



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Nicole Emery, City Clerk  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** A resolution placing proposed Charter amendments 21, 22, and C6 on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot – Requested for July 16, 2024  
**DATE:** July 10, 2024

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## **SUMMARY AND PURPOSE**

A resolution placing proposed Charter amendments 21, 22, and C6 on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot.

## **BACKGROUND**

On October 17, 2023, Resolution No. 41282 was adopted creating a Charter Review Committee (CRC), consisting of 15 citizens (residents), to review the existing Charter of the City of Tacoma and make such recommendations to the City Council for charter amendments as the committee may deem necessary and proper to improve the manner of operation and efficiency in conducting the affairs of the City. On December 19, 2023, Resolution No. 41324 was adopted appointing members to the CRC. Starting January 11, 2024, CRC members begin to meet to review the City Charter and develop recommendations.

On May 6, 2024, the City Council received the final report from the Charter Review Committee and a presentation on their recommendations. Starting May 7, 2024, the City Council reviewed the recommendations, brought forward new recommendations, and refined recommendations for consideration for the November 5, 2024, general election ballot. At the July 9, 2024, meeting City Council Members made motions to refer recommendations to the July 16, 2024, meeting for title drafting and final consideration to place on the ballot and redirected some amendments to other policy processes. The proposed Charter amendment combines amendments 21, 22, and C6.

If approved, the amended Charter sections would read:

- Section 6.3 – “No person shall be eligible to employment in the classified service who is not a resident of the City at the time of appointment, and all officers and employees of the City appointed after this charter takes effect shall reside within its corporate limits during their period of employment in the City service; provided, that the Civil Service Board may waive such residence requirements for employees in the classified service and the City Council may waive such residence requirements for appointive employees in the unclassified service when such waiver is deemed to be for the best interests of the City for such reasons and under such conditions as may be prescribed in the personnel rules.”
- Section 6.7 – “No applicant for employment and no appointed officer or employee shall be discriminated against in any personnel decision on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin or ancestry, political affiliation, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, familial status, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability; provided, however, that affirmative action may be used to remedy prior discrimination in the employment and promotion of City appointed officers and employees. The City Council shall periodically review, and amend as appropriate, the anti-discrimination ordinances applicable to City applicants and employees.”
- Section 2.3 – Remove the word “Citizen”
- Section 2.19 – Replace the word “citizens” with “residents”
- Section 2.20 – Replace the word “citizens” with “residents”



- Section 2.25 – Replace the word “citizens” with “Tacoma residents”
- Section 9.2 – “All records and accounts of every office, department, or agency of the City shall be open to inspection by any requester, to include but not be limited to any representative of any organization, or any representative of the press, at all reasonable times and under reasonable regulations established by the City Council, except records and documents the disclosure of which would tend to defeat the lawful purpose which they are intended to accomplish. All such records and accounts shall be City property and be kept as such by the proper officers and employees during their continuance in office, and then delivered to their successors.”

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The City Charter requires the City Council to commence a comprehensive review of the City Charter no less frequently than once every ten years by appointing citizens to a Charter Review Committee (CRC). The CRC met between January and May of 2024. They took comment at public meetings and held two extended public comment meetings with opportunities to comment in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Khmer. On May 6, 2024, the CRC presented final report to the City Council. The City Council reviewed every proposal from the CRC, in addition to creating new proposals for consideration. All materials were published in advance of the City Council’s Public hearing on July 2, 2024.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**Equity and Accessibility:** Ensuring that all feel welcome in Tacoma is vital for effective democratic governance, economic prosperity, and fostering broader community well-being. The use of the word “citizen” in the Charter conveys that only those with citizenship status can participate in city government. Changing the language to “resident” in the Charter is an important step toward fostering inclusive participation in city government and better reflecting our values as a welcoming city. In addition, citizenship as a requirement to employment is unconstitutional and therefore not currently enforced in Tacoma. The term handicap refers to a disadvantage in filling a role in life relative to a peer group and switching to the term disability reflects a functional limitation with regard to a particular activity, making it a more accurate term for employment anti-discrimination.

**Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Alternative	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Do not advance this resolution.	Tacoma will continue to abide by the United States Constitution and federal requirements in its hiring and anti-discrimination practices.	Tacoma’s Charter will include language that may be offensive and harmful to members of the community.

**EVALUATIONS AND FOLLOW UP**

If approved, this Charter amendment will be placed on the ballot for voters in the November 2024 election.

**RECOMMENDATION**

None.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

Staff in the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) provided Fiscal Notes during City Council review of proposed amendments. OMB reviewed all proposed amendments and provided fiscal impacts on amendments may require investments above \$50,000 to implement. OMB did not provide a Fiscal Note for this amendment. The cost to place amendments on the ballot will be captured in the combined resolution brought forward on July 23, 2024.

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

There is no funding being used for passing the resolution to place this amendment on the ballot. If approved by voters, further analysis and budget appropriations may be required for implementation.

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

N/A

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

N/A

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

There is no ongoing fiscal impact for passing the resolution to place this amendment on the ballot. If approved by voters, further analysis and budget appropriations may be required for implementation.

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

There is no change to the City's FTE/personnel counts for passing the resolution to place this amendment on the ballot. If approved by voters, further analysis and budget appropriations may be required for implementation.