How can a more complete community be achieved

What should growth look like to support community goals

What are the distinctions & commonalities within the area

What corridors & connections can be made to support the goals

How can local identity and livability be improved

What catalyst projects can be developed to improve quality and stimulate growth

How can the neighborhood be transit-ready for a future light rail station
The City of Tacoma is preparing a “Subarea Plan” and Environmental Impact Statement for the Tacoma Mall sub-area. Comprised of 485 acres, the sub-area is a regionally- and locally-designated Regional Growth Center intended to support the region’s most dense concentrations of jobs and housing. Home today to 8,290 jobs and 3,788 residents, an additional 8,385 jobs and 8,887 people are planned for the area. The subarea plan is designed to provide a framework for long-term transition from a suburban to a denser, transit-oriented, walkable mixed-use urban neighborhood.

To develop an illustrative community vision plan for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood, on September 21–24, 2015, the City hosted a four-day design workshop attended by approximately 90 community members—residents, business and property owners and public agency staff. The team gathered local experience, knowledge and expertise to assist with finding solutions to neighborhood challenges. Focus groups, open studios and design feedback discussions identified ways to strengthen neighborhood identity, culture, economy, environmental quality and sense of place for area residents, businesses and users.

**Community Guidance**
- Neighborhood needs identity and sense of place
- Make the area walkable and bikeable
- Promote public health and safety
- Add open space, play space and schools
- Support local-serving businesses
- Encourage easy access to healthy and affordable food
- Grow strategically and sustainably
- Build green streets
- Empower for equity

**Workshop Goals**
- Develop a cohesive neighborhood vision
- Establish community identity
- Provide transportation choices
- Develop a coherent, cohesive structure
- Promote livability and safety
- Provide neighborhood services and amenities
- Support health, equity and empowerment
- Encourage economic development
- Grow sustainability

*The content in this document reflects the assumptions and conclusions from the Design Workshop. These ideas will be further studied for inclusion or refinements during the Subarea Planning process.*
4 Neighborhood Quadrants

**NW Quadrant**
- **Character**: Dispersed heavy commercial and light industrial, public facilities
- **Streets**: Large block grid
- **Blocks**: Up to 15 acres

**Lincoln Heights**
- **Character**: Small 1950s-era 1-3 unit residential, big box retail
- **Streets**: Curvilinear, discontinuous pattern with topographic breaks
- **Blocks**: 2.5 – 15 acres

**Madison**
- **Character**: Single family, townhouses, 3 story apartment buildings
- **Streets**: Neighborhood-scale grid with alleys, many segments and alleys vacated
- **Blocks**: 4 – 12 acres

**Mall Area**
- **Character**: Regional mall, big box retail, expansive parking lots, hill in center, dispersed residential
- **Streets**: Discontinuous system with few public streets
- **Blocks**: Up to 50 acres
**4 Big Ideas**

**Use roads, transit & trails to create COHERENT NEIGHBORHOODS**

» Reconnect the grid with a complete street system
» Create mixed use walking streets – 38th, Steele, Pine
» Build an internal loop street for walking and biking
» Incorporate linear parks & green features into streets
» Develop design elements for 3 major corridors
» Retrofit streets for all—cars, trucks, transit, bikes, people
» Improve access for regional and local traffic
» Direct I-5 access to Tacoma Mall Boulevard
» Plan for consolidated transit station with light rail and bus service plus transit-oriented development
» Use complete streets as a primary opportunity to promote biking, walking and urban character

**Refine zoning to blend building SCALE & CHARACTER**

**Existing Land Use**
Random development pattern that is less responsive to neighborhood scale and character

**Proposed Land Use**
Transitions in scale to create cohesive mixed-use neighborhood

**Improve the NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

» Improve water quality with green infrastructure amenities
» Reduce greenhouse gas emissions with compact, mixed-use walkable neighborhood
» RemEDIATE contaminated sites
» Increase area-wide landscaping, tree cover and access to parks, play spaces and nature

**Improve investment climate with STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENTS**

» Capture economic benefits of development through strategic catalytic investment in streets, infrastructure, services and sites
» Refine zoning to respond to contemporary markets, lifestyle preferences and housing needs
» Promote local-serving retail and services

**Proposed Land Use**
Transitions in scale to create cohesive mixed-use neighborhood

**Existing Land Use**
Random development pattern that is less responsive to neighborhood scale and character
**Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Workshop Summary**

**Illustrative Vision Plan**

**Common to All**
- Coherent, cohesive urban form with complete street network
- Safe and livable—walkable everywhere—with parks, public places and transit access
- 38th, Pine & Steele become great urban boulevards
- Linked with loop street for walking and biking
- Improved image, access and investment climate
- Strategic investment to capture multiple benefits

**Distinct to Each**
- Character, identity and focal points
- Internal connectivity
- Gradations in height, scale and form

**Key Actions**
- Create neighborhood organizational structure
- Calibrate zoning for the four distinct quadrants with height and bulk standards
- Carefully leverage all public actions for multiple strategic and exponential benefits
- Plan for Link light rail and transit-oriented development
- Incorporate regional stormwater facilities and green streets
- Build complete streets and transportation projects with major changes to arterials, a local walking and biking circulator street and new street alignments
- Recruit key facilities and uses (grocery store, medical offices, etc.)
STRENGTHEN RETAIL DRAW

with entertainment venues, education, hotel, medical, residential development and other complimentary uses

- More contemporary image that responds to changing consumer lifestyles and preferences
- Public gathering places, outdoor dining and entertainment
- Public and private street network including green infrastructure
- Infill with mixed-use, residential & structured parking
- Education, health care and employment potential
- Future light rail station on Pine west of mall
- Public park on top of hill
- I-5 slip lane to Tacoma Mall Boulevard
- Appropriate for large scale development with minimal impact to existing neighborhoods
- Post office may be catalyst site for redevelopment
- Steele Street becomes mixed-use walkable boulevard — key segment of walk and bike loop trail/route
- Infill/TOD potential on Fife Street
REINFORCE NEIGHBORHOOD
retain existing grid pattern & build on public open space

- Transition taller buildings on 38th (up to 10 stories) southward to smaller buildings (up to 45 feet tall)
- Retain existing neighborhood block structure while improving livability
- Ensure buildings placed at street front with parking at rear
- Re-integrate Madison School into neighborhood with park or recreation center
- Take advantage of soil conditions in the Madison Neighborhood that have strong potential for green infrastructure and stormwater design features
- Build complete streets with green infrastructure amenities as a primary design objective
- Neighborhood scale infill with privacy and security, entrances on street fronts, parking at rear
- Provide traffic calming, lane markings and on-street parking
- Stabilize western edge above South Tacoma Way
NW Gateway District

PROMOTE LIVABILITY
by reconfiguring key streets and block pattern and adding new development and amenities

» Use the hillside and soil conditions that have strong potential for green infrastructure to create a district gateway with a major stormwater feature

» Plan for new Sounder station on S Tacoma Way if viable

» Establish urban district with green infrastructure to create park-like entry boulevard

» Appropriate for large scale development in new street pattern with minimal impact to existing neighborhoods

» Use hillside for structured parking

» Reinforce commercial, mixed-use and urban industrial uses

» Western edge transitions to South Tacoma Way manufacturing and industrial center

» Manage transitions from residential to commercial/industrial uses on the area perimeter
REINFORCE NEIGHBORHOOD
with open space and transitional building forms

» Transition dispersed 1950s housing to low- and medium-density residential development
» Retain curvilinear street pattern oriented to topography
» Connect discontinuous streets
» Capitalize on opportunity to reconnect street grid if Costco site is redeveloped
» Create neighborhood focus with parks
» Infill with medium density residential as buffer to nearby large scale commercial development
» Provide green space as buffer between residential and commercial uses on 38th Street
» Enhance character of residential enclave
» Manage the transition from residential to commercial districts on the perimeter
» Consider a “makers concept” destination area on Pierce County properties — include small-scale industrial artisans, fabricators and live-work opportunities
» Consider low-impact development opportunities in Steele Street corridor
Decisions & Implications
» Provide more directive zoning to achieve livability goals
» Create & implement neighborhood organizational structure—street networks, block size, parks & public spaces, scale
» Carefully leverage all public investment & actions for multiple strategic benefits
» Anticipate & leverage partnerships with Sound Transit, Pierce Transit, Metro Parks & School District
» Recruit key businesses & facilities in desired locations
» Build a more complete community with addition of affordable, healthy food sources, locally serving retail and services, entertainment destinations and community facilities

Implementation Actions
» Coordinate roadway improvements with green infrastructure as catalyst for development to complete street system
» Plan for infill around proposed light rail & commuter rail stations
» Coordinate actions with Metro Parks, Pierce Transit, Tacoma School District
» Cultivate public-private partnerships
» Integrate stormwater facilities into streets and public spaces as amenities
» Pursue key redevelopment opportunities on potential catalyst sites such as Costco site, City Fleet Facility, Post Office site and large commercial sites that are currently underused
» Use public right-of-ways to catalyze and set the tone for urban redevelopment
Participants

Layla Arbogast  
Heather Ballash  
Steve Barton  
Pat Beard  
Bob Bearden  
Anthony Blankenship  
Michael Blumson  
Sara Bonds  
Beverly Bowen-Bennett  
Dana Brown  
Michael Carey  
Brett Carlstad  
Barbara Casey  
Ken Casey  
Carol A. Charette  
Doug Fraser  
David Fisher  
Dan Grayuski  
Fedalta Group  
Cliff Hansen  
Don Hansen  
Mazedur Hossein  
Laura Houkgaier  
Peter Huffman  
Liz Kaster  
Roy Kissler  
Jessica Knickerbocker  
Yoshi Kumara  
Rachel Lindahl  
Karl Mastberg  
Gordon Maxwell  
Mona Maxwell  
Kathy McCormick  
Reuben McKnight  
Christina McLeod  
John Miles  
Stacy Monroe  
Jane Moore  
Samantha Pasana  
George Povich  
Amy Pow  
Lua Pritchard  
Raylene Rogers  
Shirley Schultz  
Joe Siegel  
Rebecca Solverson  
Jill Sousa  
Darin Stavish  
Rick Tackett  
Gregg Thompson  
Carl Washberg  
Bruce West  
Diane Wiatr  
Ko Wibowo  
Anaid Yarenza  
Rob Zawatzky
Design Team

City of Tacoma

Elliott Barnett, Associate Planner, Workshop Leader
Molly Harris, Senior Planner, Workshop Leader

3 Blocks

Julia Walton, AICP, Architect/Urban Designer, Workshop Leader
with
Seth Harry, AIA NCARB, Architect/Urban Designer, Design Leader
David Peterhans, Senior Retail/Urban Designer
Keith Covington, Architect/Senior Urban Designer
Jose Jaime Venegas, Architect/Urban Designer
Jeff Benesi, Landscape Architect/Designer/Illustrator