



TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
FROM: Ian Munce, Assistant to the Director, Planning and Development Services Department
Peter Huffman, Interim Director, Planning and Development Services Department
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution setting December 3, 2013 for Public Hearing regarding the South Downtown Subarea Plan and associated changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code – Requested City Council Date: November 19, 2013
DATE: October 31, 2013

SUMMARY:

The City Council is requested to consider a resolution on November 19, 2013, to set December 3, 2013, as the date for a public hearing regarding the South Downtown Subarea Plan and minor amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code chapters 13.06 (Zoning) and 13.06A (Downtown). The Council is required to conduct a public hearing before enacting any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Tacoma Municipal Code.

BACKGROUND:

The South Downtown Subarea Plan is an area-wide, long-range plan for South Downtown Tacoma. The overarching goal of the Plan is to promote economic development in South Downtown. The Project plans for significant growth in the South Downtown based upon allocations established by the Puget Sound Regional Council and Pierce County to conform to the State Growth Management Act, which requires regions, counties, cities and towns to plan for forecasted growth. The Subarea Plan is intended to provide innovative planning and policy interventions to help South Downtown achieve its tremendous potential for economic development, an outcome that will deliver a broad range of equitable social and environmental benefits at both the local and regional scales. Associated with the Subarea Plan, the City of Tacoma and the University of Washington Tacoma, as co-lead agencies, prepared a non-project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Subarea which was issued on August 28, 2013. The EIS involves a cumulative environmental impact and mitigation analysis for the entire South Downtown Subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis on a project-by-project basis.

The Planning Commission has completed its review through a public process, including a public hearing on September 18, 2013, and is anticipated to forward its recommendation for adoption to the Council on November 6, 2013. If adopted, the South Downtown Subarea Plan would become a new element of the Comprehensive Plan and serve as a statement of the City's commitment and direction for the South Downtown Subarea and as a resource for potential investors, property owners, the community, and other public agencies. In addition, the Subarea Plan contains several changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code including Feather Sign Regulations and Downtown Fencing Standards.

ISSUE:

The South Downtown Subarea Plan has been developed based on rigorous research and analysis and through extensive public outreach efforts, and has received a great amount of support from stakeholders and citizens. There are no known significant issues.

ALTERNATIVES:

There are no specific alternatives being considered at this time.



RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of a resolution on November 19, 2013, to set December 3, 2013, for a public hearing on the South Downtown Subarea Plan and associated minor amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code. This action will lead to the Council's public hearing on December 3, 2013, followed by the first and second readings of an adopting ordinance occurring on December 10 and 17, respectively.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.