



MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Brennan Kidd, Assistant Division Manager, Traffic Engineering & Safety Section

Date: February 14, 2024

Subject: City of Tacoma Right-of-Way Design Manual, Update Overview

Overview

The City of Tacoma's Right-of-Way Design Manual (Manual) applies to the construction of all street and right-of-way (ROW) improvements including stormwater and wastewater construction, street lighting, traffic signalization, landscaping, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and channelization. The Manual provides the minimum technical standards required to construct improvements within the City of Tacoma ROW and expectations for private accessways. The Manual is designed to be used in conjunction with other local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and design guidance as applicable to a given project or design aspect. Ultimately, the consistent use of the Manual should help ensure public infrastructure is safe, effective, efficient, economical, and sustainable. City staff, private developers, and any other entity proposing construction within the public ROW or proposing construction of City-owned facilities use the Manual.

Update Underway

The Manual's last significant update was completed in 2015 and released in early 2016 (with minor updates from 2018). The City of Tacoma has started the process to update the Manual again, but is approaching it differently from before. Instead of the considerable time and effort spent by very many on a wholesale update in 2015, the City's Standards Committee and its ad hoc Manual Update leaders decided to carry out a focused update effort. Chapter 4 – Street Design is the primary objective of this effort, as championed by Public Works and the Planning & Development Services Departments, but paralleling interest from other groups such as Environmental Services and TPU Water will likely mean other chapters will have updates as well. The collective update team welcomes input, including at this earlier stage, from the Transportation Commission on the process and content being examined and revised. In addition to Chapter 4, which covers design criteria and guidelines on the geometric design elements that must be considered in the location and design of the various types of roadways and other roadway features, like sidewalks, within the ROW, other anticipated chapters/topics may include: Permitting Process, Permit & Construction Plans Formatting, Pedestrian Facilities (ADA), Tree/Vegetation Management, Stormwater/Wastewater Design, and Water System Plans Formatting.

The Vision Zero Action Plan included Transformative Action related to updating the Manual:

- *Transformative Action 4: Update the Right-of-Way Design Manual and Traffic Control Handbook to reflect best practices in roadway design that prioritizes the safety of the most at-risk road users.*

Next Steps

The purpose of February's meeting is educational. In a few months, the Commission will receive another presentation that highlights the proposed and/or significant changes to Chapter 4, given it is the focus of this effort. Please use this upcoming meeting to gain a better understanding of what is included in Chapter 4 by asking clarifying questions and clearing up assumptions about what the document can and cannot accomplish. As you read Chapter 4, note the times the Manual references the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan. *Finally, are there specific sections within Chapter 4 that the Commission is especially interested in learning more about and/or providing comment?*

More Information

[City of Tacoma Design Manual](#)



MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Jennifer Kammerzell, Assistant Division Manager, Transportation Planning and Permitting Group

Date: February 15, 2024

Subject: 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program - Overview

Overview of Program

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that transportation planning and system development support the broader, long-range goals for community development. The GMA specifies transportation as a required element of a comprehensive plan. The City adopted the Transportation Master Plan in December 2015 as the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Master Plan includes a prioritized list of transportation projects.

All cities, towns, and counties are required to develop and adopt a 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a short-range planning document that is updated every year and shows the funding sources and amounts for transportation improvement projects planned for the next six years. The TIP must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Each jurisdiction must review and update its TIP every year, following one or more public hearings. For cities, the deadline for adoption is July 1.

The TIP is necessary to allow cities and counties to obtain state and federal funding. For a project to obtain funding from the state, it must appear in the agency's current program. Since the state also disperses federal highway funds, this requirement applies to federally-funded projects as well. The TIP lists planned transportation projects for the remaining year and the ensuing six years. The program includes roadways, bridges, non-motorized facilities, sidewalks and other capital related transportation projects. The program is based upon anticipated revenues versus desirable projects. There are always more projects than available revenues.

It is also important to note that the adoption of the program does not irreversibly commit the City of Tacoma to construct the projects. A project may be canceled at any time during the course of study or design. The program may at any time be revised by a majority of the City Council, but only after a public hearing.

Staff will be returning to the Transportation Commission on the annual 6-Year TIP amendment process on March 20, 2024 to present the projects added and deleted.

Questions and Discussion

Staff invites input from the Transportation Commission on the following question:

- 1. How can the update the Transportation Master Plan be leveraged to enhance the effectiveness of the 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program?**

More Information

[6-Year Transportation Improvement Program](#)



2024 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WORK PLAN

MANDATED

- **6-year Transportation Improvement Program**
- **Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan Update ← PRIMARY FOCUS**

PRIORITIES

- **Long range transit planning + TOD**
- **Quick-build projects and neighborhood traffic calming**
- **Vision Zero implementation and automated enforcement**
- **Missing link sidewalks**
- **Impact fees**

INVOLVEMENT

- **Home in Tacoma**
- **Pacific Avenue Sub-Area Plan**
- **Tideflats Sub-Area Plan**
- **UW Tacoma 2050 Plan**
- **Neighborhood Planning**