



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Nicole Emery, City Clerk
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: A resolution placing proposed charter amendment C4B on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot – Requested for July 16, 2024
DATE: July 10, 2024

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution placing proposed Charter amendment C4B on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot.

BACKGROUND:

The Recommendation is Based On:

On October 17, 2023, Resolution No. 41282 was adopted creating a Charter Review Committee (CRC), consisting of 15 citizens (residents), to review the existing Charter of the City of Tacoma and make such recommendations to the City Council for charter amendments as the committee may deem necessary and proper to improve the manner of operation and efficiency in conducting the affairs of the City. On December 19, 2023, Resolution No. 41324 was adopted appointing members to the CRC. Starting January 11, 2024, CRC members begin to meet to review the City Charter and develop recommendations.

On May 6, 2024, the City Council received the final report from the Charter Review Committee and a presentation on their recommendations. Starting May 7, 2024, the City Council reviewed the recommendations, brought forward new recommendations, and refined recommendations for consideration for the November 5, 2024, general election ballot. At the July 9, 2024, meeting City Council Members made motions to refer recommendations to the July 16, 2024, meeting for title drafting and final consideration to place on the ballot and redirected some amendments to other policy processes.

This recommendation would permit the City to sell or dispose of waterfront property under specific limited circumstances, limit the sale or disposition to only public agencies for the guaranteed purpose of perpetual public ownership and public access, for park purposes, park structures, and open space in perpetuity.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The City Charter requires the City Council to commence a comprehensive review of the City Charter no less frequently than once every ten years by appointing citizens to a Charter Review Committee (CRC). The CRC met between January and May of 2024. They took comment at public meetings, and held two extended public comment meetings with opportunities to comment in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Khmer. On May 6, 2024, the CRC presented final report to the City Council. The City Council reviewed every proposal from the CRC, in addition to creating new proposals for consideration. All materials were published in advance of the City Council's public hearing on July 2, 2024.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: This amendment would allow for the City to transfer ownership of our public spaces, as long as the parks remain forever in public ownership for the purpose of using these lands for parks purposes or open spaces into perpetuity. This will ensure the public never loses access to this amazing public benefit.

Livability: Equity Index Score: Select Index Score.

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.

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents



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

Residents of the City of Tacoma benefit from being able to access nature and open spaces and are particularly fortunate to have a significant portion of our waterfront publicly owned and available to all. Unlike many local governments that didn't preserve access to waterfront property, Section 9.1 was established years ago to ensure public ownership and prevent private companies from blocking access to the waterfront. This has preserved the City's natural beauty and offered health benefits through recreation and increased tree canopy. It also ensures all communities to access waterfront property, especially those disproportionately excluded from the environmental benefits from accessing public open spaces. The City pays Metro Parks to manage much of the City owned waterfront property as public parks. The City has identified the goal of aligning ownership of park space under Metro Parks to establish a consistent level of service across all parks and enable the City to focus its resource on other municipal priorities.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Maintain current Charter language.	Maintains City control of these properties.	Prevents separate public entities that specialize in park services from owning land used for park purposes.
2. Expand the types of uses allowed should the City of Tacoma sell waterfront property.	Widens opportunities for use of waterfront property for other City priorities, such as education, affordable housing, and more.	Does not preserve our waterfront property for park purposes and opens the door to the reduction of accessible open space.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

If approved, this Charter amendment will be placed on the ballot for voters in the November 2024 election.

RECOMMENDATION:

None.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff in the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) provided Fiscal Notes during City Council review of proposed amendments. OMB reviewed all proposed amendments and provided fiscal impacts on amendments may require investments above \$50,000 to implement. OMB did not provide a Fiscal Note for this amendment. The cost to place amendments on the ballot will be captured in the combined resolution brought forward on July 23, 2024.

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

N/A

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

N/A

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

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

No