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**SUBJECT:** International Property Maintenance Code Implementation Consideration  
**DATE:** April 10, 2025

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**

Informational Briefing

**SUMMARY:**

Planning & Development Services staff will present an update on the proposed adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) to replace and consolidate multiple sections of the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC). This comprehensive approach aims to combine the current Tacoma Municipal Nuisance Code (TMC 8.30) and Title 2 Chapter 2.0 Minimum Building and Structures Code, along with relevant sections from Title 5 (including noise, parking, and health and sanitation provisions). The presentation will outline the benefits of adopting the IPMC, including alignment with surrounding municipalities and creating efficiencies in code enforcement processes.

Staff will also present key policy considerations that require City Council direction, including differentiated enforcement approaches for commercial versus residential properties, addressing homeless encampments on private property, implementing sliding scale penalties for repeat violations, and strategies for recovering costs from repeat abatements. Planning & Development Services is working towards potential adoption of the IPMC for April of 2026.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Tacoma Municipal Nuisance Code Title 8.30 and Title 2 Chapter 2.0 Minimum Building and Structures Code collectively provide for the protection of health, safety, and welfare of the City of Tacoma's private properties through the enforcement of nuisance conditions and minimum building standards. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2024, Neighborhood & Community Services staff provided an overview of the IPMC and discussed the potential benefits of updating to this standardized code in 2025.

Currently, various code enforcement issues are regulated in different parts of the TMC, each with its own enforcement process. For example, nuisance conditions are addressed in Title 8.30, building standards in Title 2.0, and other issues such as noise, parking, and health/sanitation matters in Title 5. When multiple issues are reported at a single location, separate cases must be created and investigated, creating inefficiencies in enforcement. Adopting the IPMC would allow for consolidating approximately 95 percent of these existing codes into one comprehensive framework, streamlining enforcement processes while maintaining local policy authority. The remaining provisions from Title 5 related to noise, parking, and health and sanitation would also be incorporated to ensure all aspects currently enforced by Code Compliance are contained within a single, unified code.



**ISSUE:**

While the IPMC provides a standardized framework for code compliance, there are still policy decisions that must be made at the local level. Based on feedback from the City Council Members, staff has identified several key policy areas that require further discussion:

1. Different enforcement approaches for commercial versus residential properties
2. Addressing homeless encampments on private property
3. Implementation of sliding scale penalties for repeat violations
4. Strategies for repeat abatements, including:
  - Cost recovery methods
  - Handling situations where traditional enforcement mechanisms may not effectively deter nuisance behavior (e.g., owner-occupied homes, churches)

These policy considerations will be central to the implementation of the IPMC and require City Council direction to ensure the updated code aligns with City priorities and community needs.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This is an informational briefing only. There are no alternatives presented at this time.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is an informational briefing only. The fiscal impact of adopting the IPMC will be analyzed and presented in future briefings.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Community Vitality and Safety Committee provide feedback on the identified policy considerations to inform the development of locally specific amendments to the IPMC.