



To: Transportation Commission
From: Wesley Rhodes, Planning Services Division
Subject: Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan and EIS – “Picture Pac Ave”
Memo Date: April 11, 2024
Meeting Date: April 17, 2024

Action Requested:
Informational Briefing.

Discussion:

Picture Pac Ave is a Subarea Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a 4.5-mile-long portion of Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 (SR 7) (approximately, I-5 to south 96th Street) along Pierce County’s first Enhanced Bus Service (EBS) (the Community Line) and planned future transit improvements including the County’s first Bus-Rapid Transit (BRT) line.

At the April 17, 2024 meeting, staff will provide a brief update on the status of transit improvements along the Corridor. These include the pausing of the BRT project and the commencement of an Enhanced Bus Service (EBS). The newly dubbed Stream: Community Line (EBS) will begin revenue service on April 1 and operates as an express bus overlay making limited stops along portions of existing Route 1. No changes to the existing local Route 1 service were made. The new service will include Stream: Community Line branding for the buses and benefit from transit-signal priority (TSP) at select intersections along the route. Additionally, there are planned improvements to the station areas along the route.

Additionally, staff will provide updates regarding the conclusion of the visioning and scoping phase of the project, including work with cultural ambassadors, major themes heard through the engagement process, and the creation of five guiding goals that reflect the community’s (and Commission’s) vision for the future of the Corridor.

The five guiding goals are:

- IDENTITY – Create a Sense of Place
- CONNECTIVITY – Improve Walkability, Accessibility, Safety and Cohesion
- COMMUNITY – Evaluate Community Needs, Amenities, and Infrastructure
- EQUITY – Encourage Equitable Transit-Oriented Development
- RESILIENCY – Promote Climate Mitigation, Sustainability, and Public Health

Staff will also present preliminary draft alternatives for the Planned Action EIS. The EIS will analyze a total of three alternatives, a No-Action Alternative (current trend), and two Action Alternatives that represent different ways of achieving the five guiding goals. The EIS will analyze and compare the impacts of each alternative, assuming growth and development across a 25-year time horizon, out to 2050 (which aligns with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, VISION 2050, and Home in Tacoma EIS). It is important to note that these alternatives are for analysis purposes only and the plan can choose to adopt one of the alternatives or a combination of elements from multiple alternatives. Generally, it is helpful to select action alternatives that represent a lower and higher end of proposed land use changes. The plan cannot benefit

from future streamlined environmental review for any projects that would meet a growth and development threshold higher than the alternatives studied as part of the EIS.

The preliminary draft alternatives are:

- No-Action Alternative – This alternative represents what would happen if no action were taken as part of the plan. It assumes that growth and development out to 2050 will continue along the current trend and with the current zoning and land use. The No-Action Alternative will include Home in Tacoma zoning (Urban Residential 1, 2, and 3) for all current residential zones.
- Action Alternative A: Activate Centers – This alternative includes everything in the No-Action Alternative (including Home in Tacoma) and proposes that additional investment and growth be focused on Centers. This alternative:
 - Extends the existing business district to include the Community Line station area at 56th
 - Creates a new Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center (MUC) focused around the business district
 - Upzones the two existing Crossroads MUCs
 - Concentrates capital investment projects (CIPs), including mobility and public realm improvements, within these Centers
- Action Alternative B: Activate Corridor – This alternative includes everything in Action Alternative A and proposes that additional investment and growth occur in more areas both along the corridor and within a quarter-mile walkshed of Pacific Avenue. This alternative:
 - Extends UR-3 around Centers and Community Line station areas
 - Enacts an affordability overlay (Inclusionary Zoning) near Community Line stations and within Centers
 - Satisfies non-project EIS requirement in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(b)(ii) for occupancy of at least ten percent of dwelling units at a sale or rental price considered affordable by a city's housing programs
 - Creates a new employment focused zoning classification for the southern portion of the project area, south of the Upper Pacific MUC to the southern City limit boundary.
 - This new zoning classification will be structured to attract uses such as craft manufacturing, maker spaces, art collectives, research and development, information and communications technology (IT/ICT), and media companies. These uses are compatible with housing (and will be mixed-use to allow housing), do not produce noise or air pollution, and have minimal freight impacts. It will exclude uses like warehousing and heavy machine storage, for example, as predominant uses on site. This new zoning classification is more compatible with the existing fabric of the area (long blocks, existing land use patterns) and less dependent on restoring a regularized grid than typical housing and commercial mixed-use zoning. This area seeks to attract family wage jobs and offer a different type of employment from the service industry jobs likely to be predominate throughout other areas along the Corridor.

Picture Pac Ave is also partnering with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPHCD) to conduct a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of the subarea plan. TPHCD has contracted with the Georgia Health Policy Center to assist in conducting the HIA. The HIA has four primary goals:

- Develop new and actionable information that enhances the Picture Pac Ave Subarea Plan (SAP)
- Elevate perspectives on health from the affected communities
- Deliver actionable recommendations for the SAP to advance the vision of Pac Ave as a healthy corridor, particularly related to active transportation

- Establish and/or strengthen working relationships between the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

In conjunction with engagement activities as part of Picture Pac Ave there is also an HIA-specific Advisory Group. Involvement with the community is a key aspect of conducting an HIA. Currently, the Screening, Scoping, and Assessment phases of the HIA are complete or being finalized. The remaining steps include Recommendations, Reporting & Dissemination, and Evaluation & Monitoring. The HIA will be focused on two primary topic areas:

- Preventative Health Infrastructure & Services, and the
- Bike and Walk Experience

While the HIA will not be a focus of the April 17th presentation, City and Health Department staff will make the assessment available to the Commission, once completed, within the next couple months.

Project Summary:

The “Picture Pac Ave” subarea planning process is intended to create a shared long-term vision and more coordinated approach to development, environmental review, and strategic capital investments along Pacific Avenue. Completion of the subarea plan will help leverage and support planned transit improvements including the ongoing eligibility for, and prioritization of, funding for capital investments.

In recognition of the significance of Pacific Avenue as Pierce County’s first Enhanced Bus Service (EBS) (Stream: Community Line) and planned future transit improvements including the County’s first Bus-Rapid Transit (BRT) line, the City of Tacoma, Pierce Transit, and the State Department of Commerce have partnered to fund and develop a Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan for adoption by the City of Tacoma as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Prior Transportation Commission Summary:

Staff has met with the Commission one previous time for this project:

- September 21, 2022 - Staff presented an overview of the Picture Pac Ave project background, major project elements, and a general timeline.

Staff Contact:

- Wesley Rhodes, Senior Planner, wrhodes@cityoftacoma.org, (253) 208-0083
- Project webpage: www.cityoftacoma.org/PicturePacAve



MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Carrie Wilhelme, Principal Transportation Planner, Public Works

Date: April 12, 2024

Subject: Transportation Master Plan Update – Vision and Goals

Overview

The City of Tacoma is beginning the update to the Transportation Master Plan that serves as the Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Commission helped to create the vision statement for the 2015 Transportation Master Plan. The purpose of today's presentation and discussion is to review the 2015 vision statement and propose changes if needed.

Vision Statement

Tacoma is a sustainable community with many diverse residents, businesses, and visitors who have various transportation priorities. The City is strategic in how it plans its transportation system with an emphasis on carrying the people and goods that foster Tacoma's culture, character, and competitiveness. The transportation system offers multimodal travel options that provide safe access for all users and neighborhoods, encourage healthy living, and protect the environment.

This vision is supported by six key goals, which provide guidance for the priorities and recommendations embodied in the plan:

- *Being a Partner*
- *Protecting Community*
- *Providing Mobility for All*
- *Striving for Fiscal/Social/Environmental Sustainability*
- *Leveraging Programs/Strategies*
- *Linking Land Use*

Next Steps

Please review the vision statement and goals and come prepared to begin discussions on

1. If the vision and goals should change, and
2. Any edits and suggestions.

This is just the first step of the discussion. It is anticipated the discussion will continue at the May meeting. Once the Commission is comfortable with the language, staff will present the revised vision and goals to other relevant Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Groups for their feedback.

More Information

- Attachment A: Example of Other Cities Vision Statement and Goals

ATTACHMENT A - Examples

Seattle

- Vision: In 2044, Seattle is an equitable, vibrant, and diverse City where moving around is safe, fair, and sustainable.
- Goals: Safety, Equity, Sustainability, Mobility and Economic Vitality, Livability, Maintenance and Modernization

Spokane

- Vision: Spokane will have a well-maintained multi-modal transportation system that provides safe and efficient mobility for all, supports economic and community vitality, and promotes a healthy, livable community that respects property and the environment.
- No Goals, instead Values: • Ensuring mobility and access within the city; • Maintaining the ability to access quickly the outdoors from the city; • Decreasing north-south congestion; • Increasing the variety and public awareness of transportation choices; • Developing and maintaining good public transit; • Maintaining roads; • Developing and maintaining pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods; and • Developing convenient access to the downtown area, increasing parking, bus service, light rail, and satellite parking with shuttles, and improving the pedestrian environment.

Vancouver

- Vision: No vision statement (?)
- Goals: Safety, Equity, Climate, Transportation Choice, Regional Connective, Maintaining Our Assets

Denver

- Vision: To create a multi-modal transportation system that connects people, places, and opportunities safely, equitably, and sustainably, enabling Denver to thrive as a world-class city for all
- Values: Equity, Sustainability, Safety, Accessibility, Connectivity, Livability

From: [Brian Bischof](#)
To: [Walker, Kristina](#)
Cc: [Hines, John](#); [Rumbaugh, Sarah](#); [Scott, Jamika](#); [Ushka, Catherine](#); [Bushnell, Joe](#); [Daniels, Kiara](#); [Diaz, Olgy](#); [Atkinson, Stephen](#); emailtheboard@soundtransit.org; Djacobson@piercettransit.org; [Wilhelme, Carrie](#)
Subject: Sound Transit/Pierce Transit Bus Cuts
Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2024 11:33:55 PM
Attachments: [Screenshot_20240328-232603.png](#)

Good evening Ms. Walker,

This is my first time writing a specific letter to anyone of my representatives at any level of government. Usually it's a "sign the petition situation". So forgive me as I don't know where or with whom to start. I am reaching out to you as the City of Tacoma's and Sound Transit representative speaking for Tacomans. I am deeply saddened to see the reductions of ST bus lines into and out of Pierce County, operated by Pierce Transit. I understand some of these routes had low ridership or trips being missed but I am concerned for the ripple effect it will have on taxpayer confidence for potential and existing riders alike.

I am a urban planner, bicyclist and am becoming a bit of a transit nerd. I spent 10 years living in Queens NY riding one of the best, concurrently most hated, and efficient transit systems in the country. I utilized express buses, light rail, commuter rail, BRT, subways, and tramways to get to where I was going. I relied on it entirely other than my own physical movement by walking or biking. I see so much potential for our home, Tacoma, to grow into it's next phase under the new home in Tacoma plan (high density along transit routes) and Pierce County's general push to corridors and/transit oriented development. Which brings us closer as a community and intelligently addresses our inevitable growth.

None of this works without a transit system ready to work efficiently as we add new residents and equally better serve our existing ones. I want to ask you just one question regarding these cuts and the cities stance on them. Where is the saved cost of 25+ trips a weekday and more on the weekends going? The trips were almost always running previous so I expect there must be some level of saved resources.

Are the extra buses and drivers being added elsewhere in the system? May I suggest some better coverage to bridge the gap until the Link opens at 5:15am?? Or run a later bus than the 11:45pm Tacoma bound 594 so that we could see a show in Seattle without leaving early and have it stop downtown since the Link also ends early.

These cuts represent a divestment from Tacoma and specifically the future of downtown Tacoma which is the center of ALL of our transit and all of our built infrastructure as well as a large majority of the planned residential development. Our future should be pushing towards a major rail hub in the city center in place of parking garages and highways.

I hope you can speak some of these concerns within any forums in which it could be useful. I hope that Pierce Transit can see some use in piloting an increase in service (no new infrastructure, if we cannot expand) on our Route 1,2,3. These increases should not hyper focus on 9am-5pm precovid commute. The aim of these added trips is to see "if we were to build it, would they come?" Before we waste anymore money focusing on BRT or express lines to the Dome, or a rail down hilly S 19th Street, when we aren't serving our core. I have cc'd other colleagues which may have interest in this matter.

Best,
Brian Bischof
(S 12th Street)

From: [Troy Serad](#)
To: [Wilhelme, Carrie](#); [Rhodes, Wesley](#)
Cc: pam.wrenn@gmail.com; troyserad@gmail.com
Subject: Public Comment Fwd: T Line Extension to 6th Ave
Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024 4:43:17 PM

Good afternoon Carrie and Wesley,

A member of our community, Heather, submitted the following letter to Sound Transit and CCed me. With their permission, I am submitting it to both the TOD Task Force and the Transportation Commission. It is shown below my message.

When holding the per mile expense of the recent Hilltop Link project, the TCC extension of the T Line would be a roughly \$500 million (*or more*) rail transit project with transformative implications for our city. The railway will open within the 25-year analysis period of our forthcoming Comprehensive Plan. The project will be in advanced stages of design ahead of the next mandatory periodic update in 2034. Despite these facts, since 2016 there has been little to no discussion of this massive project and its land-use and transportation implications, as far as I am aware. When the project is raised by City staff, 19th Street is noted as its alignment, despite the ballot measure concept being a representation. For example, in one of two such descriptions in the Home in Tacoma DEIS, City planners noted that this project would add "new stations in the City of Tacoma: six along the S 19th Street corridor to Tacoma Community college". Presumably, analysis has been performed presuming this alignment will be built.

As noted by former City Councilmember Ryan Mello, through which the Transportation Commission was created, the Commission and the Transportation Element were established to prioritize transportation investments in our City and to support the implementation of Sound Transit capital projects. The City has the capability to make these determinations; indeed, the City selected the present MLK alignment for the Hilltop project when ST2 funds allowed for a railway longer than the voter-approved extension to Tacoma General Hospital. The 2013 Council that selected this alignment, which included Mr. Mello, then explicitly identified either 6th Avenue or 19th Street — in that order — as potential corridors for an extension to the college. Again, as far as I am aware, there has been no City evaluation or resolution that has selected 19th Street as the corridor by which the T Line will reach the college. The Transportation Commission or the TOD Task Force thus has a pivotal role in guiding this discussion and planning effort.

When practical, I would like to have this project be a subject of discussions and public outreach. There is substantial public interest in, and support for, a T Line extension on 6th Avenue and Mildred Street to the West End and Four Corners area. At a minimum, there is substantial interest in exploring all available realistic corridors for a T Line extension to TCC. How this project evolves, and its ripple effect on planning the broader Tacoma transportation network, should be a key focus of our effort.

Very respectfully,

Troy Serad
Transportation Commissioner

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Heather Stajgr** <heather@passiocreative.com>

Date: Thu, Apr 11, 2024, 13:27

Subject: T Line Extension to 6th Ave

To: <wilbert.santos@soundtransit.org>

Cc: <troyseradtacoma@gmail.com>

Good Afternoon Wilbert,

I recently learned through the 6th Ave Business District that there has been discussion about changing the T Line Extension from 19th to 6th Ave. I know many businesses may be hesitant for a thing like this as it will create major construction for a long period of time but I also can see what an amazing benefit it could be to link so many major metropolitan areas together. This change would link the dome district, downtown, stadium district and hilltop district with 6th Ave and University of Puget Sound (as well as part of Proctor)

I speak as a resident of 6th Ave and mother of two Tacoma Public School students. One is currently at Grant (future student of Hilltop Heritage Middle School and Stadium High School) the other at Stadium High School now but was a Hilltop Heritage Middle School student last year. The link is already a very valuable resource for our youth. I know for a fact many Stadium students use it everyday but there is a major hole for students that came from the Hilltop Heritage Middle School area. Those students currently walk from Stadium home because it only takes them to Tacoma General. Extending the line to the 6th Ave area could be a valuable resource to those children both linking them to their school and home but also giving them more ways to explore our city as well as creating a positive experience with public transportation. Students have a tendency of moving together. This could provide much more ridership than on the 19th line. The future is our children and this change could connect so many more.

I really hope this is something that the City of Tacoma and Sound Transit consider.

Thank you for your time.

Heather Stajgr

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