

SECTION II

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION and
ALTERNATIVES**

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2.1 PROPONENT/PROJECT LOCATION

2.1.1 Proponent

The Point at Northshore is sponsored by the Proponent, Northshore Investors, LLC, whose mailing address is P.O. Box 73790, Puyallup, Washington 98373. The property owner is North Shore Golf Associates.

2.1.2 Project Location

The *Proposed Action* would be located in northeast Tacoma at the current location of the approximately 116-acre North Shore Golf Course. The site is addressed as 4101 North Shore Boulevard NE and 1611 Browns Point Boulevard NE (see **Figure 2.1-1** and **Figure 2.1-2**). Pierce County Assessor Parcel Numbers are 0321232700 and 0321236002.

Legal Description

The complete legal description of the North Shore Country Club Estates property is on file with the City of Tacoma under the following permit files:

- SEP2007-40000089066: SEPA Review
- REZ2007-40000089068: Rezone Modification
- PLT2007-40000089069: Preliminary Plat
- MLU2007-40000089065: Variances (setback)
- SIT2007-40000089067: Site Plan Approval
- WET2007-40000105876: Wetland/Stream Exemption
- WET2007-40000105839: Wetland/Stream Assessment

2.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Northshore Investors, LLC has proposed a plan for redevelopment of the central portion of the North Shore Club Estates PRD District site. The *Proposed Action* would transform the golf course site into a new residential neighborhood with associated infrastructure and publicly accessible open spaces (**Figure 2.2-1**). Upon completion of the last phase of development, *The Point at Northshore* would include the following:

- 860 single-family units, for sale and for rent, with floor plans ranging from single-floor to townhouse-style units—the current proposal includes 366 single-family detached lots and 494 attached zero-lot line, residential townhouses (**Figures 2.2-2, and 2.2-3**); and
- Approximately 29.4 acres of open space consisting of pedestrian trails, sport courts, benches, playgrounds, stormwater drainage ponds, and critical areas (wetlands and stream).

It is anticipated that full buildout of *The Point at Northshore* could occur within a six-year timeframe. Construction of the first building would commence in 2010 and is anticipated to occur in four phases (**Figure 2.2-4**).

The anticipated phasing schedule for the development is as follows:

**Table 2.2-1
PROPOSED PHASING FOR *THE POINT AT NORTHSHORE***

Phase	Number of Dwelling Units	Estimated Construction Date
I	204 Single-Family Detached	2010
II	275 Zero-Lot Line Townhouses	2012
III	162 Single-Family Detached	2013
IV	219 Zero-Lot Line Townhouses	2014

2.3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This portion of the DSEIS provides an overview of factors that influence the *Proposed Action*, including: site history and the *1981 EIS* for the North Shore Country Club Estates, State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) considerations for the project applications, and existing site conditions.

2.3.1 Site History and the 1981 EIS

Division 1, which is directly west of the site, along with nine holes of the current golf course were developed in the late 1970s. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) was published for the North Shore Country Club Estates in August 1979, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for that project was published in January 1981. These documents are included as reference documents to this DSEIS and are collectively referred to as the “*1981 EIS*.”

The *1981 EIS* addressed three residential portions of the development (Divisions 2, 3, and 4) and expansion of the 9-hole golf course to an 18-hole golf course. The current golf course site is approximately 116 acres and includes a grass playing surface, a driving range, six ponds, a concrete drainage course, and buildings for the country club, pro shop, and storage. All components of the current proposed project are either within the range of actions and impacts that were evaluated as part of the *1981 EIS* or are evaluated within this DSEIS. The *1981 EIS* assumed that the golf course would remain a golf course and open space.

Subsequent to issuance of the *1981 EIS*, a PRD District was adopted for North Shore Country Club Estates by the City through a PRD rezone. The PRD District includes the property that is the subject of this DSEIS (i.e., the golf course) and Divisions 2, 3, and 4 of the residential PRD development (**Figure 2.3-1**). The total acreage of the PRD District is approximately 338.5 acres.

2.3.2 Current Project Status

Application

Complete applications (i.e., Preliminary Plat, SEPA, Rezone Modification, Site Plan Approval, and multiple variances) were submitted to the City on January 29, 2007, with supplemental information added on November 9, 2007, including a Wetland/Stream Exemption and Assessment Permit. Additional documents provided with these submittals were site plans, an Environmental Checklist, and associated technical analyses.

SEPA Compliance

The City of Tacoma is Lead Agency with the responsibility of complying with the procedural requirements of SEPA.

In February 2007 and November 2007, the City of Tacoma transmitted the Environmental Checklist together with application materials to City departments, state and federal agencies, nearby municipalities, and other interested parties. The City of Federal Way, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Metro Parks Tacoma, Tacoma Public School District, as well as several City departments, and public citizens returned written comments which have been considered in the drafting of this DSEIS.

The City of Tacoma considered the comments offered by agencies and individuals and concluded that the *Proposed Action* “is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.” On December 14, 2007, as SEPA Lead Agency, the City of Tacoma Public Works Department issued a Determination of Significance (DS)/Scoping Notice. The City required that a Supplemental EIS (supplement to the 1981 EIS) be prepared to accompany the permit applications through the review processes. The referenced 1981 EIS was adopted per WAC 197-11-600(4)(a) and 197-11-630.¹

Issuance of the DS established dates for two actions:

- An appeal period concerning the DS, which ended December 28, 2007; and
- A scoping period associated with the Supplemental EIS, which ended January 4, 2008.²

An appeal of the DS was submitted during the appeal period. The appeal was denied on May 19, 2008, and the City’s DS was affirmed. During the DSEIS scoping period, 319 comment letters were received by the City of Tacoma from agencies, organizations, and individuals. These comments are included in the project file (refer to the project number noted in the **Fact Sheet** of this DSEIS). Following the conclusion of the appeal and the review of the EIS scoping comments received, the City of Tacoma determined the alternatives that were to be evaluated in the DSEIS and the range of environmental parameters.

2.3.3 Existing Site Characteristics

The North Shore Country Club PRD District site is depicted in **Figure 2.3-1**. The site is located in northeast Tacoma just south of the southern boundary of Federal Way. The proposed development site is the North Shore Golf Course, an existing 116-acre, 18-hole pay-to-play golf course. Surrounding the development site is the existing North Shore Estates PRD, consisting of single-family detached homes, duplexes, and condominiums.

The North Shore Golf Course includes six ponds, gentle rolling hills, mature evergreen and deciduous landscaping, and golf course parking, club house, and maintenance facilities.

¹A Supplemental EIS relies on environmental analyses contained in a previously published EIS, and it may address new alternatives, new areas of possible significant adverse impact, or add site-specific information for additional analysis. The Supplemental EIS follows the same requirements as an EIS – e.g., a Supplemental Draft EIS is prepared and issued; there is a public comment period associated with the Supplemental Draft EIS; and a Supplemental Final EIS is prepared. Like the EIS process, agency decision-making is based on the Supplemental Final EIS.

²Scoping is an optional process for a Supplemental EIS.

2.4 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Proponent's objectives for the proposed *The Point at Northshore* development is to redevelop the existing North Shore Golf Course into a residential community incorporating both attached townhouses and detached single-family homes on fee-simple lots. *The Point at Northshore* community would include open space for recreation, including active recreation areas such as sport courts and playgrounds, as well as walking paths and passive open areas. Access to the new houses would be provided by new City streets and private access ways. The Proponent has provided the following objectives for the proposal:

- Create a distinctive high quality new community where people can live, play, and thrive.
- Enhance the quality of the existing infrastructure and improving capacity of area roads and stormwater collection and treatment.
- Transform the underutilized land into a desirable new home community while maintaining livability of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods.
- Promote a variety of housing opportunities including various lot sizes and detached and attached housing to meet the needs of all segments of the community and increase the supply and choice of housing opportunities.
- To provide for a variety of minimum lot sizes and side yard setbacks in order to better consider wetland and critical areas and their buffers, to provide greater open space and park area, and to promote privacy from adjacent residential communities.
- Implement innovative development techniques that allow a better use of the land, provide a better mix of housing types, and create efficient delivery of urban services. Promote design flexibility that enhances and improves the use of and enjoyment of open space areas by the neighborhood and the general public.
- Through the flexibility of PRD design: present a quality project that meets the City's allocated density goals consistent with Growth Management Act, Office of Financial Management, and *Tacoma Municipal Code*, and as established by the 2008 Pierce County Buildable Lands Report.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.5.1 Project Overview

At full buildout, *The Point at Northshore* would involve subdivision of approximately 116 acres in the R-2 PRD zone into 366 single-family detached lots and 494 zero-lot line townhouse, fee-simple lots providing a total of 860 residential units.

The project development will include construction and dedication of new public streets and private access ways, installation of new utilities, and new landscaping and pedestrian paths around existing ponds and open space. Although the open space will be privately owned, it will remain open for public use.

In the course of this development, the existing North Shore Golf Course, along with its associated commercial buildings and parking lot, will be completely removed. The resulting land uses will be residential, open space areas for parks, stormwater facilities and landscaping, and parking.

2.5.2 The Point at Northshore

Project construction would progress according to the following schedule: Phase I would include 204 single-family detached units; Phase II would include 275 multi-family townhouse units; Phase III would include 162 single-family detached units; and Phase IV would include 219 multi-family townhouse units.

As mentioned above, *The Point at Northshore* is a residential development that would be implemented over a period of six years. Construction is expected to take place between 2010 and 2014.

Project Design and Architecture

The estimated 860 dwelling units would include a variety of floor plans and architectural styles for both the single-family detached homes and zero-lot line townhouses. **Figures 2.5-1** through **2.5-5** include examples of typical unit designs, as proposed by the Proponent.

Land Use and Aesthetics

The construction of the proposed development will convert land from open space and recreation to a mix of public open space and recreation, as well as private residential uses. There is a potential that this land conversion could adversely impact the aesthetics of the area, including views from homes in the existing North Shore Country Club Estates. Analysis of land use and aesthetics are considered in **Section 3.1** of this DSEIS.

Recreation Facilities

The on-site 18-hole golf course, along with its associated commercial buildings and parking lot, will be replaced with on-site recreation facilities. These facilities are located throughout the proposed development and include paved pedestrian paths, play structures, open lawn areas, benches, and sport courts. See **Section 3.2** for an analysis of impacts to recreation facilities.

Transportation

New traffic trips will be added to the vicinity transportation network as a result of this project. Additionally, new transportation improvements are proposed at *The Point at Northshore*, including residential and arterial streets, new points of access, and parking.

- **Roadways**
 - The principal arterial that serves *The Point at Northshore* is Marine View Drive, or State Route 509.
 - Several minor arterials more directly serve the site, such as Northshore Parkway NE and 33rd Street NE.
- **Vehicular Access** -- Two points of ingress and egress associated with *The Point at Northshore* are proposed:
 - The southernmost access point would be located at 33rd Street NE.
 - The northernmost access point would be located at Northshore Parkway.
 - The existing site access at North Shore Boulevard NE will be closed to vehicular traffic.
- **Parking** – The proposed project will be required to comply with City of Tacoma minimum parking requirements for off-street parking for residential structures, which is two spaces per unit, according to *TMC* 13.06.510. Additional on-street parking requirements will be required in Phases II and IV, which include development areas that are accessed by private streets.

See **Section 3.3** for analysis of transportation impacts.

Schools

The Point at Northshore is located in the school service area of three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school:

- Browns Point Elementary
- Crescent Heights Elementary
- Northeast Tacoma Elementary
- Meeker Middle School
- Stadium High School

The Tacoma School District has determined student generation rates for elementary, middle, and high schools for residential developments to predict the impact these developments will have on school facilities. See **Section 3.4** for analysis of impacts to schools.

Critical Areas

The project site contains flood hazard areas, buffer areas for a salmon-bearing stream, and two wetlands. Environmental analysis has been conducted to determine the impact this development will have on critical areas. See **Section 3.5** of this DSEIS for analysis of these impacts and possible mitigation.

Stormwater

The existing 18-hole golf course has experienced flooding in recent years during periods of high rainfall. Flooding has been connected to onsite ponds and associated run-off which causes nearby Joe's Creek to back up into the golf course. Stormwater modeling and hydraulic analysis have been conducted on these flood prone areas and the downstream facilities into which stormwater is discharged. Analysis on stormwater impacts as a result of the *Proposed Action* is included in **Section 3.6** of this DSEIS.

The proposed stormwater facilities will manage drainage into two watersheds: Northeast six ponds and associated conveyance systems. Five of these ponds will be reconfigured from their current location or shape, and the sixth pond will be newly constructed.

2.6 ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives to the *Proposed Action* are evaluated in this DSEIS – the *Proposed Action Alternative* and the *No Action Alternative*. Environmental impacts associated with the *Proposed Action Alternative* and the *No Action Alternative* are analyzed in **Section III** of this DSEIS, along with the *Proposed Action*.

2.6.1 Proposed Action Alternative

SEPA requires analysis of “reasonable alternatives” as part of an EIS and defines reasonableness as “actions that could feasibly attain or approximate a proposal’s objectives, but at a lower environmental cost or decreased level of environmental degradation.”³ Goals and objectives for this project have been identified by the Proponent and are noted in **Section 2.4** of this DSEIS. **Figure 2.6-1** identifies the area of the site that would be developed with a variety of housing opportunities, including single-family detached and attached townhouse dwellings, together with associated streets and park areas, and open space transition areas to promote privacy from adjacent residential communities.

The *Proposed Action Alternative* in this DSEIS includes the following:

- Approximately 670 dwelling units with a variety of floor plans and architectural styles, including both single-family homes (approximately 340 dwelling units) and zero-lot line townhouses (approximately 330 dwelling units). The difference in number of dwelling units is partially a result of larger single-family lots (min. 5,000 square feet), greater setbacks for the single-family and townhouse development areas (min. 15 feet between buildings) and the provision of open space transition areas.
- Open space transition areas would be located between the proposed residential buildings and the adjacent existing developed areas. Existing trees would be retained in some of the open space transition areas, while other open space transition areas would be graded and landscaped.
- Onsite recreational facilities, including play structures, open lawn areas, benches, and sport courts would be similar to the *Proposed Action*. A pedestrian pathway would be provided in the open space transition area, with connections to pathways within the interior of the developed area.

³WAC 197-11-440(5).

- Transportation, schools, critical areas, and stormwater components would be similar to the *Proposed Action*.

2.6.2 No Action Alternative

Analysis of this alternative is required by SEPA.⁴ The *No Action Alternative* only contemplates the currently existing North Shore Golf Course facility, which was reviewed and expanded from a 9-hole to an 18-hole golf course under the *1981 EIS*. The course is a pay-to-play facility with associated club house, pro shop, surface parking, and service and maintenance building. Future market demand, financial considerations, and economic viability which may affect the operation of the course are not considered and are not evaluated under the *No Action Alternative*.

The *No Action Alternative* in this DSEIS includes the following:

- The 18-hole North Shore Golf Course.
- The facilities associated with the golf course, including the country club, the pro-shop, and service and maintenance activities.
- Associated surface parking.
- No residential development on this property.
- Site access at Northshore Boulevard via Oakmont Place.

2.6.3 Benefits and Disadvantages of Delaying Implementation

Another aspect of the *No-Action Alternative* involves the possibility of delaying implementation of the *Proposed Action* to some future time. As required by SEPA, the following outlines possible benefits and disadvantages of such delay.

Benefits of Deferral

- The advantage of deferral is that environmental impacts noted with regard to the *Proposed Action* and the *Proposed Action Alternative* would not occur at this time, but would be delayed until project implementation.
- Deferral would maintain the site in open space.

Disadvantages of Deferral

- Deferral would result in reduced housing availability in this urban area of the City, which could increase pressure to accommodate growth in other areas.
- Delaying implementation would not meet the Proponent's goals and objectives (refer also to discussion in **Section 2.4** of this DSEIS).

⁴WAC 197-11-440(5bii).