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COPY: Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee
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PRESENTER: Jeffrey A. Jenkins, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Transportation Benefit District: Pedestrian Safety
DATE: September 10, 2025

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

This memorandum outlines a draft process for allocating 15% of Transportation Benefit District (TBD) revenues toward pedestrian safety, as directed by TBD Resolution 023. Beginning April 1, 2026, this allocation will provide approximately \$1 million annually to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility. The proposed approach is to prioritize projects based on safety, equity, connectivity, and accessibility, with a balance of high-impact corridor projects and quick-win improvements. Staff seek IPS Committee feedback on the proposed framework, which aligns with the Transportation and Mobility Plan (TMP) priorities.

BACKGROUND:

The Transportation Benefit District (TBD) is funded by a one-tenth of one percent sales and use tax approved by the TBD Board (Tacoma City Council) through TBD Resolution 023 on December 3, 2024. The measure provides continued funding for street and transportation system improvements, maintenance, preservation, and operations.

For the first time, the legislation requires that 15% of annual TBD revenues be dedicated to pedestrian safety projects. Tax collection begins April 1, 2026, with estimated annual revenues of \$7.5 million, approximately \$1.125 million will be dedicated to pedestrian safety.

This initiative directly ties to the TMP's guiding priorities of Safety, Equity, and Accessibility, ensuring funding is aligned with citywide transportation goals.

ISSUE:

The City must establish a clear and transparent process for how the 15% of revenues will be prioritized and allocated. Without a defined framework, the City risks missing opportunities to:

- Strategically tie investments to TMP priorities.
- Balance large-scale corridor improvements with near-term safety enhancements.
- Ensure equitable distribution of projects in communities with the greatest need.
- Build internal staff capacity to manage additional workload.



ALTERNATIVES:

The City could choose to use its existing processes to allocate funding towards Capital Facility Plan projects. This process evaluates projects and/or programs in accordance with goals outlined in the TMP and could result in the completion of pedestrian safety projects as part of larger projects instead of standalone projects.

The City could alternatively focus exclusively on standalone pedestrian safety projects which could result in lost opportunities to leverage multiple funding sources.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The TBD will provide approximately \$1.125 million annually for pedestrian safety beginning April 1, 2026:

- Approximately 60% of funding towards quick-win projects and leveraging opportunities based on safety, equity, and connectivity data for ADA and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, such as missing link sidewalks, curb ramps, marked crosswalks, and bulbouts.
- Approximately 40% of funding dedicated towards delivering pedestrian-focused improvements, such as signals, APS systems, streetlight repairs and additions.

This funding supplements, but does not replace, existing ADA allocations or pedestrian-related capital programs.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the IPS Committee endorse the proposed framework for allocating 15% of TBD revenues to pedestrian safety. This approach:

- Aligns with TMP priorities by focusing on safety, equity, and accessibility.
- Ensures sustainability through a data-driven, transparent prioritization process.
- Maximizes impact by leveraging funds through add-ons to existing projects and grant matching opportunities.
- Builds capacity by dedicating staff resources to signals and streetlights, an area with high potential for cost-effective pedestrian safety improvements.

Next Steps:

- Finalize prioritization criteria using TMP and GIS-based safety/equity/connectivity data.
- Establish the first-year workplan.
- Identify and scope Year 1 quick-win projects for inclusion in upcoming construction contracts.