



TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
FROM: Ian Munce, Special Assistant to the Director, Planning & Development Services Dept.
Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services Dept.
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: An Ordinance adopting the North Downtown Subarea Plan as an Element of the City's
Comprehensive Plan – October 7, 2014
DATE: August 26, 2014

SUMMARY:

An ordinance adopting the North Downtown Subarea Plan as an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This is the first reading of the ordinance which will be followed by the final reading on September 23, 2014.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

The Planning Commission forwarded its Recommendation of Approval of the North Downtown Subarea Plan to the Council on August 20, 2014, and the City Council will conduct a public hearing for the North Downtown Subarea Plan and associated Land Use Regulatory Code changes on September 9, 2014. The North Downtown Subarea Plan will become a new element of the Comprehensive Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The changes proposed in the adoption of the North Downtown Subarea Plan are presented in two separate ordinances: one for the Plan amendments and one for the Code amendments. This is the first ordinance, which contains the proposed Plan amendment.

ISSUE:

The purpose of the North Downtown Subarea Plan is to anticipate, support, and guide the long-term community development in the North Downtown Subarea, including the Downtown commercial core, Stadium district core, and residential neighborhoods, and to complete a pre-development environmental review that will identify how to address environmental and community issues while reducing development uncertainty and risk. The Subarea Plan provides innovative planning and policy interventions to help the North Downtown Subarea achieve its potential for community development, an outcome that will deliver a broad range of equitable social and environmental benefits at both the local and regional scales. The Plan will serve as a statement of the City's commitment to and direction for future development in the North Downtown Subarea in addition to serving as a resource for potential investors, property owners, the community and other public agencies.

Proposed implementation actions in the Subarea Plan will apply economic development, recreation and open space, and historical preservation objectives as well as multi-modal transportation plans and projects including streetcar, bike, and pedestrian facilities, sustainability measures, and initiate catalytic projects for City and privately owned properties, among other measures. When taken together with the Hilltop Subarea Plan, the North Downtown Subarea Plan helps to set the stage for the needed federal, State, and regional funding applications for the planned LINK light rail extension through the Stadium and Hilltop neighborhoods.



Associated with the Subarea Plan, the City of Tacoma and Bates Technical College, as co-lead agencies, prepared a non-project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Subarea which was issued on July 2, 2014. The EIS involves a cumulative environmental impact and mitigation analysis for the entire North Downtown Subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis on a project-by-project basis.

ALTERNATIVES:

There are no specific alternatives being considered at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the North Downtown Subarea Plan, which would serve as a statement of the City's commitment and direction for the North Downtown Subarea and as a resource for potential investors, property owners, the community, and other public agencies.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.