



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Corey Newton, P.E., Division Manager, Planning and Development Services
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution – Planning and Development Services Fee Schedule/Right-of-Tree Protection Fees – May 21, 2024
DATE: May 6, 2024

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution updating the Planning and Development Services fee schedule, to create a new fee structure for right-of-way street trees related to the recent Tacoma Municipal Code Title 9 Urban Forestry changes, effective June 1, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

The City Council passed Ordinance No. 28926 in December 2023. The Ordinance codified the new the Urban Forestry Section and the related tree protection standards. These new standards become effective June 1, 2024. The Ordinance also included permitting requirements in five distinct areas. The updated fee schedule would implement fees in these five areas for the right-of-way: tree pruning, tree planting, tree removal (non-conflict), tree removal (conflict), and a canopy loss fee. The new Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Title 9 update is effective June 1, 2024.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

This proposed resolution is related to the TMC Title 9 Urban Forestry Section recent update. The legislation had substantial community engagement starting in 2019 and continuing through late 2023. Planning and Development Services (PDS) presented the proposed fee schedule update to the Government Performance and Finance Committee on May 7, 2024.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Right-of-way (ROW) tree regulations impact every resident in Tacoma, though the impacts are not shared equally. While the whole city stands to benefit from recently updated ROW regulations on trees, those living in historically underserved communities stand to benefit most from the new changes to TMC Title 9.

In Tacoma, higher opportunity neighborhoods on the Equity Index have 15 percent more tree cover than lower opportunity neighborhoods. The benefits of trees are amplified to those in close proximity, and include improvements to air quality, stormwater absorption reducing flooding and runoff, and soil stability on hillsides, as well as cooling the urban heat island effect, calming traffic, and contributing to positive mental health. With the disparity in tree distribution across the city, these localized benefits of trees are not shared equitably in Tacoma.

Livability: Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

PDS is recommending the adoption of this resolution to implement new tree protection fees designed to assist in the implementation of the TMC 9 updates which has a goal to improve the health and longevity of our community's trees, which when coupled with the City's programs to increase tree canopy in historically underserved



communities, would help to ensure the health benefits of trees are shared equitably across Tacoma.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
Do not modify the PDS fee schedule.	N/A	Level of service impact or lack of resources to implement the TMC Title 9 changes related to urban forestry.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt the resolution to update the PDS fee schedule.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Forecasting of a novel program may have larger deviation than typical, however this PDS fee schedule adjustment is intended to provide an approximate annual increase of \$41,200 in funding.

ATTACHMENT:

- Proposed PDS Fee Schedule – Effective June 1, 2024