



TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Public Utility Board
COPY: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Authorizing Waiver of Certain Utility Connection and Inspection Fees during Declared State of Emergency. – December 10, 2019
DATE: November 27, 2019

SUMMARY:

Authorization for the renewal of the waiver of power and water utility connection and inspection fees upon request for cities that are providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons and are within Tacoma Power/ Water's service territories until the declared state emergency has ended.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

The proposed code amendment would align with the following City Council Strategic Priorities:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

BACKGROUND:

On May 9, 2017, the City Council passed Ordinance No. 28430, declaring a state of public health emergency relating to the conditions of homeless encampments and authorizing such actions as are reasonable and necessary through October 9, 2017.

On June 6, 2017, the City Council approved a motion for a temporary emergency aid and shelter plan with a three-phased approach (Mitigation, Stabilization, and Short-Term Transitional Housing) at a projected cost of \$3.4 million.

On July 12, 2017, the Tacoma Public Utilities Board passed U-10942, authorizing the waiver of connection and inspection fees within Tacoma Power/Water's service territories providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons, effective through October 9, 2017, and requested the City Council to pass an ordinance amending Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.

On October 3, 2017, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28457, extending the sunset date of the public emergency declaration from October 9, 2017, to December 31, 2017.

On December 12, 2017, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28477, extending the sunset date of the public emergency declaration from December 31, 2017, to December 31, 2018.

On January 24, 2018, the Tacoma Public Utilities Board passed U-10986, authorizing the renewal of the waiver of connection and inspection fees within Tacoma Power/Water's service territories providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons, effective through October 9, 2017, and requested the City Council to pass an ordinance amending Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.



On February 2, 2018, the City Council passed Ordinance No. 28487 approving the Board’s request to renew the waiver of connection and inspections fees retroactive to January 1, 2018 and effective through December 31, 2018.

On December 4, 2018, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28565, extending the sunset date of the public emergency declaration from December 31, 2018, to December 31, 2019.

On December 12, 2018, the Tacoma Public Utilities Board passed U-10942, authorizing the renewal of the waiver of connection and inspection fees within Tacoma Power/Water's service territories providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons, effective through December 31, 2019, and requested the City Council to pass an ordinance amending Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.

On March 26, 2019, the City Council passed Ordinance 28577 approving the Board’s request to renew the waiver of connection and inspections fees retroactive January 1, 2019 and effective through December 31, 2019.

On November 19, 2019, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28637, extending the sunset date of the public emergency declaration from December 31, 2019, until such time as there is shelter availability for 95 percent of the unsheltered individuals in Tacoma as noted in the annual Point in Time Count.

On November 13, 2019, the Tacoma Public Utilities Board passed U-11118, authorizing the renewal of the waiver of connection and inspection fees within Tacoma Power/Water's service territories providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons, effective through the end of the declared state of emergency, and requested the City Council to pass an ordinance amending Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.

ISSUE:

Ongoing threat of significant harm to human health and life arising from the conditions in homeless encampments and continued public emergency.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could reject the proposed ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorization to renew the waiver of power and water utility connection and inspection fees upon request for cities that are providing facilities for sheltering low-income and/or infirm persons and are within Tacoma Power/ Water's service territories from January 1, 2020 until the declared state emergency has ended. Passing an ordinance to amend Title 12 of the Tacoma Municipal Code by the Tacoma City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Unknown.