



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Anita Gallagher, Chief Policy Analyst to the Mayor, City Manager’s Office  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution –Expedition of Transportation Projects in Tacoma – October 3, 2017  
**DATE:** September 26, 2017

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**SUMMARY:**

Mayor Marilyn Strickland requests a Resolution that will direct the City Manager to coordinate with Pierce Transit to identify additional partners for a feasibility study to analyze a potential Fast Foot Ferry between Tacoma and Seattle, and to work with Pierce Transit on the feasibility for High Capacity Transit to serve the South End and downtown Tacoma. The Resolution shall also direct the City Manager to work with Sound Transit to expedite deliverables of both Sound Transit 2 and Sound Transit 3 (ST3) that are planned for Tacoma.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Mayor Marilyn Strickland  
Deputy Mayor Robert Thoms  
Council Member Ryan Mello

**STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:**

The strategic policy priorities best aligned with this action are:

- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.
- Foster a vibrant and diverse economy with good jobs for all Tacoma residents.
- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.
- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

**BACKGROUND:**

Companies consider many factors when evaluating potential locations to establish or expand their business. A streamlined, efficient transportation network is vitally important in these analyses. Highways, airports, and shipping ports are crucial for many business operations. The availability of commuter transportation options, however, is an essential decision point for many employers. Tacoma currently enjoys a robust public transit system that includes fixed route buses, Sounder Commuter Rail and Link Light Rail streetcars. We must, however, prepare for future growth, proactively explore new transit options and expedite planned projects in the face of unprecedented growth and opportunity.

This Resolution directs the City Manager to collaborate with Pierce Transit to identify additional partners for a feasibility study to analyze a potential Fast Foot Ferry between Tacoma and Seattle. This concept has recently been implemented by Kitsap Transit to provide a 28-minute commute by boat between Bremerton and Seattle. A similar service in Tacoma can address Interstate 5 congestion and provide more options for efficient connectivity to and from Tacoma. The Resolution also directs the City Manager to work with Pierce Transit during their feasibility process to analyze the potential for High Capacity Transit (HCT) service on Route 1, a 14-mile corridor connecting downtown Tacoma with areas of Pierce County south of city limits.

Additionally, the Resolution directs the City Manager to coordinate with Sound Transit to expedite deliverables of both Sound Transit 2 and Sound Transit 3 (ST3) that are planned for Tacoma and identify ways in which Tacoma’s planning, permitting, inter-jurisdictional cooperation, Public Works



Department and Tacoma Public Utilities may find process efficiencies and speed up program delivery. These include extension of Tacoma Link with six additional stations, Central Link that will connect SeaTac Airport, Seattle and South Lake Union to Tacoma. It also includes expansion of the south line Sounder Rail service that will accommodate about 40% more passengers, and Sounder Express Bus Service enhancements to increase frequency and reliability. These projects will have a significant impact on the South Puget Sound's local economy, Tacoma's ability to attract more businesses (and their employees) to our city and improve the quality of life for our residents and visitors.

**ISSUE:**

Efficient, consistent transportation options are vital for Tacoma's future growth, both in population and economically. While there are much-needed transportation infrastructure investments planned that will serve Tacoma, it is important that we undertake all possible efforts to try to expedite delivery of those projects and commit to explore additional transportation options given the city's rapid population growth and increasingly dynamic business environment. This will position Tacoma competitively with other jurisdictions in the Puget Sound region for economic development opportunities and attracting top talent to our community.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The City Council could choose not to direct the City Manager to coordinate with Pierce Transit and Sound Transit on potential and planned transportation projects. To not pursue additional partners for the Fast Foot Ferry feasibility study could result in a greater financial commitment from the City in order to fund the analysis or the study may not be financially possible. This would be a missed opportunity to explore the potential for the Fast Foot Ferry service. Additionally, not directing the City Manager to coordinate efforts with Sound Transit on the projects planned for Tacoma would not be the most efficient, effective method for cross-agency collaboration considering the scope of these infrastructure improvements.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Manager coordinate with Pierce Transit and Sound Transit on potential and planned transportation projects to the betterment of Tacoma's present and future citizenry and business community.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.