To: Planning Commission

From: Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division

Subject: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan and EIS

Meeting Date: September 20, 2017

Memo Date: September 15, 2017

With the September 15, 2017 conclusion of the public comment period, the project will soon pass a major milestone. At this meeting, the Commission will discuss the key themes of comments received to date, hear a presentation by Community Attributes, Inc. on their economic comparative analysis, and provide direction to guide subsequent staff efforts. Staff will return on October 4, 2017 with further items for discussion. On October 18, 2017 the Commission will consider making final recommendations to the City Council.

On August 2, 2017 the Commission authorized the public release of the draft Subarea Plan, proposed code changes and streetscape design concepts, and Draft Environmental Impact Statement. After broad notification and outreach efforts, public engagement has been ongoing up to today. The City hosted the August 30th Informational Meeting and September 6th Public Hearing, and staff participated in meetings with the Transportation Commission, Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group, and City Council Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee. In addition, staff have spoken with community stakeholders as well as with City to departments which will be involved in implementation. The City received over 40 written and verbal comments through Thursday.

Attached is a high level summary of the comments received to date, along with preliminary staff recommendations for additional analysis and policy options to address the issues raised. At the meeting, staff will provide any additional comments received through the end of the comment period and highlight any new issues. Staff will then ask the Commission for concurrence or further guidance on a list of actions to update and finalize the package. The objective is to have a clear roadmap to guide this final phase of Commission work on the project.

Information about the project is available at www.tacomamallneighborhood.com. Please contact Elliott Barnett at (253) 591-5389, or email tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org with any questions.

Attachments:
1. Preliminary Summary of Key Issues and Recommendations
2. Comments received through 09/14/17
3. Economic Comparative Analysis – Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan

Peter Huffman, Director
The comments received reflect diverse viewpoints and interests among residents, businesses, property owners and other stakeholders. At the time of this summary, comments are still being received. This summary is intended to help facilitate discussion at the Planning Commission’s meeting on September 20, 2017, not as a full documentation of comments and public testimony.

Comments are grouped into general categories according the chapter structure of the Subarea Plan. At the meeting, staff will bring forward preliminary recommendations for actions to address the public input.

General comments:

- Support for City focus, investment and high level goals of the plan
- Avoid making anyone feel that they are losing through City actions
- A plan is appropriate and needed, thoughtful growth is needed; however the plan is too ambitious given current market realities
- Clarify that this is a long range plan and an ideal vision
- Be clear whether actions are requirements, options, and what is occurring with Plan adoption

Urban Form:

- Support for creating a more positive image and identity
- Support walkable urbanism actions
- Support for contemporary transit-oriented development and the proposed transit station
- There should be less emphasis on front stoops and more yard space
- Different views of the vision for the Northwest District

Land Use:

- General support for proposed zoning changes
- Clarify relationship between the Subarea, Downtown, and the South Tacoma Manufacturing/Industrial Center
- Support for expanding RGC, buffer with the South Tacoma M/IC
- There should be better design and landscaping and onsite open space standards
- Should the two car dealerships located just outside the proposed Subarea be included
- More parking is needed in the neighborhood
- Front doors should not face alleys
- Comments on permitted building heights (too high or too low)
- Make warehousing a permitted use at the Puget Sound Energy site
Housing:

- Concerns about involuntary displacement
- Proposed affordable housing targets are too low
- The City should be targeting the creation of housing affordable to lower incomes

Transportation:

- Support for overall transportation approach
- Transit station relocation, Loop Road, I-5 offramp are high priorities
- Differing perspectives on where the transit station should be located
- Call for a direct transit route between the Tacoma Hub and the Subarea
- Identify a funding source for transportation projects
- Various comments regarding street design

CONNECTIVITY

- Support for the proposal
- Proposal would be an excessive burden, will stifle development and take private property rights, too ambitious given current market realities
- Proposed process is onerous and complex
- Thresholds proposed are too low
- Differing opinions whether proposed S. 37th Street is necessary, and who should bear the cost
- Opposed to the proposed S. Wright Ave through the Pierce County complex
- Clarify City funding role

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS STANDARDS

- Support for proposed pedestrian access standards
- Access should not be required to areas with restricted access
- Frequency and size of connections too high
- Threshold should remain 50% not 15%
- Pedestrian connections across property reduce safety
- Clarify how standards work with topography, rounding

Environment:

- Support for stormwater strategy, green streets, and tree canopy actions
- Prioritize planting evergreen trees
- Put stronger emphasis on protecting the aquifer
- Caution regarding City implementation of the stormwater strategy, equitability of costs and maintenance of facilities
- More emphasis on green building standards
**Community Vitality:**

- Support for parks, open space actions
- Metro Parks Tacoma should change Level Of Service and implement parks vision
- School District should implement vision for Madison School
- Specific comments regarding various proposed park locations
- Clarify what it means to show a proposed park
- Remove the park in the Mall District which is privately owned land
- Strong support for local serving services and amenities
- Crime is a big issue in the neighborhood

**Shared Prosperity:**

- Prioritize bringing in businesses with a track record of good ethics and good wages
- Diversify the types of businesses in the Mall
- Consider actions support locally owned businesses versus national chains
- Bring back City culture of promoting and supporting businesses and development
- Look for strategic and catalytic city actions to create business opportunities
- Comments regarding proposed catalyst sites

**Utilities and Services:**

- Support for coordinated planning approach to support future growth
- Add recycling to discussions of solid waste

**Implementation:**

- Make sure that infrastructure is keeping pace with development
- Development should pay for the cost of addressing impacts
- Local Improvement Districts will be challenging for low income households
- The City must follow through with implementation of non-contentious catalyst projects
I listened to the comments at last night’s public meeting and would like to offer these questions and observations

- The introduction 1st paragraph after the Vision refers to the proximity to Downtown (Fig. I.1) Downtown will be on the final map?
This is very important even more so than the TideFlats or even the S. Tac M/IC as this is what the people of this are are relating to, as far as planning for growth in their area. It is stated several time in this Intro that the Mall Subarea is second to Downtown in expected job and density growth.
If the M/IC is going to be shown here, it should state why that is important to the Subarea and I don’t see that, did I miss it? That it is an Overlay w/additional protection for M/I uses by further restricting incompatible uses…. Is there enough buffer along S. Tac Way and Water flume Trail?

The fear of higher density and heights might be (somewhat) alleviated by better stating this relationship to Downtown, by showing Downtown as being the MUCH denser RGC with heights of 100+ ft. compared with the proposed 45’- 65’ for the Mall area.

Also I think there should have been, and can be in this document, better/stronger education of what the Vision and Goals mean in the long run. Try to get it across that they are not to be achieved in the short term and maybe not even in the long term, but IDEALY they are what directs the process toward the Goals and the progress of getting there. It sounded, last night, like people were afraid of having their land taken, where, I believe, you are trying to get a buy-in on an ideal of a new way of looking at retail/commercial/mixed use development.
It seemed to me that there was a soft buy-in on the ideas at the meeting. Retail/commercial endeavors are not really working to their expectations and most people are hearing of new ideas on creating a village feeling (read; pedestrian) to the areas around and in their developments. I do hope there have been meetings with these people and education through outside resources(LUI, trade magazines, new urbanism etc). They will do better, but betterment costs money.

- Be up front on whether Strategies are a shall or a should.
In the Actions where it is suggested to “Revise development regulations to require…” and “Revise the TMC to state…..”, will they be done automatically when the Plan is adopted by the Council or will the neighborhood have to raise the issue again and shepherd it through the process?
We missed some action items when we did the South Downtown Subarea Plan and now we need to go back and resurrect those initiatives ourselves.

- I am very concerned about Implementation. It is so important to make sure, if the City is going to start up these planning processes in a neighborhood, that they follow up with some of the Catalyst Projects quickly. They should be the ones that are NOT contentious, of course, but start concrete design meetings on some that all agree on (move forward with the 3 key Corridors- the new I-5 ramp, 38th and the 45th t Fife Transit connection IF those are the ones most people want). The City needs to take the lead in this. Take care of your volunteers who
have come to these meetings.

Whatever did happen to the 2 bond issues for fixing roads? Was any of this money spent in this area?

- Transit needs to pull up into the Mall area to drop people off, not have them walk across a busy street then across a sea of parking. Do not treat bus riders as second class citizens, they are the ones who should be given optimum drop off spots!

Thank you to the all volunteer Planning Commission and City staff for your work on this

Sincerely, Jori Adkins
301 Puyallup Ave.
Tacoma WA 98421
Chair Stephen Wamback  
Tacoma Planning Commission  
747 Market Street  
Tacoma, WA 98402  

Dear Mr. Wamback:

I am writing as a member of Tacoma Friends Meeting (Quakers). Our meetinghouse is located at 2508 South 39th Street and is a commercially-zoned property within the Tacoma Mall Subarea. We are one of the few religious organizations within this subarea community. Although I am the clerk of the meeting (equivalent to a chairperson) I am writing as an individual member of the meeting not as the clerk, because I have not been authorized to represent the opinions of the meeting as a group. Part of our property includes the park that was established many years ago by Hillside Community Church and the Tahoma Audubon Society.

My concern here is with several issues that have arisen as a result of the residential plans and zoning rules proposed in the subarea plan. I have also agreed to be a co-signer of the letter you will receive from John and Eleanor Brekke that addresses elements of the plan that affect the commercial property owners.

The issues I see and my opinions about the residential plans are as follows:

1. **No front doors of apartment complexes should face alleys.** This creates second-class residents of those buildings. Having one’s front door face an alley is demeaning to the residents and not conducive to pride of place or care of one’s place. Although it is promised that developers will have to provide street-like amenities or mews-like designs for the alleys, I do not believe these rules will be enforced.

2. **Six-story buildings seem to me to be too high for apartment buildings, if we want to promote a more attractive and safer neighborhood.** I recognize that height will give the developers more profit for their investments. However, in my travels in the US and Europe, it has seemed to me that four-story apartment buildings offer a sense of neighborhood better than taller structures. They are not so overwhelming in size.

3. **Townhouses are not suitable for many senior citizens and generally not at all for disabled people**—obviously because of the need in each home to negotiate at least two flights of stairs to use the residence.

4. **Parks should be developed in available greenspace.** I am aware that these as yet undeveloped lots are privately owned. I hope Metro Parks can be encouraged to take an interest in this subarea.

5. **The various environmentally sensitive programs for porous streets, tree canopy enhancement, and the like are excellent and should remain part of the plan.**

I also am delighted to see the proposal for the non-project environmental impact statement. That should make things easier for developers overall in both residential and business sections of the subarea.

My thinking is based on the principle that no one should suffer as a result of how we plan; all people we serve should be treated with respect.

Sincerely yours,

Angelia Alexander

Cc: Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division
To: Elliot Barnett, Associate Planner  
747 Market Street, RM 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253) 591-5389  
tacomaneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org

RE: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan

Please enter into the review process by the Planning Commission, the following comments concerning the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Sub-area Plan. There has been a tremendous amount of work by dedicated professionals incorporated in this document, and most of the information concerning the “neighborhood's input” has been included.

But due to the nature of the project, and the prejudice of the contracted professionals (east coast mentality), I do not believe that it represents a great neighborhood with the economic viability and increased mixed use livability that it could have. By that, I mean two issues: (1) That development must assume some of the responsibility for new usage requirement of the infrastructure, and (2) must assume the responsibility of the energy savings and ecological technology to be used in construction, not the citizens who, for a large part, will be the aging, or the extremely young (w/children), unless restrictions are incorporated along with the ideals of this proposal.

Issue (1):

a. As the population increases, along with business and transportation, there must be a fund or incoming financing from the developer that pays for the increase use (and rates) of the infrastructure, including, but not limited to: streets, utilities, water use/disposal, communications and natural gas lines to (and possibly have to increase the size of) the main lines. New development should not be carried by the citizens of Tacoma. Development will make money from the project and by paying forward for usage, would only be right.

b. The infrastructure must also be assumed to include the nature of the building and the requirements of future tenants/owners. Therefore building for residents must include some type of recreation and play area for all ages of the building, including safety of some of its tenants (whether young or old). Development for business / government must have adequate waiting & lunch room/seating for its tenants and their customers, along with accommodations for stretching and exercise for their breaks. You would think that developers would include this in their design; however, some developers interested in making a “fast buck” will skillfully exclude these items unless required by the city.

Issue (2):

a. Development must also be mindful of the ecological concerns of Tacoma citizens. Citizens wish to continue to reduce the amount of harmful substances in the air, on the land and in the water, therefore, by using new industrial standards & technology for development materials and for excessive waste and water pollution. Developers must begin using re-useable and long usage materials for all aspects of building, including, but not limited to: framing, instillation, finishing walls and paints, wiring/piping for water/gas/communications/ electrical and heating and air-condition. Developers should be required to obtain and install the most energy efficient appliances included in each design, including waste water management systems within each building to separate, and re-use, brown water. This concept also includes a possible ‘park-like” or community garden space on roofs. Unless mandatory requirements from the city are enacted, developers will continue to use the cheapest, and/or sub-standard, materials necessary to complete the development.

b. The city must be vigilant to process permits that emphasizes new building requirements, but more importantly, for the city inspections to ensure proper and safe development availability for our citizens. Unlike the Ruston Way Project, where inspectors came out “periodically” and “signed-off” on the development already completed and buried without actually being inspected.

c. All development must include the tough “green” requirements set-forth by the city where in 2-40, 40% of the city will be a green space. But that requirement is sub-standard as the city only requires 40% of
that 40% to be evergreen foliage. Tacomaans know that the worst air quality in the region is in the
winter, and by mandating that 60% of new foliage will be deciduous, creates two problems: (i.) not able
to absorb carbon dioxide in the fall and winter months, and (ii) creates clogged drainage for streets as
this is a “transient” part of Tacoma, no-body, except some of us older ones, who are gradually dying
off, really cares if street drains are clear of leaves and debris. This needs to change by regulations, to
include developers and the city.

d. 2017 and beyond is not the time to continue to mix “brown and black” water together to flow into
Puget Sound. Technology exists that separates water that can be re-used, or used to nourish
nature/greenery. This is essential to the water use of future generations and lowering the costs of
utilities to other residents. Developers must incorporate these techniques in each and every
development in Tacoma.

e. Underground main lines for all support infrastructures to the development, including, but not limited
to: utilities / communications, and water, instead of overhead “telephone poles and lines.” This
concept protects the utilities, communications, and possibly others by having secured access from
weather, accidents or vandalism. Increasing road-ways and sidewalks (to new standards), not just
outside the development, but to the main roadways that their residents / owners / customers would
use to get to that development. Once again, should not be a financial burden to Tacoma residents.
The design for residential living consists of the front of the complex / homes to be at the sidewalk. Unlike our
counterparts from east of the Alleghenies, Tacomaans do not (as stated at numerous community meetings)
want to sit on their front “stoop” and stare at their neighbors across the street. We want some greenery and
space that will allow for our pets to run, child to play and BBQs without having to travel to “parks along the
walk-way” to enjoy our summers. We do not want our front doors to face the allies, nor be required to park in
the allies where we cannot keep an eye on them. We must draw the line somewhere, and this is a must.

Travel to and from business, appointments, schools and activities is to be through the “Bicycle and Walking
route,” then healthy activities, historical or educational information and resting areas should be incorporated
alongside the route. Activities should include exercises challenges for both the young and the elderly. Sitting
areas for the elderly and large amounts of information consisting of current events/activities, educational
(challenging) material that students will need to know to complete K-12, like quizzes and answers. Seating to
accommodate those in wheelchairs, walkers or mothers needing change diapers (yes, we’ll need this in 2040).

The planning committee charged with creating a functional design for this region has done an outstanding job.
But just as important as the design, are the types of business that will be available for a self-sustaining
neighborhood. These include (but not limited to): a major shopping center, medical (including small
surgical/E.R.) and dental and retailers and suppliers that support these services, clothing retailers, community
centers, young adult and underage educational and recreation area where pre-teens and older (up to 18) may
go to have adult supervision while they exercise, relax and/or do home-work and not leave these folks on the
street. A senior center would be a perfect neighbor to support the Youth Center as volunteers or mentors. In
order to access these places of business, the road design must include a separate left turning lane (or what’s
know as a “suicide-lane”) as to not back up traffic on the “drive-through” lane on two lane arterials, both
directions, allowing the right lane to support right hand turns. The idea of having mediums filled with cement
or foliage (hopefully not deciduous) as currently designed in the plan is not reasonable.

I strongly agree that retailers and commercial residents should be alongside major arterials (i.e., S. Pine
Street, S. 38th Street, S. 47th Street and South Tacoma Blvd. The next level on the inside of that parameter
should hold the multi-family living units and, inside of that, individual housing. The present design does not
represent the parks and playgrounds necessary for the residents. It mostly shows that the majority of the
recreational playgrounds are on (or beside) the bicycle / walking route. This is not where the residents live.
Consideration should be to have the committee examine the project again to ensure that the majority of the
playgrounds (that should include all types of recreation, including but not limited to: skateboard park, tennis
courts, basketball courts, rock-climbing activities, outdoor exercise equipment, balancing bars/logs, hop-skip
and jump areas, four-square and “feet following designs (as in dancing instructions).” This should also be a requirement for developers.

But in order for The Tacoma Mall Project to be generated, major assistance is needed by the owners of the S. Tacoma Mall. Present vendors do not generate major participation by either the youth or the elderly. The mall must somehow provide the service needs to accommodate its present and future customers. Things like a movie theater, teen activities center, child-care, post office/outlet, nutritional vendors and resting centers for the seniors, truly accessible potable water stations and restroom facilities. Access to the mall presently competes with the residents / business owners and customers of University Place, S. Tacoma and its Business Districts along with, N. Lakewood and Chambers Bay Golf Course. The City / State / Business partnership must create an access to 47th / 48th S. Street for (mainly) mall customers off I-5. A side benefit would be a reduction in the traffic in the S. Tacoma Area. Current plan is to ask the state to build another off-ramp I-5 at S. 38th Street. That would make that region even a greater “cluster,” than it already is.

The suggestions and future requirement recommendations in the above letter to the Planning Commission are just that. But understand that if regulations are not changed, development will continue to use sub-standard, non-environmental friendly, without paying their share of taxes (city granted tax exemptions/breaks) and continue to pass on these costs to the residents of Tacoma. Interpretation of the city’s requirement for greenery can look like the deciduous trees planted under power wires on new development sites north of S. 47th Street, and Tacomans will have the responsibility to “fix” issues in the future by increased taxation / fees /etc.

For the plan to take shape, present development (or future) must begin using the requirements set forth in the plan now as to not have to begin over, correct or modify, over the next 20 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the Tacoma Mall Project plans and EIS.

Robert Bearden
5311 S. Pine Street
Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 475-2818
rbearden@comcast.net
September 13, 2017

Dear City of Tacoma Transportation Commission:

Over the past few years, BPTAG has provided input into the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan (TMSP) on multiple occasions. The city has integrated our suggestions thoughtfully and has done a nice job explaining why some suggestions did not appear in the final document. As with any large project, the integration of alternative priorities from multiple parties has required modifications and adjustments and we appreciate the difficulty of those decisions.

Ultimately, the City of Tacoma has incorporated BPTAG’s input into the TMSP and has presented a plan with excellent focus on active transportation alternatives. We strongly support the city’s goal of supporting connectivity through the use of a mixed road network. Consistent with Tacoma’s Transportation Master Plan, the blank spaces in the Tacoma Mall subarea have been filled in with an effective balance of pedestrian, transit and cycling infrastructure. For transit, we like the updated requirements that create robust pedestrian access throughout large sites including a higher standard for central pedestrian access with frontage sites of over 450 feet. Cyclists will benefit not only from the infrastructure within the TMSP but also from the connectivity to bicycle infrastructure in the Transportation Master Plan outside of the Tacoma Mall subarea.

In our August BPTAG meeting, we spent considerable time discussing the proposed connection of S 37th street. While we understand local business and property owners concerns regarding reconnecting new roads within the right of way of businesses, BPTAG feels that the city and business owners have achieved an appropriate balance of preserving relatively large parcels for businesses (even with the addition of S 37th Street), while improving connectivity for both bicyclists and pedestrians by reducing a few of the very large parcels. The TMSP includes triggers and incentives that would govern such development, meaning these roads will not be constructed soon and developers maintain control of redesigns that would trigger such development. However, as the landscape of the Tacoma Mall Subarea changes, we feel that the connectivity goals need to be maintained, as outlined in Transportation Master Plan and reflected in the TMSP. South 37th St. is particularly strategic as it connects Pine St. (with proposed bike lanes) with the Loop Road, South Tacoma Way, and access to the Water Flume Trail.

Thank you for your hard work on the TMSP and attention to making the Tacoma Mall area accessible to active transportation options.

Sincerely

Daniel Hansen
Co-Chair

David Cook
Co-Chair

Cc: City of Tacoma Planning Commission

Staff Liaison:
Meredith Soniat
253-591-5380

City of Tacoma
Public Works Department
Engineering Division
747 Market St., Room 644
Tacoma, WA 98402
What we like about the Sub Area Plan
City interest in the neighborhood
Creating a transit center and working to bring rail to the area
Brining more of an identity to area and creating a destination
Improvements to existing streets
Grant $ for street improvements and help revitalizing the neighborhood.
Recognizing the neighborhood is residential, commercial, and industrial in nature.

Connectivity
We are watching the biggest economic boom in the Seattle area. 50+ cranes and not yet seeing in Tacoma. It is indicative. Looking forward to Tacoma Mall neighborhood boom.

#1 concern you have heard from property owners has been about connectivity and often overlooked onerous attributes of connectivity that stifles progress and redevelopment including the time frame up to the point of major redevelopment.

Logically happens when market demands and at the time of major redevelopment. Bulldozer comes out. Major development defined as 50% of valuation (15% trigger much too low). At that time will address connectivity within site & neighborhood

If try and have connectivity either in plan or actual prior to major redevelopment creates economic barriers. Unnecessary in this economically sensitive area. Negotiating with neighbors. Losing deals while waiting or permitting approvals

Beware of creating barriers. Need incentives to build connections, not more restrictive regulations. Allow, but don’t require, through connections to be combined with emergency access serving a parcel.

Chopping up parcels with a connectivity plan and/or actual implementation limits buildable square footage and restricts flexibility. Property owners are unable to maximize the value of property given the restrictions.

The frequency and size of connections creates a burdensome environment for current owners, businesses as well as future developers. Appropriate time for connectivity is at the time of major redevelopment and with more modest connectivity goals.

***what is being proposed is breaking down a 16 acre site into 32 one-half acre sites

Connectivity has its place but there is value in large parcels. Developers and government need assemblage. University of WA Tacoma, Convention Center, Tacoma Dome, Central Police Facility. Malls, Convention Center, Corporate Campuses, Midsize Shopping Centers = large parcel

37th Street
Continue to question the cost/benefit of 37th when there are viable alternatives at lower costs and without topography issues and significant ROW acquisitions. For example, extending 35th and Cedar Streets to connect to South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail.

If 37th is deemed necessary by the City then it should be a Tier 1 Street which is City led, City funded ROW acquisitions, and City constructed. It should also be built both east and west of Pine Street as topo allows.

Eleanor Brekke
eleanor@brekkeproperties.com
Cedar Plaza

John Brekke
john@brekkeproperties.com
Cedar Plaza
September 15, 2017

Mr. Stephen Wamback, Chair
City of Tacoma Planning Commission
747 Market Street
Tacoma, WA 98402

Dear Mr. Wamback and Members of the Planning Commission:

RE: Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan and EIS

As owners of the Cedar Plaza shopping center located in the NW Quadrant of the Tacoma Mall neighborhood, we have actively participated in the public process concerning the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan. The decisions of the Planning Commission will have a direct impact on our property and our tenants, and it is in the spirit of public-private partnership that we offer our comments on the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan and Environmental Impact Analysis.

We want to acknowledge the tremendous effort that has been put forth by the Planning Commission and staff over the past 18 months to bring the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan to its final stages. There are a number of initiatives we support including:

- Neighborhood Infrastructure – significant City investments in new sidewalks, street lights, street trees, storm water drainage system improvements, the Loop Road and additional bicycle and pedestrian connections to South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail.
- Regional Transportation Improvements – City leadership to bring more transportation options to the Tacoma Mall neighborhood such as:
  - Second I-5 interchange to relieve pressure at 38th and Steele;
  - Pierce Transit station located more centrally within the neighborhood and the addition of express bus service; and,
  - Sound Transit light rail and Sounder stations nearby to serve the neighborhood.
- Height, zoning, design standards, and city improvements to the regional storm water facilities to serve the area.
- SEPA - The City’s decision to complete an upfront Environmental Impact Statement is of considerable value to private property owners and is a tangible benefit that will help both existing businesses when they wish to expand their facilities and new development coming to the area.
While the City’s proposed capital investment and economic development focus for the Tacoma Mall neighborhood is exciting and supported by the business community, there are elements of the Subarea Plan that continue to be a cause for concern.

For all the apparent hustle and bustle of the Tacoma Mall neighborhood, the economic underpinnings of this area of the City is deceptively fragile. When compared to other properties we own and manage in the South Sound region, retail-office-warehouse space in the NW Quadrant of the Tacoma Mall neighborhood rents for less than our industrial warehouse space in Kent. Of considerable concern is the structural change taking place in the retail shopping industry and the way business is conducted, making retail centers no longer the predictable property investment it has been. All this is to say that new regulations should support business retention / expansion and recruitment without creating or imposing burdens for private property owners.

Our greatest concerns fall into the broad categories of connectivity and the characterization of large blocks. These issues remain the greatest concern of private property owners in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood.

We considered several formats that might be used to most effectively provide our public comments; for instance, a narrative supported by spreadsheets or a line-by-line editing of the City’s proposed code changes found in Appendices LU-2, pages 34-50, etc. In the end, we chose to outline a simple approach we can begin to support and that we feel could bring mutually desirable results. The following brief summary spells out the elements of that approach.

**CONNECTIVITY**

1. **Use existing Rights-of-Way when available**
   - Use existing city-owned rights-of-way for the Loop Road bicycle and pedestrian trail.
   - Extend South Cedar, So. 35th and So. 40th Streets westerly to connect with South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail.

2. **Proposed Future 37th Street**

   If the City determines the proposed 37th Street would be effective in improving neighborhood-wide connectivity, we would support the construction of 37th with these changes:
   - 37th Street would be classified as a Tier 1 Street;
   - 37th Street would be built on both sides of Pine Street as topography allows (east to Fife Street and west to existing 37th Street);
   - 37th Street would be a City-led and City-funded project including right-of-way acquisition, design, and construction.
3. **Connectivity Framework – Subarea neighborhood**

Larger blocks should not be required to be divided any less than a 600’ x 600’ block configuration for the Tacoma Mall neighborhood to accommodate and enhance multi-mode travel (vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit).

4. **Internal Connectivity**

Replace the very complicated proposed connectivity requirements / connectivity plan with a 300’x 600’ network of Tier 3 bicycle / pedestrian connections to establish an urban framework for the neighborhood.

- Internal pathways with alignments allowed to meander to accommodate buildings, above ground utilities, or other impediments.
  - **Note:** The WSDOT bicycle and pedestrian standards for the newly constructed bike/ped trail built on a major commuter route on the north side of the SR520 floating bridge to connect nonmotorized travelers to and from Seattle and the east side of King County is 14’. There is no justification in requiring the subarea through block connection to be equal or greater than 14’. Bike/ped trail in the subarea are major commuter routes therefore a 5’-10’ is more appropriate.

- Triggered by major redevelopment defined as “improvements exceeding 50% of the value of existing development or structures as defined by the Building Code, unless specifically exempted” (see language taken from Appendices LU-02, page 34, TMC 13.06.12). Tenant improvements, façade and site improvements would be exempt from the major redevelopment calculation.
  - Tenant improvements and site improvements are necessary to attract quality tenants. Façade improvements improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood. A private property owner should not be penalized for improving their property.

- The proposed connectivity threshold triggers are much too low. Most routine leasehold improvements for larger tenants or higher value tenants would trigger the connectivity plan requirement (see proposed TMC 13.06.512 General Applicability, Appendix LU-2, page 34).
  - In no event should thresholds be more stringent than those found in the current Tacoma Municipal Code and an exemption should be added for tenant improvements, façade and site improvements.

The proposed connectivity plan / process is complex, rigid and onerous. It’s a process that requires a private property owner to notify and then negotiate with neighboring property owners to determine connectivity alignments. It’s a process that creates a recorded and legally binding document that may well have to be ‘undone’ when major redevelopment takes place, and it may not be suitable for highest and best use in the future.
This legally binding commitment would not only dictate future development but could have the unintended consequence of stifling property improvements because property owners won’t want to make improvements that will trigger the connectivity plan requirement. The city’s connectivity policies will have an impact on mortgage financing, future lease negotiations and the sale of a property. A property owner who went through the arduous process of designing a connectivity plan and having it approved would have to repeat the same approval process if the connectivity plan needs to be changed in the future. This would require additional time and money for both the private property owner and the city.

Designing a connectivity plan at the time of major redevelopment allows the property owner to design connections in context with the new development rather than guessing at what might be best, where buildings might be located, the possible configuration and size of a future building footprint, etc. To design site improvements within the constraints of a pre-determined and legally binding connectivity plan seems to be the tail wagging the dog.

As avid cyclists and daily pedestrians, we understand connectivity and the benefits it can bring to a neighborhood. Nevertheless, the proposed connectivity process and requirements spelled out in the proposed changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code are complicated with real consequences to private property owners. The same effect can be achieved without having to file and record a connectivity plan by implementing a policy calling for Tier 3 bicycle/pedestrian connections as outlined above.

We ask for your serious consideration of the simpler and yet effective approach outlined above. In addition, we have attached our recommendations for transportation improvements outlined in the Subarea Plan, Table 2, Project List, page T-26.

LARGE BLOCKS

The Subarea Plan and EIS characterize ‘large blocks’ and ‘very large blocks’ as undesirable and a condition to be remedied with a network of east-west and north-south streets supplemented by bike and/or pedestrian paths built at intervals of 150’. While the EIS states that Medium and Long-term maps for the neighborhood are ‘illustrative not directive’ (EIS Page UF-6), the proposed code changes (Appendices LU-2 pages 34-50) dictate a prescriptive and predictable pattern with little consideration of existing property boundaries and patterns of ownership. The proposed code changes provide connectivity requirements that would essentially subdivide properties into a grid of smaller development parcels and eliminate flexibility for future site planning.

We contend large blocks can be a benefit to business recruitment efforts of the city and local economic development agencies. Indeed, Catalyst Sites in the Subarea Plan include large blocks. The City of Tacoma has considerable experience in the assemblage of large blocks of property for signature projects in the downtown Regional Growth Center such as the Tacoma Dome, University of Washington Tacoma, Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center, and the original Central Police Facility site.
Recent regional examples of property assemblage include South Lake Union in downtown Seattle, Kent Station, and Bothell Crossroads project. The City of Kent purchased a 20-acre industrial site that was located next to a Sounder rail station, designed a site plan with new street and bike/pedestrian connections, and then sold the development site at a discount to a private developer that carried out the city’s site plan. The City of Bothell spent $53 million to purchase property and another $100 million to demolish buildings and build a desired street network. Bothell then sold the remaining property they had purchased as pad-ready development sites to private developers.

**CATALYST SITES**

Focusing the majority of improvements in the NE and SE quadrants of the Tacoma Mall neighborhood could create a vacuum or a diversion, leaving the NW and SW quadrants in the shadow of the more improved parts of the neighborhood. In other words, the perception could become that the farther away from the area being improved, the less desirable could be the properties.

1. Consider designating an aggregation of vacant or severely underutilized properties in the north end of the Northwest Quadrant.
2. Goodwill/Outback Plaza (and potentially in combination with abutting properties to the north, east and west).

In closing, we are excited about the prospect of approximately $125 million in infrastructure improvements that could be made in the Tacoma Mall neighborhood over the next 20 years. These changes will make a noticeable improvement in the neighborhood’s image, and in turn, spur economic development and investment by the private sector.

Sincerely yours,

John Brekke
Brekke Properties

Eleanor Brekke
Brekke Properties

cc: Elliott Barnett, Planner

Attachment: Suggested priorities for Near- and Mid-Term Transportation Projects (Subarea Plan, Table 2, Project List, Page T-26)
Suggested priorities for Near- and Mid-Term Transportation Projects (Subarea Plan, Table 2, Page T-26)

Focus on near-term and mid-term improvements – These investments will enhance the neighborhood’s image and build stronger market demand that, in turn, will lead to more private investment. Incremental change will be most effective in reaching long-term goals.

Near-Term Priority Project
1. Area-wide sidewalk gaps
2. Loop Road Demonstration Project
   - Include Lawrence between So. 36th and So. 38th Street
   - Include So. 36th between Lawrence and Pine Street
3. 38th and Steele Street Intersection Improvements
4. South Cedar, 35th and 40th Streets extended to the west on existing rights-of-way to South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail
5. Tacoma Mall Transit Center, Design Phase I
   - Select a location closer to the center of the neighborhood, future Sounder station and Water Flume Trail to support residents, employees, and visitors.

Mid-Term Priority Projects
1. Intersection improvements on 38th Street from Cedar to South Tacoma Way
2. Loop Road, Phase 2
3. Transit Center, Phase 2
4. Sounder Rail Station and commuter parking garage
Mr. Barnett -

It was nice to meet you yesterday and thank you for the tour of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood. It is clear that you have put a lot of time and effort into creating a growth vision for the area.

As I noted yesterday, my client has substantial concerns with, and opposition to, the direct impacts of the proposed connectivity plans affecting the Michaels Plaza shopping area. They are particularly concerned with the proposal to establish a new road connecting Pine St. to South Tacoma Way at what would be considered 37th Street. This would effectively cut through the middle of this private property and would have a substantially negative impact on this property.

All the documents I have reviewed in the August 11, 2017, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan & EIS Appendices seem to suggest that other streets could possibly be designated in this area, effectively cutting up the property in a north/south direction as well. This part of the proposal was not discussed yesterday. My client would also oppose adoption of such amendments to the code.

I would be interested in meeting with you to discuss the proposal as it stands, and suggest amendments that would eliminate my client’s opposition to the proposal.

Please let me know of your availability.

Thank you,

Charlie Brown
You've just received a new submission to your Comment form- Participate Page.

Submitted Information:

Name
Jon Castle

Email
jon.castle@comcast.net

Comment
It is my hope that ADEQUATE on-site PARKING and STREET SIZES are INCLUDED in the plan for increased population density!!! That, in my view, would be at least one parking spot for each anticipated adult...PLUS consideration for visitors. Also, street overpasses to accommodate added pedestrian traffic, to and from planned facilities. It is not fair to current property owners to impinge upon their existing spaces.
September 11, 2017

TO: Chair Stephen Wamback and Tacoma Planning Commissioners
FROM: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Coalition of Private Property Owners
RE: Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan - Public Comment

As private property owners in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood, we have been tracking the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan for the past 18 months and are submitting the following comments for your consideration as you deliberate your recommendations to the City Council.

1. **Connectivity** – This issue remains the greatest concern of private property owners in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood. The proposed connectivity process and requirements are a burden with real consequences to private property owners.
   - Any connectivity requirements and/or plan should be designed and implemented at the time of major redevelopment. Major development should continue to be defined as new development and alterations, that within a two-year period, exceed 50% of the value of existing development or structures. Threshold and changes to pedestrian and bicycle support standards should not be modified in any way to make such requirements more stringent than current existing requirements throughout Tacoma, including in the Tacoma Mall Sub Area. In addition, it is paramount that tenant improvements – both internal as well as external façade improvements -- be exempted from the threshold triggers. Tenant improvements are necessary to attract quality tenants, and façade improvements improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood. A private property owner should not be penalized for improving their property.

   - The burden of the proposed incremental requirement for through-connections across private property at intervals of 150’ outweighs the benefits – wait for the time when major redevelopment takes place for through-connections to be built in context with new buildings or site layout. Any required through-connections, including enhanced through-connections, should be completed in a manner that is least impactful to the division of existing parcels.

   Existing large parcels can be a benefit when recruiting larger scale medical facilities, corporate operations such as the newly announced Amazon headquarters requirement, and public facilities including governmental offices.

   The proposed code changes provide connectivity requirements that would essentially subdivide properties into a grid of smaller development parcels and eliminate flexibility for future site planning.

2. **Neighborhood Infrastructure** - We are excited about the prospect of approximately $125 million in infrastructure improvements that could be made in our neighborhood over the next 20-25 years. These changes will make a noticeable improvement in the neighborhood’s image, and in turn, we hope will bring greater economic stability to those doing business in the area. We support the City’s investment in new sidewalks, street lights, street trees, stormwater drainage
system improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian connections to South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail. We urge the City to:

- Use existing public Right-of-Way for the proposed Loop Road bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- Extend South Cedar, 35th and 40th Streets westerly to connect the neighborhood with South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail.

3. Regional Transportation Improvements – We encourage City leadership and working with other agencies to bring more transportation options to the Tacoma Mall neighborhood discussed in the Subarea Plan and EIS

- Additional I-5 interchange that would take pressure off the 38th St. / Sprague intersection.
- New Sound Transit train station nearby to serve the neighborhood.
- Pierce Transit station located more centrally within the neighborhood and adding express bus service.

4. SEPA - The City’s decision to complete an upfront Environmental Impact Statement is of considerable value to private property owners and is a tangible benefit that will help both existing businesses when they wish to expand their facilities and new development coming to the area.

5. Focus on near-term and mid-term improvements – City funded investments will enhance the neighborhood’s image and build stronger market demand that, in turn, will lead to more private investment. Incremental change will be most effective in reaching long-term goals.

Signed - Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Coalition of Private Property Owners:

Paul Etsekson, Active Investment Co., LLC  Ray Velkers, First Western Properties
David A. Shammas, McDonald’s USA  Art Redford, Michael’s Plaza
Glenda Hollenbeck, McDonald’s USA  Jack Menashe, CAP Associates
Dave Dearth, Dobler Management Co Inc  Dr. J Antonio Garcia, CAP Associates
Dennis L. King, NEI Investors, LLC  John Burkhalter, CAP Associates
Dr. David Clark, Bioclear Matrix  Stan Huse, CAP Associates
Patrick L. Hughes Sr., Hughes Group  Brent Norris, CAP Associates
Valerie Fyalka-Munoz, KAMG Management Corp.  John W. Brekke, Cedar Plaza Partners, LLC
Jay Petersen, KAMG Management Corp.  Eleanor Brekke, Cedar Plaza Partners, LLC
Andy Jessberger, First Western Properties  Phyllis Ohrbeck, Coronet Apartments
Byron Richmond, Action Business Furniture

cc: Elliott Barnett, Planner
Hello Elliott,

I just finished reading the Subarea Plan (just about every page) and briefly checked out the Appendices (I could not get the font to enlarge so I just skimmed it to prevent eye strain). First, I thoroughly enjoyed reading the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan. It was easy to read, well laid out, and the colors and graphics are relevant and pleasing to the eye.

What I like about the Subarea Plan:

- The emphasis of a Triple Bottom Line approach (very nice) which was explained well and makes one realize the City of Tacoma cares about their residents.
- You know my favorite part of the Subarea Plan is the Loop Road. This is going to be a key factor in bringing the neighborhood 'together' as well as providing a tourist/exercise attraction if art and green spaces are liberally placed. Although, being a 'park head', I would have like to see more green spaces in the long-term plan.
- Five minute walkable neighborhoods: well defined and another favorite attribute of the Subarea Plan. This, along with the Loop Road, will make the neighborhoods very desirable places to live. Even employees will be able to enjoy walking outside in the fresh air at lunch...easy access to food and easy access to mid-day walking to increase health and make one's day more engaging.
- Under Internal Loop Road and Parks, it was mentioned that residents will be able to participate in art and art placement - excellent way to retain residents, create partnerships and increase human and social capital.
- Expanding the RGC’s boundaries to include the section(s) by South Tacoma Way is a great idea and will expand the tax base for the neighborhood.
- The Chapter 3 Goals and Actions Table is great - easy to follow and use as a resource while looking through the Subarea Plan. The only thing that would make the chart better would be to add the page numbers where each goal or action is addressed in the Subarea Plan.
- A lot of the goals were making me smile: CV-2, CV-4, CV-6, CV-22, CV-23, SP-2, SP-9; as well as Actions CV-11, CV-13, CV-15, SP-10.
- Another great tool is Table IMPL-3 for Priority Early Implementation Actions and Prioritization Criteria. Great job.
- The Subarea Plan mentions that it will work to prevent displacement of current residents; and, Community Development Corporations and Community Land Trusts are mentioned in Chapter 11 for implementation tools. If I lived in he neighborhood, my biggest concern with the Subarea Plan would be - will I be able to afford to stay in my home/residence once new/re-development beings or is complete? Establishing
Community Land Trusts may be a great way to make sure current residents are not displaced.

What I would like to see:

- In the very beginning (page 1-4), the importance of the neighborhood as a watershed for the South Tacoma Aquifer should be emphasized more. Yes, the area is a RGC, but is also a main supplier of ground water and needs updated to green standards, which benefits everyone connected to the Tacoma watershed.

- The Local Improvement District (LID) idea sounds like something a neighborhood should be able to vote on. I understand the need to impose an LID; however, if I was a senior citizen that owned my home, maybe I would be more likely to support an LID IF my lot could be grandfathered in without the new tax with some sort of restriction when the homeowner sells (so that the new owner picks up the lot’s LID tab). I'm not sure how to work something like this out. I just know that a lot of senior citizens are on a fixed income. Of course they want improvements, but they cannot afford it nor should they be denied access to them.

Questions:

- Goal H-2: this discussed AMI percentages pertaining to new housing. Do current figures for the neighborhoods match what the plan proposes? For example, 25% new housing for households earning 80% PC AMI & 12.5% at 50% of AMI or less - would these percentages be able to support the residents in need now that currently meet the AMI's presented?

There are a couple typos. I noted this one: page 1-10 Paragraph Header "City Council and City Commissions" is not in Bold like the other headings. Also, I noticed some of the extra information on the left side of the pages (which I enjoyed reading) had grammar errors or did not end in a complete sentence (when I looked for the rest of the sentence on the next page it was not present or by then I had forgot to look for the ending).

Regarding the EIS, no action is not good. I didn't have time to read every page, but what I did read made perfect sense.

I hope this input is useful. Thank you for all the hard work you put into the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan.

Best Regards,

Kristine Coman
September 14, 2017

Mr. Elliott Barnett, Senior Planner
City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services
474 Market Street
Tacoma, WA 98402

Subject: Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan – Comments on Draft Plan

Dear Mr. Barnett:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Tacoma Subarea Plan. The County is pleased to have had the opportunity to be a partner in the Subarea Plan development and continues to be very interested in the progress of the Plan. The County supports the general directions of this planning effort but with one specific objection regarding a proposed road crossing the County’s Annex Campus.

Request for Removal of S. Wright Avenue Future Road Alignment

The draft Plan shows an extension of S. Wright Avenue between South 35th Street and South Tacoma Way, as shown on Figure I-5 of the Draft Plan, which bisects the existing Annex building and Annex campus. The County objects to this proposal of the Plan and specifically requests that the connection be removed from the County’s Annex campus location.

The County has expressed concerns and objections regarding this proposed road on several occasions. We expressed our concern and need for coordination in our letter of August 30, 2016 and later registered specific objections to the road during regular stakeholder meetings over the last year—specifically in our one-on-one stakeholders meeting with the City in the fall of 2016; in testimony before the Planning Commission on January 15, 2017; and most recently, on September 6, 2017.

The proposed road connection would conflict with the existing Annex Building, which will be retained for the foreseeable future, and with the possible future use of the Annex Campus. A required road across the site would seriously impair the ability to use the Annex campus site.

The proposed road is shown as a Bike Boulevard in Figure T-3 in the Draft Plan. As a Bike Boulevard, the road does not advance the overall connectivity scheme or creating of the street grid as envisioned of the Subarea Plan. It is a 10-15% grade road that is far from bike friendly. There are better grades and access alternatives on Sprague Avenue which is used more by cyclists. The Bike Boulevard also does not appear to be a priority as it does not show up on the Near and Mid or Long term priority maps as shown in Figures T-12, 13 and 14 in the draft Plan.
For the above reasons, the County stridently and respectfully requests the removal of the proposed connection from the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan.

**Other Recommendations**

**Transit and Transportation**

We recommend a direct transit route between the Tacoma Hub and the Tacoma Mall Subarea by way of South Tacoma Way. We see this connection as critical to serving employees who live in unincorporated Pierce County or outlying cities who may use the train to commute into Tacoma.

**Parks and Greenspace**

We recommend the Plan include the enhancement of existing park facilities or the addition of new park and or open space in close proximity to the Annex site. This will enhance the employee experience by providing areas for the employees to get outside during lunch times and breaks.

**County Support for Plan Elements**

The County supports many of the elements of the Subarea Plan that will benefit the Tacoma Mall area and the County Annex site. The County appreciates that the City provided the opportunity for the County to financially contribute to the Subarea Plan work and thereby expand the scope of analysis so that the Annex Campus is included in the Plan area and agrees that the campus is an asset as a major employer as is recognized in the Shared Prosperity section of the Plan (SP-17). The County supports:

1. The Loop Road and improved pedestrian crossing of South 38th Street;
2. The Green Streets program;
3. The relocation of the transit station, which will make it much closer to the Annex;
4. The Storm Management plan and use of Low Impact Development techniques; and,
5. The proposed zoning for the Annex Campus.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan. We look forward to participating in the remainder of the planning process.

Sincerely,

Bruce F. Dammeier
Pierce County Executive

C: Bret Carlstad, Director, Facilities Management
Dennis Hanberg, Director, Planning and Public Works
Rick Tackett, Real Property Specialist, Facilities Management
Sean Gaffney, Planning Manager, Planning and Public Works
Mr. Barnett,

I wanted to provide you with these written comments for consideration as they pertain to your Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan Project. My company has had an investment in the success of the Tacoma Mall Area since 1973. We currently have 803 apartment units and the largest vacant land parcel within the Subarea, our commitment totals over 125 million dollars. I very much appreciate yours, and the City’s intensive interest, and commitment in the area the last couple of years.

There is very much to like within the plan, and also some major problems, in my opinion the good and bad are as follows:

1. The new I-5 off-ramp to Tacoma Mall Boulevard is great.

2. The Loop is a great way to create a sense of community and identity, but it does not need to be so heavy handed. In order to not chop existing businesses in half and punish longstanding investors in the area, the Loop can look very green and snake along in some areas, and look more urban (along 38th) with 90 degree turns and brick pavers in others.

3. I have a 136 unit apartment on Cedar St between S47th and S45th, I spent 300k to run the storm line three blocks to S Pine ST and then more to the City for the right to dump storm water into there system, and then a bill every month. The threshold for conforming to the new Subarea Plan should be a 50% reconstruction not 15%, one medium fire and I throw my previous infrastructure investment out the window and I'm installing new infiltration lines, no disrespect but ten years later the City will be scratching there head wondering why there is no Affordable Housing, and I don't mean low income.

4. The Plan calls for it's highest density housing closest to the Mall, this makes total sense, but the quickest way to achieve the goal is not to draw a line around the largest undeveloped parcel (ours) and label it a Proposed Park. Large parcel developments can have great opportunities for open spaces, urban plazas with retail mixes, mid rise buildings stuffed on small infill lot's only have so much appeal. This proposed park site should be on the Old School Site already publicly owned and more central to the Subarea and it's housing.

Thank you for your consideration, Elliott, you have been a pleasure to work with and get to know, and you are a great ambassador of the City. There has got to be a way to achieve some of the great ideas in the plan, without crushing the very people that have worked hard to survive and promote the area.

Dave Dearth
President or Asset Development
Dobler Management Co Inc
September 13, 2017

Mr. Barnett
RE: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan Project

Dear Mr. Barnett,

I want to thank you for the time and energy you have invested in the city’s proposed future development of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood.

My management company, Dobler Management Company, Inc. and my various investment LLCs have been involved in the Tacoma Mall area since 1983. I have managed multi-family properties, renovated and built new properties in the Mall vicinity and currently own over 850 apartment units. I take pride in producing affordable, safe, highly attractive housing for my residents. The Mall area is a working class neighborhood with very solid people looking for well maintained housing. I provide that for them. I have invested heavily. My office is on 47th Street. I see a lot in the happenings around the vicinity and know the community well.

Attributes of the development proposal are the new road off of Tacoma Mall Boulevard and the green “loop” road. But I do have concerns about the condemnation of property, the storm system and roads.

We need walkability. I agree with the concept of the loop. But, you do not need to force the loop into developed properties. The loop can stay on current city streets and be effective. Use what we already have, but augment with landscaping, lights, plantings and rest stops. Do not force the loop into new developments either without first utilizing the existing streets and sidewalks. A walk way in the middle of a development is not exactly positive in the neighborhood.

The schools in South Tacoma are weak. Families do not live here and won’t live here until the schools are academically attractive. My residents have babies, but leave to better school districts once the children are school age. This will not change. It hasn’t for fifty years. The city should expect a diverse, but younger resident base or childless base in its population demographic. Although I always have play areas designated in my properties, they are only used by toddlers. A large proposed park, which has been depicted on the City’s plan is actually proposed on my property. In a neighborhood with few children, a large park will not bring families. It will just bring crime, gangs and homeless people. Concentrate on attractive smaller green areas within the area. The current head start school is a far better choice, since it is flat, can handle court surfaces and is an underutilized government property. It will be less expensive to develop than a hillside with double the land value. I have no intention of selling my commercial site for a park.
Crime has been and continues to be a huge issue in the Mall area. Stop the townhome developments. They are low quality, low density structures and are the tenements of Mid-Tacoma. No one should enter their home via an alley for a front entrance. If the city continues allowing these substandard developments, the crime will never be contained. We need alley ways closed off to thru traffic. We need our streets, especially the arterials as our main traveling roads. If all people, vehicles, etc. are in the open, visibility will deter crime. Remove the hiding areas like the alleys. Do not require walkways and connectivity through the residential developments. Use the perimeter streets and sidewalks. Otherwise you will only increase the crime in the residential communities.

I have concerns about the proposed storm system I agree whole heartedly with utilizing rain and containing water, but I have concerns about how the city implements the program. I have paid handsomely for hooking up to the city’s storm system. I cannot reconvert to a contained system on sites that are already developed. It would be far too expensive. I also have sites with internal storm systems. Currently, I have a 100% contained storm system at Tudor Village Apartments on Pine Street. I am being billed as though the water leaves the site, I am not happy about this at all. I have incurred the cost and maintenance for the internal system, yet am also paying full storm fees. I highly doubt this will be well received by property owners once they see the true situation here.

In regards to any and all road improvements planned. Good luck. I will believe it, when I see it. The roads in the Mall area are the utmost embarrassment to the city. The city had personally neglected the area and is a major reason for the poor homeownership in the vicinity. In the thirty-four years of working in the Mall area the city has never paved a street. Never, I have paved more streets in the area than the city has since the roads’ inception. I do not believe the drawn plans will ever happen. But, by some remarkable situation, if the city ever addresses the roads give us what we need, main arterials, sidewalks, lighting and most importantly, safety. We cannot walk, drive or ride with dark streets, missing sidewalks, potholes, etc. If you incorporate landscaping make sure it is maintained too. In fact in order to be successful. I suggest you start with the road improvements first. Then we might believe the other improvements could be a reality.

Thank you again for your work on the Mall area.

Kathryn J. Dobler
Broker
Engel, Dennis [mailto:EngelD@wsdot.wa.gov]
Sent: Monday, September 11, 2017 11:52 AM
To: Barnett, Elliott
Cc: Alam, Nazmul; Sutmiller, Forest
Subject: RE: PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT SUBAREA PLAN AVAILABLE

Here is WSDOT Olympic Region Planning’s comments on the Subarea Plan, the EIS will be sent separately.

- Page T-27 project 2 – The title says “I-5 Direct Access/HOV Ramp-Phase 1”, this is the first I have seen HOV. I suggest dropping the HOV from the title and description. During the study, we could look at HOV as an option, but that is not something in the previous study.
- Page T-34 I-5 Direct Access Ramp, first paragraph – plan says “through a formal scoping and project development process with WSDOT”, this should say “through a Feasibility Study process with WSDOT”. The original study was a Feasibility Study in 2001. We currently have funding to redo this study.
- Page T-34 I-5 Direct Access Ramp, last paragraph – says “initial design and permitting studies (known as an Interchange Justification Report)”. I am assuming this project is the Feasibility Study, we are not doing the Interchange Justification Report with the current funding. The Interchange Justification Report would be the next step before right-of-way and design phases.

Please let me know if you have any questions or want to discuss these comments.
Here are comments from the WSDOT Olympic Region Planning on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement:

- Page P-26, 2nd paragraph, 2nd bullet – suggest removing “HOV” from the proposed project. This has not been an HOV access in the past, the HOV part could be looked at during the current study.
- Page T-37 Figure 3.6.7 Study Intersections – Not sure why the SB I-5 off and on ramp intersection with 38th street was not studied, but yet the intersection on the east side of the freeway is included in the analysis for existing and future LOS impacts.
- Page T-30 Figure 3.6.10 Collisions and T-31 Figure 3.6.11 Pedestrian + Bicycle Collisions – use Section 409 disclaimer –

- Page T-35 Appendix B, project 2 Description – change to “Feasibility study for new direct access freeway off ramp”
- Page T-35 Appendix B project 6 – I assume this is related to project 2, Suggest add This will implement results from Project 2. I would also remove the statement “It will directly connect to a new or relocated multi-modal transit center.” The location of the new transit center is not confirmed, I thought one option is over on Pine, this ramp would not connect to Pine St.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this DEIS, if you have any questions or need clarification on any of these please let me know.

Dennis Engel, P.E.
Olympic Region Planning Manager
Wellness Coordinator
(360) 357-2651
(253) 381-2673 Cell
Hi Elliott Barnett, the total plan for the neighborhood limits of this project looks good (actually great). However, those of us in the southwest quadrant of the study area are not receiving any benefit from this master plan. More specifically, Puget Sound Street looks like a rural road (and a rough one at that) rather than a city street. I own 4 houses and a 6 plex from 4334 to 4350 South Puget Sound and the street in front of these properties is a disgrace. Attached are some photos of this roadway. I also own Cascade Park Gardens, an 85 bed memory care assisted living facility around the corner at 4347 South Union Ave.

There was discussion of an improvement LID for sharing costs with the city along South Puget Sound Street several years ago that was disbanded after the city funding was not available. Additionally, there are many children living in this area that have no place to play except in the street (and they do). This is an area hit by crime in various forms, including gun shots, fires, vandalism, robberies, drug dealing, and domestic violence. Providing streets with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and playgrounds in this area won't solve all the problems but it will go a long way in making this a better neighborhood in keeping with the intent of this planning program. How about extending the bicycle path discussed to include South Puget Sound Street.

I will be out of town on September 6 so cannot be at the public hearing. I request that the information herein be included.

Thank you for your consideration.

Donald L Hansen  4339 South Union Ave. Tacoma WA 98409
- Transit Connection from Tacoma Dome to the Sub-Area Plan Area
- Delete road through County Annex Campus at 35th
- I-5 Access VIA S 48th ST TO Tacoma Mall (NORTH & SOUTH)
- Signal Coordination S-56th ST.
- I-5 Direct Access/301
  Ramp → Need to Reconsider & Wrong Concept.
Dog Park • Forest by Apex

Where do kids play?
- Developments don’t provide areas
- or yards

Skate Park • at Lincoln Park

De-pave & Trees are great
• Need to address maintenance

Require more (or only) evergreen trees

CV: LOCAL
1) IDENTITY

CV: ARTS/CULTURE

CV: MORE SERVICES
CONVENIENCE

CV: NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP
on Implementation

CV: SAFETY

CV: IMPLEMENT
OPEN SPACE/PARKS
September 14, 2017

Dear City of Tacoma,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft of the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan. The Puyallup Watershed Active Transportation Community of Interest is a community-based coalition working to build access to safe, healthy, and affordable active transportation options for all. We see the Tacoma Mall neighborhood as a critical gap in our community’s active transportation network and hope that the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan will help ensure that everyone who lives, learns, works, and plays in the Tacoma Mall neighborhood can safely travel through and within the neighborhood –whether they are on foot, on a bike or skateboard, or in a car or bus.

We are very impressed with the strong vision set forth for the Tacoma Mall Subarea in this plan and commend staff for their work in crafting it. We are in support of many pieces of this plan and would like to highlight specific strengths below.

**Complete Streets Approach**
The Tacoma Mall neighborhood presents a significant barrier for people travelling on foot or by bike. Whether they are headed to destinations within the neighborhood or it’s on their route to other parts of the City, this area is consistently cited as significant area of concern. We are in support of taking a Complete Streets approach as existing streets are maintained and redesigned and when new streets are built, including the new multi-modal inner Loop Road. Designing and constructing Complete Streets will significantly increase walking and bicycling access within this neighborhood and to the larger transportation network.

**Connect the Street Network**
The current conditions, with large blocks that lack public through access, inhibit people’s ability and desire to walk, bicycle, and skate for transportation purposes. These large blocks also exacerbate congestion on the few arterials that span this neighborhood, which creates more hazardous conditions for vulnerable road users. New connections are essential for the development of a multi-modal, layered transportation system. We support the creation of a new Connectivity Requirement to extend and enhance the existing grid network by creating smaller, more walkable blocks to provide easier access to various destinations.

**Transportation Mode Shift to Walking, Bicycling, and Transit**
This plan sets forth specific and formidable goals for shifting the mode split away from single occupancy vehicle trips to more sustainable modes. Enhancements such as investing in the pedestrian and bicycle networks, encouraging the expansion of transit and transit oriented development and implementing parking management strategies will have a significant impact on how Tacoma Mall Subarea residents and visitors will navigate these streets.

**Identify Dedicated Funding**
We are pleased to see a number of potential opportunities to dedicate funding to build the ambitious list of projects stated in this plan. We encourage the City to begin to explore opportunities to build dedicated funding sources and engage with partners to begin designing and constructing this vision.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft plan. This plan takes a multi-faceted approach to mapping out what it will take to build a vibrant, livable and diverse space! We look forward to seeing this plan progress.

Sincerely,

Liz Kaster
Active Transportation COI Manager
Puyallup Watershed Initiative
www.pwi.org/activetransportation

Safe, healthy & affordable active transportation for all
You've just received a new submission to your Comment form- Participate Page.

Submitted Information:

Name
kathy Kelly

Email
writeeveryday@comcast.net

Comment
1. Please, consider aesthetics. Make it a beautiful area where a citizen will feel good when they go there. Since it is a busy shopping area. As it is now, there is stress and tension as the traffic congestion during holiday shopping, where it could possibly be a peaceful enjoyable experience at beautiful times of the year.

2. I would like to see more vegetarian restaurants. Thank you, and good luck with the project.
September 13, 2017

Elliott Barnett, Associate Planner
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, Washington 98402
tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org

Re: Draft Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan

Dear Mr. Barnett:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has been a fixture in the Tacoma Mall Subarea for 54 years. Our offices at 3130 S. 38th Street opened in 1963 and serve residents and community businesses, as well as provide a local employment base. The PSE property is made up of several parcels totaling approximately 7.28 acres bounded by SE 38th Street to the north, S. Lawrence Street to the west, S. 40th Street to the south, and S. Cedar Street to the east (See Attachment).

The Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan provides a vision for the subarea as a place for people to live, work and shop. As a public service provider, our business does not fit neatly into most long-range plans or land use code provisions, but provides an important benefit and service to the community. PSE’s desire is to remain in our current location for years to come and continue to serve the Tacoma community. We appreciate efforts by the City of Tacoma to foster the need to accommodate service providers such as PSE.

Based on PSE’s review of the Draft Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan, we have the following comments:

1. Figure LU-1: *Existing land uses in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood* identifies the PSE property use as Warehousing. There are multiple uses on the property that comprise the utility service. These include: office, warehouse, communications, and service yard. These uses are interconnected and function together as one property. The use charts in 13.06.300D classify the office uses on the property as Permitted and the warehouse uses as Conditional Uses. PSE requests that all uses on the property be classified as Permitted.

2. Per Figure LU-6: *Proposed Zoning*, the subarea proposal includes split zoning the existing PSE property, with the northern half zoned as UCX 75-120 and the
southern half zoned as UCX Transition 65-85. PSE supports the desire to provide transition in terms of height variations as long as the uses on the property continue to be regulated collectively as if the site was zoned the same.

3. Proposed code section 13.12.090 addresses large parcel connectivity plans. This requirement applies to development sites at least one acre in size which are located within a block that is 8 acres or larger in size. The block in which the PSE property is located is over 8 acres in size, so this provision would apply to the PSE property if the thresholds in subsection C are met.

The code section does not address application of the connectivity plan requirement in cases where there is multiple property ownership within the block. If the retail property on the corner of S. 38th Street and S. Cedar Street (parcel # 9710001651) meets the redevelopment thresholds for the connectivity plan, is connectivity now required through the PSE property, which makes up the remainder of the block? Due to the nature of the PSE service use, maintaining secure access and limiting public entrance on the property is a necessity.

4. Similar to the comment above, the proposed revisions to code section 13.06.512 would require additional pedestrian walkways if an addition or alteration exceeding 15 percent of the value of the existing development were proposed. Public access is provided to the front of the office building, as this is where the public service function of the site is located. However, additional access to other areas of the site by the public is not warranted and violates security requirements of PSE facilities. Particularly access required to attract the public with amenities such as lighting, street furniture, and landscaping.

5. As shown in Subarea Plan Figure T-3. Subarea Complete Streets typologies, S. Lawrence Street is designated as a Signature Street: Loop Road and S. 40th Street is designated as an Urban Residential/Green Road. It is not clear by information and cross sections provided whether these street typologies require additional right-of-way or will have impacts on adjacent properties.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Should you have questions or would like to discuss these comments or other aspects of the Subarea Plan further, please feel free to contact me at 425-462-3821 or kerry.kriner@pse.com.

Sincerely,

Kerry Kriner, AICP
Senior Land Planner
Puget Sound Energy Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Property
Good morning! I wanted to provide some comments on the proposed sub-area plan for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood. Thank you for your attention to this section of our city.

I don't live in this neighborhood, but I had the opportunity to walk around with Beverly Bowen-Bennett and to doorbell the area when I was running for Mayor. I was surprised at how few amenities were available--especially open space for the children. Frankly, the area will become blighted if there are not some changes.

It should be no surprise that areas planned for density and for affordability attract young families, but there appear to be no provisions made for the children of these families. Even their local schools are across the freeway and some distance away. The logical open space and potential play area is Madison School. I would strongly urge the City to work with TPS to make grassy areas and the playground available now, and to eventually work with Metro Parks to develop a park and play area there.

In addition, I suggest the City consider changing some of the streets in the residential area to one-way streets. Many residents only have a single garage, and therefore park a second car in the driveway or street. That makes the streets very crowded, and unsightly. One-way streets might allow for more flow through the area, and might look better.

Anything the City can do--resurface the most damaged streets, clean up the alleys--will help make the residents feel more positive about their neighborhood, and may help install more pride in the area. From there you may see gardens started and lawns cared for--if there is a start toward something more attractive. And I wholeheartedly support not having front doors on alleys--we can do better.

Thank you for working on this project. I hope you can move the area in a positive direction, and make the neighborhood more nurturing for the children and adults who live there.

Regards,

Evelyn Fielding Lopez
Thank you, Elliott. The process is really complex and quite onerous. A recorded legal document and going back through the same approval process if the connectivity plan needs to be changed adds so much time and money. Designing a connectivity plan at the time of major redevelopment allows the property owner to design connections in context with the new development rather than guessing at what might be best, where buildings will be located, footprints, etc. To design a site plan with the constraints of a pre-determined connectivity plan seems to be the tail wagging the dog. At least from a developer/private property owner’s point of view.
Comments on the subarea plan for the Tacoma Mall area:

I was happy to see so many different aspects of quality of life taken into account – and I have several concerns:

Goal H-2: I see that there are some percentages for the target amount of low-income housing, and that is great – but I wonder how those compare to the incomes of current residents (i.e. are there currently less than 25% of residents low income and less than 12.5% very low income?) Are the proposed percentages sufficient so that there will not be displacement of current residents? These types of plans always speed up gentrification, of large concern to many in Tacoma, so I am just questioning whether the current proposed amount of low-income housing will mitigate those concerns. I see there is the intention to work with housing partners (Action H-8) but since there are no numbers there it is hard to see if that is sufficient to keep people in their homes.

Goal CV-3: I also see that there is a plan for increased development and new businesses in the area – is there a plan to prioritize locally-owned businesses vs. national chains so that the neighborhood can continue to reflect the interests/ambitions of residents vs. which corporations are interested in this demographic?

Goal CV-1: I have heard many times of efforts like this that ‘renovate’ neighborhoods and then give them a new name being compared to colonization – I think it’s worth examining and working to ensure that the name that is chosen is actually a name that comes from the existing community, rather than one that would be attractive to others looking to come into a community like this will be after all this work – It’s always important to ensure that the process has authentic community engagement (it looks like you have attempted that, it’s hard to know who actually showed up and how representative they were of the neighborhood), and the naming process is important.

Goal CV-8: I see that affordable food sources are top priorities for the community – we have been working on a parallel research project with the community in S. Tacoma focused on this and should have results and an action plan by mid-2018 – there may be opportunities for partnerships there.

Thanks for all the work to put together such a comprehensive plan and for the opportunity to provide comments!
You've just received a new submission to your Comment form- Participate Page.

Submitted Information:

Name
William Towey

Email
toweywf10@gmail.com

Comment
Affordable housing should be provided so that 15% of total mall area housing stock is available at 50% AMI.
September 11, 2017

Planning Commission
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402

Re: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Plan—Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Comments

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for collaborating with the Health Department to develop this important sub-area plan. Tacoma Mall Neighborhood is home to a diverse, highly transient, and low-income population. Typically, residents experience worse health outcomes and shorter life expectancy than in other areas of Tacoma.

Last year, the Board of Health adopted a Health-in-all-Policies Resolution that encourages local jurisdictions to consider health in all decisions. The sub-area plan demonstrates this approach. We have partnered with the City of Tacoma and other stakeholders over the past 30 months to infuse health into each decision-making step. We engaged diverse populations through non-traditional methods to understand their livability needs and to support policies to improve the community.

Many approaches proposed in this plan would help to achieve more walkable neighborhoods, including:

- A playable loop road.
- The Madison school and community hub.
- Tree canopy and green infrastructure, etc.

To address involuntary displacement, we empowered local residents to champion the implementation of the plan, while welcoming new comers to join build a healthy neighborhood. Maintaining the current level of affordable housing units in this neighborhood is crucial.

The neighborhood affordability target performance measures in the Housing Chapter are too low. According to the American Community Survey’s five-year estimates (2011-2015), about 90% of the current housing stock is renting less than $1,250 per month and 25% renting less than $750. To help minimize the adverse impact of gentrification, we strongly encourage the City to maintain closer to the current percentage of affordable housing within the neighborhood for low and very low-income households, earning 80% and 50% of the Average Median Income respectively.
With the above comments incorporated, I encourage you to recommend this draft plan and draft EIS to the Tacoma City Council for adoption and future implementation. Once implemented, the Tacoma Mall sub-area community will be a healthier community for all who live, learn, work and play there.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Anthony L-T Chen, MD, MPH
Director of Health
Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan and DEIS
Editorial Comments from Core Staff Committee Member
Amy Pow, Principal Planner
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
September 12, 2017

DEIS
Recommend giving this document a good proof-read to ensure:

- All information is complete, particularly references to Figures and Tables.
- Any action numbers referred in this DEIS align well with the final draft plan’s.

Some obvious examples include:

- P. H-3: The 2nd sentence in the second paragraph under Housing Cost is incomplete.
- P. H-4: The 3rd sentence in the third paragraph under Affordable Housing is incomplete.
- P. H-12: Cross-check Action H-9 referred in the 2nd paragraph with the revised Action H-9 in the draft plan to ensure alignment. From a public health perspective, we support the original policy language which calls for “maintaining a no net loss of the current stock of affordable housing”. In fact, the City should encourage the rehabilitation of the current stock to ensure that those currently relying on these units would not be displaced.
- Recommend using a smaller font for footnotes on P. T-6, 11 and 12, similar to that of footnote 4 on P. T-20. Ensure consistency throughout.
- P. T-11: Footnote 2 seems incomplete.
- P. PS-26, Figure 3.7.4: Expect some concentric circles or “walkshed” in light green (if network analysis is used) shown on this figure to show where the open space gap is, as mentioned in the text on P. PS-18. The school site should also be shown as “hatched blue” on the map/figure.
- Similarly for Figures 3.7.2 and 3.7.3 on P. PS-24 and PS-25, not all items shown on map legends can be found on the maps/figures. Readers typically read the map in conjunction with the legend.

Draft Plan

- P. 1-8: Add the word “Department” after “Health” in the title.
- P. UF-4, Figure UF-1: Consider adding the subarea plan boundary. It’s misleading to show a huge green area south of Madison, as if this subarea plan area has a huge open space.
- P. UF-7 and UF-8: Outline the loop road would be useful. Add map legend to annotate the use of different colors.
- P. UF-13: Check if the Figures numbers (UF-9 through UF-11) in the last paragraph are correct?
- P. UF-14: It would give readers a better orientation if street names are added to those Figures.
- P.LU-5: Would the word “address” be a better choice than “reflect” in the opening sentence of the 2nd paragraph?
- P.H-8, Action H-5: The paragraph under Action H-5 seems out of place.
- P.H-8, Action H-7: See TPCHD Letter to Planning Commission dated September 11, 2017 Re. Comments about “maintaining 25% and 12.5% affordable housing units for the entire neighborhood (vs. solely for new housing development) for low (80% AMI or less) and very low income (50% AMI or less) households respectively are NOT sufficient”.
• P.T-7, first paragraph: Recommend changing the last two words from “business health” to “businesses and health”.
• P. T-10, Figure T-3: Add the term “Complete Streets” after “Signature Street” to denote the Loop Road.
• P. CV-12, Action CV-21: Check reference to Photo 8. Where is the photo?
• P. IMPL-4 Side Bar: The last paragraph is incomplete. Recommend replacing the last word “and” with “open their arms to welcome new comers to jointly build a healthy neighborhood”.
To: Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division

I was unable to attend the September 6 meeting, but still would like to comment for the record.

- I believe that all buildings for human habitation should be required to have green space available for its residence. Depending on the size and occupancy of the development a certain amount of green space should be required.
- No front doors facing alleys. It should be required to have all access for residences to be through the front doors. The back doors should be open for green space.
- There should be requirements for a certain amount of housing to be affordable and some senior developments with easy access to the transit system. This can be done through some sort of incentives.
- No buildings should exceed more than six stories and have adequate off street parking to include visitor parking. Depending on the size of the building would determine the amount of parking spaces and visitor parking. Buildings more than six stories should be built downtown.
- It should be required by the developer to pave streets, put in curbs and handicap accessible sidewalks in front of the development to make it a more walkable area.
- As for the environment, it should be required to have all new streets pervious, so water can penetrate into the ground instead of going into the Puget Sound and developers should be required to plant trees, shrubs and other plants because of the air quality during the winter months.

Sincerely,

Heidi White, S Tacoma Resident
Help shape the future of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood

Please provide your comments on any aspect of the draft Plan, code changes and EIS below:

Average Median Income in Tacoma is too high - forcing people to move. Low income affordable housing is not affordable. Building design is too high. Not enough parking. No open space at development (yards)

Comments due by September 15, 2017

Return to:

Elliott Barnett
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98407
tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org
(253) 591-5389
Affordable Housing

Income is too high - too much

Teachers to leave.

Income too high. Affordable housing is
not achievable.

Employment. Housing is too high.

High income enough. Landlord

10per cent. Other governments
(Chiefs)
Draft Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan and EIS

Help shape the future of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood

Please provide your comments on any aspect of the draft Plan, code changes and EIS below:

Environmental

Developers need to incorporate into their designs a 1/20 recovery system for re-use of Brown Water & collection of use of Rain Water

Bob Baumberg

Comments due by September 15, 2017

Return to:

Elliott Barnett
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98407
tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org
(253) 591-5389
Help shape the future of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood

Please provide your comments on any aspect of the draft Plan, code changes and EIS below:

All utilities lines, communications, cable and piping (H2O, sewer, gas) to be underground allowing for growing trees, no damage & a better community appearance. Prevents damage (car crash, signage) & easier to maintain. Can be accomplished when road get fixed.

Comments due by September 15, 2017

Return to:

Elliott Barnett
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98407
tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org
(253) 591-5389
Stakeholder Group Comments and Questions (07/20/17):

City staff asked the stakeholders for input on two topics:

1. How to be effective in engaging broadly with the community?
2. What questions do you need answered to understand the proposals?

We appreciate your help! While our resources are not unlimited we are doing our best to implement the suggestions from the stakeholders. The goal is to get as much community input as possible in order to represent the community’s desires for the neighborhood.

NOTES:

1. How can the City engage as broadly as possible to get input on the draft proposals?

- Make it clear that this is the time to comment
- Not just emails
- Engaging seniors?
- What is the core of the community?
- Do gated communities act as a barrier?
- Use radio and local media
- Offer food at meetings
- Farmers Market
- Flyers in Starbucks, Marlene’s, etc
- Marlene’s – first Sundays
- Share and communicate the vision

Contact Local Organizations:
- Community Arts
- Service Organizations (VFW, Amvets, etc)
- Posts in business windows
2. What questions do you need answered to understand the proposals?

Proposed roadways/streets:
- How will new roads be funded?
- Road patterns are a key/controversial topic
- No roads through Michael’s Plaza

Transportation:
- Why should Warner Street be changed/redesigned?
- Are there transit connections to downtown Tacoma?
- Would one way dead end streets support the goals?
- Why are we having a Loop Road?
- What does the plan say about gated communities?

Stakeholder input:
- Does the proposal address the community’s input?
- Who are the stakeholders – are they only residents and business owners?
- Are we collaborating with the school and parks districts?

Implementation:
- How will implementation of the Plan unfold over time?
- Don’t want the Post Office to go away

Zoning, land use and development:
- How has zoning changed under the proposal?
- It would be useful to make comparisons of the proposed scale to help people to understand what’s being proposed
- No front doors on alleys
- How do we limit the number of townhouses and encourage more high density housing?

Housing:
- What are we doing for senior housing?
Transcript of Proceedings

September 6, 2017

In Re Planning Meeting for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan
1 APPEARANCES

2 Planning Commission:

3 Stephen Wamback, Chair
4 Anna Petersen, Vice Chair
5 Carolyn Edmonds
6 Jeff McInnis
7 Brett Santhuff
8 Andrew Strobel
9 Dorian Waller
10 Jeremy Woolley

11 Also present: Brian Boudet, Planning Manager
12 Lihuang Wung, Senior Planner
13 Elliott Barnett, Associate Planner
14 Jeff Lueders, Audiovisual
15 John Griffith, Admin. Support
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BE IT REMEMBERED that on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 4851 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, Washington, at 5:01 p.m., the following meeting of the City of Tacoma Planning Commission was had, to wit:


CHAIR WAMBACK: All right. I will call to order the City of Tacoma Planning Commission meeting for Wednesday, September 6th. First item is the quorum call. Do we have a quorum present?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, you do.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Great. And I am not going to get used to this speaker system. I feel like I'm talking down a well.

All right. Item B on our agenda, the approval of the agenda and the minutes. We'll start with the agenda for tonight's meeting. Is there a motion that we approve it?

COMMISSION MEMBER: So moved.

CHAIR WAMBACK: And it has been moved.

COMMISSION MEMBER: Second.
CHAIR WAMBACK: And seconded that we approve tonight's agenda.

Is there any discussion on that? All those in favor of approving the agenda say "aye."

MULTIPLE COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All those opposed?

The agenda is approved.

Turning to the minutes. We have two sets of minutes, from the meetings of August 2nd and August 16th. And they are separately stapled in our packets. Very long meetings. Where is -- where is John? Thank you, John. Excellent job on the minutes.

Do we have a motion before us on them?

COMMISSION MEMBER: I move we approve the minutes.

COMMISSION MEMBER: I second.

CHAIR WAMBACK: It's been moved and seconded that we approve the minutes from August 2nd and August 16th. Is there any discussion?

Seeing no indication that anyone wants to discuss, all those in favor say "aye."

MULTIPLE COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All those opposed?

The minutes from August 2nd and August 16th are
Is there anybody else who wishes to testify on the proposed marijuana use buffers code amendment?

All right. So I will just remind everybody that we are accepting public written comments on this topic through close of business, 5 p.m., on Monday, September 11th. There are various locations here where you can find where to send those code amendments. And so with that, I will close this public hearing.

All right. Item D2 on our agenda is the Tacoma Mall neighborhood subarea plan and environmental impact statement. I get to read this same cheat sheet all over again for this one.

So we'll call to order the public hearing on the draft Tacoma Mall neighborhood subarea plan and environmental impact statement. The public hearing is being recorded. Those who wish to testify should sign up on the sign-in sheet at the entrance, the front entrance to the room. The staff report and pertinent materials have been made available for your review there. I had to bring my own backpack for all the materials.

Elliott will be providing a brief presentation.

Say "hi," Elliott.

ELLIOITT BARNETT: Hello, everyone.
CHAIR WAMBACK: After Elliott's presentation, I'll call for oral testimony using the signup sheets. Same as we went through for the previous hearing. Testimony will be limited to three minutes apiece. Your testimony can be brief. It's not necessarily to repeat testimony previously given by other people.

After the testimony is complete, the public hearing record on this item will remain open to accept written comments until Friday, September 15, 2017, at 5 p.m. The Planning Commission will consider all oral and written testimony at subsequent meetings. Elliott will be talking about the schedule. And then we'll be forwarding a recommendation on to the city council. The council may conduct a study session of its own, hold a public hearing, and then make their final decision after that.

So I now call on Elliott Barnett to present this topic. Thank you.

ELLIOTT BARNETT: Thank you, Chair, Planning Commissioners, and everyone who's come here this very hot afternoon. Thank you very much. I'm really happy to see the room filled with people who are here to comment on and share your insights into
this plan for a very important neighborhood of our city. And thanks also to all of the Planning Commissioners for bearing up in this hot weather. I wanted to mention from the very beginning, if you haven't already found the signup sheet over here, this is a good time to go over there and make sure that you get your name on there. That way you'll be called in the order that you signed up. And then at the end, the Chair will make sure that everybody who wants to comment has that opportunity.

I'm going to go through a presentation that provides an overview of this full package of materials. And I want to thank those of you who have seen portions of this presentation before for your patience, which is many of you. And I also want to apologize for turning my back towards the audience because of the setup here. So I will do my best. And thank you.

So the meeting objective or -- of this public hearing is really to ask -- ask everyone -- excuse me -- is really to ask for everyone's input as we're finalizing a package of plan, code -- plan and code changes as well as an environmental impact statement. Really it's an opportunity to provide your perspective to help shape the future of the Tacoma
Mall neighborhood. And so our objective is to hear from all of you who each have a unique perspective and stake in the neighborhood.

The Planning Commission is of course listening to this testimony. We are recording it as well, and a transcript will be created. And all this input is going to be invaluable to the Commission, to staff, as we work to finalize this package. It's been a couple of years in the making. And again, thanks to everyone who has contributed to this.

In terms of our timeline, we will come back to the Planning Commission at your next two meetings, September the 20th and October the 4th, tentatively. And at those meetings, we will start to go through the public input and comments that we have received and start to flesh out the issues that need further work and analysis and options.

At that point, we will tentatively come back in mid October and ask the Commission to make a recommendation on this package to the full city council. At that point, the Commission will be able to step back and the city council will make its decision on the package. So according -- if all goes according to plan, we will have this project wrapped up this calendar year.
In terms of what is in this package of proposals, there are three components. And it's worth going through what each one of those is. The draft subarea plan, itself, is a vision, goals, and actions for the neighborhood, going over -- it's got a total of 11 chapters, multiple goals. There -- it really sets the vision, sets the policy direction.

Proposed for adoption along with the subarea plan are several appendices, a code changes summary and code changes text, as well as some streetscape design guidelines. So with the plan will be a policy adoption as well as zoning design standard and other changes at the same time.

Finally, we're also presenting a draft environmental impact statement. What that is, is it's really an in-depth review and analysis of all of the required mitigation steps, all of the actions necessary to make this plan work, to make it work for the neighborhood, to handle the impacts of growth, et cetera.

The important thing to know about this draft EIS is that it takes the place of project-level SEPA review, which is currently applicable to larger-scale projects in this neighborhood as well as throughout the city. So it's a way of coordinating that review,
coming up with the mitigation actions up front, and
then streamlining development that's consistent with
that plan.

So we are about two years into the process, which
has had a very broad community engagement component
to it, as well as some very specific technical
analysis. So starting about a couple of years ago,
we did a major push, similar to what we just got --
got finished doing, mailing, e-mail, media, various
different -- every way that we could to reach out to
the people who live and work and own property in the
neighborhood, and did a very intensive push in late
2015. Through that, we came up with some themes in
terms of what the neighborhood needs to -- to be a
place that a lot of people are going to want to be,
invest, live, and shop.

And some of those key themes were that this is
a -- we need to work on a more positive identity, a
sense of place here. Needs to be more walkable,
bikable, and transit-ready. Parks, open space, and
green infrastructure are very much needed here. We
need to continue to support economic development and
growth here in this area, which is a very important
employment base for Tacoma. Safety, both in terms of
the neighborhood and in terms of our streets. Access
for the people who live here to services, needs, healthy affordable food. Housing affordability and choice, and other elements needed to make this a healthy community. Those are some of the key themes that we started out with, started the process, and became the foundation or the -- or the objectives of the policies that we're bringing forward now.

We also have a regional and city policy framework. This is a designated regional growth center, as you know, meaning that this is where, as a region, we have gotten together and said we're going to support jobs and housing growth here with infrastructure investment in order to make that work. So this is something that -- this is a vision that's been in place for over 20 years, and there really has been a lot of growth and change during that period. This is our opportunity to try to shape it and direct it and encourage further growth that's consistent with the community's desires.

Perhaps the main theme animating all of our discussions are the desire to shift the character of this neighborhood from its current, more suburban, more auto-oriented structure, to one which is just more focused on people, both in terms of transportation options, in terms of making a place
that people actually want to be, place-making,
positive identity, and so forth.

So we've proposed a -- a pretty ambitious vision
for this neighborhood to make it a thriving center of
regional significance and a distinctive, connected,
livable and healthy place with opportunities for
everyone to live, work, invest, and fulfill their
potential. As part of that, there really is a lot of
change proposed.

However, our overall objective is to try to
create the opportunities for change through targeted
city investment and other actions so that over time
it's in everybody's interest to see significant
change even to the street network and block scale of
the neighborhood.

We had a -- there's an urban form chapter of our
plan, which really points out that in many ways this
600 acres does not hang together as a single
connected neighborhood right now. So there are six
design ideas which are reflected throughout the plan.
Place-based districts in each of the four quadrants
of the neighborhood, focusing our density and
concentrating on transitions. A loop road and park
system, green infrastructure investments, and
enhancing the neighborhood's edges and transitions.
Coupled with that are the ideas of making this a walkable neighborhood where people could walk within five minutes and get to most of what they want to, what they need on a daily basis that way, and supporting a transition to a transit-ready community.

To support that urban form vision, we have a package of proposed zoning changes. To a large extent, zoning is recommended to continue what's here today, but there are some significant changes. Two areas in Madison and Lincoln Heights are proposed to be zoned for residential as opposed to mixed-use development to reflect their existing character. And we are proposing some -- rather than the one-size-fits-all zoning height limits that are here today -- high, medium, and lower height limits. And finally, an industrial transition area in an area which is currently light industrial along South Tacoma Way. So the expanding the center and changing the zoning from light industrial to commercial and industrial mixed use.

Finally, the Planning Commission asked us to bring forward two alternatives for zoning in the Madison district, which is the area to the west of Pine. And they are up on the screen. The difference is that, in the staff recommendation, the height of
the core of the area would be 45 feet. In the alternate, there are two areas along Warner Street and at Madison School where the height would be allowed to go up to 65 feet. So that's something that members of the public here may wish to comment on as part of this process today.

There is a package of design standards changes both to residential and commercial development that would take place in the future. The primary thrust of these is really just to make sure that development is oriented towards pedestrians so that buildings are oriented towards the sidewalk, so that pedestrian pathways and connections are attractive and safe and prominent. There's also some increase in landscaping and street trees requirements and some other -- some commercial design standard changes to drive-throughs and to pedestrian access.

It's a very exciting and ambitious transportation and infrastructure package here. And again, we're looking to handle and facilitate 25-plus years of growth in this one plan. And to do that, we know we need to invest heavily in our transportation infrastructure.

So that the approach here is, we have a list of city capital projects which really will transform
some of our streets so that they are safe and comfortable for people who are walking and biking, enhance our transit access, create a central transit hub closer to the center of the neighborhood. Very exciting. Over a hundred million dollars' worth of capital projects over the next 25 years. And we do really believe that will not only help with transportation, but also a major place-making benefit to the neighborhood.

In addition, the area currently has several very large blocks or larger than what is recommended in terms of a urban center district like we are trying to achieve here. So the largest is actually the Tacoma Mall, itself, which is over 50 acres without any street connections, and there are some others that are close to 20 acres in size. So the plan does include a proposal to create new street connections along with major private development.

And I know that we will hear some comment and input on this topic from people here tonight. As the Commission well knows, we've spent a lot of time talking about this topic. And I will just mention that, at the outs -- or at the conclusion of our process here when we come back to you, staff is prepared to come forward with a range of alternatives
related to those transportation proposals. So we 
know we're going to be talking more about those. 

For the audience, very briefly, why are we 
emphasizing the importance of creating some new 
street connections? It boils down in simple terms 
to, if you have a small number of streets, all the 
traffic has to go to those streets, so they have to 
be big streets. That means that it's more difficult 
to make them attractive and safe for pedestrians. 

So the more street alternatives that you have, 
the finer-grain street network that you have, the 
more that you can make those streets calm and 
attractive and more pedestrian oriented. So that's 
really the thrust of the activity proposal. It also 
is important in handling and accommodating the growth 
that we are planning for here and in promoting a 
shift in the urban form. 

So moving on, we have some very exciting green 
storm water and tree canopy proposals here. This 
happens to be an area of the city where it's ideal 
for green storm water techniques. That means that 
water is able to go back into the ground rather than 
having to get piped out and dumped into the Puget 
Sound. So that's better in multiple different ways. 
Environment, life of the infrastructure, even
creating a new funding source for us to -- to rebuild
many of our streets. So very ambitious green storm
water and green streets proposal.

In addition, we have proposed a major increase in
the amount of tree canopy in the neighborhood here.
It's currently about nine percent, which is not a lot
of trees. And through a range of actions, we believe
it's reasonable to reach 25 percent tree canopy
coverage by the year 2040.

Parks and open space proposals. The gist of this
proposal is that we heard from the beginning that
residents here really would like to have more
attractive and safe places for children and for
people of all ages to be in the neighborhood and that
that was one of the main missing features here. So
the plan is proposing some parks principles,
including a park or open space in each of the four
quadrants of the subarea, and then connected by a
green loop road that would allow you to walk from one
to the other. So that's the gist of the parks and
open space proposals. Madison School is also
strongly emphasized in the plan as a very important
community hub and asset.

Finally, this -- this is very much an economic
development plan. From Day 1, the actions that we
have put forward here and been working on are intended to remove barriers that we have heard from the development community are reasons why they would choose not to invest in the area. And those are things like problems with the transportation network, that lack of neighborhood amenities and other things. So we do really believe this is a way of encouraging growth.

The upfront environmental impact review is also very much an economic development strategy. And finally, we have a chapter that really focuses on other things we can do to promote growth and investment here.

Housing choices are also something we have heard over and over from the community are a very big issue here. While this area is currently affordable as compared to other areas of Tacoma, that could change with time. And, in particular, if we really channel a lot of growth here, it could really exacerbate affordability. So the housing chapter includes actions and benchmarking to try and track that issue and take more, again, action if it becomes a big problem in the future.

So local culture and identity. What makes a neighborhood an attractive place to be? A lot of
that has to do with just attractive places. Places
where people can gather and have community events.
It has to do with making the public infrastructure
not only functional but again attractive and doing
things to bring in public art and support local
culture. So we're very excited about some of those
actions.

And finally, in the implementation chapter, we
have proposed a prioritization of the actions in the
plan. One of the most important is to initiate a
funding study early on in the implementation of the
subarea plan, in particular to focus on those
infrastructure investments and the connectivity
proposals.

Very last point. While the City is bringing this
forward, many of the actions would need to be
implemented by other public agencies, Metro Parks,
transit agencies, the school district, as well as
private property owners, who after all are the people
who would be investing and growing our economy, and
of course by people who live here. So this plan is
not intended as the City's plan but as the
community's plan.

So we're well -- we're over halfway through our
public comment period. Comments are requested and
due by September the 15th. I really hope everybody will comment during that time. I wanted to provide the Planning Commission with a brief overview of the themes that we've been hearing so far in our comments.

We have gone to the transportation commission as well as the bike and pedestrian technical advisory group, again to focus primarily on connectivity on proposed South 37th Street, which is one of the proposed new streets, as well as on the overall transportation proposals. So we've got -- we are expecting comments from both of those two groups.

And I think it's fair to say that they -- they wrestled with those, with those issues, the same ones that the Planning Commission has, in terms of seeing the need and the importance of additional streets and needing to make sure that it's fair, equitable, avoids impacts to property owners and businesses, and is feasible. So their comment letters will speak for themselves, but do expect those.

We also had the informational meeting last Wednesday right here in this room. And during that -- during that session, of course the street network and connectivity was a very big theme. A lot of people wanted to talk about design standards, so I expect
that you'll hear some more comments on that. Parking comes up a lot. Functional and attractive yard space. Development that has front doors facing alleys. That's something that we'll continue to hear about.

I expect we'll also hear comments on the zoning proposals; in particular, the industrial transition areas. There are some more industrial uses in those areas, and those folks may come forward and have something to say about them, which I hope that they will.

And then residential heights. Again, we are proposing some height changes there. So that's something that people have been asking about.

I already mentioned housing affordability. That continues to be an emerging issue, and I expect we'll hear on that as well. Making the neighborhood more safe, reducing crime, addressing nuisances. A lot of enthusiasm about parks and open space. And I would also just say a lot of enthusiasm for the capital projects, the transportation projects, and the green environmental projects, the parks and open space proposals have come through as priorities.

I would encourage everybody here tonight to let us know, let the Commission know what you think your
priorities are. There is a lot in this plan, and we
would love to know -- we'd love to have your help in
prioritizing implementation.

So again, written comments are due by September
the 15th. Between now and then, on September the
13th, the City Council IPS Committee, the
Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability
Committee, will be doing a tour, a bus tour of the
neighborhood.

And a quick order of business. I wanted to ask
Planning Commissioners who are able to attend that,
despite your busy schedule, would you -- would you
let us know tonight so that we can just confirm and
make sure we have -- the voice of the Planning
Commission can be represented there?

And after that, again we'll be back before you
with some of the summarized comments that we've heard
from the public on the 20th and October 4th and
October 18th. Again, we hope that we will be able to
bring forward a package for your consideration to
recommend to the city council.

And last word. I hope I haven't spoken too long.
To everyone here tonight, if there's any way that I
or other people can help you to understand the
proposals, please don't hesitate to let us know. I'm
happy to come talk to you in your workplace or residence. And we really would like to hear from you.

So thank you for your patience with my presentation.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you very much, Elliott.

So we will now begin the public testimony process. I'm going to receive the sign-in list.

All right. So it appears that we have 17 people signed up to speak. When I call your name -- and what I'm going to do is call up three names at a time. So invite a speaker up, and then the next two people in queue will know who they are. You'll be speaking from that microphone in the center of the room.

It's important for the -- with this extensive record and for this extensive plan that we are able to identify you by name, your address, and your affiliation for the record. Looks like many of you have already signed that information up here. If you haven't provided that to us, please provide your name, address, and affiliation, and we can get that on the record.

After exhausting the signup sheets, I'll do what
I did on the previous hearing and open it up for other people to come forward.

As with the other hearing, testimony is limited to three minutes. So with that, I will begin in the order that was signed up. Forgive me, between my glasses and the long day. Valerie Fyalka-Munoz.

VALERIE FYALKA-MUNOZ: Yes.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Followed by John Brekke and Eleanor Brekke.

VALERIE FYALKA-MUNOZ: Hi. I'm Val, Valerie Fyalka-Munoz. I have been in real estate for 40 years --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear.

VALERIE FYALKA-MUNOZ: -- in the Tacoma --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can't hear.

VALERIE FYALKA-MUNOZ: Oh. In the Tacoma area. I'm from --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Please turn up the microphone.

VALERIE FYALKA-MUNOZ: I'm from Tacoma -- wait. Let me start over.

I'm Valerie Fyalka-Munoz. I have been in real
estate for 40 years in the Tacoma area. I'm from Tacoma. I help manage Michael's Plaza at 2921 South 38th. I have been going to the Tacoma Mall neighborhood meetings for over a year. The Tacoma Mall neighborhood plan places an excessive burden and encumbers Michael's Plaza with new roads on the median-term and long-term vision maps. The roads and 37th Street will restrict businesses, devalue the property, and restrict the ability for future development.

The topography has a difficult 20-foot slope coming off of Pine Street. The cost to construct a road will be costly endeavor and will restrict the property. Presently, Michael's Plaza has eight entrances for ingress and egress. The city planners would be wiser to develop and improve the existing road system and not encumber and burden the commercial property owners with 37th and other roads.

The Tacoma Mall neighborhood plan is an excessive taking of private property rights. The plan is unconstitutional. The nexus and proportionality is unreasonable. We are going to defend our constitutional rights and will let the courts decide.

Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.
John Brekka, Eleanor Brekka, and Nikki Rohloff.

ELEANOR BREKKA: I'm Eleanor Brekka.

JOHN BREKKA: And I'm John Brekka.

ELEANOR BREKKA: And we're going to do our testimony together since both each have three minutes, but...

We are brother and sister, and our parents developed the raw land in the northwest quadrant 35 years ago, which is now Cedar Plaza, and our family takes great pride in our property. We also own commercial real estate in several other urban transition areas such as SoDo, Southcenter, and downtown Auburn.

We have been participating in this process for over a year now. Overall, we are for having a subarea plan. I'd like to start by specifically stating what we like about the subarea plan. The City's interests in the neighborhood, creating a transit center, and working to bring rail to the area, bringing more than identity to the area and creating a destination, improvements to existing streets, grant money for street improvements and helping revitalize the neighborhood, recognizing the neighborhood is residential, commercial, and
industrial in nature.

JOHN BREKKA: We've had a chance to read through the several hundred pages. And the one overriding theme that is still a concern is connectivity. And this is shared by not just us but the 30 or 40 other people that expressed, the commercial property owners and businesses that expressed these concerns earlier on in the process in the stakeholder meetings that went on.

We need to arrive at a connectivity plan that allows owners to operate their properties and businesses. And we don't want to stifle development in this neighborhood. We have an above-average vacancy rate in our well-managed project, and we're receiving rents in the Kent Valley and some of our warehouses higher than the rents we're receiving in our complex here. So it needs to be done right.

And we're not starting with raw land. That's what our family started with 35 years ago when we developed this center. And if we are going to make connectivity changes, it needs to happen when the bulldozers are out, when it possibly becomes raw land, and there needs to be room for incremental development on the sites where additions can be made to the build -- to buildings, additional small
buildings can be added to the site, and not before that. A 15-percent trigger point has been mentioned in the plan, and that's far too low and is out of touch.

So the other major concern is the filing of connectivity plans. These plans will burden the property for the next, you know, 15 to 20 years. Large parts of the property. It requires the property owners to negotiate with the City, negotiate with neighborhood property owners, and it's really rather unrealistic in nature. And it's going to stifle development and stagnate the area, and I don't think we want -- we don't want that. I don't believe anybody in Tacoma wants that. So we need to be wise about what we're proposing.

And with a connectivity requirement of a pathway of various sizes every 150 feet, you're talking about dividing a 16-acre parcel into 32 smaller chunks of half an acre apiece. That is very far-reaching in nature. And there's room for connectivity in the subarea. There already is some connectivity in the subarea. But there's also justification for larger parcels with. And we've seen that need with the University of Washington in Tac -- University of Washington Tacoma branch, the Convention Center, the
Tacoma Dome, the central police facility, the mall, corporate campuses, midsize -- midsize shopping centers, and such. So there needs to be room, and it makes sense to have room for those larger parcels along with some smaller parcels in nature.

ELEANOR BREKKA: The last thing I'd like to bring up is something that we previously shared, and it's -- we continue to question the cost-benefit of 37th Street when there are viable alternatives at lower cost and without topography issues and significant right-of-way acquisitions. For example, extending 35th Street and Cedar Street to connect to South Tacoma Way and the Water Flume Trail.

If the proposed 37th Street is deemed necessary by the City, then it should be a Tier 1 street, which is City-led, City-funded right-of-ways, acquisitions, and City-constructed. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All right. So we have Nikki Rohloff, Kate Lantiff, and Zak.

NIKKI ROHLOFF: Hi. My name is Nikki Rohloff, and I live in the Tacoma Mall neighborhood. I'll be honest. I thought that was just a sign-in for the meeting. So my comments are informal, but just to give perspective for somebody
who lives in that area.

I live in the Apex, right by the mall. I basically tell people I live in the Tacoma Mall parking lot. But in that short little block from where I live to the mall, I only have a sidewalk that goes halfway to the mall. There's no crosswalk to go over to the pet store, to Joann's. And getting over to Red Robin is nearly impossible. So even though I live right there and could walk to anything in a minute, it's nearly impossible. So sidewalks, I think, would be -- are great and would be a priority.

I'm excited about the new I-5 ramp going directly to Tacoma Mall Boulevard. That intersection at 38th and Steele is a nightmare, especially with Chick-fil-A. And I feel, with all of the multifamily units that I've been going in, a great idea in the green area would be a dog park, an unleashed dog park for the people who don't have a place for their dogs now.

And then with the multiunit living spaces, I would just encourage more parking. Right now where I live, we have five parking garages and it's still not enough to accommodate everybody that lives there. And Heaven forbid if you want to have a guest over. Nearly impossible. So thank you.
CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

All right. We have Zak Klineman (phonetic). No?

Jack Knottingham.

Jeffrey Mann. No, Jeffreys here.

After Jeffrey will be Angelia Alexander.

JEFFREY MANN: Good evening,

Mr. Chairman, members of the Planning Commission.

Jeff Mann with Pierce County Planning -- well, Planning and Public Works now, a new department, and they're representing the County's interest in our annex campus that is located within the -- within the plan area.

I've been on the stakeholder group for the last couple years. And we asked in 2015 to be a part of the plan. And we're grateful that we were included in the plan, and of course want to see our -- and feel like we are an asset to the plan area as a major employer. And that's recognized in the plan on Page SP17. And I appreciate that, that's recognized as an asset as a major employer.

We've been very supportive of some of the key concepts of the plan, the loop road. I think that's -- that's a wonderful concept with the improved crossings on 38th. Also the storm water management approaches there, the low-impact
development techniques, the green streets program, and increased parks and recreation area, as well as the zoning scheme, which I feel is appropriate for the annex campus.

We've made a couple of recommendations. Among other things, to provide a transit connection between the Tacoma Dome and the subarea plan area. And feel like that's necessary. And also we have a recommendation for additional park land close to the annex campus.

However, our primary concern with the plan is the impact of the connectivity proposal. Specifically with regard to the bike boulevard, the street connection from South 35th to South Tacoma Way, which is on Wright Avenue. That is shown in the plan area as bisecting -- completely bisecting the annex campus, including going right through the existing building, and would have a significant impact on our potential to develop the site in the future. We may need to use the site for a significant County facility, and a street going directly across the property would have a significant impact.

It is a bike boulevard. If it's just something that goes around a building, through a parking lot, that's different than doing an actual boulevard right
through the middle of the property. That boulevard
does connect to Wright Avenue, which is about a 10–
to 15-percent grade. So it'll be very difficult for
biking. I don't see anybody using it now, and I
don't foresee that being used in the future.

So our request, kind of bottom line, is -- and
it's not shown on the priority maps for that road,
but our request is that that road crossing the annex
campus would be deleted from the plan and so we can
continue to use that site as a major employer and
further the goals of the -- of the subarea plan.
Thank you very much.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

All right. Angelia -- is that right --
Alexander, followed by Amy Pow and Venus Dergan.

ANGELIA ALEXANDER: I'm the clerk,
which means something like a chairperson, for the
Tacoma Friends Meeting, which is the Quaker meeting
whose meeting house is located at the top of South
39th Street on the hill, the eastern end. If you --
if you leaped off the end of that street, you'd land
on Chick-fil-A, just to give you an idea of where we
are for sure.

The original map I saw of the plans for bike
paths, by the way, had a bike path going down there.
And I think I was able to convince Elliott that that wouldn't work. Didn't see it on any of the subsequent maps. I too thought I was just signing up to let you all know I was here. So I'll try to keep this brief and speak from the heart.

It struck me pretty early on that this whole area has not really much of a sense of place or neighborhood. And I think we've struggled with that over the conversations in the last year. Nobody could come up with a substitute name for it, for example. That will come with time. But it means that people who work, own property, live here, and so on, need to have a sense of what that identity and sense of place is.

That means to me that the neighborhood development, the business-side developments, and all of that have to be sensitive to quality as well as quantity, and also to the kinds of costs it can mean for -- to the business owners, for example. You've already heard about that.

On one of the original plans that I saw, it looked as if the City was going to be prepared to buy us out on our little place at the top of the hill. And I don't think that's going to happen anymore either. We might choose to sell to the City, but I
don't think the City's planning to buy us out. If it
ends up that way, I'll be surprised.

But we're prime to be a kind of spot that could
connect well to whatever parks might be planned for
the green space that's just to the east of that huge
post office complex. That's undeveloped land, and it
could be perhaps developed better into some kind of
parks, green space.

I guess that's -- that's probably all I can think
of to say at the moment. I will be bringing this
topic up to our Quaker meeting. We have our business
meeting this coming Sunday around 11:15. If anybody
would like to see how we Quakers do business, we come
to unity around whatever we're going to decide.

I would suggest that you-all think about moving
in that direction so that property owners who would
like to have a better quality for their residences
and the business owners who would like us to be
sensitive to their needs don't ever feel like any of
them are losers in this whole concept. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

All right. Amy Pow, Venus Dergan, and then
Christian Koposki (phonetic). I'm sure I just
massacred that one.

CHRISTIAN KONOPASKI: Close enough.
CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

Good evening.

AMY POW: Good evening, Planning Commissioners. I'm Amy Pow, principal planner for Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. Thank you for collaborating with the health department to develop this very important subarea plan. This neighborhood is very diverse, filled with a lot of low-income populations, and is very transient. Residents in this area has experienced a very low -- a very high health disparities and a shorter life expectancy than average Tacomans.

Last year, the board has adopted a resolution on health in our policies, encouraging cities and towns to consider health in all decision-making. We have demonstrated with your City staff how this can be done in your subarea plan. We have partnered with the City and stakeholders in the last 30 months to infuse health in every step of decision-making. We outreached and empowered local residents to understand their needs to make it more livable and decent area.

Above all, we also apply a triple bottom line health framework to make sure that health is embedded in each chapter in throughout the plan, to create the
vision that we all envisage for.

There are several health issue that we hold very
dear to our heart from the get-go of this planning
process. Amongst them, we have particular concern
about the possible involuntary displacement of low-
income residents in this neighborhood as the economy
and the environment improves over time. We strongly
feel that maintaining the current level of affordable
housing in this neighborhood is crucial. Besides we
try our best to make sure the local residents will
champion on for to implement this plan as well as to
welcome newcomers to join them to build this
neighborhood together.

To actualize walkable urbanism, there are many
good policies and actions in this plan, including a
playable loop road, the Madison School hub, tree
canopies and green infrastructure. The only comment
that the health department particular concerned is,
is that the current performance measures in the
health chapter talking about the target performance
for the entire neighborhood is too low.

Our quick analysis shows that according to
American community survey, five years estimates,
about 90 percent of the current housing stock of the
entire neighborhood is renting less than $1,250 per
month, and 25 percent is actually renting less than $750. To help minimize the impact of gentrification, we strongly encourage the City to maintain a closer percentage of affordable housing for the entire neighborhoods over time for those low- and very-low-income neighbors.

Today I encourage you to support this plan to the council for adoption together with the DEIS, with our comments being incorporated. Once fully implemented, I'm sure the social fabric and economy will be improved, the natural environment be improved as well, and the motor vehicle traffic will be reduced, and after all, health and equity will be bettered.

Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

Okay. So we have Christian is next. Oh, I'm sorry. Venus. Excuse me. Venus Dergan, Christian, and then Fran?

CHRISTIAN KONOPASKI: Francesca.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Francesca. Thank you.

CHRISTIAN KONOPASKI: I'll be speaking for her.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All right.

CHRISTIAN KONOPASKI: We're
FACTS

CHAIR WAMBACK: So Venus.

VENUS DERGAN: Okay. Hello again.

My name is Venus Dergan. I'm a longtime resident in south Tacoma, live in Manitou, and I'm a Manitou representative. I again had just signed up just to state that I was here, but I did make a couple of notes because I did attend the meeting last Wednesday. And I'm just going to follow up to the -- to the lady here in regards to affordable housing.

That was one of the notes that I -- that I made.

I've lived in south Tacoma most of my life, and I represent people who I believe a lot of us are median to low income. And we have a lot of seniors that live in our area as well. And when you have an AMI that's too high, I don't think that these multifamily dwellings are really considered affordable housing at the rents that you plan on renting them out at, and that was one of the concerns that I had.

I also viewed a couple as a person who might want to rent one of these apartments that have just been developed. And a couple of things that I noticed in regards to those apartments is that my quality of life living in those apartments. And what I've noticed is, I saw multifamily dwellings that had
their front door in the alley. I would not want my front door in the alley. I don't know why that design was ever allowed, but I would not want my front door in the alley.

There's no open space. It's -- they're stacked on -- you're stacked on top of each other. There's no open space for children. There's no parking for anybody who has a vehicle of any size. So I don't know anybody with a large vehicle who would be able to be accommodated at one of these apartments.

I think that we're -- that the height restriction is too high. I saw a rendering of 38th Street, the new design. And the height of 65 feet is too high. I like a skyline, myself, and I didn't see a skyline there. And I think if you want to live in a concrete or work in a concrete jungle, you need to keep that in the downtown area and not in the south Tacoma area. That's -- that's my feeling.

And in regards to transit, I ask that in regards to transit, that the transit station have a stop at the mall again like it used to. Being across the street from the mall is burdensome to every disabled senior, anybody who has to get to the mall. And I think it's dropped people coming to the mall because
the transit bus drop-off is across the street.
I took the bus once in the winter and had to walk
from across the street to the mall, and I swore I'd
never do it again. And that's because my vehicle was
broken down. I don't know how the elderly do it. I
don't know how disabled people do that. But it has
to be reconsidered in the plan, that people be
dropped off. If you want buyability at the Tacoma
Mall and people to attend the Tacoma Mall, the
transit center needs to be there at the mall where
people can have access, direct access to the mall.

Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

Okay. We have Christian, then Francesca, and
Beverly.

CHRISTIAN KONOPASKI: Okay. I'm
Christian. I'm here to represent myself and
Francesca. We own a multifamily property in the area
that's under discussion. And while I'm in favor of a
lot of the concepts in the plan, the City has failed
to implement a number of the concepts that are
already in the plan; namely, paving streets,
sidewalks, storm water.

We've had two years now of new taxes that are
supposed to be funding this. We have third-world
streets in our neighborhoods. We have no sidewalks.

We have gigantic lakes when it rains. And the City is not funding any of these neighborhoods. They're funding streetscaping projects in the Lincoln District or downtown. And we want to spend a hundred million dollars on this project.

I object to any funding by the City for any new projects until they bring the City's infrastructure standards of streets, sidewalks, and storm water drainage up to modern standards.

CHAIR WAMBACK: So that was Christian speaking on behalf of himself and Francesca. So that means Beverly Bowen Bennett, Gerald Pleasant, and Stuart Johnston. And then Stuart is actually the last person that's signed up.

And as I mentioned earlier, after we exhaust the sign-in list, I'll see if there's anybody else who wishes to speak who hasn't already spoken.

BEVERLY BOWEN BENNETT: Thank you.

There's a man who understands a short woman when he sees her. Does that count on my three minutes?

CHAIR WAMBACK: No.

BEVERLY BOWEN BENNETT: Okay.

CHAIR WAMBACK: We'll start the three minutes now.
BEVERLY BOWEN BENNETT: All right.

I wanted to make sure that you knew that I read this entire document and understand it perfectly.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Excellent.

BEVERLY BOWEN BENNETT: Not.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Just don't quiz me when you go for a walk.

BEVERLY BOWEN BENNETT: I stalk him because he works by where I walk. I think it's his fault, not mine.

I'm going to limit myself to three things tonight because you only gave me three minutes. No front doors on alleys. Now, I read in one of those documents that we were going to kind of make it okay if the developer was willing to make it look like a street or a mews. Well, I say then, if it's a street or a mews, the front door's not on the alley. So there would be no reason in God's green Earth that it could not say in clear terms that everyone would understand "no front doors on alleys." And actually, in the very original document that was given to me, Elliott, at the very, very first meeting and showed the goals of this plan, no front doors on the alley was one of those goals. I was surprised when I found that.
Now I want to talk about Metro Parks. It has come to my attention that the matrix that they use for deciding where to put their parks has to do with the geography of an area and nothing to do with the population. So the number of apartments, townhouses, four-bedroom units that are now existing in the west/southwest quadrant of the subarea plan is not reflected as a need. We have one little corner, according to one of the pictures in there, that says that we are not currently having enough parks.

Did any of you go by that park that is not a park, that is in the Lincoln Heights? It's not a park. But I tell people there's a park there. They say, "Where?" Then when they go by, they say, "Oh, yeah, I see it now." But it's not a park.

And then I'm going to stand up for the wall walkers -- mall walkers. I said that wrong. Mall walkers. It has come to my attention -- I know in the winter I've been doing it, walking in the mall. And rather than the rain or the snow, I go to the mall. There are hundreds of people of all ages that walk in the mall. We even have a secret entrance where we go in before it's quite ready for us to go in and walk the mall.

There's a gentleman who comes all the way from
Eatonville to walk our mall because the mall that's in Puyallup on the South Hill is not conducive for walking. So when we talk about our connectivity, it's a little scary to me if we do something to make it difficult for the mall walkers to do their loops. So I know it's a small thing, but there really are hundreds of people who walk every single day in that mall. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

All right. The last two people that we have signed up are Gerald Pleasant and Stuart Johnston. No? Gerald? Stuart? Neither of you?

All right. Well, that concludes the list of people that had signed up to testify. If you have not already spoken tonight, but you would like to avail yourselves of three minutes to speak your piece to the Planning Commission, I would invite you to first raise your hand to let me know if there is anybody interested. I see a couple people.

All right. So could you -- we don't have another sign-in list, do we? Oh, we do? Okay. So let's do this. We'll just start at the front of the room and work our way back. Either before you speak or right after you speak, if you would do me the favor and write your name down on the sign-in sheet. Then we
have the record. Thank you.

BOB BEARDEN: Hi. My name is Bob Bearden. I've been working with Elliott and his group since the onset of this project started. And just like Beverly before me, I have read the EIS. Okay? Believe it or not, I borrowed it from him last week and was able to finish it. There's a couple of issues in there that is just concerning that either the public did not get a chance to -- or really state what they really wanted to even though we heard it at these numerous public groups.

One is the vegetation. The mayor wants 40 percent of the town covered in the next 10 years. Okay. We know we're getting rid of the mayor. No problem there.

However, what has been decided is deciduous trees versus evergreen. Tacoma has a problem in the winter with the pollution in the air. Most of us old folks and younger ones or those with disabilities have problems breathing during that time. If you continue to plant deciduous at 60 percent versus 40 percent, that's not going to help us.

Besides that, as was previously stated, this is a transient community. Nobody takes care of the gutters. They wait until there's huge water puddles
out there and they call the City as an emergency. Evergreen trees will prevent that. So we need to take a look at the types of trees that's going to be presented overall. And this is going on for future projects throughout Tacoma also.

Another thing is, when the City brought in designers to start this project, they brought them in from New York City and Washington, D.C. You probably know who they are already. You probably talked to them. They continually talked about people liv -- or enjoying their afternoon on stoops. Tacoma does not have stoops. New York City and "Washington, D.,"

has stoops.

Now, for those who don't know what stoops are, it's their front porch or their steps, which is right on top of the sidewalk next to the roadway. In other words, there is no yard. There's nothing but street, sidewalk, and stoops to sit on. Kids and family does not have an opportunity to sit out and enjoy what little summer we do have here in Tacoma. So we really need to get rid of that concept design where peoples gonna sit on their front porch and love what Tacoma has to offer.

Developments. Development had a strong input into this project. Development came on strong at
almost every community meeting, saying that, "We need, we need, we need. We need the City to give us this and this and this." We need to stop giving development everything in the world, 10 years' worth of tax-free property, 10 years' worth of tax-free water/sewer. We need to stop doing this and make the developers responsible for brown water recycling in the future. They can build a multilevel apartment complex and not be responsible for collecting rainwater or anything else within their building.

Technology has allowed us to do this on numerous occasions. So to cut down even the water issues in the, not necessarily sewer, but definitely brown water, they can make some recycling or utilize holding tanks on brown water instead of just putting it down the sewers and sending it on down the system. They can utilize this.

It is important that -- and Elliott caught this -- that development and the City and community buy into these things together so that parks that can be built outside of large apartment buildings or whatever can be possibly purchased by the developers and put in place, maintained by the parks department or whatever, in addition to what's already being planned, which is, as Beverly suggested, doesn't
really fit the population of where people live. I mean, it's great if you're a bicyclist. You've got places to stop along the way between mercantile, but not residential.

So my time's up, but thank you very much, folks, for listening.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you very much for your time tonight. Make sure you sign up on that --

BOB BEARDEN: I will.

CHAIR WAMBACK: -- sheet that he has right back there.

I don't know who signed up next, so just...

JOHN BURKHALTER: I'm taller than that. My name is John Burkhalter. I represent Michael's Plaza. And I know I stand before you many times talking about connectivity. And I do want to thank you for listening to us and taking our comments, and I'd like to thank Elliott for, I'm sure, countless more meetings that he's been to than I have.

You know, the plan is -- is needed. I mean, we need to have a plan. We need to know where we're going in the future. The idea is to have thoughtful growth and revitalization, which the community in
that area really needs and we would love to see. I even heard Elliott mention today that, you know, the plan is to promote growth. And I agree with that. But some of the things in the plan I think don't promote growth. And, you know, as you all know, one of those issues for us is connectivity.

And the reason being is, we currently have 65 feet of height in zoning, and we will not build a project that's 65 feet tall in the next 20 years, unfortunately, unless something radical happens. And so by requiring dedication of right-of-way and all the improvements that go along with that, and I -- I think you guys -- I don't know if you heard my speech in the transportation commission, but we're talking an acre and a half of roads, sidewalks.

For every acre, that's roughly 20,000 cubic feet of detention and storage. At 10 bucks a foot, it would be about thirty -- $300,000 for just that, not to mention the collection systems, the asphalt, the curbs and gutters. I can't even remember the numbers. But it's a lot of money, and it all adds up.

So if we can't build a 65-foot project now, the zoning that we're getting out of the plan is 75 feet, up to 120 feet with bonuses. You could see where
that devalues the property because we can't even build a project today. So in some respects, by having such a vision, we're actually stifling growth. And so I was hoping that the Commissioners would think about potentially stepping back and maybe softening the language. You know, at least saying, Hey, when the development happens, you need to look at this and you need to provide, you know, consultants and information about how that connectivity would benefit your project or our project and, you know, benefit the neighborhood.

I'm sure it would benefit the neighborhood. I'm not sure it would benefit our project, but that's a whole nother story. And then if we couldn't think about that, maybe think about the idea where, you know, if we're gonna have ground-floor retail, it certainly behooves us to provide sidewalks and connectivity to make sure that we have plenty of storefronts and plenty of opportunities for people to, you know, spend money and bring in sales tax.

So if we could -- you know, we can do biking, we can do pedestrian stuff, but we don't have to dedicate a road to do it. There's so many things that come out of that, that cause problems for development, that I just hope that you'll think about
that.

And then one final thing is, in the interim to get there, to make sure that whatever the triggers are -- and I'm a little scared about some of those triggers, Elliott -- that they don't -- aren't -- aren't too onerous. Meaning, why do I need to come up with a plan for connectivity when you already told me what the connectivity plan is? So that -- those kind of things like, I don't want to write a report, hire some consultants, and spend $25,000 in order to, you know, do a 10,000-square-foot addition. Things like that.

And then one final thought was, I was reading in the zoning code stuff, and it said, Oh, hey, if you have X amount of foot or you built something right next to a right-of-way over here, that you would have connection to it. And I was thinking, I thought that was already sort of in the building code as part of ADA. It was, like, Hey, you need to be able to get out of a building, have ADA access to the right-of-way, I'm assuming in case of an emergency or something. So I just -- some stuff to think about.

Anyway, I appreciate it. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

Welcome.
J. J. McCAMENT: Thank you. J. J. McCament, McCament & Rogers, 708 Broadway in downtown Tacoma. Elliott had challenged us at last week's public meeting about coming up with our vision for the northwest quadrant of the Tacoma Mall subarea plan. And I cannot say that there has been any work done on a -- on a northwest division with all of the property owners. And I'm not a property owner either. But being familiar with the area, I thought that I would put together some rough notes and at least share those with you. So, Elliott, this is in response to your request.

My vision for the northwest quadrant. I'm speaking only for myself. City-led improvements and economic development efforts that help create a strong and healthy neighborhood economy necessary to spur a fresh look and feel for the neighborhood where pride of ownership is evident and property owners and tenants prosper.

An overall cool physical setting that encourages property owners to invest in their properties, existing businesses to expand, and new businesses to bring jobs, services, and entertainment. The private dollar follows the public dollar as the northwest quadrant responds to stronger market demand. In
essence, a rising tide that lifts all boats.

Contributing to the fresh look and reputation for the northwest quadrant, a couple items that I saw:
Newly surfaced streets with underground utilities, street trees, sidewalks, streetlights, sidewalks built the length of every street, and bicycle and pedestrian connections to regional trails.
Landscaped commercial frontages with regular maintenance. Crime-free and garbage-free. Tasteful signage. South Cedar and 35th extended westerly to connect to South Tacoma Way on the Water Flume Trail.
Expanded Pierce Transit bus service and a new Sound Transit station to serve the neighborhood. And finally, a medical campus, restaurants, and entertainment that combine to make this a happening place, both day and night. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All right. Since I don't have the sign-in sheet. Justin.

JUSTIN LEIGHTON: Steal my thunder.

Justin Leighton. I live in the Hilltop, 2149 South "M" Street. I'm here, I'm going to do what I effectually call the David Bowe, where I'm going to wear several hats. And I will let you know when I take one hat off and put on another.
The first hat that I'm going to put on tonight is
I'm the cochair of the transportation commission.
And at our last meeting we had a good discussion with
Elliott about this subarea plan. And it is my
understanding that at one of your meetings you had
sought the transportation commission's point of view
on 37th Street. We haven't had an opportunity to get
there yet.

However, we -- I just want to let you know we do
have a subcommittee working on it and we will discuss
it at our next meeting and get a comment letter to
the Planning Commission, what we think not just about
37th Street, but generally how the plan in a
transportation perspective fits into the rest of the
city and what -- the transportation master plan. I
was telling Beverly, only us nerds carry around plans
in our cars and in our -- our bags.

Taking that hat off and just putting on "citizen
Justin" hat, I've had the great opportunity to
doorbell this district three times over and talking
with these neighbors about their community, folks
like Beverly Bowen Bennett. And not just walking
through their neighborhood, but understanding what
they want.

And I think that we all want a shared community
that is vibrant, that we encourage places where we live, work, and play all in the one spot so we don't have to rely on our vehicles. I think it's quite interesting. We talk a lot about walkability. And in the current environment -- and this is not just in this neighborhood, but in all parts of our own city and other cities -- these large parking lots. If you end up having to park at the end of it, there's no sidewalks to get you from your car all the way to the front door of the businesses. That's today. In fact, I actually encourage the Planning Commission to work with the transportation commission to figure out code to address that issue now for the entire city.

When I think about street trees and lighting and curb gutters, I think about a city. And I am lucky enough to travel around, not just this country, but the world. But the places I find myself wanting to continue to come back to are places that have all of these elements.

The master plan talks a lot about super-blocks and not creating those. And we need to break down those barriers. There are reasons why connectivity is important. It goes to the health of folks, from what we've heard from the department of health. When we encourage walking, when we encourage biking, when
we encourage folks to use transit, they're healthier. And when we have a healthier community, they're actually cheaper for us to serve on. I was able to cochair the Hilltop subarea plan. It took a long time. In fact, Commissioner Waller was a part of that effort. And I understand that this plan, just like that plan, is very aspirational and it's going to take years and decades to even see it through. And nothing is in these two plans are saying that it has to happen today or it's being forced upon you.

And my last comment, if I may. As a fellow commissioner that's served on other committees, it's our jobs to not just hear what is being heard today, but also try and represent those people that don't have the privilege to come to this meeting tonight because they're putting food on the table for their kids of they're at work or they just didn't have the ability to get here. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

All right. Was there anybody else?

Okay. So I'll remind everybody that the Planning Commission will continue to accept oral testimony on this topic through Friday, September 15th, 2017, at 5 p.m. And with that, I will close the public
1 hearing. Did I say written testimony? Yeah, written
2 testimony. Excuse me. Thank you, Vice Chair
3 Petersen. "At the conclusion of oral testimony,
4 state that written comments may be submitted."
5 All right. So we are moving on to -- we have two
6 communications items on the agenda. So we'll start
7 with Mr. Wung.
8 LIHUANG WUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair
9 and members of the Commission.
10 So just to reiterate your communication items.
11 First of all, you will be conducting a special
12 meeting next Wednesday, September 13th. It's a
13 special meeting because it's scheduled outside of the
14 regularly scheduled first and third Wednesdays'
15 meeting. And this particular meeting on the 13th
16 will be a public hearing. The subject of the public
17 hearing is the proposed tideflats area land use
18 interim regulations. The location will be the
19 Greater Tacoma Convention Center. The starting time
20 of the public hearing is 6 p.m. For -- interested
21 citizens can check more information on this Web
22 address: www.CityofTacoma.org/TideflatsInterim.
23 The second item is the council's IPS Committee
24 will be conducting a tour.
25 CHAIR WAMBACK: Mr. Wung.
LIHUANG WUNG: Yes.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Before you go on to that, can I ask the Commissioners to -- I'd like a show of hands of Commissioners that are planning to attend next Wednesday's hearing. Make sure that we are not running into a quorum problem. So one, two, three, four, five -- is that a "yes" or a "maybe"?

COMMISSIONER WALLER: That's a "yes."

CHAIR WAMBACK: That's a "yes." So that's six Commissioners. I, unfortunately, will be traveling out of town. Some family matters have come up. So that is six members. That is just one above our quorum.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's correct.

CHAIR WAMBACK: So that directly relates into the next item. So let's transition to the IPS tour.

LIHUANG WUNG: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to call on Elliott to talk about this IPS tour that will get into your scheduling of the 6:00 hearing. Elliott.

ELLIOTT BARNETT: Testing. Ah, thanks, Jeff.
Chair Wamback, the IPS Committee is going to be conducting a tour. It will start at 4:30, and we're trying to get it done by 5:45, partially because of your other commitment that night. And previously we had had four Planning Commissioners express willingness to go along on this -- on this ride. And we do think it would be valuable and important to have Commissioners there who might kind of listen and relay information back and forth. So there's no question of the value, but at the same time, you're very busy.

So hoping to get it done by 5:45. In fact, if you wanted to make sure you were done by, say, 5:30, we could work with you and figure out where to leave your car on the route and be sure to get you at least a half an hour to go from one meeting to the next.

With that, there had been four Commissioners expressing interest. And, great, I see Commissioner Edmonds, I think, expressing that you can join us on that tour. So that is great.

Are there other Commissioners who are able to carve that time out?

COMMISSIONER EDMONDS: Am I the only one?

ELLIOTT BARNETT: Going once.
CHAIR WAMBACK: I think that Commissioner Beale had expressed an interest, but I'm not sure. I'm playing e-mail tag. I'm not sure if he's actually going to be available next week.

The thing that I am concerned about -- again, I apologize. I'm not going to be able to be in town. But it's crucial that we have a quorum of Commissioners present so we can start the hearing at 6 p.m. Since we're expecting so many people to attend, I would say that the hearing at 6 p.m. is far more important than joining the city council, so...

ELLIOTT BARNETT: Agreed.

CHAIR WAMBACK: I think if Commissioner Edmonds is the only Commissioner that's going to go on the tour, I think it's good to have a Planning Commission presence, but at least having five people so we can start the meeting on time, 'cause we may have a lot of people there. And the longer --

COMMISSIONER EDMONDS: I will be there at --

CHAIR WAMBACK: So --

COMMISSIONER EDMONDS: -- the meeting.

CHAIR WAMBACK: All right. Well...
COMMISSIONER EDMONDS: I'll drive --
CHAIR WAMBACK: Good luck on --
COMMISSIONER EDMONDS: -- behind --
CHAIR WAMBACK: -- parking.

So -- so that's -- is there any special arrangements made for parking at the Convention Center for all the attendees? Are the garages going to be open that night? We'll take -- take transit. That's a good -- busses and transit? I've heard of those things.

Okay. So Commissioner Edmonds will be joining you, Elliott. And we'll get some other folks, as long as we don't run into a quorum problem.

ELLIOTT BARNETT: And other folks who are here, if you're interested in joining that tour, come and ask me about it and I can give you the details. Thank you.

CHAIR WAMBACK: Thank you.

Is there any other business before the Commission tonight? Any members have anything else they'd like to add?

All right. Well, I'd like to thank everybody for joining us tonight. Thank you for staff for arranging this location in the south Tacoma area. And with that, I'll call this meeting closed.
(Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.)
STATE OF WASHINGTON )    I, JOHN M.S. BOTELHO, CCR, RPR, ) ss a certified court reporter
County of Pierce    )    in the State of Washington, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing meeting of the CITY OF TACOMA PLANNING COMMISSION was had in my presence and adjourned on September 6, 2017, and thereafter was transcribed under my direction; that the transcript is a full, true and complete transcript of the said meeting, transcribed to the best of my ability;

That I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any party to this action or relative or employee of any such attorney or counsel and that I am not financially interested in the said action or the outcome thereof;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my signature on the 13th day of September, 2017.

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Attachment 3

Economic Comparative Analysis

Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan

September 15, 2017

WORKING DRAFT

Submitted to:

City of Tacoma
WASHINGTON

Submitted by:

cai community attributes inc
Community Attributes Inc. tells data-rich stories about communities that are important to decision makers.

President and CEO
Chris Mefford

Project Management and Analysis
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Madalina Calen
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INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The City of Tacoma has developed a draft subarea plan for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood (see the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan). CAI has contributed to the development of the subarea plan by providing real estate market analysis and an initial existing conditions assessment. The City now seeks to gain a better understanding of how proposed actions and investments called for in the subarea plan will impact the neighborhood, with a focus on economic impacts and indicators. In particular, the City desired an assessment of how proposed regulations and investments may impact the neighborhood economically. The analysis will in turn help guide policy level decisions related to the subarea plan and its adoption. Key ideas and priorities discussed with City staff included:

- Existing property owners need more information regarding the actions proposed through the subarea plan
- Work should provide additional context for policy makers and property owners
- The action should focus on the potential value created by the subarea plan and the proposed actions that it includes for the future
- The City has a package of proposals – infrastructure, regulations, new roadways through connectivity requirement) and wants to illustrate the potential value of these changes for stakeholders and land owners

In responses to the City’s aforementioned needs, the following analysis attempts to accomplish three things:

1. Illustrate the impacts of actions taken in other communities in the region
2. Provide examples of how other cities have implemented similar actions
3. Provide lessons and observations from other market areas to guide future implementation of the proposed subarea actions studies in the analysis

Methodology and Approach

The approach to this work focuses on evaluating the proposed actions for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea and providing context and data, through detailed case studies, on how such investments have impacted other neighborhoods and cities. The case studies examine the effects of City-led infrastructure investments on rents, property values, development opportunities and other metrics where possible. The projects studied through the case study analysis are selected based on their similarity to the investments called out in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea plan. They
are intended to provide a more definitive picture of potential impacts and illustrate how such investments can affect the local market area.

This report relies on analysis of existing and published data sources, supplemented by custom data queries of economic data by local government officials, and supplemented by interviews with expert stakeholders in industrial land for Pierce County and the region.

The methodology is based on the following framework:

1. Establish high-level objectives for the comparative case study analysis:
   a. Identify key factors that have affected the successes, challenges and barriers to effective implementation of similar actions in other comparable areas
   b. Assess the extent to which similar projects in other comparable areas were able to achieve their key objectives
2. Establish a set of criteria to help guide selection of 2-3 final case studies for each action
   a. Economic – land use and employment mix, household income distribution etc.
   b. Socio-demographic – population, connectivity etc.
   c. Real-estate market conditions – vacancy rates, property values etc.
3. Establish a set of criteria for evaluation
   a. Objectives and design
   b. Implementation and efficiency
   c. Effectiveness and results

Study Limitations. The analysis is not an appraised valuation. Community Attributes is not a licensed appraiser and this analysis is not intended to be used as a valuation of property in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea or intended for investment purposes. The analysis is an attempt to provide context regarding the economic impacts of infrastructure improvements and other investments called for in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan.
Organization of Report

The report is organized as follows:

- **Action Review.** The section describes the evaluation and selection process of actions selected for analysis.
- **Comparative Analysis.** The section is broken into the following components:
  - *Review of Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Existing Conditions.* Provides context for case study examples and conditions.
  - *City Action and City Profile.* For each City, the section is divided into a profile of the actions taken in that City followed by a summary of indicators that describe changes in the local economy and real estate market.
  - *Addition Connectivity Analysis.* Provides additional research on the connectivity requirement.
- **Findings and Observations.** Summary of findings from the comparative analysis.
ACTION REVIEW

Action Review and Evaluation

The City and CAI worked collaboratively to review the subarea plan proposed actions. The process included a workshop with the City’s project team as well as a stakeholder representative to review and select projects for further study. A formal survey of the workshop attendees was also conducted to help inform the action selection process. The survey and workshop were leveraged to narrow the analysis down to several actions that the City has identified. Exhibit 1 illustrates the initial snapshot of actions reviewed through the staff workshop and follow up survey.

Exhibit 1. Initial Actions Reviewed, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan, 2017

| Qualitative | Establish a coherent attractive neighborhood structure |
| Fosters a positive identity for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood |
| Support community engagement efforts |
| Upfront EIS | Permit streamlining - no project level SEPA review |
| Data available on stormwater and transportation infrastructure |
| Certainty that utilities will be available with planned development. |
| Public infrastructure investments | Near, mid, and long-term transportation projects |
| Regional bus service, high capacity transit, and a new central transit station |
| Complete streets design guidelines for public and private streets |
| Area-wide stormwater and green streets investments |
| Development regulations | Zoning changes that create transitions in scale, establish 2 residential areas, add industrial area to the Center |
| Commercial and residential design standards updates |
| Connectivity requirement for large-scale development |
| Zoning flexibility through Development Regulation Agreements |
| Funding actions | Strong case for getting grants |
| Calls for new funding sources (e.g. City catalytic fund, impact fees) |
| Public agencies focus | City community and economic development programs, cleanups, enforcement |
| WSDOT, transit agencies focus |
| Redevelop Madison School as a community hub |
| Focus efforts on catalyst sites |
| Parks improvements and new parks construction |
The following section describes the action selected for further study. In addition, it provides context on the selection of case study examples and the framework though which examples were selected.

**Actions for Review**
The comparative analysis is centered on the following actions selected for further study. The previously described framework for the analysis provides for a review of similar actions taken in communities with the Puget Sound Region. Exhibit 2 describes the actions selected for analysis within the study.

**Exhibit 2. Subarea Plan Actions Selected for Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Actions</th>
<th>Findings and Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Near, Mid, and Long-term Transportation Projects</strong></td>
<td>Examining projects that improved circulation and in incorporated new roads in existing urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Calls for New Funding Sources</strong></td>
<td>Reviewing funding strategies and implementation at the subarea and city wide level, including mechanisms similar to Tacoma’s Catalytic fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connectivity Requirement for Large-Scale Development</strong></td>
<td>Focused on understanding how other cities have incorporated connectivity and circulation requirements on large block developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permit Streamlining – Planned Action EIS</strong></td>
<td>Many cities have incorporated this as a development tool and incentive with varying levels of impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Case Study Selection Framework
Case studies were selected based on the following criteria:

- Actions- Types of actions and investments made by the City
- Timeframe – when were the actions implemented
- Economic Activity – Has the area attracted recent investment
- Implementation – What role did the City play in implementation

Exhibit 3 illustrates the cities and evaluation process leveraged to select comparisons for the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea. Many communities are implementing similar efforts across the region.

Exhibit 3. Case Study Evaluation by City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Kent</th>
<th>Bothell</th>
<th>Bel Red Corridor (Bellevue)</th>
<th>Federal Way</th>
<th>Northgate (Seattle)</th>
<th>Downtown Tacoma</th>
<th>Mountlake Terrace</th>
<th>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</th>
<th>Tukwila</th>
<th>Everett</th>
<th>Northgate (Seattle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permit streamlining - no project level SEPA review</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near, mid, and long-term transportation projects</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity requirement for large-scale development</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls for new funding sources (e.g. City catalytic fund, impact fees)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the purposes of the analysis Bothell, Kent and Bellevue were selected based on their alignment with the aforementioned criteria. In addition, Bellevue and the BelRed Subarea was selected because of its recent implementation of large block connectivity requirements (Exhibit 4).

**Exhibit 4. Case Study Example by City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Type</th>
<th>Kent, WA - Downtown and Kent Station</th>
<th>Bothell, WA - Bothell Crossroads and Landing</th>
<th>Bellevue, WA - Bel-Red Subarea Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permit streamlining - no project level SEPA review</td>
<td>Downtown Subarea Action Plan</td>
<td>Bothell Crossroads Plan Action EIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near, mid, and long-term transportation projects - <em>Loop road/road realignment</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bothell Crossroads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity requirement for large-scale development</td>
<td>Kent Station Plan/Ramsay Way</td>
<td>Bothell Landing Downtown Development Requirements</td>
<td>Bel-Red Subarea Plan Connectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls for new funding sources - <em>Impact Fees</em></td>
<td>Transportation impact fees</td>
<td>Transportation impact fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls for new funding sources - <em>City catalytic fund</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>TIF program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section provides more detail on each case study. The section begins with an overview of Tacoma existing conditions, which can be referred to as context when evaluating the applicability and relative market position of each community studied,
CAI initiated the analysis with a cursory review of real estate conditions in the subarea and Tacoma Market. CAI completed an existing conditions analysis at the outset of the plan and recently completed a feasibility assessment for the planning effort as well. As such, the focus of the existing conditions update was on real estate indicators to test whether conditions had changed significantly since the previous analysis was completed. In addition, the baseline data provides a comparison for the comparative analysis provided later in the report.

**Development History**

The subarea’s commercial stock is generally older than its multifamily stock ([Exhibits 5 and 6](#)). After the Mall was built in the 1960s, the most productive time for commercial development in the subarea, there was still fairly strong development through the 1990s. This has since tapered. Most of the multifamily development in the subarea has taken place since 2000, though a significant portion occurred in the 1970s.

**Exhibit 5. Commercial Dev. Sq. Ft., Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 1930-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rentable SF Built</th>
<th>60,500</th>
<th>32,000</th>
<th>180,000</th>
<th>300,000</th>
<th>485,000</th>
<th>750,000</th>
<th>710,000</th>
<th>245,000</th>
<th>4,500</th>
<th>-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1930</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017*
**Industrial and Retail**

Across Tacoma, industrial rents average $6.28 per square foot and the average vacancy rate is 2.6%. Retail vacancy rates have fallen from just over 10% in 2016 to around 7% in Q1 of 2017.

**Exhibit 7. Industrial Vacancy Rate and Rents, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 2007-2017**

![Graph showing industrial vacancy rate and rents from 2007 to 2017.](image)

*Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017*

**Exhibit 8. Retail Vacancy Rate and Rents, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 2007-2017**

![Graph showing retail vacancy rate and rents from 2007 to 2017.](image)

*Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017*
Office and Multifamily

The current office market in the subarea is very similar to that of the larger Tacoma area, where office rent currently averages $21.05 per square foot and vacancy is at 7.3%. Across Tacoma and across all unit types, the average multifamily vacancy rate is 4%.

Exhibit 9. Office Vacancy Rate and Rents, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 2007-2017

Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017

Exhibit 10. Multifamily Vacancy Rate and Rents, Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 2007-2017

Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017
Market Absorption

Retail absorption has experienced a few dramatic swings over the past decade, with otherwise minimal activity. Net office absorption has not experienced the same swings in this period.


Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017


Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017
Exhibit 13 shows how median home sale values per square foot (both single and multifamily) in South Tacoma, home to the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, compare to those in nearby neighborhoods over the 20 years. As shown, values have been low compared to neighbors, but have been steadily rising since 2012.

**Exhibit 13. Median Home Value/SF, South Tacoma and Other Neighborhoods, 1996-2017**

*Source: Zillow, 2017.*
In 2015, there were an estimated 9,996 jobs in the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, 9.3% more than in the previous year (Exhibit 14). Despite the proximity of the South Tacoma Manufacturing and Industrial Center, the focus of employment in the study area is primarily as a retail center anchored by the Tacoma Mall. Services, particularly accommodation and food services, as well as government services are also key sectors for employment in the neighborhood. The services sector has added more than 700 jobs between 2014 and 2015, an increase of over 26%.


![Bar chart showing employment by industry from 2014 to 2015.](chart.png)

**Source:** Puget Sound Regional Council, 2017.

**Note:** Certain industries are suppressed in the PSRC data for this geography; approximate values estimated from larger geographies, control totals.

**Definitions:** Warehousing, Transportation and Utilities (WTU), Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)
Bothell Action Profile

The following section provides a profile of application actions studies in the City of Bothell, WA.

- Near, mid and long term transportation projects
- Connectivity Requirements

Near, mid, and long-term transportation projects – Bothell Crossroads

The Bothell Crossroads project is part of Bothell's Downtown Revitalization Plan launched in 2006 that capitalizes on the historic charm of the City's Main Street, bringing new residential, retail, office, mixed-use and an expanded park system in the downtown district.

Background and objectives
The Bothell Crossroads project was generated by the community through a long and intensive public process. This process began with interaction between Kenmore and Bothell to define the corridor needs within their city limits. In 2003 and 2004 a public planning effort concluded with the City of Bothell's Council's endorsing Alternative G (also known as the Bothell Crossroads). During the 2006 and 2007 Bothell Downtown Plan visioning process, Bothell Crossroads was solidly endorsed by both the public and Council. The project was central to the vision that emerged: a pedestrian friendly downtown with a vibrant Main Street that is not overshadowed by the nearby highway.

Previously, downtown Bothell was bisected by two state routes (SR 527 and SR 522) which served as barriers to local traffic, as well as pedestrian and bicycle circulation. The downtown was invisible to passing motorists and had a poor entrance to welcome visitors to Bothell. It was also disconnected from the historic Sammamish River waterfront that includes the regional Sammamish Rivers/ Burke Gilman Trail system. The critical intersection of SR 522/ SR 527 / Main Street was experiencing high levels of peak-hour traffic congestion and was projected to degrade further without any improvements. All of this made creating a cohesive downtown core difficult which, in turn, inhibited economic development and sustainability.

The Bothell Crossroads project aimed to provide remedies to the existing conditions by realigning State Route 522 to the south between Hall Road and 102nd Avenue NE. This creates a new grid of downtown blocks, eliminates physical barriers and reduces heavy traffic congestion during peak hour on a major commute corridor around Lake Washington. Despite the two highways running through the community, the changes allow residents to easily walk
and cycle in an attractive setting between the downtown amenities. The project also integrates community expectations related to promoting economic revitalization and sustained urban land use.

**Costs and funding**
The City of Bothell has completed public investments of over $150 million as part of the revitalization of the downtown: $50 million has been spent on buying property and another $100 million was spent on infrastructure. To facilitate the effort, Bothell brought together approximately 15 people from departments across the City to form a dedicated project and management team. These staff members were supplemented by external consultants who worked with the City team on downtown planning efforts ($300,000); marketing and economic studies ($150,000), environmental impacts study, engineering and design of parks, open space, five major roadways, etc. *(Source: Association of Washington Cities, 2011 Municipal Excellence Awards Submission, City of Bothell Downtown Redevelopment; City of Bothell Media Release, State Highway 522 Realignment Opens - Significant Regional Transportation and Downtown Redevelopment Project)*

The Crossroads project is one of the highest ranked economic development projects proposed by the State Community Economic Redevelopment Board and is included in the City’s $150 million public infrastructure improvements. The project was developed in three phases. Crossroads Phase I was completed for a total cost of $339,224. Crossroads Phase II had a final project cost of $2,094,747, with $1,135,048 allocated to the Downtown Contaminated Soil and Groundwater Cleanup project.

Crossroads Phase III costs included: predesign ($62,000), design ($6,779,000), ROW acquisition ($25,615,000) and construction ($20,747,000). The breakdown of Phase III estimated project funding is shown in the table below *(Exhibit 15)*. The main source of funding was the city’s Capital Improvement Fund which covered approximately 42% of total project costs for this phase.
Exhibit 15. Crossroads Phase III Estimated Costs and Funding Sources ($ Mil)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Total Secured Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Improvement Fund (Real Estate Excise Tax)</td>
<td>$20,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Improvement Fund (Traffic Impact Fees Transfer)</td>
<td>$1,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arterial Street Fund</td>
<td>$1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond Anticipation Note</td>
<td>$9,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Awarded (CTED)</td>
<td>$6,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Awarded (TIB)</td>
<td>$3,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Contribution (WSDOT Overlay)</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigation - Brightwater</td>
<td>$650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works Trust Fund</td>
<td>$7,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities - Sewer</td>
<td>$518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities - Water</td>
<td>$835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$52,973</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Crossroads Phase III Estimated Costs and Funding Sources, City of Bothell

Implementation

The project started in 2010, finished in 2014, and was implemented in three stages:

1. Phase I of the work began in 2010 and was physically completed later that year. This phase of the project involved demolishing fourteen buildings in the area of the future SR 522 alignment, hazardous materials abatement and utility disconnections.

2. Phase II started the same year (2010) and was physically completed later that year. This phase included site clearing, stockpiling of preload material and contaminated soil cleanup.

3. Phase III began in 2012 and finished 2014. This third and final phase of Bothell Crossroads consisted of site grading, roadway construction, utility installation and landscaping.

Several important actions taken by the city of Bothell over the last eight years have contributed to the current success in transforming its downtown:

(Source: Association of Washington Cities, 2011 Municipal Excellence Awards Submission, City of Bothell Downtown Redevelopment; City of Bothell Media Release, State Highway 522 Realignment Opens - Significant Regional Transportation and Downtown Redevelopment Project)
– To create a funding account for future downtown investments, in 2005, City leadership established a policy that required all its one-time revenues to be set aside. These revenues would be used only for one-time expenses, such as infrastructure and facility improvements. Money from the fund has significantly shaped the revitalized downtown core.

– To create developer interest and market demand for Bothell’s downtown parcels, the City of Bothell has taken on the role of master developer. The City purchased 25 acres of land within the Downtown. Seven of those acres were set aside for parks and infrastructure while the rest was to be sold to developers. The city used its ability to apply for state money and grants to install the necessary infrastructure and conduct environmental cleanup of the properties before selling back to developers.

– To provide a framework for the downtown redevelopment, City leadership focused first on the design, development and funding of important roadway infrastructure projects such as the Bothell Crossroads project. In 2007 the City of Bothell applied for, and was awarded the opportunity to participate in the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) Program pilot, a limited form of tax increment financing that provides up to $1 million/year (for 25 years). This allowed the City of Bothell to invest $53 million in acquiring property and design projects to catalyze private investment in the City’s downtown redevelopment.

One of the biggest challenges of the Crossroads project as mentioned by Ryan Roberts, the project engineer, was coordinating with all the different government, regional, and utility agencies and to meet their needs. This was resolved by developing lines of communication early on with all key agencies and addressing all issues and concerns as quickly as possible. (Source: Walkable Washington Case Study - Bothell Crossroads Project, Feet First)

Outcomes
In a three year comprehensive process, Bothell city and its citizens defined a clear vision for the City’s future. Their efforts to create a vibrant downtown have not gone unnoticed and have proven influential in the recruitment of major businesses. On the heels of the planning process, McMenamins, an Oregon based company known for repurposing historically significant buildings as hospitality hubs agreed to purchase and redevelop the historic Anderson School in downtown Bothell. The company created a complex that includes a hotel, a movie theater, a brewery, three bars and three restaurants and a community pool. The public-private partnership with McMenamins gives Bothell citizens free access to the pool, meeting space and garden for 15 years.
Other private developers followed as more parcels were sold and redeveloped into retail, office and residential space. The Bothell Downtown Development map shows the pending or completed city parcel sales in purple together with information on the buyer and the proposed development for each parcel. Other developments are highlighted in blue.

Exhibit 16. Bothell Downtown Development Map

Due partially to the positive energy created by the redevelopment, existing business centers outside of downtown, including Canyon Park and North Creek, are becoming more desirable locations for firms in biotech, information and other related industries. This is a case where a major planning process focused on creating an excellent sense of place is retaining and attracting key firms and industry clusters and improving local business viability (Source: Economic Development Roadmap for Washington Cities, Washington APA Support Economic Development Working Group).
An economic impact study of the downtown redevelopment reports the following potential impacts over 25 years of development:

- $668 million in private investment is prompted by the proposed public projects catalyzed by the Crossroads and other public investments here;
- 2,700 diverse housing unit types providing high-quality work force housing;
- 250,000 sq. feet of new Class A office space providing an attractive lure to employers;
- 400,000 sq. feet of new retail space adding amenities and convenience to downtown;
- 1,600 net new permanent jobs – FTE engineers, scientists, attorneys, financial analysts, health care, retail and food service jobs being created;
- Estimated net new State and Bothell taxes generated by development within the RDA is a combined total of $190,129,000.

Bothell Crossroads was a primary catalyst project of the downtown revitalization plan. Crossroads created a better connection between the new downtown development to the historic Main Street and safer pedestrian access to this area. It also stimulated business development with its two new blocks for retailers that were created after the construction. Crossroads also improved traffic and freight flow by eliminating a bottleneck and is expected to improve transit ridership and provide more reliability.

The Crossroads project triggered other important transportation improvements in the area such as: the SR 527 Multiway Boulevard, that creates a pedestrian-friendly boulevard with street parking while maintaining arterial traffic volumes; the Main Street Extension, that creates a vital east-west connection and completes the city street/block grid; the Main Street Enhancement, that rebuilds the entire streetscape to allow the street to compete with the new development.
Connectivity Requirements for Large Development

Without proper internal circulation, large block developments can exacerbate traffic issues and create inefficient routing patterns by establishing the need to travel around the development rather than straight through along the existing grid. These challenges will be especially acute for pedestrians and cyclists, who may have to physically travel much further.

**Background and objectives**

Connectivity Requirements are an effort to avoid these issues by requiring that certain new developments provide internal road and/or pedestrian circulation. This can be accomplished as part of a development agreement or formalized in the zoning code.

There are two broad approaches to setting connectivity requirements, depending on project intent. If there are a few specific connections required, these can be established and mapped as new pre-located streets or pedestrian paths, with specific locations and standards set to be provided by the developer of the property. If there is a broader goal in breaking up large blocks or encouraging finer-grained street networks, tools like a connectivity index standard or setting a maximum parcel perimeter for new development can be considered for subdivision regulations. A connectivity index is calculated by dividing the number of nodes (intersections) by the number of links (street segments between nodes). Cities can establish minimum index values by zone. Maximum parcel perimeter rules establish that parcels over a certain maximum perimeter must be divided with new streets to create parcels under the maximum perimeter. These tools give the developer flexibility in where they decide to place new streets and pedestrian pathways.

Before implementation of Bothell Crossroads, there was a lack of connections from Bothell Way to the neighborhoods on its western side. In addition, there were a number of very large parcels ready for development. The City desired a walkable downtown district, which would require a finer grained street network.
Implementation

To achieve this goal, Bothell deployed both approaches to ensuring adequate connectivity in new development. First, it established the critical need for a specific connection from Bothell Way to the west. This new street was laid out in the new downtown regulations, as shown with a purple dashed line in Exhibit 17.

To also ensure the rest of the development in the district supported the desired urban fabric, the City implemented a maximum parcel perimeter of 1500 feet. Beyond this point, a new street is required.

Outcomes

The City was able to sell the property to a developer willing to build according to their vision. The new connection was built, along with new high quality mixed use buildings. New development since this action was codified includes more than 200 multifamily housing units, with more than 700 to come online shortly.
Bothell City Profile

The Bothell City profile includes analysis and data on the following indicators:

Economic and Demographic Conditions

- Population Density (Persons per Square Mile), 2010 – 2016
- Median Household Income
- Mean Quintile Household Income
- Covered Employment
- Change in Industry Employment

Real Estate Market Conditions

- Multifamily Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Multifamily Development History and Pipeline
- Office Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Office Development History and Pipeline
- Retail Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Retail Development History and Pipeline
**Land Use and Development**

The City of Bothell features two major commercial centers with divergent character – its downtown, located within the study area tract shown above, and Canyon Park, located to the north and east of the City. Downtown Bothell represents the City’s historic core, with shops and restaurants catering to local residents, while Canyon Park is home to business centers and light industrial campuses for a range of internationally-known businesses.

*Exhibit 18. Land Use by Parcel, City of Kent, 2017*
Bothell Economic and Demographic Conditions


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Area Bothell</td>
<td>3,493</td>
<td>3,415</td>
<td>3,438</td>
<td>3,504</td>
<td>3,518</td>
<td>3,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Bothell</td>
<td>2,728</td>
<td>2,745</td>
<td>2,767</td>
<td>2,804</td>
<td>3,004</td>
<td>3,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastside Region</td>
<td>3,218</td>
<td>3,242</td>
<td>3,351</td>
<td>3,398</td>
<td>3,464</td>
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<td>King County</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Exhibit 21. Mean Quintile Household Income, 2010 - 2015


Sources: Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2017; Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), Covered Employment Estimates, 2017; CAI, 2017
Bothell Real Estate Market Conditions

Exhibit 24. Multifamily Rents and Vacancy, 2008-2017

Exhibit 25. Multifamily Development History & Pipeline


Exhibit 27. Office Development History & Pipeline

Exhibit 28. Retail Rents and Vacancy, 2008-2017

Exhibit 29. Retail Development History & Pipeline

Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017
**Demographics**

The population of the study area neighborhood in downtown Bothell was approximately 4,700 persons in 2015, which represents 11% of the total population of the City of Bothell. The downtown neighborhood population increased by 1.1% on average per year between 2010 and 2015, compared to 4.9% for the city’s population. The area is more densely populated than the City of Bothell, with almost 3,700 persons per square mile in 2015. Future residential development resulting from the Bothell downtown revitalization could lead to even stronger growth in population density.

Median household income in the study area neighborhood has followed an upward trend between 2009 and 2015, increasing at an annualized rate of 3.1%, as opposed to 1.9% for the City of Bothell. **Exhibit 21** illustrates the evolution of mean quintile household income in the study area between 2010 and 2015. Mean income grew the most for the third quintile at an average annualized rate of 4.2% and fell for the lowest quintile at an average annualized rate of 6.5%.

**Employment**

Employment in the study area neighborhood in downtown Bothell was approximately 2,062 jobs in 2015, which represents 7% of the total employment of the City of Bothell. While employment in the City of Bothell has experienced relatively steady growth between 2005 and 2010, the downtown neighborhood employment has dropped significantly following the recession. It has started to recover in 2013 but remains below the pre-recession level. The decline in employment was likely linked to the departure of several businesses, including a downtown grocery store which moved to another neighborhood within the City. New development activity and retail is also not likely represented in the current covered employment data, which only reflect employment levels through 2015. New restaurants and hotels (McMenamins for example), will have a significant impact on the amount of employment in the City’s downtown.

Study area employment is mainly concentrated in the services sector (51%), followed by retail (12%) and government (12%). Employment in the construction and resources industry has increased significantly between 2010 and 2015, most likely as a result of the construction work happening in the area as part of the downtown revitalization plan. More industries such as retail are expected to continue to experience a growth in employment as more developments are added to the Bothell downtown area as a result of revitalization efforts.
**Taxable Retail Sales**

Bothell City taxable retail sales have grown at an annualized rate of 2% from $396 million in 2005 to $495 million in 2016. Taxable retail sales from restaurants, hotels and entertainment have grown at a significantly faster rate (5.6%) than general retail taxable sales (0.9%).

**Real Estate Indicators**

As shown in the dashboard (*Exhibits 24-29*), multifamily development in Bothell has refocused downtown in the years since its revitalization efforts began. Nearly all of the currently planned multifamily development is slated for the development area as well, while new office development has yet to take hold there.

Over the past 20 years, downtown multifamily rents have tracked consistently lower relative to the City overall, while vacancy has remained close to the overall average. This trend is likely to be impacted by several large new apartment buildings about to open downtown. While there has been little office production in recent years downtown, downtown office rents have trended higher compared to the City overall and vacancy has been lower, though there has been a recent disruption resulting from a local fire incident. Downtown retail vacancy has generally trended much lower compared to the City overall, though it has been uneven. Downtown retail rents jumped in 2016, reversing the trend in recent years.
Kent Action Profile

The following section provides a profile of applicable actions studies in the City of Kent, WA.

- Permit Streamlining
- Connectivity Requirements
- New Funding Sources

Permit streamlining - no project level SEPA review – City of Kent Station Planned Action

The City of Kent adopted planned actions in 2002, for Kent Station, and in 2014, for its downtown subarea. This profile will detail the 2002 planned action.

**Background and objectives**
In the late 1990s, the City of Kent was challenged with high levels of retail leakage to surrounding communities and an undiversified tax base that relied heavily on industrial uses. The downtown area lacked identity and activity.

Borden Chemical operated a glue factory downtown, Kent’s last active downtown industrial use, and was planning to expand. The City took the opportunity to negotiate with Borden to instead acquire the 20-acre property and help the company relocate. Located immediately adjacent to the Sounder commuter rail station and blocks from the historic downtown, the site was well-positioned for redevelopment as a new, modern mixed-use center.

**Implementation**
The City had set some specific requirements as part of its vision for the redevelopment, including connectivity requirements to maintain a public, pedestrian-friendly street through the development. In addition to its active role in acquiring the site, the City pursued a Planned Action EIS to facilitate the site cleanup.

The planned action, which was adopted in 2002, encompassed 25 acres and allowed for development capacity of 514,800 sf commercial, 200 hotel rooms, a 169,400 sf conference center, 480 housing units, 53,000 sf parks and open space and 2,932 parking spaces.

In order to attract a developer that would meet these requirements in an uncertain market, the City decided to sell the property at a below-market price. While controversial within the community, this was the critical factor in attracting a private developer to build the project as planned.
Outcomes
Kent Station was developed consistent with the City’s plans. The City’s tax base is diversifying and growing, and has attracted new types of tenants beyond retail, such as the Green River College. Following the City’s work in another public-private partnership to develop apartments near Kent Station, several multifamily developments have been built in the neighborhood.

Kent Station has become well known, and by extension, Downtown Kent has become better known and more attractive to development. According to City staff, “rooftops have followed retail” in this case, as opposed to the traditional saying that “retail follows rooftops”. There is a current challenge related to this, as some businesses in the historic downtown relocated to Kent Station, and these old spaces have remained vacant.

Land values have been rising in the area around Kent Station, though there are many legacy property owners in the area who have not been opting to sell yet. The City anticipates that it will soon attract its first hotel, which will serve the nearby convention center.

Kent’s 2002 Planned Action EIS successfully facilitated a large redevelopment, but it was not the only factor. While this project had the particular challenge of a brownfield redevelopment, a Planned Action alone is still not sufficient to overcome unfavorable economics. By selling the property below market and developing a clear vision for its use, the City was in a better position to negotiate the redevelopment.

Connectivity Requirements for Large Scale Development – Ramsay Way
While Bothell has benefited from a strong market to support the viability of new development in its Crossroads project, the City of Kent needed the Kent Station project to serve as a catalyst for its struggling downtown. As a result, the City had to take on an active role in ensuring the site was redeveloped to a higher standard to serve as a community asset.

Background and Objectives
While the City wanted to attract a single developer for Kent Station, it did not want to see a standard auto-oriented strip mall, as would likely be supported by rents at the time. It planned for a pedestrian-oriented lifestyle center than could blend into the downtown urban network. As a result, it was key to maintain a public road through the center, which would eventually be known as Ramsay Way. This street was planned to feature a quality pedestrian environment, on-street parking, and other pedestrian-friendly features. Once successfully developed and occupied, Kent Station would demonstrate that this type of development is desirable and economically viable in Kent. In addition, it would provide a better sense of identity for
downtown, which suffered from retail leakage to neighboring areas and a lack of foot traffic even from local residents.

**Implementation**
As the City was the owner of the property, it was able to negotiate directly with potential developers and set conditions on the property’s sale and redevelopment. It conceded that requiring the developer to provide public infrastructure in the form of a new street and pedestrian improvements would not be economically feasible in an emerging market. To overcome this barrier, the City decided to sell the property below market value in exchange for the public street.

**Outcomes**
The City was able to find a developer willing to work with its terms and build Ramsay Way as planned. With the public street, Kent Station provides a unique shopping experience compared to the typical suburban retail development, and has drawn more residents back to Downtown Kent.

**Calls for new funding sources – City of Kent Transportation Impact Fees**
Impact fees are one-time charges assessed by a local government against a new development project to help pay for new or expanded public facilities that will directly address the increased demand created by that development. Cities can impose impact fees for several different purposes, specifically for: transportation; publicly owned parks, open space, and recreation facilities; school facilities; and fire protection facilities.

**Background and objectives**
The primary enabling mechanism for imposing impact fees in Washington is the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA of 1990 specifically authorized the use of impact fees for areas planning under the Growth Management Act.

These fees are collected to improve the transportation system to accommodate the higher travel demand added by new development. Local governments, in line with the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 82.02.050), use transportation fees:

- To ensure that adequate public facilities will be constructed to serve new development and growth;
- To implement a public policy that new development should pay a portion of the cost of facilities that it requires, and that
existing development should not pay all of the cost of such facilities; and

– To obtain revenue to pay for some of the cost of new public facilities.

The City of Kent adopted transportation impact fees in 2010. In addition to transportation impact fees, the City of Kent funds transportation capital projects using the General fund, Street fund, Local Improvement Districts, Business and Occupation Tax, Solid Waste Utility tax, and grant revenue from local, state and federal governments.

**Implementation**

For the City of Kent to impose GMA impact fees, the following requirements had to be met:

– The city must have an ordinance authorizing impact fees that follows the requirements of RCW 82.02.050 et seq.
– The city must establish one or more service area for fees
– A formula or other method for calculating impact fees must be established
– The fees must be based on, and used for, specific improvement projects in the Transportation Master Plan
– The projects must be “system improvements” that provide a service to users

Scoping and consultant procurement, analysis and fee development and a plan for program implementation was required to develop the transportation impact fee program. The City also needed to put in place business processes to support the operations of its impact fee program.

The development of a transportation fee program for the City of Kent followed several steps. Firstly, an impact fee project improvement list was compiled, which included selected transportation capacity projects from the City’s Transportation Element adopted in June 2008. During the development of the City's Transportation Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan Element, the City identified street and road projects needed by 2030 to meet the adopted Level of Service (LOS) standards. These capital projects form the basis for the City's impact fee project list.

This list of projects was then analyzed to determine what proportion of need is due to existing deficiencies. RCW 82.02 requires impact fees to be based on the City's Capital Facilities Plan which must identify existing deficiencies in transportation system for current development, capacity of existing transportation system available for new development, and additional transportation system capacity needed for new development. Future development cannot be held responsible for the portion of added capacity needed to serve existing development.
Cost allocation was the next step in the process. Eligible project costs were distributed either within the City and Annexation Areas or to external areas. Travel modeling and land use data were provided by the City’s travel demand model. The final step was the actual calculation of the impact fees that resulted in a fee schedule which shows fees as dollars per unit of development for different land use categories.

**Outcomes**
Impact fees, like user fees, offer a more efficient way to pay for infrastructure than general taxes, and ensure benefits to those who pay them. Academic literature suggests that the aggregate benefits of impact fees improve efficiency in the provision of infrastructure. Impact fees can directly fund vital infrastructure improvements, while increasing the supply of buildable land, improving predictability in the development process, and indirectly promoting local employment at the same time.

In some cases, impact fees can slow growth by increasing costs to developers, pushing some developers out of the market and/or putting downward pressure on land values which may reduce the number of transactions. Impact fees could also indirectly support future growth by making neighborhoods more attractive for new development through investments in infrastructure, possibly leading to more population growth and attracting additional businesses. It is difficult to predict the likelihood of these countervailing forces cancelling one another out as opposed to either dominating the other.
KENT CITY PROFILE

The Kent City profile includes analysis and data on the following indicators:

**Economic and Demographic Conditions**

- Population Density (Persons per Square Mile), 2010 – 2016
- Median Household Income
- Mean Quintile Household Income
- Covered Employment
- Change in Industry Employment

**Real Estate Market Conditions**

- Multifamily Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Multifamily Development History and Pipeline
- Office Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Office Development History and Pipeline
- Retail Rents and Vacancy Rates
- Retail Development History and Pipeline
**Land Use and Development**

Kent is one of the region’s industrial centers, and this is reflected in its land use. Most of northwest Kent consists of industrial uses. Its downtown sits on the southern tip of the City’s largest industrial concentration, and features both historic commercial streets and a newer lifestyle center, Kent Station. Two other commercial areas with big box and other auto-oriented retail lie to the east and west.

**Exhibit 30. Land Use by Parcel, City of Kent, 2017**
Kent Economic and Demographic Conditions


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<th>2015</th>
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<td>970</td>
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<td>102</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Exhibit 33. Mean Quintile Household Income, 2010 - 2015

Exhibit 34. Covered Employment, 2005 - 2015

Exhibit 35. Change in Industry Employment, 2005 - 2015

Sources: Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2017; Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), Covered Employment Estimates, 2017; CAI, 2017
Kent Real Estate Market Conditions

Exhibit 36. Multifamily Rents and Vacancy, 2008-2017

Exhibit 37. Multifamily Development History & Pipeline

Exhibit 38. Office Rents and Vacancy, 2008-2017

Exhibit 39. Office Development History & Pipeline

Exhibit 40. Retail Rents and Vacancy, 2008-2017

Exhibit 41. Retail Development History & Pipeline

Source: CAI, 2017; CoStar, 2017
**Demographics**

The population of the study area neighborhood in Kent was approximately 3,800 persons in 2015, which represents just over 3% of the total population of the City of Bothell. The population of the study area increased by 8.2% on average per year between 2010 and 2015, compared to 5.9% for the city’s population. The area is more densely populated than the City of Kent, with almost 4,900 persons per square mile in 2015.

Median household income in the study area neighborhood has not changed much between 2009 and 2015 and has remained significantly lower than the median income for the City as a whole. **Exhibit 33** illustrates the evolution of mean quintile household income in the study area between 2010 and 2015. Mean income grew at an average annualized rate of 1.6%, 2.3% and 0.6% for the second, third and fourth quintile and fell by 7.1% and 2% for the lowest and highest quintile respectively.

**Employment**

Employment in the study area neighborhood in Kent was 3,566 jobs in 2015, which represents 5% of the total employment of the City of Kent in that year. Following the recession, employment in the study area has dropped from 4,126 jobs in 2009 to 3,294 jobs in 2013. The start of a recovery can be observed in 2013 but employment in the study area remains below pre-recession levels. In contrast, employment in the City of Kent has recovered much sooner and at a faster rate after the recession, increasing on average by 3.3% per year between 2010 and 2015.

Study area employment is mainly concentrated in the services sector (57%), followed by government (18%) and retail (10%). The number of jobs in the service sector have been increasing steadily since 2005, as opposed to employment in the manufacturing sector which has been in decline during the same period.

**Taxable Retail Sales**

Kent City taxable retail sales have decreased at an annualized rate of 3% from $1,336 million in 2005 to $1,008 million in 2016. The most significant decline has been in the furniture and home furnishings sector as well as miscellaneous store retailers sector.

**Real Estate Indicators**

As shown in the dashboard (**Exhibits 36-41**), all of the City’s post-recession multifamily development has been located downtown. While retail and office deliveries have been light overall recently, the Kent Station development,
which began in 2003, represented a significant portion of the City's retail and office development from 2003-2009.

Downtown multifamily rents suddenly climbed to rise above those across the City in 2014, while vacancy has dipped below the City average and will drop below 5% if trends continue. Downtown office vacancy has been much lower compared to the City overall, and rents have been slightly higher. Downtown retail vacancy has dropped well below overall retail vacancy in the past three years. While downtown rents have been fairly stable, rents in the City overall have dropped in recent years.
ADDITIONAL CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS

The following section provides additional perspective on connectivity requirements

Connectivity Requirement – BelRed Subarea, Bellevue, WA

The City of Bellevue adopted the BelRed Subarea Plan in 2009 after four years of community input, public meetings and analysis. Amongst many of the policy, code and capital improvements planned for the area, the City faced an existing street and block network that was a major hurdle to redevelopment. The following provides a review of the connectivity requirements developed for the BelRed Subarea with a focus on how the City has implemented the new development regulations related to large block development.

Background and Objectives

The BelRed Subarea was formerly an underutilized light industrial. With its proximity to downtown Bellevue and the future planned light rail line through the neighborhood, the City identified this area as a key component of the City’s future growth. As such, the plan focused on transforming the neighborhood into a mixed use center with a dense mix of housing and commercial uses. The physical character of the existing neighborhood, similar to portions of the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, was largely defined by large block sites with little connectivity and infrastructure for pedestrians.

Exhibit 42. Bel-Red Subarea, City of Bellevue

Source: City of Bellevue, 2017
Implementation
The City, much like the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan, developed a comprehensive series of infrastructure improvements, with a particular focus on improving transportation and mobility for all modes of travel.

- Significant development rezones in terms of permitted density, concentrating higher densities in strategic areas
- Allowed existing uses to remain and transition over time
- Inclusion of a comprehensive incentive program to encourage development and supply of neighborhood amenities and desired uses including affordable housing
- Identification of key transportation infrastructure improvements needed and funding needs identified

Connectivity Requirement Approach. In terms of the connectivity requirement, the city is generally responsible for new and/or expanded arterials. Private land owners and developers are responsible for what are designated as “local streets” in the BelRed development code. Developers can obtain transportation impact fee credit for frontage improvements they make on city arterial projects. A key component of the commitment to development of new arterial roads is funding through the City’s transportation impact fees, which has been leveraged for new road development. (Source: City of Bothell, 2017)

The following three subarea policies reflect the intent of the plan and zoning regulations that were adopted to implement the plan.

POLICY S-BR-80. Reserve the right-of-way needed for the Bel-Red public infrastructure and amenities identified in this Plan as early as practicable.

POLICY S-BR-82. Require the dedication and improvement of local streets at the time of development, consistent with Figure S-BR.2, to enable development of frontage improvements and a local street pattern that provides for access and loading, and improved transportation connectivity.

POLICY S-BR-83. Encourage master planned developments and other processes that better coordinate and integrate this Subarea Plan’s objectives rather than individual development of small parcels. Consider mandatory use of master planned development approval for large sites, to facilitate site planning for vehicle access and pedestrian needs.
**Required Local Streets.** The development code itself is clear in its requirement for local streets within the Subarea. The intent of the City’s connectivity requirement is to...introduce a public right-of-way system that improves mobility by increasing access for local vehicular and pedestrian traffic throughout the Bel-Red District. In addition, the language provides for flexibility in terms of how the local streets are implemented over time, allowing the City to approve modifications to the local street grid to respond to specific site conditions, property ownership, and phasing considerations.

(Source: City of Bellevue Municipal Code, 2017). **Exhibit 43** from the City’s municipal code illustrates the street grid proposed in the Subarea and relative street designations.

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**Exhibit 43. Required Local Streets, City of Bellevue, 2017**

*Source: City of Bellevue, 2017*
Outcomes
The Bellevue economy, much like other major urban centers in King County, has experienced tremendous growth since 2009. Broader market context is important to consider when evaluating the impact and success of the BelRed Subarea Plan and the level of development occurring at this time. The following outcomes reflect both the relative impact of the planning effort as well as the broader economic climate in the City of Bellevue.

- 1,700+ housing units built or permitted through 2016
- Approval of Master Plan for the Spring District and construction of initial phases
- Planned relocation of REI headquarters to the BelRed Subarea
- Implementation of 3,700 feet of roadway improvements with more under construction or design

Exhibits 44 and 45 illustrate the current and planned development activity in the BelRed Subarea. The amount of investment occurring in the area is reflective of both market conditions and the planning efforts made by the City.

**Exhibit 44. Multifamily Development History and Pipeline, BelRed Subarea**

**Source: CoStar, 2017.**

**Exhibit 45. Commercial Development History and Pipeline, BelRed Subarea**

**Source: CoStar, 2017.**
KEY OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

The following is a summary of key observations related to the analysis of actions taken in the cities of Bothell and Kent. Key findings and observations related to economic performance as well as implementation are include for each case study example.

Implementation
A description of the key decision points, methods and results associated with the case studies analyzed. The observations and findings are intended to provide guidance to Tacoma policy makers and clarity on what lessons can be taken away from each example.

Economic and Market Observations
Also included are summaries of the economic, demographic and market changes experienced within the study areas selected. Local and regional economic conditions influenced the changes experienced in each City and study area. It is important to note that the actions taken by each City undoubtedly impacted the local economy and level of private investment but are not solely attributable to the actions studied herein.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Lessons for Tacoma - Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• In both Kent and Bothell, the City spearheaded both revitalization/subarea efforts through the purchase and disposition of land within the subarea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In both cases, private investment was initially made through collaboration and partnership with the City through the purchase and sales of land and close collaboration and partnership on future uses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships with local developers and landowners were key in all examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear mechanisms to allow for collaboration and negotiation between the City and private investors were critical, especially in the case where the City did not own or acquire land.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>Lessons for Tacoma - Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Bothell</td>
<td>NEAR, MID, AND LONG-TERM TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The City engaged the Bothell community in a multi-year planning process to define a clear vision for the City’s future.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The City of Bothell used the SR 522 alignment to provide an east-west connection with future development that extends historic Main Street, create new city blocks for development and complete the city’s downtown street grid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The City actively purchased properties within the Downtown, invested in infrastructure and environmental cleanup and then solicited development opportunities, all under the City’s role as a master developer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The City relocated/aided 32 businesses and tore down 30 buildings, turning back decades of auto oriented/strip mall development to make way for a re-imagined Downtown.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The City led major road and pedestrian infrastructure improvements that cut through traffic, reduced commute times, encouraged local shopping and entertainment, and created a place where the community will interact.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Connectivity Requirement for Large-Scale Development

- Bothell used two approaches to connectivity requirements downtown, both formalized in code.
- One of these approaches was to define a specific “pre-located street” needed to establish a key connection, while the other places limits on parcel perimeter anywhere in the district. The second approach requires new roads to break up large parcels and allows for more flexibility in how developers place new roads.
- While multiple new connections were desired, the City placed the most emphasis and the most strict requirements on the most important new connection. The success of this node may serve as a catalyst for development elsewhere in the district.
- The City was able to find a developer to build the pre-located street and fully develop the parcel as envisioned. The City took an active role in this process.

Economic and Market Impacts

- The population of the downtown study area neighborhood increased by 1.1% on average per year between 2010 and 2015, compared to 4.9% for the city’s population.
- Median household income in the study area neighborhood has followed an upward trend between 2009 and 2015, increasing at an annualized rate of 3.1%, as opposed to 1.9% for the City of Bothell.
- The City of Bothell has added more than 7,000 jobs between 2005 and 2015. While employment in the City of Bothell has experienced relatively steady growth following the recession, employment in the downtown study area neighborhood has dropped from 2,200 jobs in 2009 to 1,950 jobs in 2013.
- The fastest growing industry in the downtown study area neighborhood between 2010 and 2015 was Construction and Natural Resources, most likely as a result of the construction work happening as part of the Bothell Revitalization Plan.
- Bothell City taxable retail sales have grown at an annualized rate of 2% from $396 million in 2005 to $495 million in 2016.
- 1,684 units of multifamily have been built in Bothell since the Crossroads project began, 12% of which were in the study area. 58% of the 1,292 multifamily units currently in the pipeline are located in the study area.

City of Kent

Connectivity Requirement for Large-Scale Development

- The Kent Station development took place on contaminated former industrial land in an area without a strong retail market. In order to encourage high-quality development in this environment, the City had to identify appropriate incentives for development to overcome serious economic hurdles.
- The City was highly particular in terms of where the new street was to be located and how the pedestrian environment would look. The new street had an entirely new form for the area. The City was able to negotiate these terms because it owned the land and could choose to sell the land below market rate.
- In cases where there is not a bargaining chip this strong, standards for the new street connections may need to be scaled back accordingly.

Permit Streamlining

- The City of Kent’s two planned actions have been successful in facilitating new types of development for the area – a lifestyle center and mixed use apartment buildings.
- These planned actions were effective as part of a coordinated strategy. While they facilitate development, they are not sufficient to overcome adverse economic conditions. Supplementary incentives should be considered based on the level of challenge.
**Funding Sources**

- Scoping and consultant procurement, analysis and fee development and a plan for program implementation was required to develop the City of Kent transportation impact fee program. The City also needed to put in place business processes to support the operations of the program.
- Impact fees can provide a revenue stream directly proportional to the amount of development occurring in the City.
- One of the primary concerns surrounding impact fees is who ultimately bears the cost of the fee. There is a practical limit on how much cost can be added to development without causing significant distortions in the marketplace.
- Impact fees are complementary funding sources by design and it is unlikely they could be wholesale substitutes for any other funding source. This is because impact fees cannot be used to address existing facility deficiencies.

**Economic and Market Observations**

- The population of the study area increased by 8.2% on average per year between 2010 and 2015, compared to 5.9% for the city's population.
- Median household income in the study area neighborhood has not changed much between 2009 and 2015 and has remained significantly lower than the median income for the City as a whole.
- Employment in the study area neighborhood in Kent was 3,566 jobs in 2015, approximately 560 jobs less than in 2009. Employment for the city has surpassed pre-recession levels and increased by over 10,000 between 2009 and 2015.
- The number of jobs in the Services sector in the study area neighborhood in Kent has almost doubled since 2005.
- Kent City taxable retail sales have decreased at an annualized rate of 3% from $1,336 million in 2005 to $1,008 million in 2016.
- The Kent Station development included more than 183,000 square feet of retail, which represented nearly half of the total retail development across the City of Kent since 1997. Over 75,000 square feet of office was developed in 2009 in the Kent Station area, the largest single year delivery across the City over the same period.

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**City of Bellevue**

**Connectivity Requirement for Large-Scale Development**

- The City implemented strong master plan and catalyst development incentives that have been leveraged for large block development (Spring District for example). Such provisions provided flexibility and allowances for negotiating inventive requirements and transportation infrastructure improvements.
- The City is responsible for major arterial road improvements, while developers/land owners are responsible for “neighborhood streets” that are required to be developed per the transportation and circulation plan developed for the area. The City has taken the lead in funding these major road improvements while being clear about the responsibility of property owners and their requirements on “neighborhood roads”
- The City has clearly defined how and when new arterial roads will be implemented.
- The City has provided flexibility in terms of the final alignments and location of new neighborhood through streets for site that are being development in phases.

**Economic and Market Observations**

- Neighborhood development and revitalization has been spearheaded by the master planned development known as the Spring District.
- Bellevue’s market conditions vary greatly from those found in Tacoma and the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea, meaning much of the success of the plan can be linked to strong market demand for the development products under developed.
- A key component of the market demand in the area is the future implementation of transit in the form of light rail, which is a major catalyst for developer interest.