Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan & EIS
Planning Commission
January 18, 2017
Objectives

• Develop one or more options for connectivity requirement
  – What is the intent?
  – Key considerations
  – Range of options
  – The Tacoma Mall Neighborhood approach

• Taking more time
  – Developing 10-year vision
  – Discussing the rest of the Plan
  – Residential neighborhood design
Focusing our efforts

CHAPTERS:
• Urban Form
• Land Use
• Housing
• Transportation Choices
• Environment
• Community Vitality
• Shared Prosperity
• Utilities & Services
• Implementation

Topics for further review:
• Plan & chapter visions
• Connectivity
• Parks approach
• Code changes
• Quadrants character
• Community engagement
• Projects & priorities
• EIS Mitigation summary

• OTHERS?
Why is Connectivity Important?

• Benefits
  – Accommodate growth
  – Travel behavior Urban form
  – Create value
  – Health benefits
  – Environmental benefits
  – Improved access for development sites

• Regional Growth Center and One Tacoma policies
Complete Streets

- Streets are designed to match the surrounding character
- Streets make up a diffuse network, with many choices
- Streets serve motorists AND walkers, bicyclists, and transit users
HOW DO WE GET THERE FROM HERE...?

2 possible routes without doubling Back....
Enhancing the network: 4 x 3 grid yields 35 routes

Courtesy HPE
Continue enhancing the network: 5 x 4 grid yields 126 routes
Why Is This Important?

Small Network = Big Roads

Big Network = Small Roads

Mixed Network...
Making big streets more friendly

Coral Way (Miracle Mile), Downtown Coral Gables, Florida – 37,000 ADT
Tacoma Mall Neighborhood: Approach to Improved Connection
Where we started

- Illustrative vision + transportation + urban form goals
- Original street network map
  - Difficult to envision the “middle chapter”
- Modifications
  - Street Network Tiers
  - Follow existing street grid in the NW Quadrant
What we have heard

- Property & business owner concerns
  - Adversely impacts businesses
  - Disincentive to investment
  - Disproportional impacts
  - Improve existing streets first
  - Reconsider Loop Road alignment
  - Too far ahead of market
What we have studied

- Studied other urbanizing areas in region
- Range of Connectivity Approaches
  - Scale: Low → High
    - Tradeoffs - fine grained = more urban, distributed traffic, walkable
    - Large blocks (600 x 600) = large scale developments
    - Typically no more than 300 ft between pedestrian connections
  - Flexibility: Not mapped → All mapped
    - Not mapped: Reduces up front concerns
    - Mapped: Provides more predictability
    - Typically combine both - the essential urban grid is mapped
  - Thresholds: All work → Major work only
    - Stricter requirements in stronger markets
Recommended: Develop 10-Year Vision

• Street Network Map:
  – Illustrative, not directive
  – Depicts one possible application of connectivity standards and Street Tiers

• Phasing
  – 10-year vision
    • Tier 1
    • Enhanced, greened corridors and parking areas
  – 20-year plus vision
    • Redeveloped sites with performance-based connectivity
Recommended: Street Network Tiers

- **Tier 1 (mapped)** - Essential to transportation system + area wide benefits
- **Tier 2 (planned)** - Establish urban grid framework
- **Tier 3 (planned)** - Site access + internal connections
  - alleys, pedestrian/bike connections, vehicular site access
  - lots already in code
Recommended: Street Network Tiers

- Define Tier 1 connections as City-led projects not subject to a Connectivity Requirement

- Allow flexibility for future alignments of Tiers 2 and 3 connections, subject to connectivity performance standards (Tiers 2 and 3 would not be mapped)

- Require a Connectivity Plan with mid-range development activities

- Allow flexibility for site access and internal connectivity (more flexible than proposed Through-Block Connection requirement)
Recommended: Connectivity Standards

- Connectivity Plan requirement
  - Tier 2: ~600 by 600 ft blocks
  - Tier 3: ~300 by 300 ft site access
- Topography
- Coordination with neighboring properties
- First ones in will establish the pattern
Seeking Direction

- Concurrence on staff recommendations
  1. Street Tiers + Connectivity Plan approach
- Decisions on:
  1. Loop Road alignment
  2. Connectivity principles
  3. Thresholds
  4. Tier 2 flexibility and funding
  5. Tier 3 flexibility, ownership and standards
  6. Are new funding sources needed?
Loop Road

PRINCIPLES:

- Walking & biking street
- Links the four districts
- Minimizes steep slopes
- Linear public green space
- Green features
- Unifying design features
- Links future park spaces
- Potential festival street sections
- Catalyst
Recommended: Connectivity Principles

• Connectivity requirements will:
  – Accommodate growth & support Subarea goals
  – Achieve multiple benefits
  – Build on existing & Tier 1 streets
  – Create a rational & legible network
  – Support reasonable improvements & expansions to businesses
  – Balance predictability and flexibility
  – Plan connections when development is imminent
  – Share costs proportionally
  – Compensate for disproportionate impacts
  – Nexus and proportionality
Thresholds

- What level of activity should be the trigger for a plan?
- What level of development should trigger dedication or construction?
Tier 2 Urban Framework

- Typical 600 by 600 foot blocks
- Serve quadrant level connectivity goals
- Alternative routes to existing arterials
- Questions:
  - How much flexibility on alignments?
  - How should they be funded?
Tier 3: Site access and mode shift

- Typical 300 by 300 foot frontages
- Provide site access and internal connectivity
- High flexibility - connections can be streets, alleys, pedestrian & bike

Questions:
- How much flexibility on alignment?
- Public vs private ownership?
- What standards should apply?
New funding sources

- Are new funding sources warranted to meet connectivity goals?
- Existing tools:
  - Grants
  - Local Improvement Districts
  - Street maintenance
- Potential tools:
  - Impact fees
  - Catalytic street fund or LID funding
  - Others?