



# CUSHMAN AND ADAMS SUBSTATIONS FUTURE USE STUDY

## Tacoma Cushman and Adams Future Use Study – Historic Cushman Street Fair on September 7, 2024

### EVENT SUMMARY

The following is a brief summary of the September 7, 2024 Historic Cushman Street Fair event, where the Future Use Study team set up displays and gathered input on key topics pertaining to the Cushman and Adams Substations buildings and sites. A more detailed report on the outcomes from engagement activities will be prepared in the coming weeks.

#### Event Description

On September 7, 2024, the City of Tacoma and consultant team hosted two booths and set up various project displays and gathered input to help shape the ongoing process of the Future Use Study. The event was held from 11 AM to 3 PM. Mandi Roberts, the consultant team’s project manager, gave a brief presentation at the event, orienting attendees to the project and the displays at the booths, and inviting participants to come and provide input for the ongoing study. She also announced the upcoming October 21 and 26, 2024 Scenarios Workshop sessions planned to be held at the University of Washington Tacoma (October 21) and the Wheelock Branch of the Tacoma Library (October 26).

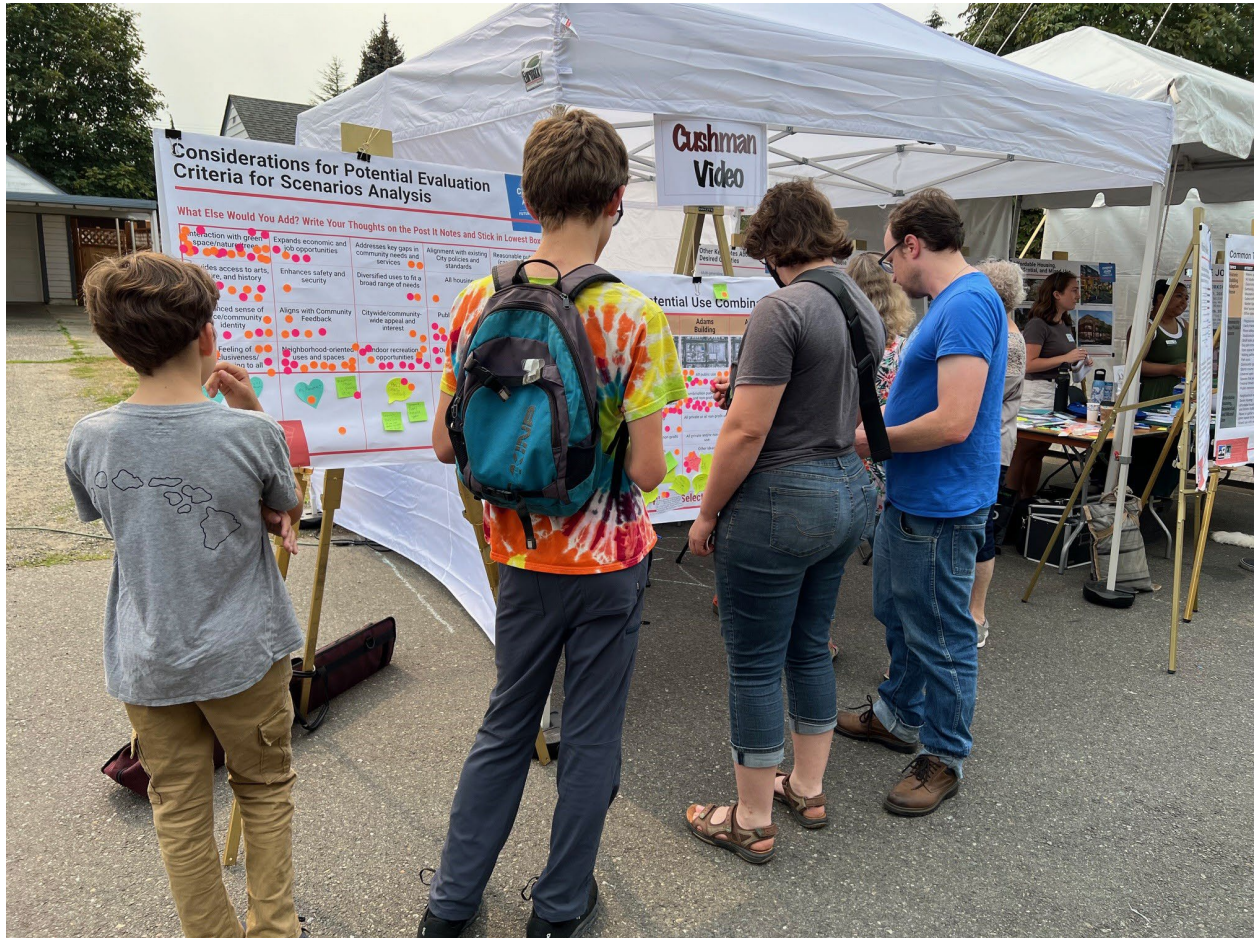
The following information was displayed:

- Boards and a rolling presentation showing the results of the June 2024 workshop sessions—including common themes from input, the most popular images selected by participants in the workshop sessions, and site mapping exercise results.
- A board listing key values and considerations related to potential evaluation criteria for future use scenarios that participants were asked to comment on.
- A board showing potential future use combinations for the Cushman and Adams buildings and sites that participants were asked to place dots on to show their preferences.
- A digital 3-D conceptual/diagrammatic model of the Cushman substation building.
- Site mapping exercise materials for those who wanted to provide specific input on the uses they would like to see at the buildings and sites.

- Other project information, including the project purpose, timeline, and other background, as well as a link to the VISIONING Survey, held open through September 9, 2024. A separate report will summarize the VISIONING Survey results.

### About the Tacoma Cushman and Adams Future Use Study

The City of Tacoma is studying potential future uses for the historic Cushman and Adams substation sites and buildings. In 2018, a City Council resolution directed the City of Tacoma’s General Government and Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) to work collaboratively and engage the community on the future redevelopment of these historic properties. These efforts were paused in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024, the City restarted the project and will be conducting community engagement activities through the summer and fall. Tacoma Power is still actively using and maintaining the Cushman building and plans to vacate and surplus it by 2027, following construction of an off-site replacement facility.



*Participants posting preferences and comments on the displays at the street fair.*

### Participation and Partners

Of the many attendees at the Street Fair, more than 100 people stopped by the City/project booths and viewed the display materials and provided input. Many attendees were from the surrounding North End

neighborhoods. In addition to members of the community, there were representatives from the following organizations, among others:

- Tacoma City Council
- Tacoma Public Utilities
- Metro Parks Tacoma
- North End Neighborhood Council
- Friends of Tacoma’s Cushman Substation
- Historic Tacoma

### Language Access

Fact sheets about the Cushman and Adams Future Use Study translated in Vietnamese, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Russian were available at the event.

### Next Steps

The intent of having a presence at the Street Fair was to inform the community about what we have been hearing in the study process and to gather future community input regarding the vision and potential future uses that should be explored for the Cushman and Adams substation sites and buildings. This event provided the community an opportunity to get involved and provide input based on their interests and ideas. Because the current phase of the project is focused at the conceptual level, community feedback gathered at the event is being used to inform the team’s ongoing work on the study and development of potential future use scenarios. “SCENARIOS” workshop sessions are planned for October 21 and 26, 2024. Community input, as well as technical feasibility, will be used to develop and analyze those different scenarios.



*Displays and team members at the Street Fair.*

## WHAT WE HEARD

Participants placed dots on display boards listing potential future uses and statements representing key values and evaluation criteria displayed at the Street Fair. They also placed post-it notes with their comments on the boards (see pages 7-8). People also shared verbal feedback in conversations with members of the consultant team, which is reflected below in the feedback. Overall, people were excited about future use possibilities of the buildings and sites. The following common themes emerged from the input received:

**Public/Community Use for the Cushman Building:** Many participants expressed an interest in having the Cushman building as a community space and/or open for community and public uses. The majority of participants said that they would like to see at least a portion of the Cushman building be publicly accessible.

**Park and Open Space:** Many participants were from the surrounding North End neighborhoods and stressed the perceived need for a neighborhood-scale/community park with a variety of uses that would serve the needs of surrounding residents. From several conversations, individuals perceived there to be a lack of sufficient park and open space serving the neighborhood. Several mentioned the Proctor Community Garden as a form of open space but mentioned that it is not a public park space with activities and recreational opportunities. Some people at the event pushed for the entirety of the site to be dedicated to park/open space and recreational uses, but others were supportive of a variety of uses being present on the site as long as there was some open space provided.

**Housing:** The project team told attendees that housing, and in particular affordable housing, needed to be evaluated as a future use based on City and TPU surplus policies. While the project team mentioned that the Cushman building likely would be difficult to convert entirely to housing (due to Building Code upgrades that would be needed), a variety of housing types could be explored for portions of the Cushman and Adams site. Some people were supportive of housing, and some indicated the importance of considering housing that is designed in scale with the surrounding neighborhood and historic sites and buildings. Others mentioned the importance of having affordable apartment options for various residents as well as for seniors looking to find options to stay in the neighborhood while downsizing from their single-family homes. In general, there was more support for middle housing.

**Public Uses of Site:** Many participants expressed interest in a wide array of potential public uses for the sites and buildings. A common theme of the input received related to providing access to arts, culture, and history. A variety of recreational opportunities were mentioned. People seemed very enthusiastic about including information regarding the history of the site. This included conveying information related to the Puyallup Tribe and tribal history at the site.

### General Notes:

- On the display board showing options for uses of the buildings and sites (see pages 7-8), the strongest interest was in public uses, following by a combination of public/private/non-profit uses and housing. No one expressed interest in “all private” uses.
- Several individuals had questions regarding the Puyallup Tribe’s involvement in the project and regarding their first right of refusal for the project.
- Many people explicitly mentioned the need for a dedicated park option to be considered for the Cushman site and expressed a strong interest in the value “Interaction with green space/nature, trees.” However, beyond the need for green space, nature, and trees, people expressed interest in a variety of recreational options—such as a dog park, skate park, walking paths, and other activity spaces.
- People did not initially perceive Adams Street as part of the project. They were told that it was being included in the scenarios planning and could be designed as a festival street or vacated and used for development of parking or other uses. Many expressed interest in the festival street option.
- There was a strong interest in the Cushman Building being in public use/operated as a community space; but there also was a large amount of support expressed for spaces that would be operated by private entities or non-profits that maintain public access to the site (such as leased spaces for restaurants, local shops, cultural uses, etc.).
- People supported the idea of the Adams building becoming a small café or other revenue-generating facility.
- Similar to the Cushman site, many expressed an interest in the Adams site being used as a park/open space area for public use space. However, the Adams site also saw the most preference expressed for housing compared to other options.
- When shown the renderings and the videos of the Cushman building, people seemed to realize the constraints of the space, but also the opportunities. People were very excited about the open front side of the building and the potential uses for the various floors.
- A large number of the written comments for potential use combinations centered around various public uses and recreational activities as well as other types of uses (such as having a Fire Station in the Cushman building). Various uses mentioned included:
  - Community center
  - Trees (magnolia trees in streetscape), access to green space
  - Dog park
  - Walking paths
  - Outdoor historic interpretation/commemorative park
  - Swimming pool (indoor)
  - Skate park and bike park
  - Senior center

- Kids' educational/science center
  - Multigenerational activities
  - Lifelong learning opportunities: writing, cooking, other classes
  - Art gallery space (indoor/outdoor)
  - Playground/play spaces
  - Water park/splash pad
  - Rock climbing gym
  - YMCA operated facility/activities
  - Dance/yoga/fitness classes
  - Community kitchen space/cooking classes
  - Makers' spaces; local shops
  - Brewery/wine tasting
  - Café space
  - Music hall; indoor and outdoor small-scale concert space
  - Ballroom
  - Food truck spaces
  - Childcare
  - 24-hour clinic; healthcare services
  - Fire station
- Several people were concerned about the Cushman building facade being changed or about the potential for the building to be demolished as part of the redevelopment project and were relieved to hear that these types of changes would be very unlikely due to both sites' listing on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.
  - The project team let people know that the final decision about how the buildings and sites would be used in the future would be up to City Council and the TPU Board, and that likely more feasibility study, planning, analysis, and design would be required before construction on potential solution could begin. Several people were eager to see something happen and expressed frustration that the process has been taking so long. Some expressed disappointment that TPU is expected to occupy the Cushman building and site until 2027.
  - Many people expressed concern about how future uses would be implemented and funded. Several expressed concerns about the City of Tacoma being able to fund what the community wants to see in the future.

# Examples of Potential Use Combinations

	Cushman Building	Cushman Site	Adams Building	Adams Site	Adams Street
	All public use	All public use (park, gathering spaces, parking)	All public use	All public use; could be single type of use such as a dog park or skate park	Street is vacated and used for parking
<b>OR:</b>	Combination public private, and non-profit use	Combination public private, and non-profit use (some public; some housing; some parking)	Combination public private, and non-profit use	All parking	Street is not vacated but designed as a festival street/ shared use area
<b>OR:</b>	Public use at the ground floor; lofts, artist studios, other live/work spaces in upper floors	All housing	All private or all non-profit use	All housing	Street is vacated and used for development space; could be part of housing solution.
<b>OR:</b>	All private and/or non-profit use	All private and/or non-profit use	All private and/or non-profit use	All private and/or non-profit use	All private and/or non-profit use
<b>OR:</b>	Other ideas:	Other ideas:	Other ideas:	Other ideas:	Other ideas:

**Please Select Two Sets of Use Combinations**



# Examples of Potential Use Combinations

Cushman Building	Cushman Site	Adams Building	Adams Site	Adams Street
OR: Public use	OR: Public use, parking	OR: All public use	OR: All public use	OR: Street is vacated and used for parking
OR: Combination public, private, and non-profit use	OR: Combination public, private, and non-profit use; some non-profit use parking	OR: Combination public, private, and non-profit use	OR: All parking	OR: Street is vacated but designed as a rest area/retail space
OR: Public use at the ground level; studios, artist studios, other work spaces in upper floors	OR: All housing	OR: All private or all non-profit use	OR: All housing	OR: Street is vacated and used for development space; could be for housing solution
OR: All private and/or non-profit use	OR: All private and/or non-profit use	OR: All private and/or non-profit use	OR: All private and/or non-profit use	OR: All private and/or non-profit use
OR: Other ideas: - Senior Center - Day Care - Day Care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care	OR: Other ideas: - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care	OR: Other ideas: - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care	OR: Other ideas: - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care - Day care with a cafe - Library - Ymca - Fire station - Community center - Retail - Office - Gym - Day care	

Select Two Sets of Use Combinations



# Considerations for Potential Evaluation Criteria for Scenarios Analysis

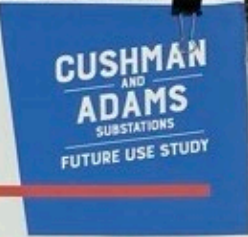


**What Else Would You Add? Write Your Thoughts on the Post It Notes and Stick in Lowest Boxes.**

Interaction with green space/nature/trees	Expands economic and job opportunities	Addresses key gaps in community needs and services	Alignment with existing City policies and standards	Reasonable public cost (capital, operations, maintenance)
Provides access to arts, culture, and history	Enhances safety and security	Diversified uses to fit a broad range of needs	All housing	Street is vacated and used for development space; could be part of housing solution.
Enhanced sense of place/community identity	Aligns with Community Feedback	Citywide/community-wide appeal and interest	Public/community access	Promotes active/healthy lifestyles (walking, bicycling, other activities)
Feeling of inclusiveness/welcoming to all	Neighborhood-oriented uses and spaces	Indoor recreation opportunities	Outdoor recreation opportunities	Allows for flexibility in uses to adapt to changing needs over time



# Considerations for Potential Evaluation Criteria for Scenarios Analysis



What Else Would You Add? Write Your Thoughts on the Post It Notes and Stick in Lowest Boxes.

<p>Interaction with green space/nature/trees</p> <p>Provides access to arts, culture, and history</p> <p>Enhanced sense of place/community identity</p> <p>Feeling of inclusiveness/welcoming to all</p>	<p>Expands economic and job opportunities</p> <p>Enhances safety and security</p> <p>Aligns with Community Feedback</p> <p>Neighborhood-oriented uses and spaces</p>	<p>Addresses key gaps in community needs and services</p> <p>Diversified uses to fit a broad range of needs</p> <p>Citywide/community-wide appeal and interest</p> <p>Indoor recreation opportunities</p>	<p>Alignment with existing City policies and standards</p> <p>All housing</p> <p>Public/community access</p> <p>Outdoor recreation opportunities</p>	<p>Reasonable public cost (capital, operations, maintenance)</p> <p>Street is vacated and used for development space; could be part of housing solution.</p> <p>Promote active/healthy lifestyles (walking, bicycling, other activities)</p> <p>Allows for flexibility in uses to adapt to changing needs over time</p>
<p>Stamps, posters &amp; balloons</p> <p>Self-serve cultural programming</p> <p>Water features for family park</p> <p>McDonnells</p> <p>Maple - place in planting strip</p> <p>Use with space for kids</p>	<p>More... place in planting strip</p> <p>Use with space for kids</p>	<p>Full locally milled</p> <p>Also feature splash pad in fountain</p> <p>Community built exercise space</p> <p>Enough parking for use with park on street</p>	<p>Green space with play area</p> <p>Lots of trees</p> <p>Park playground</p> <p>BEER GARDEN</p> <p>More food + beer options</p>	<p>And this with... park playground</p> <p>Beach... park... area</p> <p>... park playground</p>

