




City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Justin E. Davis, Facilities Management Division Manager, Public Works
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COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution - Real Property Purchase from Metro Parks Tacoma for Future Construction of Fire Station #7 - October 1, 2024
DATE: September 9, 2024

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution authorizing the execution of necessary agreements with the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma (Metro Parks Tacoma) to purchase 2.27 acres, in the amount of \$870,000, budgeted from Fund 3211-Public Safety, for facilitating the future construction of a new Fire Station #7 to enhance emergency response capabilities.

BACKGROUND:

This Department's Recommendation is Based On: As the community of Tacoma grows and changes, the operations of the Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) need to grow and change along with it to ensure the department continues to meet the needs of the community. The current Fire Station #7 was constructed in 1959 and is collocated with the South Tacoma Library Branch at 5448 South Warner Street. The station is staffed with a single engine company that responds to over 3,500 emergencies annually. The call volume for this station far exceeds the department's target and national standard of 2,500 calls annually. There is a need for an additional response unit to this area; however, the station is undersized, and the existing property lacks the capacity for the needed expansion to accommodate additional emergency vehicles, equipment, and staff.

As part of the Fire Facilities Master Plan (2024), it is recommended that the existing station be relocated, and a new station be constructed. In partnership with Metro Parks Tacoma, the City has been evaluating undeveloped Metro Parks owned property located to the west of the South End Recreation Area (SERA), near South 60th and South Tyler Streets, to site a new station. The proposed site is currently undeveloped, has been significantly impacted by prior site grading and disturbance, and due to its isolation from other active areas of the park, has historically been the subject of misuse and dumping. This location has been identified as a favorable location for a new fire station. Constructing a new Fire Station #7 at this vacant corner of the SERA campus would strategically place TFD in a better location to respond more effectively to the growing South Tacoma community, while also collocating these vital emergency resources on the SERA campus which is a designated disaster/crisis response site.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

There have been several opportunities for the community to engage on the proposal to relocate Fire Station #7. At the August 14, 2023, Metro Parks Board study session, City and Parks staff provided an overview of the proposed property transfer. On Thursday, August 31, 2023, Metro Parks and City staff conducted a community open house at the STAR Center, for community members to offer input on the proposed property transfer. In September 2023, the community was invited to share their feedback on the proposal online through Social Pinpoint. On June 10, 2024, the first reading of the surplus and sale was presented to the Park Board. On July 8, 2024, Metro Parks held a public hearing to allow community members to share their thoughts on the proposal. At the July 29, 2024, Metro Parks Committee of the Whole meeting, community input was received on the proposal. At the August 26, 2024, Park Board meeting, community comments were received and the second reading of the surplus and sale was presented and unanimously approved by the Park Board.



2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Fire Station #7 serves an area in Tacoma that has been identified by the City’s Equity Index to be an area in which residents have less access to opportunities, including where community members are not able to access services or where services do not meet community needs. The City equity measures demonstrate a need for more investment to minimize inequities and maximize access. It is important to ensure an ability to promptly respond to calls in this community to ensure equity in the delivery of services. Replacement of Fire Station #7 will provide more equitable service delivery to all residents and visitors of Tacoma. Without the replacement of this station, we will continue to experience high call volumes, which impacts response times disproportionately in our areas of highest need.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Very Low Opportunity

Improve access and proximity by residents to diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

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

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

Legislation approving the execution of necessary agreements with Metro Parks Tacoma would provide for property to construct a future fire station that will strategically place the Tacoma Fire Department in a better location to respond more effectively to the growing South Tacoma community.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Council could deny the resolution to acquire property for a future fire station.	The undeveloped property would remain in Metro Parks Tacoma inventory.	Sale proceeds would not go towards enhancing public parks in South Tacoma. The City would be required to pursue private property that may not be ideally located.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

Evaluation and follow-up will consist of executing necessary agreements to acquire the property.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Public Works Department, on behalf of the Tacoma Fire Department, recommends approval of this resolution authorizing the execution of necessary agreements with Metro Parks Tacoma for property acquisition.



FISCAL IMPACT:

Property acquisition expenses will be funded through Real Estate Excise Tax, budgeted from Fund 3211-PSFTY (Public Safety).

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
Fund 3211-PSFTY (Public Safety)	TFD-00025-06	5621100	\$ 870,000.00
TOTAL			\$ 870,000.00

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

Expenses will be funded by Real Estate Excise Tax.

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Proceeds of the sale would not be utilized to support public park improvements in South Tacoma. The City would be required to pursue private property, which may increase acquisition costs and project durations.

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

YES

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

- Real Estate Purchase and Sale Agreement