



## AGENDA

**MEETING:** Regular Meeting (Hybrid)  
**DATE/TIME:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 5:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Council Chambers, 1st Floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**ZOOM INFO:** Link: <https://www.zoom.us/j/84416624153>  
Dial-in: +1 253 215 8782  
ID: 844 1662 4153

### A. Call to Order

- Quorum Call
- Land Acknowledgement

### B. Approval of Agenda

### C. Approval of Minutes

There are no meeting minutes to approve.

### D. Public Comments

This is the time set aside for public comment on Discussion Items on this agenda.

- Written comments on Discussion Items must be submitted to [Planning@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:Planning@cityoftacoma.org) by 12:00 noon prior to the meeting. Comments will be compiled, distributed to the Commission, and posted on the Planning Commission's meeting webpage at [www.cityoftacoma.org/PlanningCommissionAgendas](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/PlanningCommissionAgendas).
- To comment virtually, join the meeting using Zoom and raise your virtual hand. To comment in person, sign in at the back of the Council Chambers. Where necessary, the Chair may limit the allotted time for comment.

### E. Disclosure of Contacts and Recusals

### F. Discussion Items

#### 1. One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update – Transportation

- Description: Review the Vision Statement, Goals, and Policies for the Transportation Mobility Plan.
- Action: Informational.
- Contact: Carrie Wilhelme ([CWilhelme@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:CWilhelme@cityoftacoma.org))



The City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Planning and Development Services Department at (253) 905-4146 (voice) or 711 (TTY) before 5:00 p.m., on the Monday preceding the meeting.

¿Necesitas información en español? Cần thông tin bằng tiếng Việt? 한국어로 정보가 필요하십니까? ត្រូវការព័ត៌មានជាភាសាខ្មែរ?  
Нужна информация на русском? Потрібна інформація українською мовою? Contact TacomaFIRST 311 at (253) 591-5000.

## 2. One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update – Design and Development

- Description: Review and provide input on the Design + Development Element of the One Tacoma Plan, with consideration of State and Regional planning requirements. Presentation will include an assessment of the current element and proposed structural updates.
- Action: Informational.
- Contact: Carl Metz ([CMetz@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:CMetz@cityoftacoma.org))  
Stephen Antupit ([SAntupit@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:SAntupit@cityoftacoma.org))

## G. Upcoming Meetings (Tentative Agendas)

(1) Agenda for the November 20, 2024, meeting:

- Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review – Economic Development Element, Environment Element (part 1)

(2) Agenda for the December 4, 2024, meeting:

- Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review – Environment Element (part 2), Engagement Element

## H. Communication Items

(1) Reports/Communications from Staff

(2) **Status Reports by Commissioners** – Picture Pac Ave and the TOD Task Force.

(3) **IPS Agenda** – The Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee’s next meeting on November 13, 2024, has been cancelled. The next meeting is a special meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.; the agenda (tentatively) includes interviews for the Landmarks Preservation Commission and presentations on the Planning Commission Annual Report and Work Program, and the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Code update. (Held at 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402, Conference Room 248 or virtually at <http://www.zoom.us/j/87829056704>, passcode 614650)

## I. Adjournment



City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

Agenda Item  
F1

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Carrie Wilhelme, Principal Transportation Planner - Public Works  
**Subject:** **One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update – Transportation**  
**Memo Date:** October 30, 2024  
**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2024

**Action Requested:**  
Informational.

**Discussion:**

Public Works staff will present an overview of Transportation Master Plan Update that serves as the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff will lead a discussion regarding proposed updates to the TMP, including:

- Updated vision statement, goals, and overarching policies
- Key changes for the modal elements and the addition of two new functional elements: Public Realm and Activation and Curb Management

In particular, staff is seeking feedback from the Planning Commission in the following areas:

- Do the updated vision, goals, and policies align with Tacoma's long-term transportation and land use needs? Are there any overarching themes or priorities that you believe should be emphasized or reconsidered?
- As the Transportation Commission continues its work to update the TMP, including review of modal and functional elements and project prioritization criteria, what overarching considerations do you feel should guide their work to best support safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility across the city?

**Project Summary and Background:**

This update is part of the scheduled update to Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan, [One Tacoma](#), which is the City's official statement concerning its vision for future growth and development. It identifies goals, policies, and strategies for maintaining the health, welfare, and quality of life of Tacoma's residents. The Comprehensive Plan consists of multiple elements, each addressing key areas such as urban form, design and development, parks and recreation, and transportation.

In Tacoma, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) acts as the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The TMP outlines the transportation vision, goals, and priorities for the city, guiding decisions on infrastructure investments, transportation and land use policies, and the development of a multimodal system. Its purpose is to ensure that Tacoma's multimodal transportation network is safe,



accessible, and connected for all users, aligning with the city's broader goals of sustainability, equity, economic vitality, and community well-being.

The current TMP, adopted in 2015 as part of the Comprehensive Plan, has effectively guided Tacoma's transportation planning and infrastructure development. However, Tacoma is experiencing growth and change, and there are new transportation planning requirements under the GMA, making an update to the TMP essential. The update will address challenges facing Tacoma, such as managing the impacts of increased population density on the transportation network, accelerating efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with sustainability goals, and eliminating fatal and serious traffic crashes.

The update process for the TMP is well underway, involving a multifaceted approach to engagement and input. Engagement specific for the Transportation Master Plan Update is being done as part of the One Tacoma engagement efforts. Additionally, the community has voiced their hopes, needs, and challenges regarding the transportation system through numerous recent planning efforts, including Participatory Budgeting, Home in Tacoma, Vision Zero Action Plan, Safe Routes to School Plan Update, and the Climate Action Plan. The insights gathered from these planning processes are shaping the development of the TMP, helping it reflect the community's priorities and address their key concerns for a transportation system that safely supports all travel modes, ages, and abilities.

Over the past six months, the Transportation Commission has been updating the vision statement, goals, and policies (Attachment 1). They are now moving into work on project prioritization criteria and reviewing draft elements. Meanwhile, the TOD Task Force has been leading updates to the Transit Element, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group has focused on enhancing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements, and the Parking Technical Advisory Group has been providing guidance on the new Curb Management Element.

The updated TMP will follow the Comprehensive Plan's adoption timeline and process, integrating it as the Transportation Chapter within the overall Comprehensive Plan.

**Prior Actions:**

- October 16, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Historic Preservation Element
- October 2, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Urban Form Element
- September 18, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Public Facilities + Services Element
- September 4, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Parks + Recreation Element
- July 17, 2024: Joint meeting with Transportation Commission for the TMP Integrated Transportation Network
- December 20, 2023: Recommended scope of work and engagement strategy
- June 21, 2023: Reviewed planning requirements for the Periodic Update

**Background Documents:**

- [Dept. of Commerce Checklist](#) and [Vision 2050 Checklist](#)
- [2015 Transportation Master Plan](#)

**Staff Contacts:**

- Carrie Wilhelme, Principal Transportation Planner, [cwilhelme@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cwilhelme@cityoftacoma.org)

Planning Commission  
One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update  
November 6, 2024  
Page 3 of 3

- Jennifer Kammerzell, Assistant Division Manager, [jkammerzell@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:jkammerzell@cityoftacoma.org)

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Draft TMP Vision, Goals, and Policies

cc.

Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services Director

Ramiro A. Chavez, P.E. PgMP, Public Works Director/City Engineer



# TACOMA TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY PLAN

## *DRAFT – OCTOBER 30, 2024*

### VISION STATEMENT

To create and sustain a transformative multimodal transportation system that connects people to places and people to people.

### GOALS AND POLICIES

1. Advance **Equity and Livability**: Harm is repaired, and burdens from legacy transportation infrastructure decisions are alleviated by prioritizing investment identified through equitable engagement in communities that have experienced disproportionate impacts and disinvestment.
  - a. *Center the voices of communities of color, individuals with a lived experience of poverty, and underrepresented groups when planning, designing, and making-decisions about key transportation policies, projects, and programs.*
  - b. *Prioritize policies, programs, and projects that remove systemic and physical barriers and address harm from past and contemporary infrastructure investment.*
  - c. *Provide accessible and dignified services to all persons ensuring all travelers regardless of mobility status can safely and effectively navigate the transportation system at every part of their journey.*
  - d. *Plan and design transportation investments to support and strengthen community assets and reduce displacement risk.*
  - e. *Empower communities affected by harm or disinvestment to shape their neighborhoods' futures by fostering inclusive participation and encouraging reciprocal dialogue, while utilizing technical guidance from subject matter experts for collaborative decision-making and meaningful change.*
  - f. *Prioritize investment in affordable transportation options so everyone can take the trips they need to make, when they need to make them.*
  
2. Ensure a **Safe and Comfortable** Experience: All users of the transportation system can move freely and without fear of traffic violence, supported by safe, comfortable, and intuitive multimodal travel options.
  - a. *Advance the commitment to zero fatal and serious injury crashes by implementing safe and equitable design and practices that uphold the principle that no loss of life is acceptable on Tacoma's transportation network.*

- b. *Design a street network that is safe and accessible for vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other small mobility users, ensuring complete networks of ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities and a comprehensive bicycling system that connects all parts of Tacoma and accommodates all types of riders.*
  - c. *Reduce vehicle speeds to increase safety for all street users, prioritizing safety and mobility over vehicle capacity.*
  - d. *Concentrate safety investments in areas with the highest risk of fatal and serious injury collisions, guided by safety and equity data, while secondarily enhancing routes to key destinations such as schools, transit stops, mixed-use centers, and health-serving destinations.*
  - e. *Foster a public realm that people want to use, where communities are empowered to look out for each other, and all people can use without fear of harassment or threats.*
  - f. *Design and maintain the transportation network to secure safe and reliable emergency access, facilitating rapid response for emergency vehicles and efficient emergency evacuation routes.*
3. Make Tacoma an **Environmentally Sustainable** and **Healthy** Place to Live:  
 Transportation and land-use strategies enable a citywide shift towards a greener future, delivering better outcomes for the environment and ultimately for the people who live here.
- a. *Prioritize active travelers and public transit riders in the planning, design, and construction of streets using the Green Transportation Hierarchy.*
  - b. *Design new transportation infrastructure to be climate resilient and withstand the impacts of climate change.*
  - c. *Incentivize modes that improve air quality, reduce vehicle emissions, and offer convenient alternatives to driving and transporting goods.*
  - d. *Establish land use, zoning, and design regulations that create development patterns and street designs that minimize conflicts between road users and prioritize and incentivize transit and active transportation.*
  - e. *Support the transition from fossil fuels to electric and cleaner transportation technologies, including electric fleets and emission-free vehicles and devices for all types of motorized mobility.*
  - f. *Transform streets into green streets by incorporating features such as trees, bioswales, and permeable pavement to manage stormwater, reduce urban heat, and enhance air quality.*
  - g. *Promote active transportation and public realm activation by creating safe, accessible, and engaging public spaces that encourage walking, biking, and social interaction to support physical health and mental well-being.*



4. Cultivate Meaningful **Partnerships**: Local, regional, and intergovernmental efforts are coordinated and aligned, supporting a more seamless multimodal transportation system.
  - a. *Develop shared goals with other agencies, which balance local and regional needs, to help guide and navigate trade-offs in ongoing coordination.*
  - b. *Establish and maintain regular communication channels across departments and agency partners to identify opportunities for better alignment in decision-making, funding, and planning processes.*
  - c. *Equip Tacoma city staff with the skills and resources to engage in multimodal transportation planning and design using a Safe Systems Approach, promoting partnerships across work groups and departments to foster collaborative improvements.*
  - d. *Promote ongoing capacity building for community organizations to strengthen local advocacy networks.*
  - e. *Collaboratively identify interlocal and interagency responsibilities for the use and improvement of city rights-of-way early in the planning process, carefully weighing betterments that have the potential to undermine delivery.*
  - f. *Pursue City-led initiatives to raise revenue for the development, operation, and maintenance of the city's multimodal transportation system, leveraging the resources of private residents and businesses, and local, regional, state, and federal partnerships.*
  
5. Promote **Transparent Decision-Making**: Transportation decisions are made openly and with community, and lessons from projects are captured and used to make future work better, while success and challenges are shared to improve community trust.
  - a. *Use a data-driven approach for transportation investments, making the decision-making process accessible and clear to the public.*
  - b. *Track and publicize the measurable outcomes of transportation investment.*
  - c. *Create defined processes for how lessons learned are used to inform and improve future projects.*
  - d. *Regularly provide progress updates in ADA-accessible formats that are easy for all members of the public and stakeholders to understand and engage with, considering language needs and literacy levels.*
  - e. *Educate the community on the need for transportation changes and work together to navigate tradeoffs that prioritize safety and equity while striving to address community needs and priorities.*

6. **Connect the Tacoma Community:** Streets and the public realm serve as essential public spaces, which are inclusive for all ages and abilities, foster social interaction, and provide multimodal access, enriching quality of life.
  - a. *Support land use policies and investments in transportation infrastructure that transform the Frequent Transit Network into conduits for equitable transit-oriented development.*
  - b. *Reallocate street space to prioritize people, creating enjoyable places that also facilitate goods delivery and mobility.*
  - c. *Create streets as public spaces that are enjoyable for people to travel to and through, give people a sense of pride and community care, and encourage them to travel by walking, biking, or rolling.*
  - d. *Redesign streets that divide neighborhoods by creating frequent safe and accessible crossing opportunities, slowing driver speeds through arterial traffic calming, and increasing tree canopy.*
  - e. *Support land use and grid street patterns that promote mixed-use developments, bringing housing, retail, workplaces, and recreational spaces closer together to create walkable neighborhoods.*
  
7. **Maintain and Upgrade Tacoma's Transportation Resources:** Infrastructure is preserved and modernized to support the city's sustainable and multimodal future.
  - a. *Pursue reliable sources of funding that align with Tacoma's multimodal transportation investment priorities.*
  - b. *Keep streets, sidewalks, bridges, trails, and transit facilities well-maintained and able to meet the needs of all transportation users.*
  - c. *Prioritize maintenance of transportation facilities in areas of historic underinvestment.*
  - d. *Prepare Tacoma for emerging mobility trends and technology and leverage proven technology to improve safety and efficiency.*
  - e. *Invest in the timely maintenance of transportation assets to reduce long-term repair and upkeep costs.*
  - f. *Foster and strengthen partnerships to support clean, safe, and vibrant public spaces that contribute to neighborhood and business vitality and community well-being.*
  
8. **Support a Thriving Economy:** An effective multimodal transportation system facilitates connections that enable people, goods, and services to access businesses, jobs, essential services, and recreational and cultural destinations, boosting economic vitality.
  - a. *Promote safe, reliable, and convenient multimodal transportation options that support seamless commutes and enhance workforce mobility.*

- b. Enhance access to local businesses through improved transit, active transportation, and inviting public realm in mixed-use centers, fostering welcoming business environments for people to visit, gather, and invest in.*
- c. Include small and disadvantaged businesses in the planning, design, and construction of transportation projects to advance Tacoma's transportation vision.*
- d. Facilitate the safe movement of goods within and through the city, to get supplies to local businesses and connect the Port with the broader region, while reducing local impact.*
- e. Remediate the impacts of I-5 and current and legacy state routes on the commercial success of designated growth areas to support economic vitality and sustainable development.*
- f. Advance flexible curb management to adapt to changing land use and support economic development while balancing the diverse needs of all users.*





City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

Agenda Item  
F2

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Carl Metz and Stephen Antupit, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update – Design + Development**  
**Memo Date:** October 29, 2024  
**Meeting Date:** November 6, 2024

**Action Requested:**  
Informational.

**Discussion:**

Staff from Planning and Development Services will be leading the Planning Commission on a review of the [Design + Development Element](#) of the One Tacoma Plan, with brief discussion of the Element’s relationship to the Growth Management Act. Anticipated updates include more explicit linkages between the City’s goals and policies related to design considerations attendant to the 15-minute neighborhood concept, support for equitable, healthy, safe and resilient design outcomes at a site-level, and complemented by an accessible and vibrant public realm. Updates will also build upon goals and policies that were previously contained within the Urban Form Element’s Historic Residential Pattern Areas (Attachment 3).

**Project Summary and Background:**

Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan, [One Tacoma](#), is the City’s official statement concerning its vision for future growth and development. It identifies goals, policies, and strategies for maintaining the health, welfare, and quality of life of Tacoma’s residents. The Comprehensive Plan comprises numerous individual elements, including elements addressing such important issues as urban form, design and development, environment and watershed health, parks and recreation, housing, economic development, and transportation and infrastructure.

The City of Tacoma amends its Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis as permitted by state law. In addition to these regular amendments, the [Growth Management Act](#) (GMA) requires counties and cities to periodically conduct a thorough review of their plans and regulations to bring them in line with any relevant changes in the GMA, and to accommodate updated growth targets. [RCW 36.70A.130](#) establishes the review procedures and schedule for Comprehensive Plan amendments and periodic review. Tacoma last completed such a “periodic update” in 2015 and is mandated to undertake and complete another “periodic update”.

In addition, the City of Tacoma is the designated “Metropolitan City” for Pierce County and is allocated, through [Vision 2050](#) and the [Countywide Planning Policies](#), to accommodate a significant share of the region’s population and employment growth. The Puget Sound Regional Council evaluates and certifies local comprehensive plans for consistency with the multi-county planning policies (see the [Plan Review Manual](#), page 27). The Comprehensive Plan update will include a review and update to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of Vision 2050.



Planning Commission  
One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update  
November 6, 2024  
Page 2 of 2

**Prior Actions:**

- October 16, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Historic Preservation Element.
- October 4, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Urban Form Element.
- September 18, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Public Facilities + Services Element including opportunities to better align goals and policies with level of service standards and project prioritization criteria.
- September 4, 2024: Reviewed planning requirements for the Parks + Recreation Element including opportunities to better align goals and policies with the Metro Parks Tacoma System and Strategic Plan.
- December 20, 2023: Recommended scope of work and engagement strategy.
- June 21, 2023: Reviewed planning requirements for the Periodic Update and recent legislative updates pertaining to housing and climate policy.

**Background Documents:**

- [Dept. of Commerce Checklist](#)
- [Vision 2050 Checklist](#)
- [One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan Update Work Plan](#)

**Staff Contacts:**

- Carl Metz, Senior Planner, [cmetz@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cmetz@cityoftacoma.org)
- Stephen Antupit, Senior Planner, [santupit@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:santupit@cityoftacoma.org)

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Assessment Report
- Attachment 2: tachHOMEa: Infill Tools for a Happy City (2015)
- Attachment 3: Current Urban Form Element (Excerpt): Historic Residential Pattern Areas
- Attachment 4: Current Design + Development Element ([LINK](#))

cc. Peter Huffman, Director

# PURPOSE

The City of Tacoma is updating its Comprehensive Plan *One Tacoma* to the year 2050. This is a major update for the City, with the last update to the plan occurring in 2015.

This document summarizes planned updates to the Comprehensive Plan Design and Development element.

# ELEMENT OVERVIEW

The goals and policies in the Design and Development Element convey the City's intent to:

- Promote neighborhood, site, and street design that supports the 15-minute neighborhood concept.
- Guide building designs that meet the needs of current and future Tacomans and respond to local context.
- Support well-connected neighborhoods with safe, comfortable, convenient, and equitable mobility access for people of all ages and abilities.
- Create public spaces that promote a sense of community and support the goals of community health and sustainability.
- Foster a welcoming and dynamic community through creative expression and historic and cultural preservation.
- Promote energy and resource efficient neighborhoods and buildings and encourage the integration of nature into the built environment.

## Why does this matter?

Development and design shape how Tacoma looks and functions. Past development, in combination with the natural landscape, has shaped how the city is experienced. Future development, and responsiveness to built and natural heritage, has the potential to create a better, healthier, more efficient and more pleasant Tacoma. New development and redevelopment can promote vibrant, accessible urban places for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, while also enhancing natural resources, providing aesthetically pleasing experiences, protecting health and safety, and promoting resilience. As a metropolitan city that is expected to accommodate a significant share of regional growth, Tacoma faces design and development challenges, as well as opportunities. The policies in this chapter encourage neighborhood design and development that respects context, preserves historic and cultural resources, engages

innovation and creativity, reduces carbon emissions, improves resource efficiency, minimizes risk from natural hazards, limits impacts to wildlife and natural systems, and integrates nature into the urban environment.

## PRELIMINARY CHANGES

Update the Element name to better convey the scope of the Element's goals and policies from neighborhood to building site and reinforce the Plan's emphasis on the 15-minute neighborhood concept. For that reason, staff suggest "Neighborhood Design" as the revised Element name.

### Structure and Content

- Connect to the 15-minute city concept through ideas of human scale design, safety, equitable access to opportunity, comfortable experience of everyday life for all ages and abilities, resilience, cultural identity, health and contextual design.
- Reduce redundancy with other elements but identify cross-connections to transportation (public realm), historic preservation (cultural identity), environment (health) and urban form (comfort, real and perceptions of safety, and access to opportunity).
- The current chapter is focused on buildings and sites. Propose to orient policies around broad urban design topics at three policy scales of neighborhood, site, and public realm. These urban design topics consist of neighborhood development pattern; connectivity; built form; public space; culture, heritage and creative expression; and environmental health and resiliency. Some policies will identify opportunities and challenges related to specific development pattern areas (see discussion below of the re-positioning of the *Historical Residential Pattern Areas* information).
- Align with Transportation and Mobility Plan (TMP) on streets, curb management, and public realm activation.

### Language

- Propose renaming to "Neighborhood Design"
- Remove harmful and/or clearly define vague language that can otherwise be used to exclusionary ends. For example, avoiding vague language like "neighborhood character" or using "community member" instead of "citizen."



# GMA CONSISTENCY

The Design and Development Element supports numerous goals and requirements of the Growth Management Act. The Design and Development Element is a companion to the Urban Form Element. Where the Urban Form Element more directly relates to the allocation of population, housing, and employment across the City and the strategy for accommodating and connecting growth and public facilities and services, the Design and Development Element is focused more on the experiential components of neighborhoods and community design. Similar to the Urban Form Element this chapter specifically responds to the following GMA goals:

- Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- Reduce sprawl.
- Utilize urban planning approaches that promote physical activity and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled.
- Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled.
- Promote economic opportunity for all citizens and promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses.
- Retain open space and green space, enhance recreational opportunities, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
- Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.
- Protect and enhance the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
- Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
- Adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.
- Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies.
- Consider environmental justice in goals and policies, including efforts to avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities.
- Where applicable, review drainage, flooding, and stormwater runoff in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state, including Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound.

# BACKGROUND

## Policy Framework

### State and regional policies

#### **Growth Management Act Goals and Policies (RCW 36.70A)**

Washington State's Growth Management Act establishes a vision for well-being, natural system function, and economic viability that depends on cities and urban development patterns which are complete, connected, and compact. The structure, goals and policies of this Element align with the importance of supporting precisely those urban development patterns—places that efficiently use urban land and infrastructure, are walkable, cycling- and transit-supportive.

#### **VISION 2050**

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) supports urban design priorities to encourage desired outcomes. Specifically, Vision 2050 Multi County Planning Policies (MPPs) include:

*MPP-DP-9 Support urban design, historic preservation, and arts to enhance quality of life, support local culture, improve the natural and human-made environments, promote health and well-being, contribute to a prosperous economy, and increase the region's resiliency in adapting to changes or adverse events.*

The structure, goals and policies of this Element would support above listed three-part set of strategies.

*MPP-DP-15 Design communities to provide safe and welcoming environments for walking and bicycling.*

The structure, goals and policies of this Element focus on pedestrian orientation, access and connectivity, public realm design, and support for active transportation as a significant focus.

### City policies

The Design and Development element of the Comprehensive Plan contains 14 separate goals and their underlying policies. Some of the existing policies are expected to be reused or revised and organized as described in this document.

- GOAL DD–1 Design new development to respond to and enhance the distinctive physical, historic, aesthetic and cultural qualities of its location, while accommodating growth and change.
- GOAL DD–2 Ensure that parking area design and management balances the needs of all users, supports modal priorities, and is responsive to site context.
- GOAL DD–3 Ensure that sign location and design is responsive to site context and compatible with the envisioned mix of uses and modal priorities.
- GOAL DD–4 Enhance human and environmental health in neighborhood design and development. Seek to protect safety and livability, support local access to healthy food, limit negative impacts on water and air quality, reduce carbon emissions, encourage active and sustainable design, and integrate nature and the built environment.
- GOAL DD–5 Ensure long-term resilience in the design of buildings, streets and open spaces, including the ability to adjust to changing demographics, climate, and economy, and withstand and recover from natural disasters.
- GOAL DD–6 Protect and preserve designated significant scenic resources, including public views and scenic sites.
- GOAL DD–7 Support sustainable and resource efficient development and redevelopment.
- GOAL DD–8 Promote development practices that contribute to a sense of safety and reduction in opportunities for crime.
- GOAL DD–9 Support development patterns that result in compatible and graceful transitions between differing densities, intensities and activities.
- GOAL DD–10 Ensure that all citizens have nearby, convenient and equitable access to healthy foods.
- GOAL DD–11 Protect people, property and the environment from environmental hazards.
- GOAL DD–12 Integrate and harmonize development with the natural environment.
- GOAL DD–13 Protect and preserve Tacoma’s historic and cultural character.
- GOAL DD–14 Infuse the City’s built environment with creative expression and design that encourages expressions of creativity and results in vibrant public spaces where people want to be.

## Addressing Priority Outcomes

In the first phase of the comprehensive planning process, the project team identified key outcomes that assess a baseline of wellbeing across a community. The selected outcomes reflect the key themes for this plan update: equity, public health,

sustainability, opportunity, and safety. Outcomes were evaluated geographically, comparing results across eight Tacoma neighborhoods.

The **Design & Development** element addresses these priority outcomes:

1. **Climate impacts, Urban Heat Index.** Residents across Tacoma experience urban heat differently depending on where they live and if their neighborhoods have more impervious surfaces and less tree cover. Neighborhood design can mitigate the climate impacts from urban growth by prioritizing responsive site and building designs, urban forestry, landscaping, on-site access to open space and green roofs. Public Realm strategies can support improved tree canopy as well as incorporating innovations in stormwater management to better respond to climate change-induced rainfall events.
2. **Walkable Neighborhoods.** The City of Tacoma produced an analysis in 2021 focused on walking access, and integrates several walkability inputs, including distance to schools, parks, trails, commercial businesses and transit stops. Neighborhood design can help close the walkability gap in neighborhoods with low walkability scores.
3. **Perception of Safety.** Community safety is a broad concept that addresses much more than levels of police service and the factors that contribute to a sense of safety may include sidewalks, lighting, prevention, after school activities, restorative justice, and more. Perceptions of safety in Tacoma vary by district, race and ethnicity, and household income. The design and development of neighborhoods can improve the perception of safety by implementing building, site, and public realm design approaches that help increase social interaction and cohesion, a positive sense of identity and pride in place, as well as public and shared spaces that are designed to provide passive surveillance and support situational awareness.
4. **Historic Preservation.** Historic preservation is recognized as an important tool to mitigate negative impacts that rapid change can impose upon a neighborhood and enhance an area's "sense of place." This Element broadly supports preservation citywide as well as the specific outcomes relates to thematic representation and distribution of landmarks and districts.

## Policy Audit

The below principles for plan development will be used when drafting language for this element update.

### Structure and Content

- Strengthen the connection between goals and policies in all chapters

- If needed, aim for more goals and fewer policies per goal to maintain clear connections (some goals and policies currently read like a laundry list)
- Remove redundant language
- Connect everything to the Vision Statement and Focus Areas and reinforce the overall growth strategy
- Policy Chapters should be better connected to community engagement. Key opportunities for community engagement should be explicit.
- Reflect new program capacities in Neighborhood Planning Program and the Urban Design Studio, including the Urban Design Project Review process and Home in Tacoma's recommended middle housing design standards.
- Tie to Transportation and Mobility Plan's Language and policies, especially withing the Public Realm Activation and Curb Management sections.
- Integrate some of the Historic Residential Pattern Area information that previously resided in the Urban Form Element. This includes acknowledging new approaches in Neighborhood Planning, Urban Design Studio, and Home in Tacoma's Middle Housing design standards as frameworks for considering and evaluating the catalog of previous, pattern area specific policies. In addition, relocating certain form-giving data sets (e.g., intersection density) as a technical resource, plus providing direction to add more measures (i.e., tree canopy) for Element Outcome Measurements.

## Language

- Use more people-centered language that focuses on the experience that the City aims to create rather than the characteristics of the physical environment.
- Use more active language where possible. For example, use the core action rather than "strive to" or "consider"
- Identify accountable parties and parties where possible
- Use consistent terms.
- Define and use a consistent set of terms for geographies – centers, outside centers, residential pattern areas, neighborhood council districts, council districts, basins/watersheds.
- Use a consistent term or terms for those we intend to serve with the plan. There were several uses of the word "citizen"
- Recommend using *community member* as the most inclusive term (of visitors and workers) and *resident* when specifically referring to those who live in Tacoma.
- Finalize the vision statement and use the language consistently.

- Be more specific about equity terms, existing disparities (reference baseline conditions), and priority groups.
- Distinguish between perceived safety and experienced events of harm and include acknowledgement of trauma-induced experience.

## COMMUNITY INPUT

The Project Team compiled qualitative data from nine community visioning workshops and categorized it into overarching themes representing community priorities for Tacoma's growth over the next 25 years. Additionally, the Project Team reviewed community input gathered through previous engagement activities.

Notable to this Element's goals and policies, community input solicited online by Urban Design Studio Staff yielded distinct priorities for Urban Design Project Review program design. Several representative open-ended comments are included below. Other engagement activities that occurred between 2016 to present day were included in the Tacoma Existing Engagement Gap Analysis report.

Residents love the distinct character of the city's neighborhoods and want design and development to reflect local history, context, and cultures. Tacomans also want more greenery in their neighborhoods, including trees, planter boxes as traffic barriers or on sidewalks, native plants, local food growing in community gardens or food forests.

Engagement from the Comprehensive Plan also suggests there is concern for the lack of cleanliness and street maintenance in their neighborhoods. Community members felt that a lack of cleanliness was contributing to the decline of one business district and a decrease in visitors to the area. Input included references to trash, graffiti, potholes, deterioration of buildings and neglect in business areas, absence of appropriate lighting at night especially for pedestrians with disabilities, and the need for sidewalk landscaping and tree cover.

---

**“Communities with increased tree canopy report lower levels of crime and less speeding. Adding to our tree canopy is the easiest way to create safer neighborhoods for all.” Ideas Wall Comment**

**“I want our streets to be fully connected corridors of mixed use and not isolated islands of walkability.” Ideas Wall Comment**

**“Adaptive reuse of structures for more housing... adds and retains character of the neighborhood.” Urban Design Online Open House**

---

**“[Places] to gather - something we're short on in Tacoma. Again, in a city that's wet most of the year, semi-sheltered seating. I know this is an issue for folks because of unhoused people camping on such spots. But we need them, period.” Urban Design Online Open House**

**...[M]ake sure ... [implementation] doesn't cripple our ability to grow, change, innovate, and someday be a leader in housing and urban design in one of the most beautiful places in the PNW!" Urban Design Online Open House**

---







## REPORT PREVIEW

Final Report available June 9, 2015

**Prepared for: Planning and Development Services, City of Tacoma, Washington**

Prepared by: Michael Cynkar, Nicholas Kobel, Anaïs Mathez, Hannah Silver  
Portland State University Planning Workshop

# OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Tacoma is a city of neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have distinct natural and built features that make them unique urban places. Despite these differences, Tacoma's neighborhoods each have an instrumental role to play in the collective need to accommodate future growth in the city. The challenge ahead for the City of Tacoma is to meet the needs of its current and future residents in a way that **recognizes evolving needs while still preserving the important qualities that lead to unique and cherished neighborhood character.**

The core of this challenge is the need to accommodate a larger future population as the region continues to grow. As the City of Tacoma updates its Comprehensive Plan, it must plan based on population projections from the Puget Sound Regional Council which indicate that as many as 127,000 new residents will live in Tacoma by 2040, resulting in the need for up to 47,000 new housing units.<sup>1</sup> The City has planned for high-density growth in major centers and along transportation corridors, but less so in existing single-family residential neighborhoods that cover the majority of Tacoma.

Our final report identifies a variety of residential infill development strategies that can help guide housing policy to incorporate better place-making practices to reflect a neighborhood's unique character while also meeting the increased demand for housing citywide. The goals of these recommendations are to promote context-sensitive strategies that provide housing choice and affordability as a means of fostering thriving neighborhoods that meet the diverse needs of Tacoma's current and future residents.

Three key elements serve as the impetus for this study.

- 1. State-mandated review:** The City of Tacoma is required under the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 (GMA) to periodically update its comprehensive plan to incorporate regional population projections and incorporate long-range planning that fulfills a variety of social, economic and environmental needs. The Housing Element is a mandatory requirement under the GMA and requires that cities plan for sufficient types of housing that meet the needs of all economic segments of society.
- 2. Community concerns:** Tacomans are concerned about trends of development in their city. These concerns often involve new development not fitting in with existing residential development patterns or not meeting community needs of affordability, well-maintained housing or the provision of a variety of housing options.
- 3. Gaps in information:** The City of Tacoma's Planning and Development Services (PDS) department saw the identification of neighborhood design patterns within Tacoma as an important need to inform growth management policy and promote development that was consistent with neighborhood character. PDS submitted a proposal to Portland State University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program to conduct this analysis to help inform the Housing Element.

---

1 Puget Sound Regional Council. (2009). VISION 2040 Growth Management Strategy.

# OBJECTIVES

Our approach examines housing policy with the goal of meeting two key objectives: **increasing access to missing middle housing** and **promoting context-sensitive development**.

- *Why the missing middle?*  
Zoning regulations have allowed limited housing options of low-density single-family houses or high-density units in limited areas. There is a wide range of underutilized “missing middle” options that could lead to more housing choice for Tacomans.
- *Why context-sensitive development?*  
Building upon the defining characteristics of neighborhoods is essential for meeting the unique needs of those neighborhoods. This suggests the need for residential development that not only has similar visual features, but fits **social**, **economic** and **environmental** needs of the city and its residents.

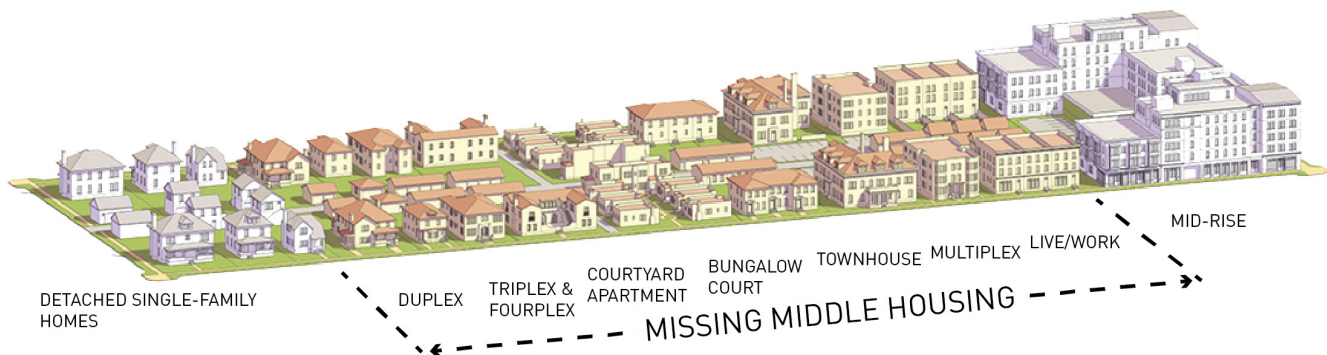


Illustration © 2015 Opticos Design, Inc.

# METHODOLOGY

**Background research:** Through comprehensive investigation and analysis we can understand the broader context in Tacoma for our housing analysis. This was done in three primary ways:

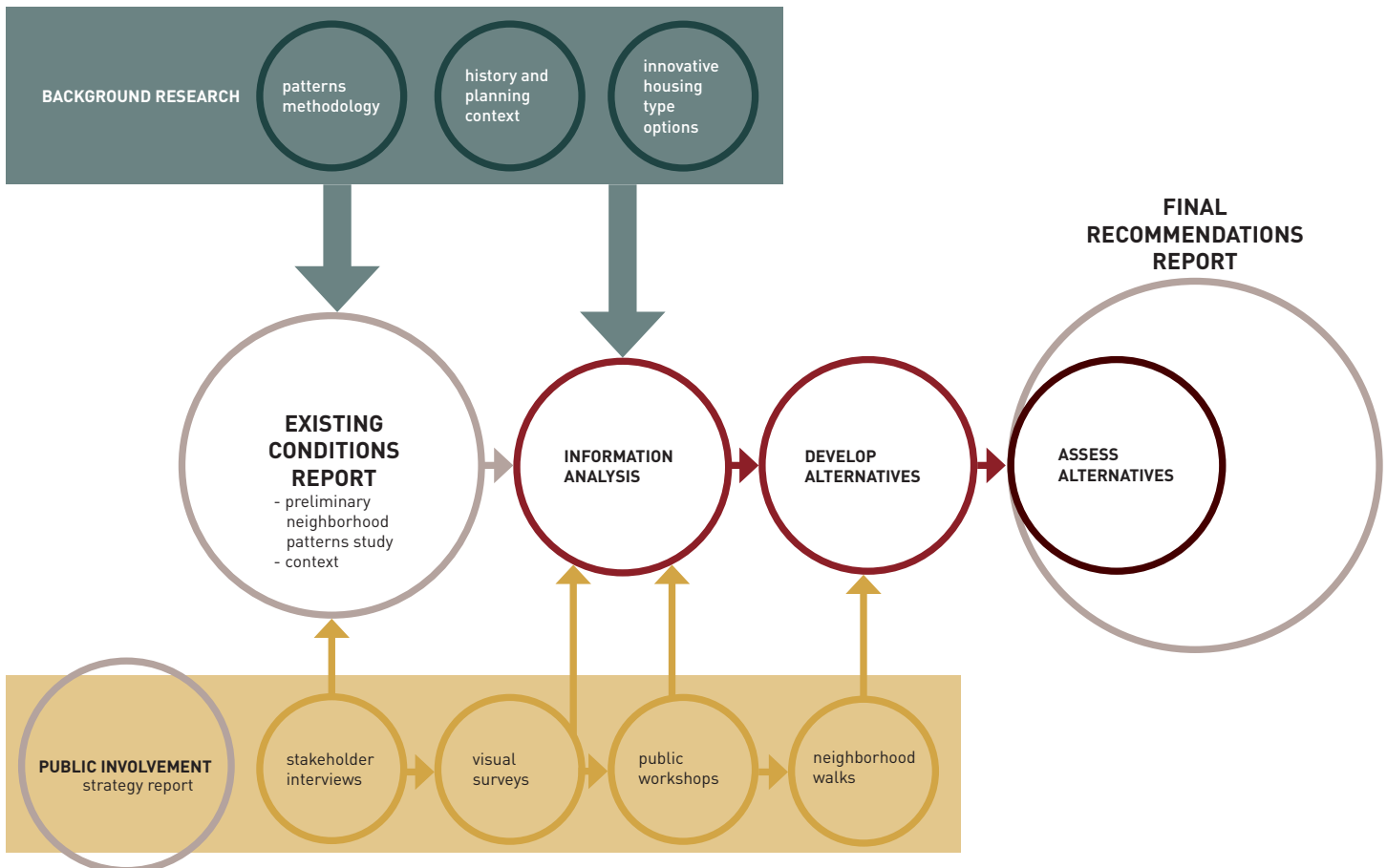
- *Develop a patterns methodology:* Identify built and natural environment characteristics that help inform our understanding of existing residential development.
- *Summarize history and planning context:* Past and present policies and community needs are critical for understanding important issues in Tacoma.
- *Conduct expert interviews:* Collect first-hand knowledge about innovative housing types from those who develop housing and policy language.

**Public involvement:** Comprehensive Plan updates can transform the social and physical landscape for decades to come. Extensive community engagement can help policymakers identify which policies have broad, lasting community support and reflect diverse community values.

- *Stakeholder interviews:* To identify issues pertinent to housing policy from experts and other key stakeholders.
- *Visual preference surveys:* To identify which types of housing Tacoma residents find most appealing for their neighborhoods.
- *Public workshops:* To give Tacoma residents the opportunity to interact with other community members to envision the direction of their community.
- *Neighborhood walks:* To provide educational opportunities for community members to learn about a variety of residential development patterns and offer feedback.

**Existing conditions report:** The culmination of elements of our background research and public involvement into a preliminary document of current conditions in Tacoma.

**Development and assessment of alternatives:** Through an analysis of our existing conditions report, community engagement and background research we will create various alternatives to meet our project objectives. We will rank these alternatives to make our final recommendations.



# DEFINING PATTERN AREAS

## WHY DO PATTERN AREAS MATTER?

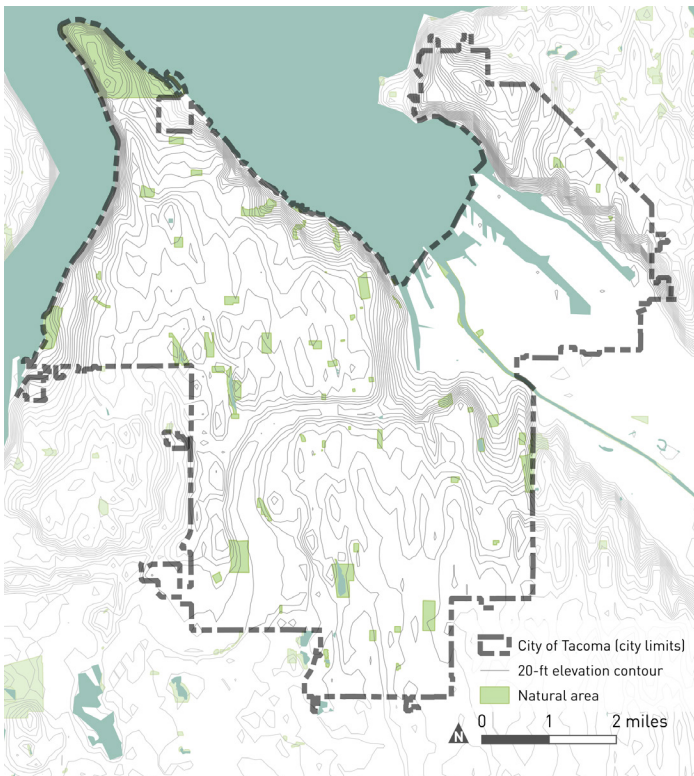
Residents of Tacoma value the unique character of their neighborhoods and districts. But what exactly contributes to neighborhood character and context? The goal of a pattern area mapping exercise is to highlight the features that make each area of the city unique. A pattern area is an area of the city that is linked by its **physical** characteristics—features of both the built and natural environment.

To determine the loose boundaries of the pattern areas in Tacoma, we did an analysis of five major built and natural characteristics: topography, street grid, land improvement ratio, intersection junction density, and era built. These maps are shown here.

### TOPOGRAPHY

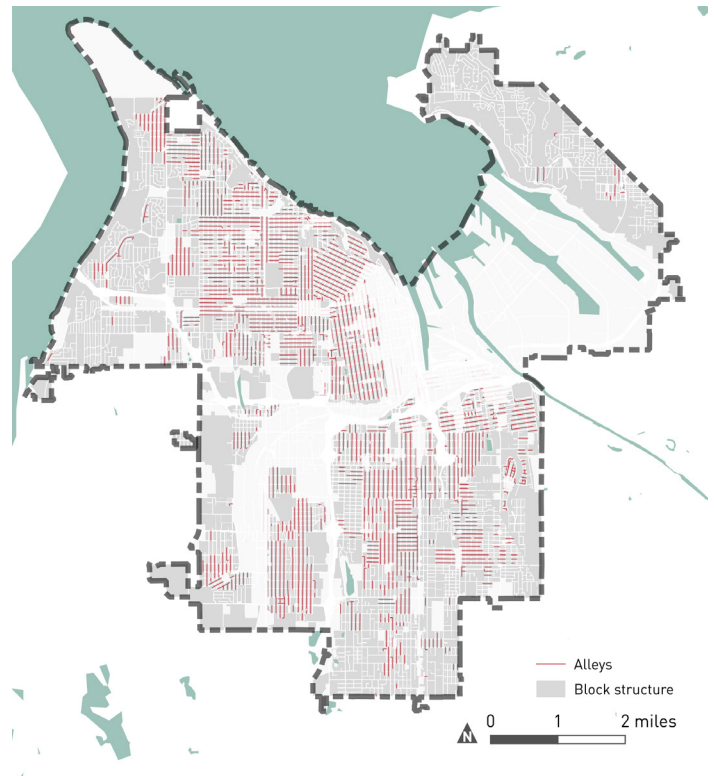
#### How does topography influence residential development?

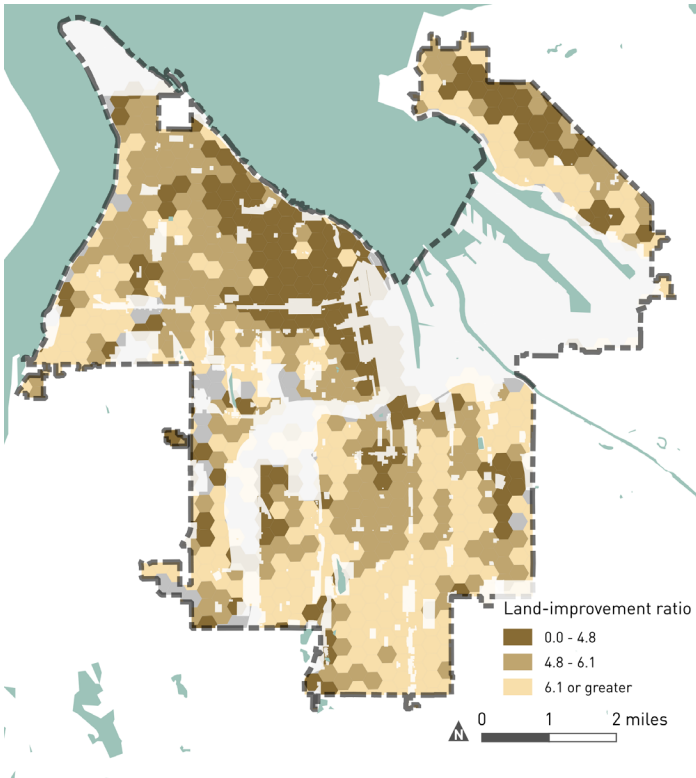
An understanding of the natural features that vary across Tacoma is essential for visualizing the nuances of development in different areas. For example, in areas with major slopes and views, houses are generally built to preserve those views. Additionally, semi-rural development historically happened most often in flatter areas.



### STREET GRID

What is important about the street grid? An aerial view of Tacoma's street network highlights the major differences between a more rectilinear (straight), historic network and a more curvilinear (curving) post-war network, which has implications for how neighborhoods look. **Why highlight alleyways?** Alleyways are generally conducive to out-of-sight off-street parking. This usually means that the lack of garages at the front of lots allow for homes and blocks to be more pedestrian- rather than auto-oriented.



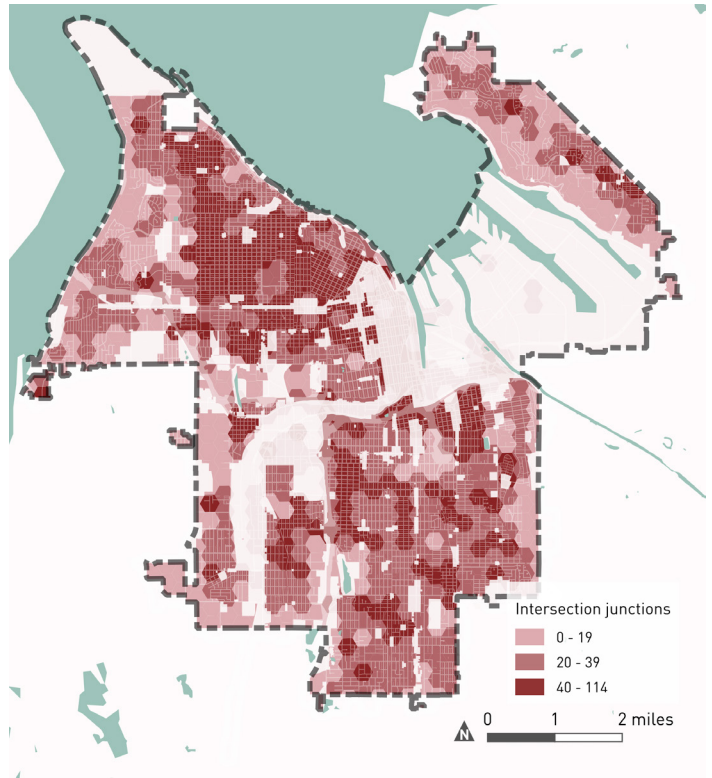


### LAND USE INTENSITY

**What is land improvement ratio and why is it important?** Though the age of housing map can tell us much about the design of a neighborhood, some neighborhoods that were built in the same era exhibit very different land use qualities. Land improvement ratio shows the difference between land available on a lot and actual square foot developed on that lot. Darker areas are where land is more intensively developed, i.e. for a given lot, the residential structure is built up tall, or the footprint of a house takes up much of the lot. Lighter areas can mean that houses are smaller comparatively.

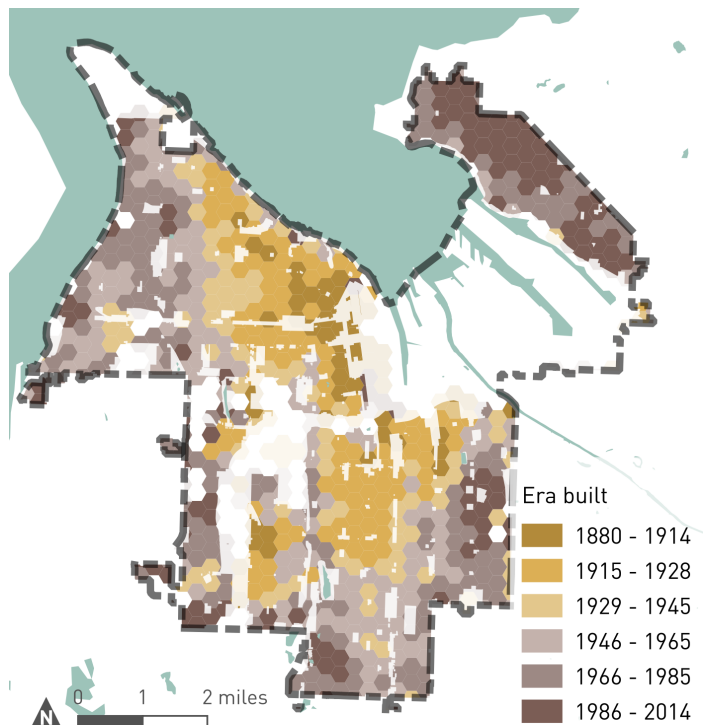
### ERA BUILT

**Why does it matter when housing was built?** This map can give us a sense of what time period that the majority of any given area's housing comes from. Pre-war (approximately pre-1940s) housing was built without many modern amenities and construction techniques, meaning that construction is generally (though not exclusively) harder to the elements, hand-crafted, and more pedestrian-oriented. Post-war housing was developed with more amenities like A/C and the proliferation of cars, so design often reflects that with prominent garages and less expensive materials and labor. Pre-1950s housing was also built prior to the adoption of zoning code, so residential development includes more variety of housing types (duplex, small multifamily, carriage houses, etc).



### INTERSECTIONS

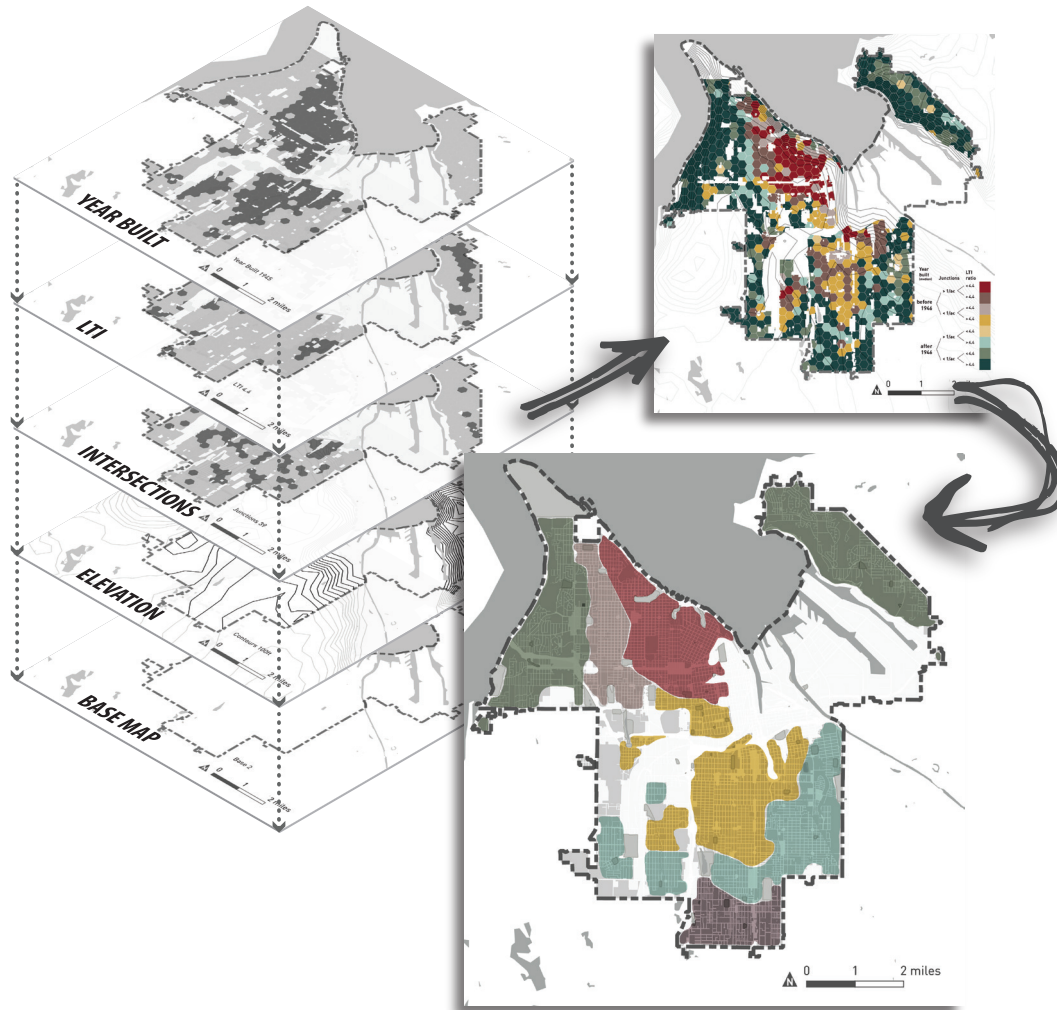
**Why intersection junction density?** By showing the cumulative number of intersection junctions (places where streets intersect) under each hexagon, we can visualize where neighborhoods are permeable or not. "Permeable" means that travel through them is easy because of a complete street network. This map gives us a sense of what the pedestrian experience is like in any given area.



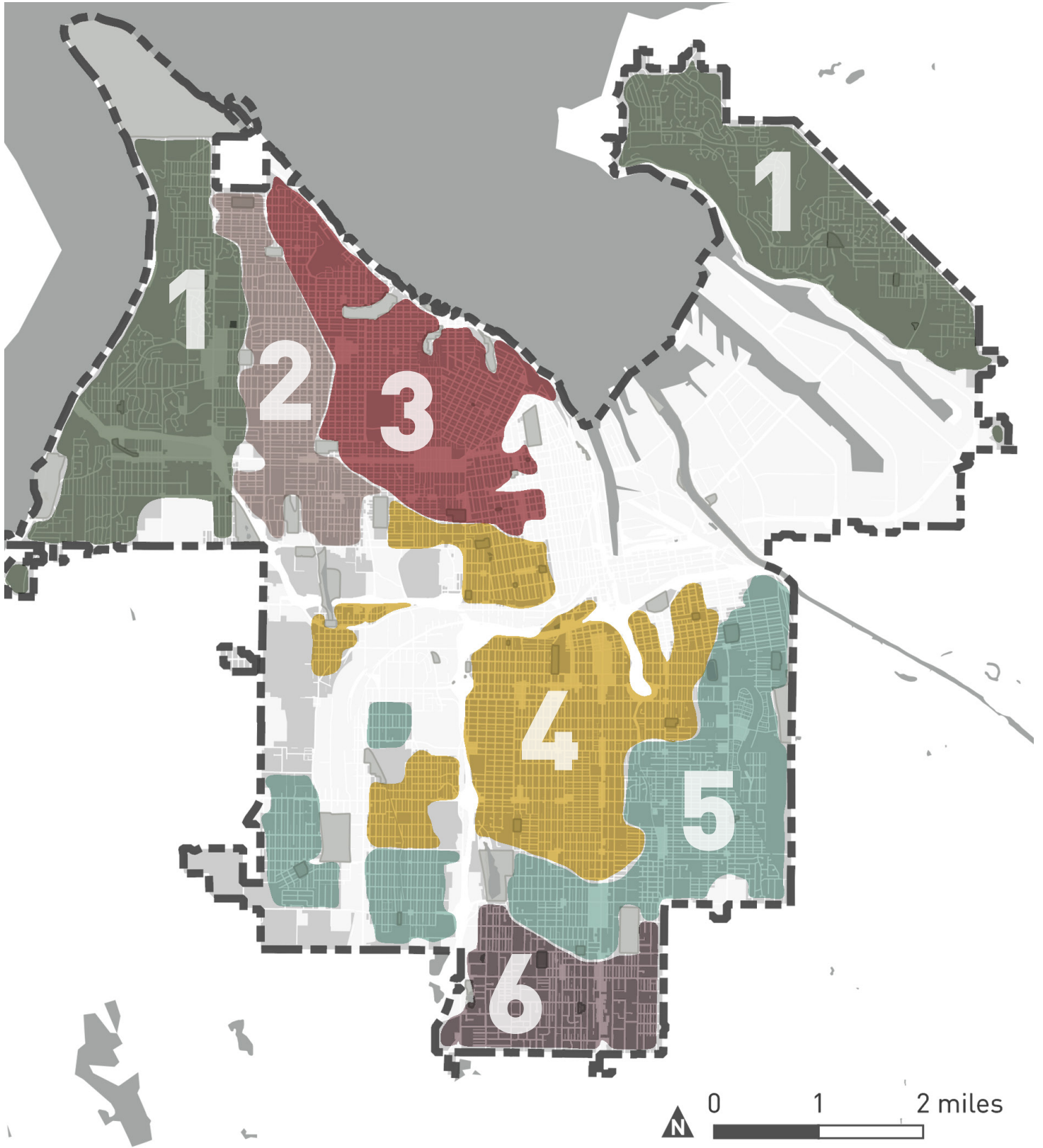
Data source: Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer. (2014). Tax parcel records.

# TACOMA'S SIX RESIDENTIAL PATTERN AREAS

By simplifying and overlaying the preceding five maps, our team identified the six patterns areas shown in the map on the next page. Each of the six patterns is described in the pages following.



The residential pattern mapping exercise reveals that **one size does not fit all**. Tacoma's conventional approach to residential zoning does not adequately distinguish the nuances of residential development across the city. Identifying pattern areas is a first step in developing and refining policies, investments and regulations that are sensitive to neighborhood context. Pattern areas can help the city and its residents manage change in ways that enhance community identity by defining what the broader neighborhood context is.





# 1 POST-WAR SLOPES

These discontinuous but very similar areas were primarily developed post-war and represent a societal shift that favored auto use and more insular neighborhoods. This is evidenced by the dominance of garages, curvilinear (curvy) streets, and cul-de-sac development. This disrupted street grid limits walkability but lends itself to a sense of privacy and security within neighborhoods. Houses tend to be ranch, double-ranch, or more contemporary building styles, often with garages front-and-center, facing the street, as alleyways are rare. Many homes have long frontages and are 1-1.5 stories, as much of the area includes view overlays.

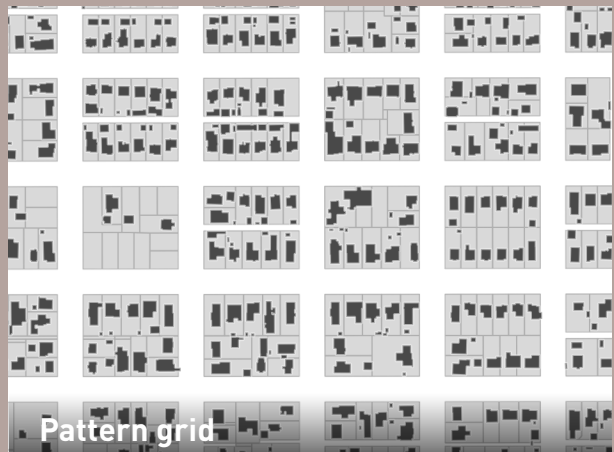


## PATTERN 1 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: SLOPED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: CURVILINEAR
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

# 2 MIXED-ERA TRANSITION

Though this area shares many street grid characteristics with Pattern 3, sidewalks are sometimes undeveloped. This area contains a generous mix of pre-war and post-war housing, including a fair bit of mid-century homes, which tend to be more auto-oriented than pre-war. However, much of the area includes alleyways, meaning that homes often hide garages at the rear. This area is slightly less compact than Pattern 3 and also holds far fewer large or land-use intensive homes.

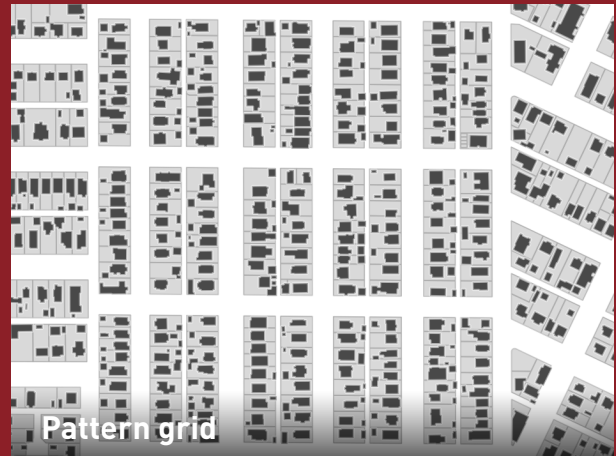


## PATTERN 2 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: MIXED
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: CONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: PRE-WAR
- LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY

## 3 PRE-WAR COMPACT

This is Tacoma's most historic section of residential development, containing homes from pre-1900 but ranging through current era. The street grid is very connected and blocks tend to be fairly short, creating walkable neighborhoods. This area has a variety of pre-zoning non-conforming lot sizes, lots of alleyways, many large historic homes, and a mix of non-residential uses blended within it. A significant portion of this area is built on dramatic slopes and home designs emphasize views of the Puget Sound.



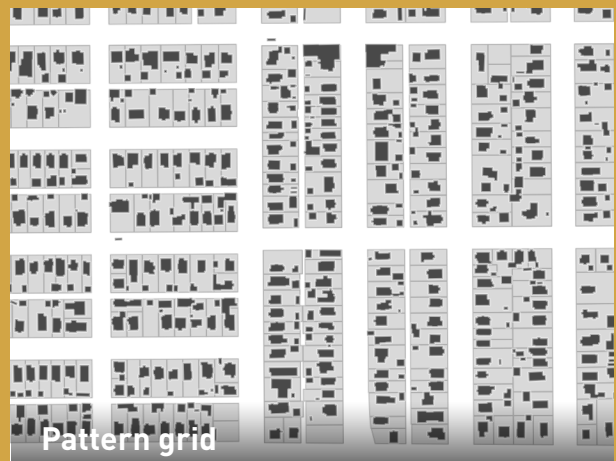
Pattern grid

### PATTERN 3 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: SLOPED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: CONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: PRE-WAR
- LAND USE: HIGH INTENSITY

## 4 PRE-WAR EXPANSION

This area contains a fair share of historic homes, though they are generally smaller than in Pattern 3. Homes in this area are primarily bungalow style or reference this type of modest residential design. Land is developed less intensely than in Pattern 3, and though neighborhoods are walkable within themselves, they tend to be discontinuous, as they are edged by large, busy thoroughfares. Blocks are slightly longer than in other historic areas. This development is on fairly flat land, and the prominence of alleyways allows for hidden garages. Some neighborhoods also push powerlines into alleyways, creating a fairly clear line of sight.



Pattern grid

### PATTERN 4 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: MIXED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY

## 5 MID-CENTURY EXPANSION

This area contains a general mix of residential styles, though mid-century homes are fairly common. These post-war homes frequently emphasize garages, and though alleyways exist throughout to some extent, they are less used than in other areas. The street grid begins to shift in this area, and blocks become longer in many places.



### PATTERN 5 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: MIXED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: MIXED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

## 6 SUBURBAN FRINGE

This area is comprised of a fairly disrupted street grid. In some cases, blocks are 3-4 times the sizes of those adjacent, and many times the size of blocks in compact historic areas. While there are some historic homes interspersed in this area, much of the development is post-war. Some residents benefit from large, nearly-rural lots. Some blocks have been developed as PRDs (Planned Residential Developments), with new, similar-looking, closely developed homes. This area has some flag lot and pipe stem development to make use of space within extremely deep blocks. This area tends to be fairly auto-oriented due to its less-connected streets.



### PATTERN 6 STATS:

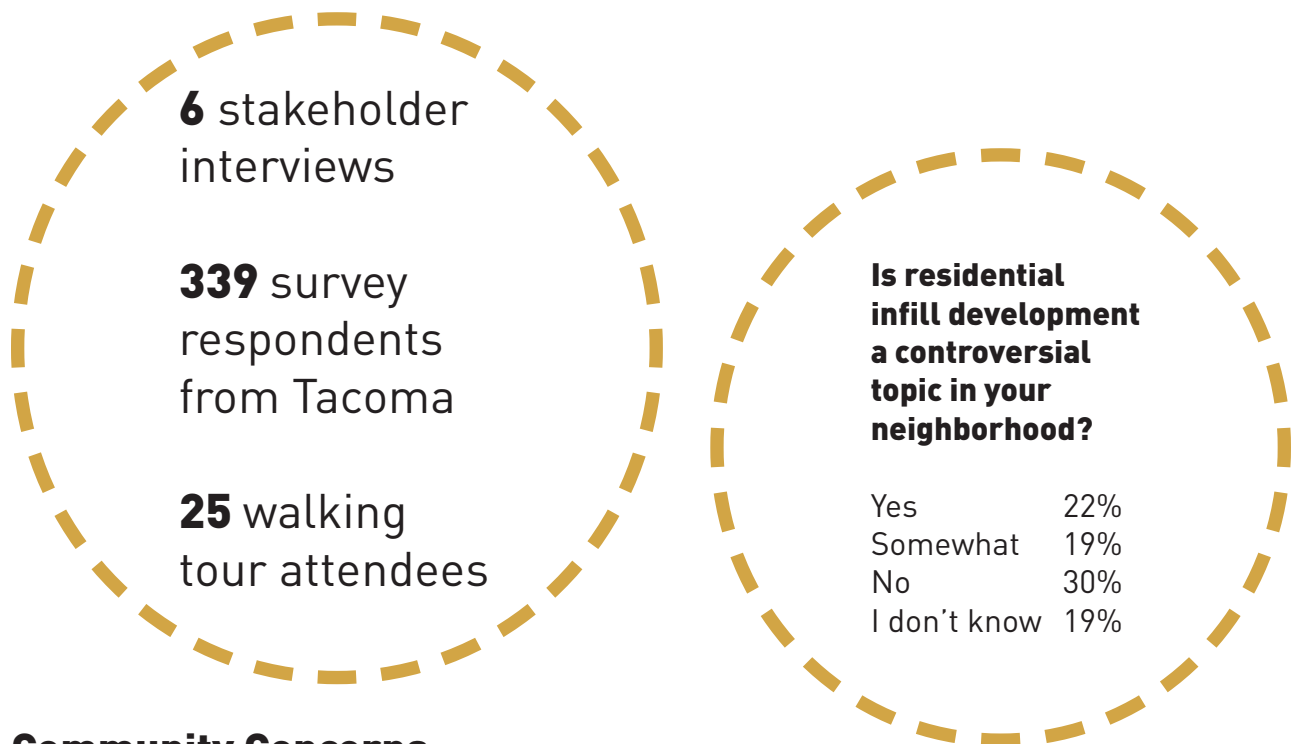
- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

## What are the qualities that lend to the distinct identities of Tacoma's neighborhoods?

Community concerns over the direction of growth and development is one of the three guiding forces behind the purpose of this project. A key objective of this report is to identify the qualities that make Tacoma's neighborhoods unique so that new residential development reflects the patterns and scale of Tacoma's neighborhoods. Examining the concerns, perceptions and design preferences related to residential infill development helps calibrate physical patterns with neighborhood character.

Our team designed a public outreach and community engagement process to gather input from a wide range of key stakeholders, including City staff, planning experts, property owners, developers, community leaders, and Tacoma residents. Overall, nearly 400 people were reached through this project.



## Community Concerns

While opinions regarding compatibility vary widely, issues of scale, look and function drive the concern over infill development. As controversial as the topic can be, conversations with the community indicated that "duplexing the neighborhood" and the perceived impacts of traffic and noise were embedded within issues of deteriorating infrastructure, residential blight and distrust towards public service providers. However, the sentiments shared with our team point to a sense of neighborhood pride and reveal an overarching commitment to supporting improvements in their communities.

# What are the most important design and development priorities?



## Design Preferences

Both through the online survey and open house meetings for the Comprehensive Plan Update, community members were asked to respond to images of different housing types and designs. A visual preferences survey asked participants to state the extent to which they thought the overall design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of their neighborhood. Overall, responses show that the greatest proportion of survey respondents preferred housing designs that depict the classic Pacific Northwest architectural style, with front porches, hidden garages and orientation towards the street. Those designs with the least amount of support were garage-centric, with little architectural detail or landscaping. Respondents did not show a clear preference for any particular type of housing (i.e. how many units a structure holds).

### What were the top-ranked homes in the visual preference survey?



duplex



single family



duplex



duplex



PRD

Image number	Total responses	Pattern area					Age group		Renter/owner	
		Post-war slopes	Mixed-era transition	Pre-war compact	Pre-war expansion	Mid-century expansion	Under 36	36 or older	Rent	Own
18	95%	88%	96%	96%	98%	95%	93%	96%	91%	96%
7	93%	92%	100%	94%	95%	100%	89%	94%	90%	94%
22	85%	85%	81%	84%	85%	95%	82%	86%	86%	84%
11	83%	92%	92%	78%	89%	95%	82%	84%	84%	84%
28	83%	77%	81%	78%	94%	85%	83%	83%	83%	83%

# What were the bottom-ranked homes in the visual preference survey?



attached



alley flats



single family



duplex



triplex

Image number	Total responses	Pattern area				Mid-century expansion	Age group		Renter/owner	
		Post-war slopes	Mixed-era transition	Pre-war compact	Pre-war expansion		Under 36+	Over 35+	Rent+	Own+
15	46%	50%	36%	35%	50%	60%	52%	43%	62%	41%
30	45%	46%	33%	39%	56%	60%	46%	45%	60%	41%
2	44%	42%	58%	33%	49%	63%	49%	41%	55%	41%
19	34%	46%	38%	16%	55%	50%	33%	35%	44%	32%
10	24%	35%	15%	9%	36%	53%	22%	25%	28%	23%

## Next Steps

The information gleaned from survey data, interviews and conversations will provide considerable opportunities for understanding community values and assessing the challenges and opportunities of residential development. Analysis of this information will look at the differences between pattern areas regarding design preferences, development priorities and the perception of neighborhood qualities.

# FORMING RECOMMENDATIONS

The tacHOMEa team is currently in the process of finalizing its recommendations and will present these to the Planning Commission at the June 3rd meeting. These recommendations will offer context-sensitive strategies for increasing missing middle residential infill development. Our approach evaluates context-sensitivity through economic, social and environmental lenses to evaluate how well it meets community needs, as determined through research and community engagement. Each individual recommendation receives a score in each of the following categories:

## **Economic**

“Housing that allows for profit maximization and cost savings by developers that in turn helps spur development.”

## **Social**

“Housing that promotes equal access to opportunities for a higher standard of living, community revitalization and housing security.”

## **Environmental**

“Housing that limits the consumption of scarce natural resources, reduces pollution and helps to protect existing environmental features.”

The recommendations are ranked in each of these three categories on a scale of 1-3. The scale represents:

“3” score = High opportunity for achieving goals.

“2” score = Medium opportunity for achieving goals

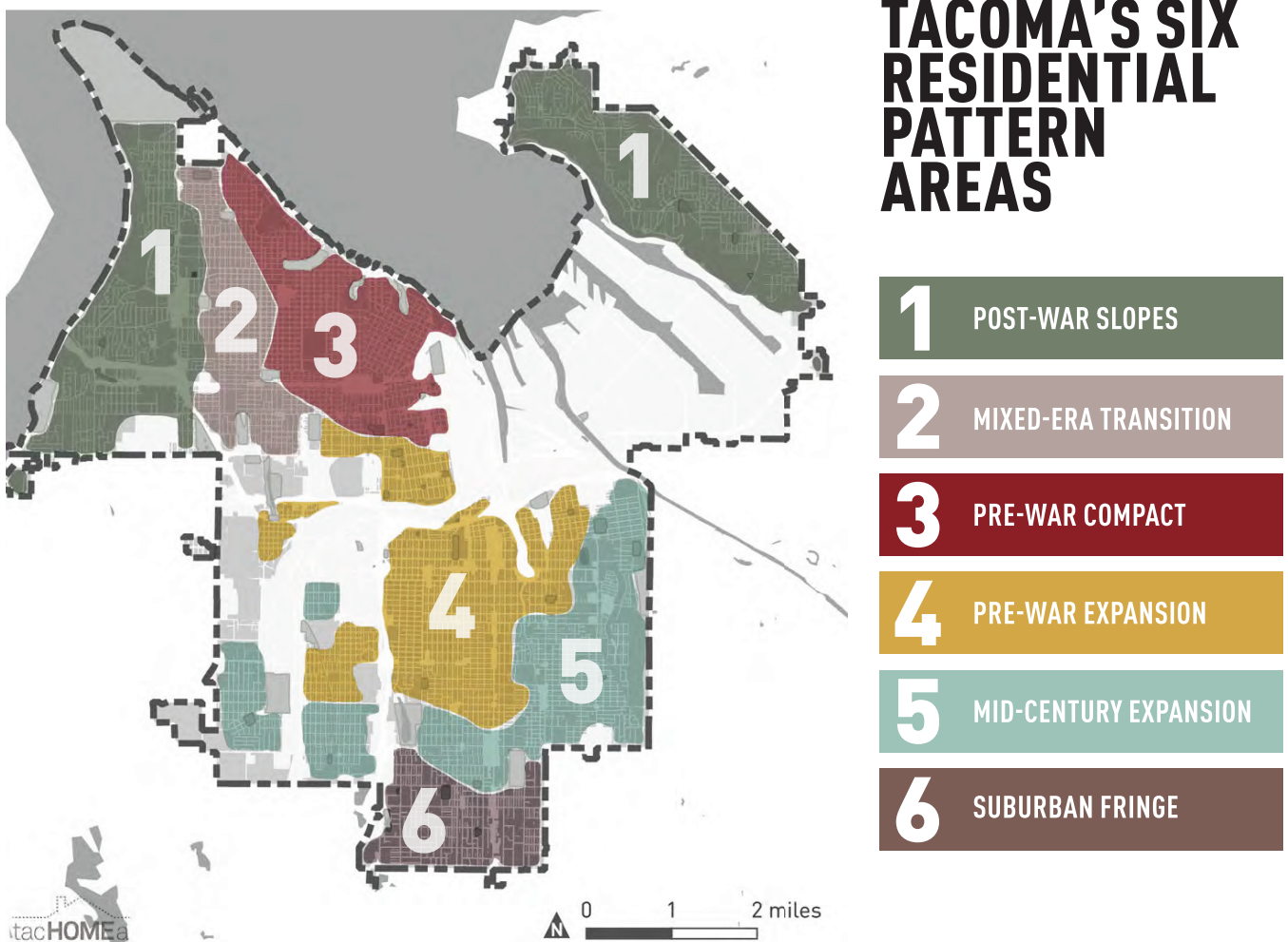
“1” score = Low opportunity for achieving goals

These three scores are bundled to create a composite score for each recommendation. Coupled with an analysis of **economic and political feasibility, ease of implementation,** and **consideration for pattern area characteristics**, this composite score allows us to prioritize recommendations for the City of Tacoma to consider for updates to zoning code and planning policy.



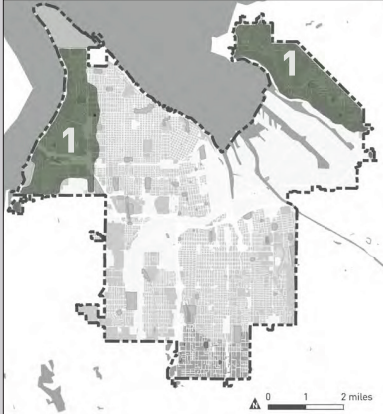
**ESTABLISHING PATTERN AREAS**

The *TacHOMEa Infill Report* identifies six residential pattern areas in the city based on key physical features, including (1) natural environment, (2) block structure, (3) intersection density, (4) era built, and (5) intensity of land use.



For a complete discussion of the features and methodology used to establish pattern areas, please see the *TacHOMEa Infill Report* at [www.tachomea.org/](http://www.tachomea.org/).

Source: *TacHOMEa: Infill Tools for a Happy City*, 2015.



#### QUALITIES:

##### Topography

*Sloped*

##### Block Structure

*Curvilinear*

##### Intersection Density

*Disconnected*

##### Era of Development

*Post-war*

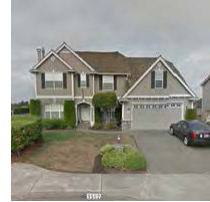
##### Land Use

*Low Intensity*

Source: TacHOMEa:  
Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.

**Policy UF–13.2** Promote infill development within the residential pattern areas that respects the context of the area and contributes to the overall quality of design.

**Policy UF–13.3** Utilize the findings of the TacHOMEa Infill Report in developing future design guidelines and/or development standards that apply within the following residential pattern areas.



### Pattern Area 1: Post-War Slopes

These areas were primarily developed during the post-war period and is characterized by the prevalence of garages, curvilinear streets, and cul-de-sac development. The disrupted street grid limits route directness but lends itself to a sense of privacy and security within neighborhoods. Houses tend to be ranch, double-ranch, or more contemporary building styles, often with garages more prominently situated at the front of the structure and facing the street, as alleys are rare. Many homes have long frontages and are typically 1–1.5 stories as the area includes view overlays.

**Policy UF–13.4** New development should be oriented to take advantage of the view of Commencement Bay and the Tacoma Narrows and to preserve significant public views.

**Policy UF–13.5** Preserve and restore the slopes and gulches for their aesthetic qualities, to provide wildlife habitat, and to expand passive recreational opportunities.

**Policy UF–13.6** Pursue funding to acquire open space properties and require easements as necessary to complete the West Slope and Northeast Tacoma trail systems consistent with *Shoreline Public Access Plan* and *Transportation Master Plan*.

**Policy UF–13.7** Complete pedestrian facilities and enhance bicyclist and pedestrian safety along Marine View Drive to improve opportunities to enjoy the waterfront and to learn about ongoing restoration efforts.

**Policy UF–13.8** Improve neighborhood bicycle and pedestrian access to the waterfront, especially to Narrows Marina, Titlow Park, Marine View Drive and Point Defiance.

**Policy UF–13.9** Improve the streetscapes along 6th Avenue and Pearl to support infill redevelopment opportunities and to create vibrant and distinctive public places.

**Policy UF–13.10** Maintain and enhance the existing commercial areas while preserving the unique features of these neighborhoods.

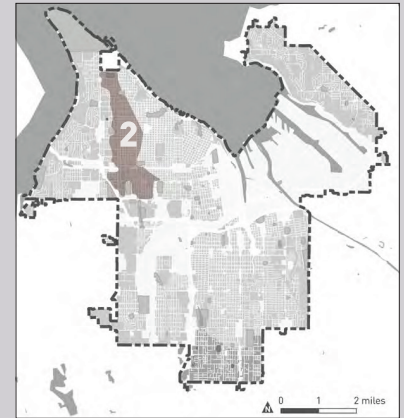
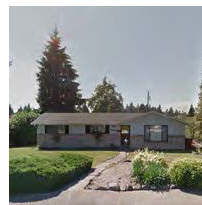
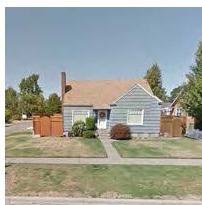
**Pattern Area 2: Mixed-Era Transition**

This area contains a generous mix of pre-war and post-war housing, including a mix of mid-century homes. However, much of the area includes alley-ways, with the garages often located at the rear of the property, facing the alley. This area is slightly less compact than Pattern Area 3 and also holds far fewer large or land-use intensive homes. Though this area shares many street grid characteristics with Pattern Area 3, sidewalks are sometimes undeveloped.

**Policy UF–13.11** Preserve the area’s urban fabric of compact blocks and highly interconnected grid of streets.

**Policy UF–13.12** Enhance and expand the Mason Signature Trail as an anchor for the neighborhoods.

**Policy UF–13.13** Maintain the predominant single family residential character of the area, with multifamily and commercial uses concentrated along S 19th Street, S 12th Street, 6th Ave and N 26th Street.



**QUALITIES:**

**Topography**  
*Flat*

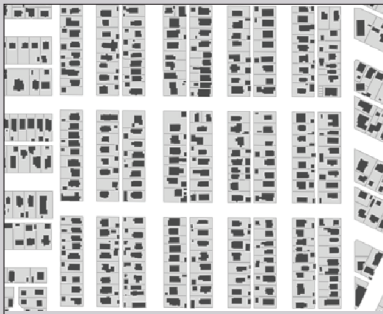
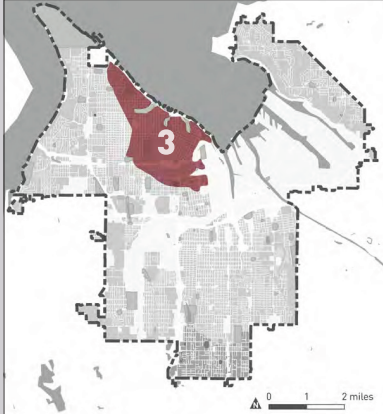
**Block Structure**  
*Mixed*

**Intersection Density**  
*Connected*

**Era of Development**  
*Pre-war*

**Land Use**  
*Medium Intensity*

Source: TacHOMEa:  
*Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.*



#### QUALITIES:

##### Topography

*Sloped*

##### Block Structure

*Straight*

##### Intersection Density

*Connected*

##### Era of Development

*Pre-war*

##### Land Use

*High Intensity*

Source: TacHOMEa:  
*Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.*

**Policy UF–13.14** Identify opportunities for new neighborhood parks that serve the daily needs of the residents.

**Policy UF–13.15** Enhance wayfinding to parks and recreation facilities.

**Policy UF–13.16** Identify gaps in the existing sidewalk network and complete high priority sidewalks that improve safe routes to schools, transit, parks and other community destinations.

**Policy UF–13.17** Encourage development and right-of-way design that incorporates extensive tree canopy, including evergreens.

### Pattern Area 3: Pre-War Compact

This is Tacoma's most historic section of residential development, and also some of the densest neighborhoods in Tacoma, containing homes ranging from pre-1900 to the current era. The street grid is very well connected and blocks tend to be fairly short, supporting a highly walkable environment. This area has a variety of pre-zoning non-conforming lot sizes, prevalent alleyways, many large historic homes, and a mix of residential types and non-residential uses blended within the historic fabric. A significant portion of this area is built on dramatic slopes with home designs emphasizing views of Commencement Bay and Puget Sound.

**Policy UF–13.18** Maintain and enhance the streetcar era pattern of street-oriented buildings.

**Policy UF–13.19** Preserve the area's urban fabric of compact blocks and highly interconnected grid of streets.

**Policy UF–13.20** Fill gaps in the urban fabric through infill development on vacant and underutilized sites.

**Policy UF–13.21** Integrate new development into the districts' historic development patterns.

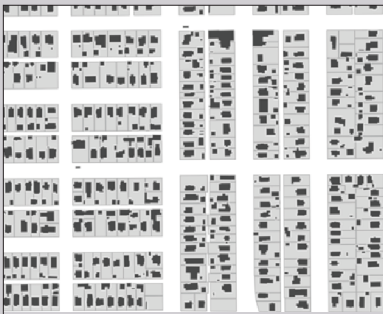
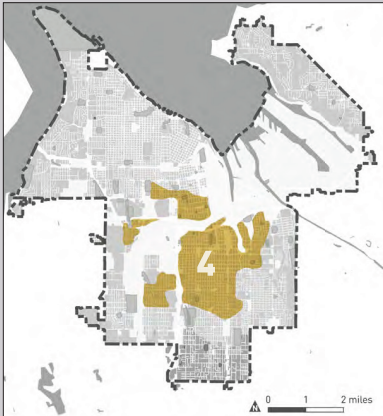
**Policy UF–13.22** Continue the pattern of small, connected blocks and the regular lot patterns.



**Policy UF-13.23** Maintain and enhance the quality and character of the business districts, with good street frontages and pedestrian amenities.

**Policy UF-13.24** Promote the retention of the existing tree canopy. Retain large, mature trees, except when they block views or pose a hazard.

**Policy UF-13.25** Use the extensive street, sidewalk, and trail system to make connections to Downtown Tacoma and other major destinations. Enhance the gulches along Ruston Way to provide a respite from the built environment and to promote connectivity between the neighborhoods and the shoreline.



#### QUALITIES:

##### Topography

*Flat*

##### Block Structure

*Straight*

##### Intersection Density

*Mixed*

##### Era of Development

*Pre-war*

##### Land Use

*Medium Intensity*

Source: TacHOMEa:  
Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.

**Policy UF–13.26** Preserve historic bridges that cross the gulches. In particular, maintain the lighting standards and plaques on the North Proctor Bridge that crosses over Puget Gulch.

**Policy UF–13.27** Preserve and expand historic street lighting along both arterial and neighborhood streets in historic districts.

**Policy UF–13.28** Encourage the conversion of electrical substations for recreational purposes if the sites are no longer needed for their intended purpose.

**Policy UF–13.29** Protect the residential integrity of the Wedge and North Slope neighborhoods.

### Pattern Area 4: Pre-War Expansion

This area contains a large share of historic homes, but at a similar time period as in Pattern Area 3, but typically smaller in size. Homes in this area are primarily bungalow style or reference this type of modest residential design. Land is developed less intensely than in Pattern Area 3 and though neighborhoods are walkable within themselves, they tend to be discontinuous, as they are edged by large, busy thoroughfares. Blocks are longer than in other historic neighborhoods. This Pattern Area is generally on flat land, and the prominence of alleyways allows for garages to be located at the rear of the property. Some neighborhoods have also relocated powerlines into the alleyways creating a clear line of sight.

**Policy UF–13.30** Support housing rehabilitation programs to improve and maintain the historic housing stock.

**Policy UF–13.31** Enhance access from the neighborhood to centers and other community destinations by ensuring that corridors have safe and accessible pedestrian facilities and creating additional connections that provide low-stress pedestrian and bicycle access.

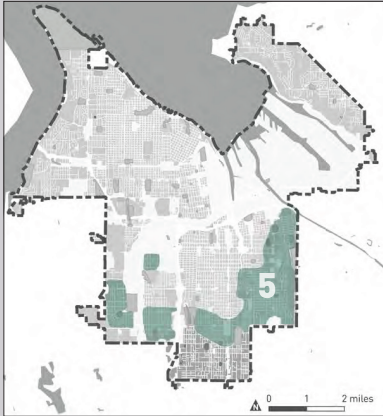


**Policy UF–13.32** Promote new multifamily infill along corridors that takes advantage of the proximity to high frequency transit service and business districts.

**Policy UF–13.33** Pursue a façade improvement loan program and tenant improvement loan program to support the business district revitalization.

**Policy UF–13.34** Promote multifamily residential infill along the bluffs overlooking downtown to take advantage of the view opportunities.

**Policy UF–13.35** Expand the neighborhoods tree canopy and coordinate plantings to create distinctive neighborhood character.



#### QUALITIES:

##### Topography

*Mixed*

##### Block Structure

*Straight*

##### Intersection Density

*Mixed*

##### Era of Development

*Post-war*

##### Land Use

*Low Intensity*

Source: TacHOMEa:  
Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.

**Policy UF–13.36** Seek opportunities for recreational facilities within the area to support active, healthy living and to address any park and recreation service gaps.

**Policy UF–13.37** Explore artist live/work opportunities within the centers and business districts as a catalyst for adaptive reuse of historic structures.

**Policy UF–13.38** Support the development of Pacific Avenue as a growing business and employment center and enhance streetscapes to improve pedestrian safety and to promote the corridor as a civic focal point.

**Policy UF–13.39** Preserve the historic bridges that cross the gulches.

**Policy UF–13.40** Enhance the village character of the neighborhoods' small commercial districts and increase opportunities for more people to live within walking distance of these neighborhood anchors.

### Pattern Area 5: Mid-century Expansion

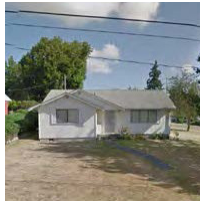
This area contains a general mix of residential styles, though mid-century homes are fairly common. These post-war homes frequently emphasize garages, and though alleyways exist throughout, though to a lesser extent, they are used less than in other areas. The street grid begins to shift in this area, and blocks become longer, limiting more walkable route directness.

**Policy UF–13.41** Guide the evolving street and block system in Pattern Area 5 in ways that build on positive aspects of the area's large blocks, such as opportunities to establish mid-block open space patterns and create new connections through blocks that make it easier to access community destinations.

**Policy UF–13.42** Preserve, enhance, and connect the area's network of habitat areas and corridors, streams, parks, and tree canopy.

**Policy UF–13.43** Enhance the area's distinctive system of trails to expand mobility, access to nature, and active living opportunities in the area.



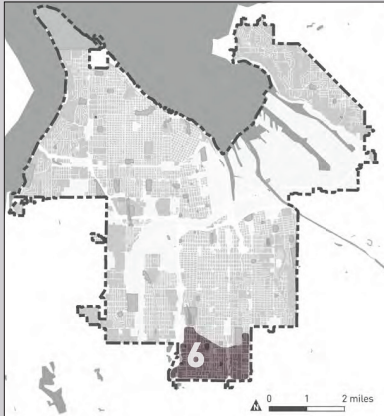


**Policy UF–13.44** Promote Wapato Lake as a City-wide recreation destination and provide safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian access from residential neighborhoods and commercial areas adjacent to the Park.

**Policy UF–13.45** Seek opportunities to expand access to smaller neighborhood parks and/or community gardens to create smaller neighborhood gathering places and focal points.

**Policy UF–13.46** Enhance wayfinding for the Signature Trails to encourage use of the trails as comfortable walking and biking options.

**Policy UF–13.47** Preserve, enhance, and connect the area’s network of habitat areas and corridors, streams, parks, and tree canopy.



#### QUALITIES:

##### Topography

*Flat*

##### Block Structure

*Straight*

##### Intersection Density

*Disconnected*

##### Era of Development

*Post-war*

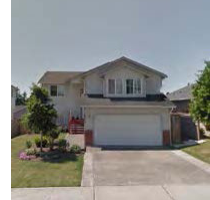
##### Land Use

*Low Intensity*

*Source: TacHOMEa:  
Infill Tools for a  
Happy City, 2015.*

**Policy UF–13.48** Enhance the village character of the neighborhoods' small commercial districts and increase opportunities for more people to live within walking distance of these neighborhood anchors.

**Policy UF–13.49** Promote Portland Avenue as a patterned corridor that provides housing options and commercial services in proximity to parks, recreation and transit.



**Policy UF–13.50** Support enhanced transit service on Portland Avenue to provide access to Downtown and other destinations, including Point Defiance and the Tacoma Mall.

**Policy UF–13.51** Provide midblock crossings along designated Avenues to improve route directness and facilitate a safer pedestrian experience.

**Policy UF–13.52** Promote the Sounder Station as a focal point for employment and high-density residential development.

**Policy UF–13.53** Housing densities greater than six units per acre or any concentrations of more than 25 people per hour/per acre in any given 24-hour period are discouraged in the Accident Potential Zone II (APZ II).

### Pattern Area 6: Suburban Fringe

This area is comprised of a fairly disrupted street grid. In some cases, blocks are 3-4 times the size of blocks in compact, historic areas. While there are some historic homes interspersed in this area, much of the development is post-war. Some residents benefit from large, nearly rural lots. Some blocks have been developed as Planned Residential Developments, with new, similar-styled, but closely developed homes. This area has some flag lot and pipe stem development to make use of space within extremely deep blocks. This area tends to be fairly auto-oriented due to its less-connected streets.

**Policy UF–13.54** Street, block and lot pattern: further street vacations should be limited until such time as the City can review and determine which undeveloped rights of way must be maintained and improved to promote enhanced walkability and route directness.

**Policy UF–13.55** Strive to complete a 300 by 600 foot grid block length.

**Policy UF–13.56** Expand access to open spaces for passive recreation and for stewardship of the areas wetlands and open space corridors.

**Policy UF–13.57** Seek opportunities to create new public gathering sites and or recreation facilities.

**Policy UF–13.58** Promote the revitalization of the Fern Hill Business District and the intensification of uses along Pacific Avenue to diversify the services and amenities available to the neighborhoods.

**Policy UF–13.59** Encourage the use of planned residential developments as a means to completing the grid system and providing greater connectivity and route directness.

**Policy UF–13.60** Promote cottage housing and planned residential development as a strategy to accommodate new residential infill while protecting and preserving the areas significant wetlands, open space and tree canopy.

**Policy UF–13.61** Encourage development and right-of-way design that preserves and incorporates extensive tree canopy, including evergreens, to maintain a strong sense of nature and privacy.





three



# DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

## DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**GOAL DD-1** Design new development to respond to and enhance the distinctive physical, historic, aesthetic and cultural qualities of its location, while accommodating growth and change.

**GOAL DD-2** Ensure that parking area design and management balances the needs of all users, supports modal priorities, and is responsive to site context.

**GOAL DD-3** Ensure that sign location and design is responsive to site context and compatible with the envisioned mix of uses and modal priorities.

**GOAL DD-4** Enhance human and environmental health in neighborhood design and development. Seek to protect safety and livability, support local access to healthy food, limit negative impacts on water and air quality, reduce carbon emissions, encourage active and sustainable design, and integrate nature and the built environment.

**GOAL DD-5** Ensure long-term resilience in the design of buildings, streets and open spaces, including the ability to adjust to changing demographics, climate, and economy, and withstand and recover from natural disasters.

**GOAL DD-6** Protect and preserve designated significant scenic resources, including public views and scenic sites.

**GOAL DD-7** Support sustainable and resource efficient development and redevelopment.

**GOAL DD-8** Promote development practices that contribute to a sense of safety and reduction in opportunities for crime.

**GOAL DD-9** Support development patterns that result in compatible and graceful transitions between differing densities, intensities and activities.

**GOAL DD-10** Ensure that all citizens have nearby, convenient and equitable access to healthy foods.

**GOAL DD-11** Protect people, property and the environment from environmental hazards.

**GOAL DD-12** Integrate and harmonize development with the natural environment.

**GOAL DD-13** Protect and preserve Tacoma's historic and cultural character.

**GOAL DD-14** Infuse the City's built environment with creative expression and design that encourages expressions of creativity and results in vibrant public spaces where people want to be.

**GOAL DD-15** Through neighborhood-level planning initiatives guided by community involvement, support revitalization, housing and reinvestment throughout the City while recognizing and retaining the unique qualities, character, populations, and community assets in each neighborhood, corridor and center.

# THREE

## DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

### WHAT IS THIS CHAPTER ABOUT?

The goals and policies in this chapter convey the City's intent to:

- Encourage building and site design that promotes human and environmental health and safety and responds to local context.
- Promote strong links between building and site design, streets and the public realm.
- Guide historic and cultural resource and scenic view preservation.
- Encourage the integration of nature into the built environment.
- Reduce carbon emissions and promote energy and resource efficient neighborhoods and buildings.
- Create public spaces that promote a sense of community and support the goals of community health and sustainability.

While a place to live is a basic human need, not all Tacomans have safe and healthy housing. Ensuring a fair and equitable housing market is essential to providing the opportunities and security people need to live healthy and successful lives. Economic, social and physical barriers limit many Tacomans' access to adequate housing. Income, physical disabilities, immigration status, limited English proficiency, and discrimination based on race and sexual orientation can also limit choices.

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Development and design shapes how Tacoma looks and functions. Past development, in combination with the natural landscape, has shaped

#### Book I: Goals + Policies

- 1 Introduction + Vision
- 2 Urban Form
- 3 **Design + Development**
- 4 Environment + Watershed Health
- 5 Housing
- 6 Economic Development
- 7 Transportation
- 8 Parks + Recreation
- 9 Public Facilities + Services
- 10 Container Port
- 11 Engagement, Administration + Implementation
- 12 Downtown

#### Book II: Implementation

##### Programs + Strategies

- 1 Shoreline Master Program
- 2 Capital Facilities Program
- 3 Downtown Regional Growth Center Plans
- 4 Historic Preservation Plan



*Historic district housing  
on S J Street*

## One Tacoma

Design + Development



*Engine House No. 9, a fire station built in 1907, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975*

how the city is experienced. Future development, and the treatment of built and natural heritage, has the potential to create a better, healthier, more efficient and more pleasant Tacoma. New development and redevelopment can promote vibrant, accessible urban places for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, while also enhancing natural resources, providing aesthetically pleasing experiences, protecting health and safety and promoting resilience. As a metropolitan city that is expected to accommodate a significant share of regional growth forecasts, Tacoma faces design and development challenges, as well as opportunities. The policies in this chapter encourage development that respects context, preserves historic and cultural resources, engages innovation and creativity, reduces carbon emissions, improves resource efficiency, minimizes risk from natural hazards, limits impacts to wildlife and natural systems, and integrates nature into the urban environment.



## GOALS + POLICIES

### GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The design of buildings and other development can affect the safety, health, and quality of life of building users, neighbors and the environment. High-quality design contributes to the beauty, livability, resilience and functionality of the city as a whole. Clear policy guidance and direction on Tacoma's desired design and development character will help preserve and enhance the character of city's neighborhoods and promote the Tacoma as an inviting and inspiring place. The following policies guide building and site design to promote accessible and attractive public environments. They also encourage site and building designs that contribute to a welcoming and attractive public realm and respond to current and historical contexts.

**GOAL DD-1** Design new development to respond to and enhance the distinctive physical, historic, aesthetic and cultural qualities of its location, while accommodating growth and change.

**Policy DD-1.1** Encourage excellence in architecture, site design, and infrastructure and durability in building materials to enrich the appearance of a development's surroundings.

**Policy DD-1.2** Promote site and building design that provides for a sense of continuity and order while allowing for creative expression.

**Policy DD-1.3** Design buildings and streetscape of a human scale to create a more inviting atmosphere for pedestrians.

**Policy DD-1.4** Consider development of a design review program to promote high quality design that supports community identity, a distinctive built environment, human-scale elements and amenities, resilient and durable materials, landscape enhancements, and other similar features.

**Policy DD-1.5** Encourage building and street designs that respect the unique built natural, historic, and cultural characteristics of Tacoma's centers, corridors, historic residential pattern areas and open space corridors, described in the Urban Form chapter.

**Policy DD-1.6** Encourage the development of aesthetically sensitive and character-giving design features that are responsive to place and the cultures of communities.



*Development on the Foss Waterway enhances the unique character of the City*



*Provide for a diverse array of public and private open spaces to promote pedestrian activity and to enhance the livability and character of the city*

**Policy DD–1.7** Encourage development that responds to and enhances the positive qualities of site and context—the block, the public realm, and natural features.

**Policy DD–1.8** Enhance the pedestrian experience throughout Tacoma, through public and private development that creates accessible and attractive places for all those who walk and/or use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

**Policy DD–1.9** Encourage development, building and site design that promote active living.

**Policy DD–1.10** Provide for public access to light and air by managing and shaping the height, and mass of buildings, while accommodating urban scale development.

**Policy DD–1.11** Encourage building and site designs that limit reductions in privacy and solar access for residents and neighbors, while accommodating urban scale development.

**Policy DD–1.12** Encourage building and site design approaches that help prevent crime.

**Policy DD–1.13** Encourage building and site design that improves fire prevention and life safety.

**Policy DD–1.14** Encourage the continued use of alleys for parking access and expand their use as the location of accessory dwelling units and as multi-purpose community space.

**Policy DD–1.15** Develop and implement work plans to conduct neighborhood-level planning for each of Tacoma’s neighborhoods, corridors and centers. Identify revitalization and growth strategies to address land use, housing, capital investments, public services, mobility choices, and other actions unique to each situation.

## PARKING

Vibrant urban places link people and activities. As Tacoma grows, we must manage both the demand and supply of parking. Providing too much parking can lead to inefficient land use patterns and sprawl. Insufficient parking can negatively affect neighborhood livability and economic vitality. These policies provide guidance to manage parking demand and supply to meet a variety of public objectives, including achieving compact walkable communities, reducing overall vehicle use, enhancing livability, reducing pollution, and expanding economic opportunity.

**GoAI DD–2** Ensure that parking area design and management balances the needs of all users, supports modal priorities, and is responsive to site context.

**Policy DD–2.1** Promote site design that minimizes the impacts of vehicular access and parking lots on pedestrian safety and the visual environment:

- Locate parking lots to the side or rear of developments and within walking distance of the activities they serve.
- Limit the number and width of driveways to those necessary to effectively serve development.
- Incorporate design treatments that break up large parking lots into smaller components.
- Parking, loading, storage, and utility service areas should be screened from view and landscaped.

### *Development Examples that Minimize Impacts of Vehicular Access*



*Structured parking*



*Landscaped alleys*



*Internal auto-courts*



*Residential parking (left)*

*Mini pop-up bicycle parking in the public right-of-way during Parking Day (center)*



*Bicycle parking (right)*



- e. On-street parking should be configured in accordance with the context of the street, including consideration of visibility, safety, and the needs of different users.

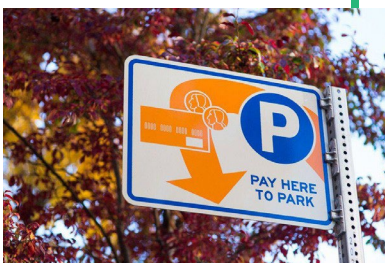
**Policy DD–2.2** Design commercial areas with an internal pedestrian circulation system that provides attractive connections between buildings, through large parking areas, connections to the street, and linkages to surrounding properties and neighborhoods.

**Policy DD–2.3** Utilize landscaping elements to screen and shade parking lots, loading areas, utility service and storage from the street view and adjacent uses, to create visual appeal, de-emphasize the prominence of the parking lot, and to enhance the pedestrian environment.

**Policy DD–2.4** Promote an efficient use of developable space by minimizing the amount of land devoted to automobile parking. Strategies may include: transportation demand management, parking reductions for locating near transit services, reducing minimum parking requirements or implementing maximum parking requirements, utilizing multilevel parking structures and on-street parking to meet demand, use of compact stalls, implementing a parking management strategy including shared parking facilities, and other methods as appropriate.

**Policy DD–2.5** Develop parking management plans for centers and commercial areas that address pricing, enforcement, parking duration and turnover, strategies for preventing spillover into surrounding residential areas (such as Residential Parking Zones), revenue and cost sharing options, and that identify SEPA mitigation opportunities.

**Policy DD–2.6** Recognize the availability and cost of parking substantially influences public transit's viability as a transportation alternative and is a substantial barrier to meeting housing supply and affordability goals.



*Paid parking sign*

**Policy DD–2.7** Manage parking supply to achieve transportation policy objectives for neighborhood livability, safety, business district vitality, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction, and improved air quality.

**Policy DD–2.8** Promote the development of new bicycle parking facilities, including dedicated bike parking in the public right-of-way, especially within designated centers.

**Policy DD–2.9** Right-size Tacoma’s regulatory parking requirements to reflect the inherent tradeoffs between onsite parking and housing goals, and to implement Tacoma’s environmental and transportation policies. The emphasis should be on promoting transportation choices. Provisions for parking for people with disabilities, drop-offs, loading and deliveries must be made either onsite or in the vicinity of significant destinations.

## SIGNS

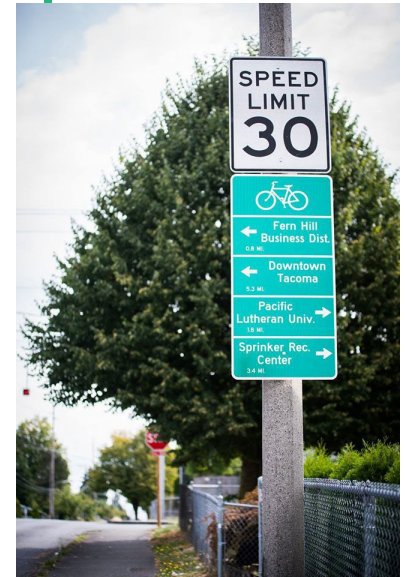
Signs are part of a myriad of elements of the built environment that our community interacts with on a daily basis. The primary purpose of signage is to communicate information and to render uses and locations more readily visible to the public. Community concerns about signage typically revolve around issues of safety and the visual impacts of signs in a community. The following policies provide direction on the size, placement, type, and appearance of signage in the community.

**Goal DD–3** Ensure that sign location and design is responsive to site context and compatible with the envisioned mix of uses and modal priorities.

**Policy DD–3.1** Ensure that signs are compatible with their surroundings. Signs should provide information and make a positive contribution to the character of the community.

**Policy DD–3.2** Signs should effectively contribute to the aesthetics of the development and minimize negative impacts on adjacent uses and all modes of transportation. Specifically:

- a. Emphasize wall mounted over freestanding signs.
- b. Limit the height of freestanding signs and integrate such signs with landscaping elements.



*Vehicle speed limit and cycling distance signs*

## **Residential Infill which Supports the Surrounding Neighborhood**



*Cottage housing*



*Duplex*



*Courtyard apartments*

- c. Provide for wall mounted signs that are sized and placed in proportion and appropriate to the façade of the building.
- d. Encourage signage that contributes to the pedestrian environment
- e. Encourage creativity in signage design.
- f. Encourage the use of high quality materials that are durable and enhance the aesthetics of the development.

**Policy DD–3.3** Promote compatibility of signs with pedestrian-oriented development in all areas, and particularly in designated mixed-use centers and residential areas.

**Policy DD–3.4** Discourage billboards in designated or developed residential areas.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

There will be development and change, even in relatively stable lower density residential areas. These policies encourage designs and development that continue the existing development pattern. They also address design and development in lower density residential areas outside of centers and corridors, and call for new residential infill to be designed and located to support the overall health and vitality of the City’s neighborhoods.

**GoAL DD–4 Enhance human and environmental health in neighborhood design and development. Seek to protect safety and livability, support local access to healthy food, limit negative impacts on water and air quality, reduce carbon emissions, encourage active and sustainable design, and integrate nature and the built environment.**

**Policy DD–4.1** Ensure that new development is responsive and enhances the quality, character and function of Tacoma’s residential neighborhoods.

**Policy DD–4.2** Encourage more housing choices to accommodate a wider diversity of family sizes, incomes, and ages. Allow adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the creation of diverse infill housing types such as accessory dwelling units to serve the changing needs of a household over time.

**Policy DD–4.3** Encourage residential infill development that complements the general scale, character, neighborhood patterns, and natural landscape

features of neighborhoods. Consider building forms, scale, street frontage relationships, setbacks, open space patterns, and landscaping. Allow a range of architectural styles and expression, and respect existing entitlements.

**Policy DD–4.4** Support resource efficient and healthy residential design and development (see also Goal DD–7 and supporting policies).

**Policy DD–4.5** Provide sufficient rights-of-way, street improvements, access control, circulation routes, off-street parking and safe bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways for residential developments.

**Policy DD–4.6** Promote the site layout of residential development where residential buildings face the street and parking and vehicular access is provided to the rear or side of buildings. Where multifamily developments are allowed in established neighborhoods, the layout of such developments should respect the established pattern of development, except where a change in context is desired per the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy DD–4.7** Emphasize the natural physical qualities of the neighborhood (for example, trees, marine view, and natural features) and the site in locating and developing residential areas, provided such development can be built without adversely impacting the natural areas. Where possible, development should be configured to utilize existing natural features as an amenity to the development.

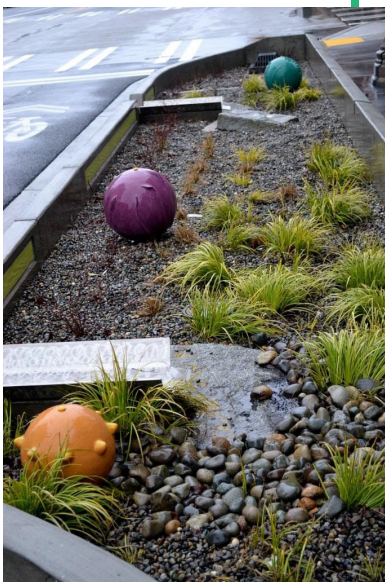
**Policy DD–4.8** Provide on-site open space for all types of residential uses. Specifically:

- a. For single family uses and duplexes, this includes private rear yard areas and landscaped front yards.
- b. For triplexes and townhouses, this includes landscaped yard space, patios, balconies, rooftop decks, porches, and/or common open spaces.
- c. For multifamily uses, this includes balconies, patios, rooftop decks, and/or shared common open space.

**Policy DD–4.9** Promote multifamily residential building design that is compatible with the existing patterns of the area. Building design should incorporate:



*On-site open spaces for residential uses, including landscaped front yards and porches, common courtyards, balconies, and common play areas*



Artist Elizabeth Conner  
installing colorful spheres  
on Pacific Avenue and  
in rain gardens

- a. Façade articulation that reduces the perceived scale of the building and adds visual interest.
- b. For infill residential in established neighborhoods, encourage the use of similar façade articulation and detailing as existing structures.
- c. Covered entries visible from the street and/or common open space.
- d. Utilize building materials that are durable and provide visual interest.

**Policy DD-4.10** Utilize landscaping elements to improve the livability of residential developments, block unwanted views, enhance environmental conditions, provide compatibility with existing and/or desired character of the area, and upgrade the overall visual appearance of the development.

**Policy DD-4.11** Encourage the diversity of design in multi-unit residential developments. Examples include provisions for a diversity of façade treatments and architectural styles that can add visual interest and diversity to the neighborhood.

**Policy DD-4.12** Encourage the inclusion of affordable spaces for artists and creative entrepreneurs such as artist live-work and/or work-live units, studio work spaces, or assembly/performance spaces in multifamily projects through incentives.

**Policy DD-4.13** Review and update Tacoma's zoning and development standards for residential development to seek opportunities to promote housing supply, choice and affordability while ensuring that infill housing complements neighborhood scale and patterns. Incorporate design standards to achieve quality, context-sensitive infill development in neighborhoods, centers, corridors, and designated historic districts.

**Policy DD-4.14** Promote infill of Missing Middle housing throughout Tacoma's neighborhoods to increase housing supply, choice and affordability, while ensuring that infill meets the following design principles:

- a. Locate Missing Middle Housing in a walkable context with a strong pedestrian orientation implemented through design, access, orientation to the right-of-way, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other features
- b. Ensure that Missing Middle Housing is consistent with massing and scale of neighboring structures and use compatible design language



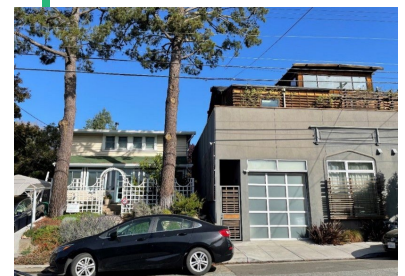
- c. Provide for smooth transitions from Low-scale to higher scale areas by preventing abrupt height and scale changes
- d. Mitigate the appearance of density from the right-of-way and adjacent properties through breaking up the building footprint, appropriate use of setbacks/screening and limiting height at lot lines
- e. Build a strong sense of community through integration of shared spaces
- f. Minimize vehicular orientation through moderate onsite parking, alley access or shared driveways
- g. Maintain a sense of continuity by encouraging reuse of existing structures including through conversions and additional units
- h. Develop design standards for individual housing types, including standards for shared spaces when appropriate (such as for cottage housing)

**Policy DD-4.15** Develop standards to regulate the scale and massing of new buildings to allow for infill housing that is reasonably compatible with existing neighborhood patterns and scale.

- a. For Low-scale Residential areas, new development should be generally consistent with the scale, massing and patterns of the existing neighborhood (allowing for scale increases over time through home additions and remodels).
- b. For Mid-scale Residential areas, new development should generally be a moderately larger scale than that of the existing neighborhood, provided that new development shall not cause abrupt scale transitions or unreasonably overshadow neighboring sites.
- c. In Mid-scale Residential areas, maximum building height will generally be 3 stories (approximately 35 feet), unless view protections or other policy considerations call for a lower height. Mid-scale development of 4 stories (45 feet) shall be limited to along designated Corridors in areas where that height is reasonably compatible with the neighborhood.
- d. Development standards for infill housing shall include relative size standards that help ensure context-sensitive integration of new structures, such that new development is not dramatically out of scale with existing development in the immediate area.



*Lacks pedestrian orientation,  
design features*



*Too close to neighbor,  
no side yard*



*Out of scale with  
neighboring house*

# One Tacoma

Design + Development



*Provide a diverse array of public spaces in mixed-use centers, including indoor and outdoor space, active and passive spaces, and plazas and garden spaces*

*Compatible infill development respects neighborhood patterns such as yards and pedestrian features, and building scale*

- e. Evaluate allowing scale increases as an incentive to promote policy goals including reuse of existing structures, affordability, green features or integrating physically accessible units.

**Policy DD-4.16** Infill design controls shall be heightened for larger projects as well as for projects located within transition areas such as around Centers and in historic areas.

**Policy DD-4.17** Strengthen landscaping, streetscape planting and other standards and incentives, and take other actions called out in the Urban Forestry Management Plan to ensure that housing development supports Tacoma's urban forestry goals.

**Policy DD-4.18** Address the needs of a growing population through review of development standards for onsite open space, streetscape improvements, City open space enhancements in partnership with other public agencies.

**Policy DD-4.19** Strive to increase the quality and quantity of housing units that are accessible to people of all physical abilities through regulatory incentives, requirements, and other actions.



**Policy DD–4.20** Ensure that new housing is supported by robust transportation options.

**Policy DD–4.21** Conduct a comprehensive concurrency analysis of the infrastructure and services capacity and funding needed to support infill, and take appropriate steps to ensure that infill is amply supported.

## DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT OF CENTERS + CORRIDORS

Centers and corridors are places where large numbers of people live, work, and visit. Careful attention to the design of centers and corridors is necessary to ensure that they become places where people want to live and gather, and where getting around by walking, biking, or wheelchair is an attractive choice. These policies also encourage the development of centers as places that reflect the character and cultures of the surrounding neighborhoods.

.....

**GOaL DD–5** Ensure long-term resilience in the design of buildings, streets and open spaces, including the ability to adjust to changing demographics, climate, and economy, and withstand and recover from natural disasters.

**Policy DD–5.1** Focus services and higher-density housing in the core of centers to support a critical mass of demand for commercial services and more walkable access for customers.

**Policy DD–5.2** Encourage development in centers and corridors to include amenities that create a pedestrian-oriented environment and provide places for people to sit, spend time, and gather.

**Policy DD–5.3** Promote building and site designs that enhance the pedestrian experience in centers and corridors, with windows, entrances, pathways, and other features that provide connections to the street environment.



*Desirable examples of building articulation and massing*



*Dome to Defiance Promenade*



*Mount Rainier*

**Policy DD–5.4** Encourage development in centers and corridors that is responsive to street space width, allowing taller buildings on wider streets.

**Policy DD–5.5** Provide frequent street connections and crossings in and within walking distance of centers and corridors.

**Policy DD–5.6** Site and design new developments with safe, convenient, connected and attractive pedestrian access. Specifically:

- a. Locate and orient buildings towards the street for pedestrian convenience and enhance the spatial definition of the street.
- b. Provide safe walkways and pedestrian areas that are visible, well-lit, accessible, conveniently located, and buffered from vehicular traffic.
- c. Provide attractive and well-maintained landscaping with amenities, including street furniture and public art, along pedestrian routes.

- d. Design pedestrian routes with sufficient widths to accommodate the anticipated long term pedestrian activity.
- e. Design buildings along pedestrian routes with attractive and interesting façades including plenty of transparent window areas, weather protection elements, and ground level detailing.
- f. Design large developments with an internal pedestrian circulation system that provides attractive connections between buildings, through large parking areas, connections to the street, and linkages to surrounding properties and neighborhoods, where possible.
- g. Encourage the development of gathering spaces such as pedestrian malls and plazas in commercial areas to enhance the pedestrian experience and sense of community.
- h. Encourage developments to provide spaces for creative activity, such as artist studios, creative retail, performance and more.
- i. Designated pedestrian streets warrant the greatest attention to pedestrian needs and interest in terms of sidewalk widths, adjacent building transparency, weather protection, and adjacent façade detailing.

**Policy DD–5.7** Encourage developments to provide bicycle facilities, including paths, parking, employee showers, and changing areas.

**Policy DD–5.8** Improve the livability of places and streets with high motor vehicle volumes. Encourage landscaped front setbacks, street trees, and other design approaches to buffer residents from street traffic.

**Policy DD–5.9** Integrate natural and green infrastructure, such as street trees, native landscaping, green spaces, green roofs, gardens, and vegetated stormwater management systems, into centers and corridors.

**Policy DD–5.10** Locate public squares, plazas, and other gathering places in centers and corridors to provide places for community activity and social connections. Encourage location of businesses and services adjacent to these spaces that relate to and promote the use of the space.

**Policy DD–5.11** Protect and enhance defining places and features of centers and corridors, including landmarks, natural features, and historic and cultural resources.



*View of the Tacoma Dome and SR 509 cable-stayed bridge crossing the Thea Foss Waterway*

**Policy DD–5.12** Protect, restore, and improve historic buildings in centers and corridors on adopted inventories.

**Policy DD–5.13** Encourage new development and public places to include design elements and public art that contribute to the distinct identities of centers and corridors, and that highlight the history and diverse cultures of neighborhoods.

**Policy DD–5.14** Promote building design that is compatible with the existing and/or desired character of the area. Building design standards and/or guidelines should incorporate the following elements:

- a. Façade articulation options that reduce the perceived scale of buildings and add visual interest.

- b. For infill development in established areas, encourage the use of similar façade articulation and detailing as existing structures, where consistent with specific center policies or guidelines.
- c. Covered building entries visible from the street and/or common open spaces.
- d. Utilize building materials that are durable and provide visual interest.

**Policy DD–5.15** Strengthen the continuity of development and streetscape by using architectural features, street furniture, and other elements that unify and connect individual areas.

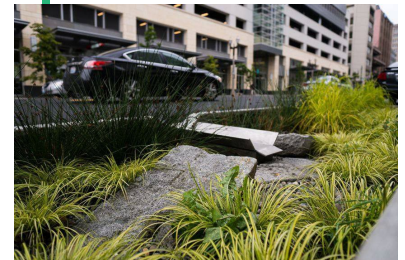
**Policy DD–5.16** Within core commercial areas, encourage uses at street level that generate pedestrian activity and support transit ridership.

**Policy DD–5.17** Centers must remain compact enough to increase densities, facilitate economical and efficient provision of utilities, public facilities and services, and support more walking, bicycling, and transit use

**Policy DD–5.18** Provide incentives to encourage a variety of development within designated mixed-use centers:

- a. Mixed-use centers are appropriate “receiving areas” for the transfer of development rights from other locations in the City, county and region.
- b. Provide the multifamily tax incentive only within designated mixed-use centers that are found to lack sufficient housing opportunities.
- c. Incentives may include reduced parking requirements, fee waivers, height increases, density bonuses, property tax exemptions, capital improvements and other techniques.

### *Sustainable Development Practices*



*Rain gardens along Pacific Avenue*



*EnviroHouse, a permanent model home showcasing green building and natural landscape ideas, located at the Tacoma Landfill*



*Community solar, a Tacoma Public Utilities program*

## SCENIC RESOURCES

Tacoma's signature views of Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains, Commencement Bay and the Tacoma Narrows and other bridges, gulches, streams, and forested slopes is important to the city's identity. They strengthen connections to the regional landscape. These policies encourage the recognition, enhancement and protection of public views and significant scenic resources.

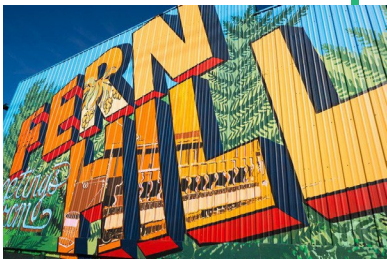
### **Goal DD-6** Protect and preserve designated significant scenic resources, including public views and scenic sites.

**Policy DD-6.1** Enhance and celebrate significant places throughout Tacoma with symbolic features or iconic structures that reinforce local identity, histories, and cultures and contribute to way-finding throughout the city. Wherever possible, engage artists to create context sensitive additions that enhance these places. Consider these especially at:

- a. High-visibility intersections
- b. Attractions
- c. Bridges
- d. Rivers
- e. Viewpoints and view corridor locations
- f. Historically or culturally significant places
- g. Neighborhood boundaries and transitions

**Policy DD-6.2** The following scenic views over public property and rights-of-way are recognized as publicly beneficial to Tacoma. Other public views which can be demonstrated to have a similar value to the public may also be considered Public Views:

- a. Views from Stadium Way of Commencement Bay, Browns Point and Mount Rainier
- b. Panoramic views from Ruston Way of Commencement Bay, Vashon and Maury Islands, Mount Rainier, and the Olympics



Tacoma Murals Project  
art wall in Fern Hill



- c. Views from N Stevens St of Mason Gulch, Commencement Bay and Browns Point
- d. Views from Marine View Drive of the Port, Commencement Bay, and Downtown Tacoma
- e. Views from Narrows Drive of The Narrows, bridges and Gig Harbor
- f. Views from designated viewpoints within Point Defiance Park
- g. Views of downtown, Commencement Bay and the Cascades from McKinley Hill
- h. Views of the Cascades from East Grandview Drive

**Policy DD–6.3** Encourage new public and private development to creating new public views of Mount Rainier, Commencement Bay, Tacoma Narrows, bridges, gulches, the Downtown skyline and other landmark features.

**Policy DD–6.4** Consider the impacts of new landscape plantings on designated public views and scenic resources and provide allowances for the pruning of trees and shrubs to maintain or enhance designated public views.

**Policy DD–6.5** Reduce and minimize visual clutter related to billboards, signs, utility infrastructure and other similar elements.

**Policy DD–6.6** Prioritize undergrounding of utilities in designated centers, scenic areas, and along civic corridors

**Policy DD–6.7** Maintain public views of prominent landmarks and buildings that serve as visual focal points within streets or that terminate views at the end of streets.

**Policy DD–6.8** Protect the integrity and stability of steep slopes during view enhancement through creation of partial views and reforestation with view friendly vegetation.

## RESOURCE EFFICIENT DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

These policies support resource efficient design and development, from the location of development to the types of building materials. They apply to new development as well as the continued and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

**CPTED** is a multi-disciplinary approach to reducing the incidence and fear of crime through environmental design. CPTED principles of design consider a range of site design techniques including lighting, landscaping, fencing, windows, entryways, and creating a sense of ownership and community ownership.

*To help establish compatible land use patterns, Tacoma is participating in the **JBIM JOINT LAND USE STUDY**, a regional collaboration to protect the long-term sustainability of the installation while also supporting the communities' needs. The Joint Land Use Study is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2015.*

•••••

**Goal DD-7 Support sustainable and resource efficient development and redevelopment.**

**Policy DD-7.1** Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of buildings, especially those of historic or cultural significance, to conserve natural resources, reduce waste, and demonstrate stewardship of the built environment.

**Policy DD-7.2** Promote seismic and energy efficiency retrofits of historic buildings and other existing structures to reduce carbon emissions, save money, and improve public safety.

**Policy DD-7.3** Encourage use of technologies, techniques, and materials in building design, construction, and removal that result in the least environmental impact over the life cycle of the structure.

**Policy DD-7.4** Encourage use of natural, resource-efficient, recycled, recycled content, and non-toxic building materials and energy-efficient building practices.

**Policy DD-7.5** Encourage site and building designs that make efficient use of water and manage stormwater as a resource.

**Policy DD-7.6** Encourage new development to optimize the range of benefits from solar and renewable resources, tree canopy, green roofs, and building design.

**Policy DD-7.7** Encourage and promote energy efficiency through the Building Code and the use of solar and other renewable resources in individual buildings and at a district scale.

**Policy DD-7.8** Encourage and promote development that uses renewable resources, such as solar, wind, and water to generate power on-site and to contribute to the energy grid.

**SAFER BY DESIGN**

Proper design not only can reduce the fear of crime but also has been found to deter the incidence of crime. Creating an environment in which people feel safe and opportunities for crime are reduced can be achieved through the application of safety-oriented design principles. One such program is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) which



*TAGRO edibles garden at the EnviroHouse, located at the Tacoma Landfill (above)*

*Tacoma Farmers' Market (right)*

promotes the use of four fundamental strategies: natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance. These principles are intended to work in concert with each other. Properly implemented safer-by-design practices can yield long term cost savings for the City by reduced management and maintenance costs as well as reduced calls for service, and promote enhanced public safety.

**Goal DD-8 Promote development practices that contribute to a sense of safety and reduction in opportunities for crime.**

**Policy DD-8.1** Encourage building and site design approaches in new public and private development that foster positive social interaction and help to prevent crime.

**Policy DD-8.2** Maintain landscaping, lighting and other features in public spaces to ensure the continued effectiveness of safety-oriented design components.

**Policy DD–8.3** Promote an understanding of the benefits of CPTED among design, development, and investment interests.

**Policy DD–8.4** Promote natural sightlines and visibility through the design and placement of features on sites in ways that provide opportunities for people to observe the space, uses, activities, and people around them.

**Policy DD–8.5** Clearly delineate private spaces from public and semipublic spaces using techniques such as paving treatments, landscaping, art, signage, screening, and fencing.

**Policy DD–8.6** Use design features to encourage access to buildings and spaces at designated entrances and exits.

**Policy DD–8.7** Focus should be given to projects located in areas where community safety is an issue and on spaces associated with private development that are intended for use by the general public.

**Policy DD–8.8** Promote the voluntary integration of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles for new development and substantial improvements to existing projects, particularly for multifamily housing and projects that attract large numbers of people.

## **TRANSITIONS + OFF-SITE IMPACTS**

These policies address transitions between areas of differing types of activity and scale of development, such as where centers and corridors interface with adjacent lower-intensity residential zones. These policies also address the consideration and mitigation of offsite impacts from development.

•••••

**GOAI DD–9** Support development patterns that result in compatible and graceful transitions between differing densities, intensities and activities.

**Policy DD–9.1** Create transitions in building scale in locations where higher-density and intensity development is adjacent to lower scale and intensity zoning. Ensure that new high-density and large-scale infill development adjacent to single dwelling zones incorporates design

elements that soften transitions in scale and strive to protect light and privacy for adjacent residents.

**Policy DD–9.2** Improve the interface between non-residential activities and residential areas, in areas where commercial or employment areas are adjacent to residential zoned land.

**Policy DD–9.3** Use land use and other regulations to limit and mitigate impacts, such as odor, noise, glare, air pollutants, and vibration that the use or development of a site may have on adjacent residential or institutional uses, and on significant fish and wildlife habitat areas.

**Policy DD–9.4** Minimize the impacts of auto-oriented uses, vehicle areas, drive-through areas, signage, and exterior display and storage areas on adjacent residential areas.

**Policy DD–9.5** Protect non-industrial zoned parcels from the adverse impacts of activities on industrial zoned parcels.

**Policy DD–9.6** Buffer between designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers and adjacent residential or mixed-use areas to protect both the viability of long-term industrial operations and the livability of adjacent areas.

**Policy DD–9.7** Encourage building and landscape design and land use patterns that limit and/or mitigate negative air quality and noise impacts to building users and residents, particularly in areas near freeways, high traffic streets, and other sources of air pollution.

**Policy DD–9.8** Encourage lighting design and practices that reduce the negative impacts of light pollution, including sky glow, glare, energy waste, impacts to public safety, disruption of ecosystems, and hazards to wildlife.

**Policy DD–9.9** Where uses, densities or intensities adjoining the city differ significantly from planned or existing development patterns inside the city, work in collaboration with adjoining jurisdictions ensure appropriate transitions and compatibility between uses. For example, McChord Field, part of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), is located near the city’s south border and development patterns in this area of Tacoma should be compatible with airfield activity. The City of Tacoma is working with JBLM to ensure long-term land use compatibility around the airfield (see sidebar).



*Old City Hall clock tower in the St. Helens Neighborhood*



*Protect and build upon Tacoma's unique historic resources*

**Policy DD–9.10** Mitigate the visual impact of telecommunications and broadcast facilities through physical design solutions.

## HEALTHY FOOD

Access to healthy food is important for many reasons. A nourishing diet is critical to maintaining good health and avoiding chronic disease later in life. This leads to better long term public health outcomes and lower healthcare costs. Food behaviors are shaped at an early age. Children who are exposed to healthy foods are more likely to develop healthful food behaviors than those who are not. These policies promote a range of approaches for improving access to healthy food through buying and growing.

**GOAL DD–10** Ensure that all citizens have nearby, convenient and equitable access to healthy foods.

**Policy DD–10.1** Recruit and or/retain and expand grocery stores and neighborhood-based markets offering fresh produce in or in close proximity to designated centers.

**Policy DD–10.2** Encourage small, neighborhood-based retail food opportunities, such as corner markets, food co-ops, food buying clubs, and community-supported agriculture pickup/drop off sites, to fill in service gaps in food access across the city.

**Policy DD–10.3** Encourage farmers and neighborhood markets, including development of permanent structure markets and dedicated spaces for neighborhood markets, in all neighborhoods to provide improved access to healthy foods and destinations in neighborhoods for people to meet.

**Policy DD–10.4** Increase opportunities to grow food for personal consumption, donation, sales, and educational purposes.

**Policy DD–10.5** Encourage and support the expansion of community gardens throughout the City, in appropriate locations, and ensure that community gardens are allowed in areas close to or accessible via transit to people living in centers and other high-density areas where residents have few opportunities to grow food in yards.

**Policy DD–10.6** Encourage new affordable housing units to contain designated yard or other shared space for residents to garden.

## HAZARD-RESILIENT DESIGN

Tacoma has varied topography, with hills, gulches, abundant trees, and vegetation. It is also located at the tidewaters of the Puyallup River watershed. As a result, there are periodic floods and landslides. The city is also in a seismically active region, at risk of earthquakes from local faults and the Cascadia Subduction Zone in the Pacific Ocean. These policies direct development away from hazard-prone areas, seek to reduce hazard risks and impacts, and improve resilience to disasters and climate change.

### GoAL DD–11 Protect people, property and the environment from environmental hazards.

**Policy DD–11.1** Evaluate slope and soil characteristics, including liquefaction potential, landslide hazards, and other geologic hazards.

**Policy DD–11.2** Limit development in or near areas prone to natural hazards where practicable, using the most current hazard and climate change-related information and maps.

**Policy DD–11.3** Encourage development approaches that will enhance the ability of people, wildlife, natural systems, and property to withstand and recover from a natural disaster or other major disturbance.

**Policy DD–11.4** Encourage development, building, and infrastructure design that reduces urban heat island effects.

**Policy DD–11.5** Facilitate effective disaster recovery by providing recommended updates to land use designations and development codes, as warranted, in preparation for natural disasters.

## DESIGN WITH NATURE

Incorporating natural features and functions into development yields tangible social, environmental and economic benefits. It improves human and watershed health. How this integration looks and functions depends on local conditions and characteristics. Regardless, designing





.....

**Goal DD–13 Protect and preserve Tacoma’s historic and cultural character.**

**Policy DD–13.1** Encourage the protection and restoration of high-quality historic buildings and places that contribute to the distinctive character and history of Tacoma’s evolving urban environment.

**Policy DD–13.2** Encourage development that fills in vacant and underutilized gaps within the established urban fabric, while preserving and complementing historic resources and neighborhood patterns.

**Policy DD–13.3** Protect significant historic structures from demolition until opportunities can be provided for public comment, pursuit of alternatives to demolition, or actions that mitigate for the loss.

**Policy DD–13.4** Keep City-owned historic resources in a state of good repair. Promote the use of best management practices in the City’s stewardship of these resources.

**Policy DD–13.5** Survey and inventory historic resources as part of future sub-area or neighborhood planning projects, with a focus on areas of anticipated growth and change.

**Policy DD–13.6** Expand historic preservation inventories, regulations, and programs to encourage historic preservation in areas that are under-represented by current historic preservation efforts.

**Policy DD–13.7** Work with Tacoma’s diverse communities and partner agencies to identify and preserve places of historic and cultural significance.

**Policy DD–13.8** Encourage the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage structures and sites as valuable and important public assets.

**Policy DD–13.9** Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic community structures, such as meeting halls and places of worship, for arts, cultural, and community uses that continue their role as anchors for community and culture.

**Policy DD–13.10** Encourage and support adaptive reuse and conversions of historically significant and existing viable older structures through methods including:

- a. Create regulatory incentives that favor housing unit conversion in existing buildings over demolition and replacement

- b. Evaluate subdivision standards for opportunities where flexibility could allow retention of an existing structure
- c. Evaluate incentives and support for reuse and conversion of abandoned houses
- d. Evaluate non-life safety Building Code flexibility for conversion of existing structures (such as ceiling height)
- e. Designate land available for houses being relocated as part of redevelopment
- f. Protect and preserve archaeological resources in place, especially those sites and objects associated with American Indian cultures.

**Policy DD–13.11** Discourage the unnecessary demolition of older viable and historically significant structures through a range of methods including:

- a. Develop regulations that encourage new development on vacant or underutilized spaces and reuse of existing structures
- b. Develop a proactive survey program for the identification, documentation and preservation of historically and culturally significant buildings in all areas of the City, particularly those historically underserved and underrepresented
- c. Expand current demolition review code language to protect structures of historical or cultural significance outside of current historic districts
- d. Avoid creating an economic incentive for demolitions within Historic Districts

**Policy DD–13.12** Encourage infill that is architecturally compatible within surrounding contexts through appropriate scale and design controls both within Historic Districts and citywide.

**Policy DD–13.13** Take measures to reduce waste stream impacts resulting from demolition such as developing architectural salvage requirements for demolition permits and supporting the reuse of building materials.

## **CREATIVE PLACE-MAKING, PUBLIC ART + CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

Arts and cultural activities are essential to making meaningful places and can help transform shared spaces into vibrant and nurturing communities.

Physical places that are well designed, include the thinking of artists and public art early in the process and result in aesthetically pleasing and context relevant spaces where people want to convene and linger, are successful. Remembering and celebrating the role that people play in place-making is essential.

The City's built environment should be infused with creative expression and designed to allow for expressions of creativity.

Public art and cultural amenities enrich people's lives. They offer educational experiences, enliven public spaces, and foster creativity. This helps build a sense of community and identity for an area. These policies support including public art in development and support creative place-making.

.....

**Goal DD-14** Infuse the City's built environment with creative expression and design that encourages expressions of creativity and results in vibrant public spaces where people want to be.

**Policy DD-14.1** Increase the opportunities for the public to provide place-making in neighborhoods and business districts to help reflect, define and celebrate distinct areas.

**Policy DD-14.2** Consider public art early in the planning phase to ensure the biggest impact, and leverage existing construction budgets to benefit from artful design.

**Policy DD-14.3** Provide access to the creative process and cultural resources for all neighborhoods, cultural communities, and segments of the city and its populations.

**Policy DD-14.4** Support and leverage the use of vacant and/or underutilized buildings, facades and left-over spaces in public rights-of-way for creative expression and activities that transform blighted spaces and re-engage community.

**Policy DD-14.5** Encourage diversity of public art throughout the City that includes a variety of materials, styles, approaches and artists.

**Policy DD-14.6** Provide incentives for public art as a component of public and private development projects.

# One Tacoma

Design + Development



Tacoma Housing Authority  
Bay Terrace Artists,  
Diane Hansen and  
Jennifer Wedderman



16th Annual Asia Pacific New Year Celebration at the Asia Pacific Cultural Center



Fab-5 LIFE  
program

University of Puget Sound  
Artistic Expression at  
the Race and Pedagogy  
Conference



Tacoma murals project

**Policy DD–14.7** Require new public projects to incorporate public art or provide 1% of the construction costs to support public art projects.

**Policy DD–14.8** Leverage the creative talent of artists and designers to shape the identity of place, enliven a sense of belonging, and drive a compelling vision for the built environment.

**Policy DD–14.9** Create spaces that are consistently interesting and have active presences to the street to promote more pedestrian activity and create public perception of safety and animation.

**Policy DD–14.10** Design civic spaces to include public art and to highlight the culture of neighborhoods and diverse communities and enable and encourage opportunities for engagement by the community.

**Policy DD–14.11** Encourage repurposing street segments that are not critical for transportation connectivity to other community purposes, such as parklets.

**Policy DD–14.12** Foster an urban environment and cultural activities that are true to the values and needs of our citizens to encourage and sustain authentic experiences unique to Tacoma.

**Policy DD–14.13** Develop and implement arts experiences that shape the identity of place.

