



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Lynda Foster, Council Assistant, City Manager’s Office  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution – Creating the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force – Requested for December 12, 2017  
**DATE:** December 7, 2017

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**SUMMARY:**

A resolution creating the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force to improve City of Tacoma policies, codes, and procedures for the issuance of residential and commercial permits; and, directing the City Manager to appoint members and provide staff support.

**Task Force Assignment:**

The Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force will:

- **Make Permit System Recommendations:** Meet monthly with City staff to review, discuss, and provide recommendations to City Manager and City Council for the improvement of City policies, codes, and procedures for the issuance of residential and commercial permits. Review best practices in peer communities. Monitor implementation progress and recommend adjustments.
- **Review of City Policies Under Consideration:** Review and provide recommendations to the City Manager and City Council regarding proposed City policies and laws which affect the permitting system.
- **Consultation on Customer Problems:** Consult and advise on customer issues that arise in the permitting process.
- **Establish Guiding Principles:** Establish guiding principles to guide policy and best practice recommendations made by Task Force.

**Composition:**

- The Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force will be composed of 12-15 members representative of a broad base of permit applicants who regularly apply to the City for permits. The Task Force will work closely with representative from Tacoma Public Utilities and City staff, including Planning and Development Services, Public Works, Environmental Services, and Legal. To the maximum extent practicable, the member composition will be proportionate with the types of professionals and permit applicants who interface with the City, including agency representatives who represent categories of industries.

**Meetings:**

The Task Force will meet at least monthly, and thereafter, as often as may be necessary to fulfill its mission.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Deputy Mayor Robert Thoms, Council Member Joe Lonergan, Council Member Conor McCarthy.

**STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:**

The requested Resolution aligns with the City Council’s Strategic Policy Priorities to *foster a vibrant and diverse economy with good jobs for all Tacoma residents*; and, to *encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents*.



**BACKGROUND:**

Construction is a major economic driver in Tacoma, annually producing millions of dollars in local income and tax revenue, and hundreds of jobs. An efficient, predictable, safe, and customer-orientated permitting process is essential to the growth and transformation of our City by boosting investment and development in our City. The City is responsible for regulating and administering the growth and renewal of its built environment. Having a proficient permitting regime can truly facilitate and accelerate the revitalization of downtown, the rejuvenation of the single-family home stock, the ascension of multi-family and residential infill, and the renaissance of commercial development.

Daily, City staff and the development community, (including contractors, engineers, architects, and homeowners), work hand in hand to co-produce permits which ensure that new structures and places are built safely and meet the City's planning objectives and aspirations. This partnership is destined to improve through honest and relevant dialogue with the permit system's primary users. The Permit Advisory Task Force will provide constructive feedback to City staff and policy makers for the continual improvement of the City's policies, codes, and procedures for the issuance of residential and commercial permits.

Council Member McCarthy shared a Council Consideration Request to create the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task force at a Study Session on December 5, 2017, and there was consensus of the City Council to have a resolution brought forward for their consideration.

**ISSUE:**

Professionals and permit applicants who interface with the City have convened various groups to discuss process improvements to the permitting system and provide feedback to the City. They have requested the City bring the various stakeholders together and formalize these discussions through the creation of a task force made up of the broad range of stakeholders needed to present recommendations on how to further an efficient, predictable, safe, and customer-oriented permitting process.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The council could choose to modify or not support the requested resolution.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The recommendation is that the Council approve the resolution establishing the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.