



**CITY OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST (CCR)**

TO: City Council
FROM: Councilmember Ryan Mello
COPIES TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager; Executive Leadership Team; file
SUBJECT: Implementing the Container Port Element of the City Comprehensive Plan
DATE: March 16, 2017

ITEM/ISSUE PROPOSED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:

I respectfully ask for City Council concurrence to have staff and the Planning Commission research and bring to City Council their recommendations on possible modifications to the City's zoning, subdivision, and development regulations to better implement the Container Port Element of the *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan. This review and the resulting recommendations should be coordinated with the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee.

BRIEF BACKGROUND:

Within the City, the Tideflats area is regionally and locally designated as an important Manufacturing/Industrial Center (M/IC) – a location with unique characteristics that should serve as a long-term and growing employment center. As required by State law (RCW 36.70A.085), the City adopted a Container Port Element (CPE) in its Comprehensive Plan in 2014. Consistent with State requirements, this CPE provides policy guidance relative to protection of core areas of container port and port-related industrial areas within the City and to protection against potential land use conflicts, both within and along the edge of the core area.

Recent proposals and community discussion have highlighted that the City's existing zoning within and around the Tideflats area is not sufficiently achieving the community's goals. The CPE provides the following direction: Policy CP-1.6 "...While localized impacts are permitted, continue to require Core Area industrial uses to be developed in a manner that protects the environment and preserves public health and safety from a citywide and regional perspective." Existing zoning needs to be reviewed against this standard.

The CPE identifies a core of PMI (Port-Maritime Industrial) zoning that is intended to be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses (such as residential) by a buffer of general industrial zoning (M-1 and M-2). However, this basic planning and zoning structure is complicated by the fact that PMI zoning allows for an exceptionally wide variety of heavy industries, such as smelters, hazardous chemical manufacturing and shipping terminals of all kinds (not just container terminals), as well as light industry and warehousing. The PMI zoning also allows for "uses not prohibited by City Charter and not prohibited herein," which essentially means that uses this community has potentially never contemplated and/or evaluated are automatically an allowed use in this area. In general, the current zoning allows for high-impact, high-hazard, and high-resource uses that deserve more scrutiny, and which in some cases may no longer be appropriate or consistent with the community's policies and vision for the area.

The existing zoning within the Tideflats also allows for a number of non-industrial uses, such as farming, day care centers, golf courses, religious assembly, and others, which need to be evaluated to ensure that they are not creating incompatibilities with the long-term viability of the Tideflats as a heavy industrial and container shipping area, as called for by the CPE.



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Finally, existing core area buffers need to be reviewed against Policy CP-1.4, which states “Reduce the potential for land use conflicts between industrial development and surrounding non-industrial uses by providing for adequate Industrial/Commercial buffer areas...” Given recent development activity, the CPE observation that “... to the east, the steep bluff rising above Marine View Drive provides a clear transition from the industrial area to the residential development at the top of the bluff...” and the CPE conclusion that “...the existing geography provides a very effective buffer and no additional transition area is necessary...” needs to be reviewed against current best practices and the changing development landscape. This review will complement the citywide Open Space Corridors regulatory review that is currently underway.

The City, Port and others are discussing the potential for subarea planning to comprehensively address long-term land use, transportation and environmental planning issues. However, in the meantime it is appropriate for the City to consider initial measures regarding, zoning, subdivision, and development regulations and buffers.

SUBMITTED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION BY: _____ *Ryan A. Mellor*

SUPPORTING COUNCILMEMBERS SIGNATURES (2 SIGNATURES ONLY)

(Signatures demonstrate support to initiate discussion and consideration of the subject matter by City Council for potential policy development and staff guidance/direction.)

1. _____ POS # _____

2. _____ POS # _____