



**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Lauren Hoogkamer, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Services  
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – Authorization of an Interlocal Agreement with the Port of Tacoma for Receipt of Grant Funding for the McKinley Overlook Signage – August 20, 2024  
**DATE:** August 5, 2024

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution authorizing an interlocal agreement with the Port of Tacoma for the receipt of a Local Economic Development Fund (LEDIF) grant for \$30,000 to cover interpretive and wayfinding signage and a viewfinder at the McKinley Overlook.

**BACKGROUND:**

The community identified the McKinley Overlook project as a top priority as part of the McKinley Hill Neighborhood Plan. The new public space will feature a walking path, separated from the roadway by a planted landscape area, public art, viewfinders, garbage cans, artist-designed seating, pedestrian-scale lighting, and defined parking spaces.

This interlocal agreement (ILA) with the Port of Tacoma Local Economic Development Fund grant will further enhance the project, providing \$30,000 in funding for two interpretive signs to tell the history of the site and neighborhood, wayfinding signage to direct people to the newly created site, and a viewfinder.

The McKinley Overlook project was identified by the community through a deep process of co-creation, with community members asking for activation for a new public space to enjoy the views of Downtown Tacoma, Port, and Commencement Bay. In addition to a desire to see this site celebrated and enhanced, the project responds to the community’s concern around illegal dumping and other unsafe and criminal activities at the site and protects recent plantings and restoration of the adjacent McKinley Slope, a City-managed open space and critical area.

The McKinley Overlook construction project is fully budgeted and funded and has received both City Council and grant funding through the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). The project has been designed, a contractor has been selected, and construction will begin late summer/fall.

The LEDIF grant adds new amenities and interpretation to the planned project. The project team will work in partnership with the Puyallup Tribe and Port of Tacoma, as well as City departments such as Public Works and the Office of Arts and Cultural Vitality, to develop the signage content and design.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

The McKinley Overlook project was a top community priority identified as part of the McKinley Hill Neighborhood Plan. Engagement for the Plan included 1,000+ community “engagements,” with a focus on co-creation and equitable engagement. The McKinley Hill Neighborhood Plan was awarded both the American Planning Association/Planners Association of Washington award for Excellence in Planning and the Governor’s Smart Communities award for Equity Strategies.

Based on public feedback, the resident-led steering group identified the Overlook project as a top project. The conceptual design for the new project was co-created through monthly meetings with the resident-led Open Space Committee, and members of the committee conducted door-to-door outreach to neighbors near the site to confirm



that they were supportive of the project and design. The signage portion of the project is responsive to community requests for interpretation, storytelling, and placemaking in the neighborhood.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

McKinley is a diverse and historically under-served, underrepresented community, and ranks “very low” on the City of Tacoma’s equity index. The McKinley Overlook project aims to reduce criminal activity that has historically negatively impacted the surrounding community, and the interpretive signage will tell a more inclusive history of the site, including the history and presence of the Puyallup Tribe (developed in collaboration with the Tribe) and multicultural history of McKinley Hill, including the displacement of the historic Hawthorne neighborhood. The final project will also include accessibility improvements, including Americans with Disability Act-compliant parking, new sidewalk, and new curb ramps.

**Economy/Workforce:** *Equity Index Score: Low*

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

**Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score: Low*

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

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: Very low*

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).**

Delivering on the community’s vision for the McKinley Overlook project, including amenities such as interpretation, wayfinding signage, and a viewfinder, will help to create a new public space in a historically under-served community, increase public safety in a location that has experienced violence, and support civic engagement by building trust with the community by delivering on our promises. New wayfinding signage will support local tourism for visitors to access this new public space, and interpretive signage will help to create a sense of place for visitors and locals.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Deny the interlocal agreement	N/A	Denying the interlocal agreement would result in inadequate funds for wayfinding and interpretive signage and viewfinder



**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

As part of the McKinley Overlook project, staff is working with community volunteers to conduct a “Public Life” pre- and post-evaluation of the project to determine if the project goals have been met. Information will be summarized and shared after the post-evaluation is completed in summer of 2025.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approving the interlocal agreement to receive funding for the interpretive and wayfinding signage and viewfinder.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ILA will provide \$30,000 in LEDIF grant funding from the Port of Tacoma to cover the expense of signage and a viewfinder. It is anticipated that funds under this ILA will be spent starting in 2024 and will continue into 2025. Funds will cover the cost of hiring a consultant for interpretive and wayfinding signage development; viewfinder procurement; and sign fabrication, hardware, and installation.

Additional City Council and grant funding has already been budgeted to cover the McKinley Overlook capital project, which is separate from this ILA.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1195-PLAN PDS Planning Grants	GRT-00610-01	4337102	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			\$30,000

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

This ILA will provide \$30,000 in LEDIF grant funding from the Port of Tacoma to cover the expense of the intended project.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget? No**

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

This expenditure will begin in FY 2024 and continue into FY 2025.

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

YES

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

No

**Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?**

No

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Agreement between City of Tacoma and Port of Tacoma Regarding McKinley Overlook