



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Melanie Harding, Chief Policy Analyst to the Mayor, City Manager's Office
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: A Resolution designating a place name for "Brewery Blocks" – November 9, 2021
DATE: 11/2/2021

SUMMARY & PURPOSE:

This resolution designates a place name of "Brewery Blocks" for the area bounded between South 21st and South 23rd Streets, and between Pacific Avenue to the east and the yet-to-be-developed public thoroughfare known as the Prairie Line Trail to the west.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards, Councilmember Thoms, Councilmember Walker

BACKGROUND:

On Wednesday, September 15, 2021, the Mayor's Office received a request from Horizon Partners Northwest and neighborhood proponents for a Brewery Blocks place name designation. The proposed Brewery Blocks boundary is described as being bounded between South 21st and South 23rd Streets, and between Pacific Avenue to the east and the yet-to-be-developed public thoroughfare known as the Prairie Line Trail to the west. The application appears to include all necessary components outlined in the City's naming policy.

In accordance with the current policy on place names adopted as part of Council Resolution No. 40408 in August 2019, this naming request was forwarded to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) committee on September 29, 2021 to provide oversight of the naming request process and develop a recommendation on the request for the consideration of the Council. During the September 29, 2021 meeting, the IPS committee approved a motion to forward the naming request for Brewery Blocks to the full City Council. The IPS committee also requested informal public outreach on the "Brewery Blocks" place name request. Specifically, there was a desire to reach community members and stakeholders who may not follow the City's legislative processes, to share awareness of the request, and to provide an opportunity to comment if desired. The IPS Committee received an informational briefing on the community outreach conducted at their October 27, 2021, meeting, and they expressed concurrence in moving forward with their original motion to send the naming request on for consideration by the full Council.

The place name request indicates that "the area has been the center of the Tacoma Brewing industry for at least 110 years. These blocks have been the historic home of Carling Brewing, Columbia Brewing, and Pacific Brewing Companies. The purpose of this request is to formally identify and recognize this portion of Tacoma as the Brewery Blocks. The Brewery Blocks area is partially within the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic Special Review District and the Union Station Warehouse Conservation District." Additionally, proponents of the naming request indicate that:

Historical research has been conducted to help developers and property owners better understand the significance of the properties they hold. This research will help city planners, the Historic Preservation Commission, residents, visitors and retailers within the Brewery Blocks to better understand and embrace the



role history has played in the appearance and backstory of the area. Interpretative displays and web based storytelling can help bring the message to the public regarding how the district developed; who was responsible for its growth; and more complete understanding of why the district is comprised of so many masonry-built warehouses in this portion of Tacoma.

The proponents of the naming request estimate that seventeen properties would be included in the area proposed for the “Brewery Blocks” designated place name. As noted in the September 29, 2021 presentation at IPS, their written request provides maps and detailed information on involved properties, including their historic uses and former brewery sites located within the area. Naming requests do not impact land use regulations or put any additional requirements or restrictions on impacted properties.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ (CUSTOMER RESEARCH):

Following the feedback of the IPS committee, city staff utilized the following tools to expand outreach on this item:

- A rotating banner on the City’s website;
- Social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (these posts were promoted for additional views in the Tacoma area October 12 – October 17, 2021);
- Community & Economic Development (CED) staff announced the naming request at the October 7, 2021 Downtown Tacoma Partnership meeting;
- CED staff shared information on the naming request and opportunity to comment with Neighborhood Business District leaders and liaisons on October 6, 2021, allowing the issue to be highlighted at district meetings;
- A voice-over script was used in City on-hold messaging and distributed to local radio news outlets; and
- Newsletter copy was distributed that could be used by individual Councilmembers to highlight the naming request.

The outreach efforts invited the public to submit their comments to the City Clerk’s Office and referred to a website staff created to provide additional information, including the complete naming request application.

Overall, eight comments were received by the City Clerk’s Office. Three spoke in favor of the place name request and five were opposed. The comments are attached for your information.

Proponents of the Brewery Blocks place name designation indicated that they have discussed the proposal with neighboring property owners, retailers, and residents within the district as well as neighbors and institutions in the surrounding district.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: *(Mandatory)*

The naming request has come forward from members of the community and reflects historic uses in the area. The naming request does not speak to issues of race or equity. The application expresses a desire for the Brewery Blocks name to increase opportunities for distinct placemaking and wayfinding.



Economy/Workforce: Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity

Decrease the number of vacant properties downtown and in the neighborhood business districts.
Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

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

Proponents express a desire to “create a mixed-use neighborhood that has its own distinct character and identity. Different from master planned new construction districts like Point Ruston and Town Center, the Brewery Blocks impart a sense of place drawn from an authentic past with architecture and streetscapes blending existing historic character with new building design and construction technology.”

ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives actions for council or staff to take. Please use table below.

Alternative	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
1. Take no action	No need to update city files/records with this place name	Less momentum in creating an economically vibrant, destination district with a distinctly historic sense of place.

EVALUATIONS AND FOLLOW UP:

Place names do not impact development or regulations. The place name will be one consideration that city staff can utilize when designing and/or permitting signage in this area.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECOMMENDATION:

The sponsors recommend passage of the resolution

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no anticipated fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Brewery Blocks Naming Request
- Community feedback received through the IPS-directed outreach