



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Jeff Lueders, MCO Division Manager - Franchise Services  
Amy Clancy, Media & Communications Office  
**COPY:** GPFC – Chair John Hines; Andy Cherullo, Finance Director; D’Angelo Baker, Staff Liaison  
**PRESENTER:** Jeff Lueders, MCO – Division Manager – Franchise Services  
**SUBJECT:** Request for Ordinance – Telecommunications Franchise Agreement between Unite Private Networks, LLC and the City of Tacoma  
**DATE:** August 13, 2024

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**

Please select the type of presentation you will be making to the Council Committee.  
Request for Action

**SUMMARY:**

Begin by stating the purpose of the memo. Summarize your conclusion, recommendation, and the basis for your recommendation. State why this item is being brought forward and the response you are seeking from the committee.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Tacoma Public Schools (TPS) and the Puyallup Public Schools (PPS) have been connected via fiber for off-site data storage to access in case of an emergency since 2011. The two school districts joined their computer data networks for this purpose and hired Unite Private Networks LLC (UPN). Unite Private Networks received a Limited Area Franchise Agreement from the City of Tacoma in 2011 and is now seeking a Telecommunications Franchise Agreement that will allow this fiber optic cable, a portion of which is located in the City’s right of way (ROW) to continue to provide this vital service.

**ISSUE:**

Unite Private Networks LLC is under contract with its customers, TPS and PPS, to own and operate approximately 1.3 miles of fiber optic cable from TPS’ Boze Elementary School to PPS’s ITC Data Center. The portion inside Tacoma city limits will be less than 1 mile with approximately ¼ mile installed underground with the balance being mounted on existing poles.

UPN, as the provider, is responsible for the maintenance of the fiber optic cable. The TPU Pole Attachment agreement outlines who can work on TPU poles. The City is not responsible to maintain the fiber optic cable nor any costs associated with maintenance.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

There are other telecommunications vendors that provide this service however this vendor is the one that was selected by the two school districts and UPN has served them well for the past 13 years so there is no desire to change at this point.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.

**RECOMMENDATION:**



Both Tacoma and Puyallup Public Schools will benefit from this agreement, as they will be able to continue to store data off-site in preparation for a future data recovery emergency. Unite Private Networks LLC benefits as they receive payment for their services due to leasing the fiber to their customers (TPS and PPS). The city has a history of entering into franchise agreements with private companies that wish to do business in the City, who in turn abide by our City code, and the negotiated terms of the franchise agreement.

This agreement also supports the Strategic Goal of a high-performing, open and engaged government.