



RESOLUTION NO. 38867

1 A RESOLUTION relating to economic development; designating South Tacoma
2 Way, between South 37th and South 80th Streets, as a commercial
3 district, to be known as “Tacoma’s Auto Row,” to allow auto retailers to
4 submit applications to the Washington State Department of Transportation
5 for display of directional signage on Interstate 5.

6 WHEREAS a high percentage of the City’s auto retailers are located on
7 South Tacoma Way, as it was the main north-south corridor until Interstate 5 (“I-5”)
8 was constructed in 1960, and

9 WHEREAS, as a business sector, auto retailers located in the City of
10 Tacoma generate significant tax revenue for the City and provide over 1,000 jobs
11 for citizens in our community, and

12 WHEREAS Community and Economic Development staff conducted
13 targeted outreach to the City’s auto retailers on South Tacoma Way beginning in
14 January 2013, and

15 WHEREAS the objectives for this partnership, as presented to the
16 Economic Development Committee on June 25, 2013, are to improve
17 relationships with auto retailers through open and consistent dialogue; problem-
18 solve and make connections to appropriate City services and processes;
19 promote South Tacoma Way as a regional hub to purchase automobiles; and
20 increase auto sales in the City of Tacoma, and

21 WHEREAS City staff has worked with auto retailers to identify potential
22 marketing opportunities, and retailers have expressed interest in having signage
23 on I-5 that would direct drivers to “Tacoma’s Auto Row,” and
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1 WHEREAS the Washington State Department of Transportation
2 (“WSDOT”) requires that businesses applying for highway signage provide direct
3 service to motorists or be a designated tourist activity, and

4 WHEREAS one of the options identified by WSDOT as a “tourist activity”
5 is to “[b]e a commercial district as adopted by a city ordinance or resolution” that
6 (1) has a minimum of one million square feet of leasable commercial space; (2) is
7 located within an area of one square mile; (3) provides unique commercial
8 activity where the majority of the district’s customers do not reside in the city
9 where the commercial district is located; and (4) is located within one mile of the
10 nearest state highway, and

11 WHEREAS staff analysis of these requirements indicates that (1) auto
12 retailers account for 2.9 million square feet of leasable commercial space in the
13 designated area; (2) South Tacoma Way, from South 37th Street to South 80th
14 Street, equals .86 of a square mile; (3) a sampling of auto retailers indicates that
15 50-70 percent of their customer base comes from outside the City of Tacoma;
16 and (4) the designated area is one mile from I-5 and less than one mile from
17 State Route 16; and

18 WHEREAS this resolution, if adopted, provides the opportunity for this
19 group of vested stakeholders to direct traffic to their designated commercial
20 district, and

21 WHEREAS the City has determined that the minimum area and location
22 requirements are sufficient to designate South Tacoma Way, between
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South 37th and South 80th Streets, as a commercial district, to be known as
“Tacoma’s Auto Row”; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That the City Council hereby approves the designation of South Tacoma
Way, between South 37th and South 80th Streets, as a commercial district, to be
known as “Tacoma’s Auto Row.”

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney