



# City of Tacoma

## City Council Study Session Minutes

747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402, Council Chambers

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 894 9617 1192

Webinar Link: [www.zoom.us/j/89496171192](http://www.zoom.us/j/89496171192) Passcode: 896569

**October 25, 2022**

**12:00 PM**

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### Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Ushka called the study session to order at 12:01 p.m.

### Roll Call

**Present:** 5 - Bushnell, Diaz, Rumbaugh, Ushka and Walker

**Absent:** 4 - Blocker, Daniels, Hines and Mayor Woodards

Council Members Blocker and Hines arrived at 12:02 p.m.

Mayor Woodards arrived at 12:55 p.m.

Council Member Blocker participated virtually.

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Council Members Blocker and Hines arrived here, at 12:02 p.m.

### Briefing Items

1. [22-1162](#) Proposed Budget Updates - Tacoma Public Library, Planning and Development Services, Community and Economic Development, and Tacoma Police Department

At approximately 12:02 p.m., Kate Larsen, Director, Tacoma Public Library (TPL), presented the proposed budget updates for the TPL, including an agenda; departmental overview and strategy, noting an organizational chart and branch locations; financials and personnel, noting cost categories; and alignment with the City Council strategic priorities. She continued by outlining major accomplishments from 2021-2022, including the launch of the Community Archives Center, COVID-19 test distribution, TPL staffing compared to Tacoma’s population, a feasibility study to restore library services to the Hilltop and Eastside neighborhoods, direct voter support through the Point of Assistance program, impacts of COVID-19 on students, the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge, emerging services after COVID-19 pandemic closures, and activities supported by Tacoma Creates and other partners. Larsen concluded by reviewing issues and considerations, including safety and community support in libraries, noting the proposal

for social workers in libraries; support for materials in languages other than English; book and material challenges; a refresh of the downtown Main Branch first and second floors; and the Tacoma Reads program, noting this year's theme of "Hope. Resilience. Community."

Discussion ensued regarding Tacoma Reads, library services during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, impacts of reading programs on youth, community outreach, providing resources to those most in need, adding services in lower equity areas, the role of the TPL Board of Trustees, future facility renovations and improvements, appreciation for TPL staff, resources to increase language access, impacts of electronic books and audio books, resources available at the Main Branch, national issues related to removing and banning books, coordination with the Pierce County Auditor's Office for election resources and voting access, options to expand service hours, sharing library spaces with other groups, developing relationships and agreements with other organizations, and how social workers' time will be distributed at the different branches.

Mayor Woodards arrived here, at 12:55 p.m.

Discussion concluded regarding collaboration with the Tacoma Police Department (TPD) for public safety and alternative response.

Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services (PDS), presented the proposed budget updates for PDS, including an agenda; departmental overview and strategy, noting an organizational chart, accomplishments from 2021-2022, permitting volume, level of service and transparency, and the budget development strategy; and financials and personnel, noting department funding and expenditures. He concluded by presenting the PDS budget proposals, including measures to maintain financial sustainability and levels of service; budget proposals for 2023-2024, noting continuing the Neighborhood Planning Program, prioritizing affordable housing projects, and decarbonizing and electrifying the PDS fleet; and major initiatives for 2023-2024.

Discussion ensued regarding the balance between services, revenues, and low fees; permit timelines, noting level of service, comparisons with other agencies, issues, and options to streamline the process; staffing levels, noting work capacity, qualifications, and supporting major initiatives; the Neighborhood Planning Program, noting ongoing funding needs; prioritizing affordable housing; the 2024 Comprehensive Plan major update process; appreciation for staff; and planning ahead for future growth.

Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development (CED), presented the proposed budget updates for CED, including an agenda;

departmental overview and strategy, noting an organizational chart; and the CED return on investment. He further outlined major accomplishments from 2021-2022, including affordable housing, noting the Affordable Housing Fund and the Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS) budget summary; economic and business development; business and workforce partnerships; and arts and culture. He continued by reviewing issues and considerations, strategy and goals for 2023-2024, continued program emphases, and major initiatives and proposals. Robinson concluded by reviewing financials and personnel, noting department funding and cost categories.

Discussion ensued regarding workforce development, noting the National League of Cities pilot program; minority and disadvantaged business enterprises; expanding the City's green economy; increased investment in affordable housing development; down payment assistance; outreach to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities; leveraging federal funding; balancing community and economic development priorities; appreciation for CED staff; investing in the community; ways to support local businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; murals and public art; encouraging downtown development; business recruitment, retention, and expansion strategies; staffing and internal resources; and marketing strategies and budget.

Avery Moore, Chief, TPD, provided opening remarks and introduced Paul Junger, Deputy Chief, TPD. Chief Moore further presented the proposed budget updates for TPD, including an agenda; departmental overview and strategy, noting an organizational chart, and the three priority pillars of crime reduction, organizational health and morale, and community relations and trust; major accomplishments from 2021-2022; and financials by cost category. He further outlined issues and considerations, including departmental challenges; the hiring process and timeline; staffing trends for commissioned officers from 2016 to present; primary call responders in the field from 2019 to present; calls for service, noting dispatched and officer-initiated calls for service, and a comparison of time between calls being received to being dispatched and TPD arriving on-scene, by priority; overtime costs from 2020 to present; strategy, goals, initiatives, and proposals for 2023-2024; and a summary.

Discussion ensued regarding homicides and officer-involved shootings; appreciation for TPD staff; building trust; clearance rates; staffing, noting recruitment and training strategies, impacts of staff turnover, options to provide workforce housing for new employees, improving mental health and wellness support, increased personnel costs, impacts of staffing on response rates, officer qualification requirements, overtime, and current vacancies; priority levels and examples of calls of service; historically underserved

communities; call diversion for low-priority calls; the new Community Engagement Manager position; jail staffing and capacity issues; services and agreements with Pierce County and other agencies; fleet replacement standards; use of substations and volunteers; how South Sound 911 communicates with callers; proactive crime response; how Council Members can support the TPD; the importance of community safety; and TPD's goal to review data and adjust the crime response strategy every 90 days.

## Other Items of Interest

2. [22-1163](#) Council Consideration Request - Proposition No. 1

Mayor Woodards presented a Council Consideration Request (CCR) for a resolution expressing support for the passage of Proposition No. 1 submitted by Metro Parks Tacoma, which will be on the November 8, 2022, general election ballot, to increase the District's property tax levy. She further stated the proposed CCR will be on the November 1, 2022, meeting agenda for consideration.

## Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

## Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

3. [22-1164](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, October 20, 2022

City Manager Elizabeth Pauli stated there are no ceremonials on tonight's meeting agenda; that a change is expected to tonight's agenda, for a proposed Substitute Ordinance No. 28838, regarding annual business license fees; and reminded everyone that Virtual Forum will be held after tonight's meeting. She further stated that a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) special meeting will be held later this evening, and explained the purpose of the TBD, how Council Members act as TBD Governing Board Members, and topics for tonight's TBD special meeting.

Council Member Blocker stated that he plans to propose, as a substitute, Substitute Ordinance No. 28838 at tonight's meeting, noting the purpose to revise the annual business license fees.

## **Adjournment**

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

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Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

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Doris Sorum, City Clerk