



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

733 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402

Conference Room 16

September 11, 2018

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:10 p.m.

Present: 8 - Beale, Blocker, Camarata, Hunter, Ibsen, Mello, Ushka and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 1 - McCarthy

Council Member Hunter participated telephonically.

Briefing Items

1. [18-1027](#) Updates on the Hilltop Link Extension and Tacoma Dome Link Extension

At approximately 12:11 p.m., Kurtis Kingsolver, Director, Public Works, made opening remarks and introduced Sound Transit representatives Madeleine Greathouse, Project Director, Liz Satterthwaite, Community Outreach Specialist, and Mark Wheeler, Project Labor Agreement Program Manager.

Ms. Greathouse provided an update on the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension (HTLE) project cost and schedule; progress since the last update; upcoming events and milestones; information on how Sound Transit completes work; community outreach activities; and issues and challenges experienced. She outlined work planned for each segment of the project: Segment 1, from Commerce Street to Stadium Way; Segment 2, adjacent to Stadium High School; Segment 3, through the Stadium District along Division Avenue; and Segment 4, along Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.

Ms. Satterthwaite described outreach efforts including door-to-door contact with residents and businesses along the route; monthly e-newsletters; collaboration with City and Tacoma Public Utilities staff; activities at the Links to Opportunity office in Hilltop; and outreach at community events and festivals. Ms. Satterthwaite, Ms. Greathouse, and Mr. Wheeler discussed labor outreach including Links to Opportunity grant funds, and a labor event in Hilltop being planned for October 2018. Ms. Greathouse described key

issues including maintaining awareness; identifying utilities locations; operations impacts; public outreach; and coordination with third party utilities.

Discussion ensued regarding traffic maintenance requirements related to pedestrian, bike, and bus access; labor outreach and providing jobs in the community; and community outreach and reporting on established goals.

At approximately 12:38 p.m., Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services, made opening remarks and introduced Curvie Hawkins, Project Director, and Chelsea Levy, Government and Community Relations Manager, Sound Transit. Mr. Huffman explained that the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project will extend regional light rail from Federal Way to Tacoma Dome Station, connecting Tacoma to the larger regional light rail system. The service timeline is for completion in 2030; Mr. Hawkins stated Sound Transit will make several major decisions related to the project in 2019. He noted that the City Council previously adopted a resolution to facilitate the process and outline key interests.

Mr. Hawkins presented information on the TDLE project including an overview and timeline; alternatives for route and station locations; and upcoming public outreach. He noted that the TDLE project includes a planned Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) to be used for system maintenance, support, and storage needs. The planning phase is expected to continue through 2022, with design from 2022-2025, and construction from 2025-2030. Mr. Hawkins noted that extension of the regional Link line to East Tacoma is not part of the TDLE project considerations, as it does not fulfill the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) initiative goals. He concluded by describing various alternative route alignments and station location options.

Discussion ensued regarding alignment options to the east and south of Interstate 5 (I-5), and alternative locations for crossing I-5 closer to Fife and Tacoma. Mr. Hawkins provided a focused discussion on route alignment groupings and alternatives in east Tacoma and near the Tacoma Dome, and issues such as access, impacts, and coordination with the Puyallup Tribe for the Puyallup River crossing.

Discussion continued regarding permitting and public access requirements for a future river crossing and route alignment and station location options near the new Emerald Queen Casino.

Mr. Hawkins concluded with an overview of past and future outreach efforts with Tacoma area community groups, including direct mailings, online, and in-person open house events. He said the next open house event is scheduled for September 19, 2018, and an online open house is available now. He stated

the elected leadership group is expected to make recommendations to the Sound Transit Board on October 12, 2018.

Discussion ensued regarding outreach and impacts to both business owners and business tenants; suggestions of additional community groups for outreach; route alignment preferences; ridership modeling; the number of proposed stations; and the need for access and service for East Tacoma.

2. [18-1028](#) Fire and Transportation Impact Fees Discussion

At approximately 1:20 p.m., Josh Diekmann, Assistant Division Manager, Public Works, provided opening remarks and introduced Kendra Breiland, Principal, Fehr & Peers. Ms. Breiland described the function and uses of impact fees; legal and legislative authorities; types of impact fees; example programs in Western Washington; and mechanics of how impact fee programs are developed.

Jim Duggan, Chief, Tacoma Fire Department, discussed fire protection structural considerations; possible adoption of fire service areas and additional fees for specific service areas and projects; rate methodology; and possible changes to existing standards and project plans.

Mr. Diekmann outlined options for structuring impact fees; phasing, infrastructure, development cost, and incentive considerations; and the process to develop impact fee structures. He summarized staff recommendations which included forming a staff stakeholder group; working with Council Standing Committees; and continuing to explore impact fees as a method to pay for growth.

Discussion ensued regarding goals and avoiding barriers to current and future growth. Mr. Kingsolver stated, at the request of City Manager Elizabeth Pauli, that staff's goal is to encourage, rather than discourage, growth, but he understands concerns about impact fees from the development community. He said impact fees are not a new concept and many other jurisdictions in the area already use impact fees. He noted that developers in Tacoma already undergo the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process, and impact fees would take the place of parts of that process and provide more straightforward project costs and time frames.

Discussion ensued regarding outreach and timing for this early exploration of impact fees; level of service across the City; and incorporating other agency impact fees in the City's study. Discussions continued regarding development's impact on infrastructure and facilities; Tacoma's low development fees compared with similar jurisdictions; which fee structures

will work best; and balancing costs and ease of development with quality of life and service levels.

Other Items of Interest

3. [18-1057](#) Washington State Department of Transportation Properties in Tacoma

Mayor Woodards provided Council Members with a draft letter to State Representatives about unkempt properties owned by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). She is requesting that WSDOT meet with the Council to discuss these concerns. Council Member Ushka reported multiple calls from residents and is seeking a lasting solution, after receiving a limited response from WSDOT so far.
4. [18-1041](#) Council Consideration Request - Women's Interfaith Conference Sponsorship 2019

Mayor Woodards provided Council Members with a request to allocate up to \$10,000 from the City Council Contingency Fund to support the 2019 Interfaith Women's Conference. The request will be placed on the next meeting agenda for consideration.

Committee Reports

Council Member Mello stated he and Mayor Woodards attended the Pierce Transit Board meeting on September 10, 2018, and provided brochures for upcoming open house events and web surveys. He further noted that the Pierce Transit Board approved an addition to the consultant's scope of work to study the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor. He concluded by stating the current plan is for platforms in the street median, which impacts traffic intersection planning along the corridor.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

5. [18-1029](#) Weekly Report to the City Council, September 6, 2018

City Manager Pauli reported that tonight's regular meeting agenda includes a proclamation proclaiming September 14-23, 2018 as Welcoming Week, and there are no agenda changes expected. She added that Citizens' Forum is tonight.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk