



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Jeff Lueders, Interim Media and Communications Director 
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request for Ordinance for a Telecommunications Franchise Agreement – Sprint (T-Mobile)
DATE: April 14, 2023

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to Request an Ordinance for a 10 year Telecommunications Franchise Agreement between the City of Tacoma and Sprint (T-Mobile). This is the second such ordinance as the first 10-year agreement (Ord. # 28033) has now expired. We have reviewed their request, negotiated terms, and reached a tentative agreement pending City Council consideration and approval. Based on Sprint's (T-Mobile) Financial and Technical abilities, and having a 10-year History of being a quality provider and vendor in the Public Right of Way in our community, we are recommending passage of this Request for Ordinance.

BACKGROUND:

This Department's Recommendation is Based On State and Local Law which requires a Telecommunications Provider to have a Franchise Agreement to operate in the City of Tacoma Public Right of Way. Sprint (T-Mobile) was granted a 10-year Telecommunications Franchise Agreement (Ord. # 28033) by the Tacoma City Council on December 6 of 2011, which has now expired.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

Residents and Businesses in our community will be impacted by this decision as Sprint offers a wide variety of services from Wireline Operations to Wireless Networks, Wireless Wholesale Operations to Mobile Devices and Broadband for the Home.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

A competitive Telecommunications marketplace allows all residents and businesses to have choices when selecting services and at reduced prices due to competition.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the number of infrastructure projects and improvements that support existing and new business developments.

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

Education: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase digital access and equity across the city.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity



Improve access and proximity by residents to diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

A competitive Telecommunications marketplace allows all residents and businesses to have choices when selecting services and reduced prices due to competition. A robust marketplace increases livability, service availability and potential employment opportunities. Having multiple service providers increases competition, which in turn provides competitive pricing and improves the quality of life. The increase in infrastructure allows businesses to have choice and get the services they need at competitive prices to move their businesses forward and improves the overall perception of the Tacoma economy.

ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Not Approve this Request for Ordinance		This could cause a lawsuit and/or force Sprint to cease to operate or pass through Tacoma. Negative perception of Tacoma Business Community and Economy.
2.		
3.		

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

Sprint (T-Mobile) continues to successfully do business in Tacoma and through-out the region abiding by Federal, State and Local Laws.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

This item was presented to the Government Performance and Finance Committee on May 2, 2023.

Staff is recommending passage of this Request for Ordinance by the City Council. This recommendation will allow a telecommunications provider in our community to continue to do business, providing services desired by residents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

Effective Date: July 7, 2023.



FISCAL IMPACT:

Please provide a short summary of the fiscal impacts associated with the grant, agreement, policy action, or other action.

There are no Fiscal Impacts to the City of Tacoma regarding this request.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1.			
2.			
TOTAL			

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attached is a copy of the negotiated Telecommunications Franchise Agreement between the City of Tacoma and Sprint (T-Mobile).