



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli  
**FROM:** Shirley Schultz, Interim Division Manager, Planning and Development Services  
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services *PH*  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – Set Public Hearing on Permitting Level of Service and Public Notice Code  
Amendments – November 19, 2024  
**DATE:** October 30, 2024

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### **SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution setting Tuesday, December 3, 2024, as the date for a public hearing before the City Council on the permitting levels of service and public notice code amendments.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On June 26, 2024, the Planning Commission issued a [report and recommendation](#) regarding code changes to Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13 Land Use Regulatory Code to comply with State mandates regarding land use permit level of service, set to go in effect January 1, 2025.

The State of Washington, in Substitute Senate Bill 5290 and Substitute House Bill 1105, changed how much time local jurisdictions have to process land use permits, how fees are charged for the permits, and how public notices are worded. The City establishes these timelines, fees, and notices in TMC 13.05, Land Use Permits and Procedures. The proposed amendments to TMC 13 are intended to comply with the State mandates.

In summary, the proposal is to alter the levels of service for land use permits (in general, reducing the time from complete application to a decision), clarify what constitutes a complete or inactive application, and modify the contents of land use public notices to note a comment start date.

The matter was taken to the City of Tacoma Planning Commission in May 2024, with a public hearing held June 5, 2024. Following a June 26, 2024 debrief, the Planning Commission prepared a letter of recommendation and proposed code amendments for Council consideration.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

In addition to the Planning Commission and the stakeholder outreach via the Commission process, staff also presented the proposed code changes to the most-affected parties through the City's Permit Advisory Group and conducted additional community outreach in advance of the Commission's public hearing. The proposal is expected to result in enhanced levels of service and potentially in reduced fees for some permits when the timeline is not met.

### **2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

#### **Equity and Accessibility:**

This proposal is expected to increase levels of service across all types of land use permits and, to the extent that any permit applicant is experiencing inequities or disparities, they would benefit equally.

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**ALTERNATIVES:**

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Delay public hearing	More time for discussion.	Risk not meeting state mandated timeline.
2. Decline to schedule hearing		The State mandates would not be met and the City would be out of compliance with the applicable RCW.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Following a public hearing, staff will support the City Council in facilitating the first and final readings of the ordinance to amend TMC 13, which are tentatively scheduled for December 10, 2024, and December 17, 2024, respectively.

Performance under the new level of service standards will be monitored and reported annually, as required by State Law.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Council conduct the public hearing on December 19, 2024.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact related to setting the public hearing date.