



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Jacques Colon, Director Office of Equity and Human Rights
COPY: Community Vitality and Safety Committee, Liaison D’Angelo Baker
PRESENTER: Lucas Smiraldo, Senior Equity Consultant, Office of Equity and Human Rights and Tony Amin Hester, Chair, Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities
SUBJECT: Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities (TACOD) Annual Updates 2024
DATE: February 21, 2025

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

The purpose of this memo is to provide a 2024 update from the Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities. The update includes TACOD’s activities, achievements, challenges, and proposed initiatives to advance access for people with disabilities in Tacoma, per TMC 1.29 and City Council Resolution No. 29719.

After a review of the TACOD update, it is evident that TACOD has made significant strides in educating the community and advancing disability access and disability rights for the past year. The report highlights various accomplishments, internal and external consultations, and provides insight into the commission’s future priorities.

Based on the findings presented in the Annual Report, TACOD recommends that the Community Vitality and Safety Committee (committee) acknowledges and endorses the efforts of TACOD. Additionally, the committee may consider providing support for specific initiatives outlined in the report to further strengthen the city's commitment to disability access, including review of transportation options for people with disabilities, and other consultations around physical, digital, infrastructure, and housing access for people with disabilities.

The presentation highlights:

- *The partnering efforts with Tacoma Venue and Events that led to the TVE Equity in Events Toolkit and an emphasis on universal access for people with disabilities.*
- *Completion of an ADA access audit of Tacoma Light Rail based on in person observations by commissioners.*
- *Consultations with internal departments including Public Works and the Planning Department and external organizations including Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities (TACID) and Sound Transit.*

Supporting the TACOD’s mission and efforts aligns with the committee's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable community, as prescribed in the Equity and Empowerment Framework and Anti-Racist Principles embedded in Resolution 40622. The presentation serves as a valuable resource for understanding the state of disability access within the city and offers a list of priorities for urgent needs moving forward. TACOD invites feedback on specific initiatives outlined in the report and any suggestions for further collaboration.

BACKGROUND:

The Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities is a vital entity dedicated to promoting access for people with disabilities within the city.



Covered under Tacoma Municipal Code 1.29, the TACOD is under the oversight of the Office of Equity and Human Rights and established in 1987 under City Council Resolution 29719, the commission is the advisory body that works in consultation with Tacoma City Council to promote disability access and offer policies, practices, resolutions, and ordinances that support that mission.

Focus Areas:

1. Annual Updates

- a. The update provides insights into the TACOD’s activities, achievements, and challenges in promoting disability access in Tacoma.

2. Outreach and Consultative Events

- a. The update highlights outreach efforts of the Commission and shares significant internal and external consultations that TACOD members have provided to offer a voice on behalf of people with disabilities to impact program and project designs.

3. Priorities and Future Considerations.

- a. The update concludes by distilling the recent work of a two-year strategic planning event in February to reflect the priorities of the commission and to partner in educational outreach around large scale public works projects that will improve access for people with disabilities.

The committee is requested to review the TACOD 2024 update and consider its endorsement. Additionally, any feedback or recommendations regarding specific initiatives outlined in the update would be valuable. This discussion aligns with the city's commitment to maintaining a fair, inclusive, and equitable community, as outlined in TMC 1.29.

ISSUE:

The priorities that have been elevated by TACOD include attention around and infrastructure upgrades, particularly around streets, sidewalks, and intersection access. The commission will continue to be a primary consultative voice for several departments within the city including Public Works, Information Technology, and the Planning Commission with a focus on Housing Access in that commission’s work. The primary external partners requesting consultation continue to be the Tacoma Housing Authority, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, and non-profit organizations serving those with disabilities including Tacoma Area Coalition of Individuals with Disabilities (TACID).

ALTERNATIVES:

This is an informational briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an informational briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational briefing only. There is no recommendation.