

# CITY COUNCIL ACTION MEMORANDUM GUIDANCE

## WHAT IS A CITY COUNCIL ACTION MEMORANDUM?

A **City Council Action Memorandum (CAM)** is a document intended to communicate a recommendation to the City Council on a proposal, policy, service, program, project, or purchase, which requires City Council action.

This document implements several of the City's policy goals such as Resolution No. 38247, whereby "sustainability will guide and inform City policy... and the legislative decisions of the City Council" and Resolution No. 39893, a resolution adopting a "Health and Equity in All Policies" policy, and directing the City Manager to analyze proposed policies using a health and equity lens.

This guidance should help you navigate the process to submit a CAM within the City. Please reference this document as you develop your CAM and use it as a checklist prior to submission.

Use short, succinct and clear language when writing the CAM.

### **CAM SUBMITTAL PROCESS:**

Contact the City Clerk's Office at 253-591-5167 for the dates available to present at a City Council meeting or questions regarding the submittal process.

Submit the completed CAM package (CAM and supporting materials) to your **Agenda Coordinator**. You can find who your agenda coordinator is on the intranet [website](#).

The **Agenda Coordinator** will enter the CAM into **Legistar**. For more information on Legistar, please reference the intranet [website](#).

Legistar starts the approval process and includes submission to the following:

1. Manager(s) (if applicable)
2. Department Directors
3. Clerk's Office
4. Finance
5. Budget
6. Legal
7. City Manager's Office

### **COUNCIL AGENDA TIMELINE:**

Submit the CAM and all backup materials two weeks prior to your scheduled presentation to the City Council. The submittal timeline can be found on the intranet [website](#).

Prior to submission, please consult the following departments: Finance, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Legal, and the Clerk's Office. These departments review and approve all CAM submissions in Legistar, and in some cases, may return the CAM to you for additional analysis or information. Please take this into consideration when developing your project submission timeline.

## CITY COUNCIL ACTION MEMORANDUM SECTIONS

### HEADER:

All City Council Action Memorandums (CAM) should be on official City letterhead (using the template provided), and addressed as follows:

**TO:** City Manager  
**FROM:** Subject Matter Expert, Title, Department  
Department Director  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution/Ordinance, include one summary sentence and requested action date  
**DATE:** Date CAM was generated

Once you have completed the CAM, please send to your Agenda Coordinator to convert the memo into a pdf before uploading into Legistar.

(Please note that the Resolution/Ordinance number is not assigned until after the routing process is complete.)

## SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

Begin by stating the topic you want to discuss and the purpose of the recommendation. Limit this section to three sentences. If necessary, within the background section you can include additional information about your proposed legislation. Reference if this is a new or revised policy, program, service, or initiative. State the action you are seeking from Council.

*Please see examples below:*

A resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with (state the vendor(s)), in the amount of \$ (amount), budgeted from (fund), for (what), from (time period).

An ordinance amending (chapter/title) of the Municipal Code, relating to (official chapter/title name), to (do what).

## COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Not all items coming from Council Committees should be listed as sponsored by those Committee Members, unless those attending took a vote at the meeting to forward for Council consideration. A recommendation from a Council Committee does not mean that the Council Members are sponsoring the item. The vote to forward an item is to simply bring the item to the full Council for consideration.

### **For Council Consideration Requests:**

If applicable, reference the Council Consideration Request, including the names of the City Council sponsors. In some cases, this could be a direct request from a Council Member(s). There cannot be more than four sponsors.

**If there are none, please delete this section.**

## BACKGROUND:

Include one or more paragraphs that give information about the research and analysis you conducted to develop this recommendation. Have clarity about the intent of the policy, program, or service (from now on referred to as "legislation"). Think about what the legislation is trying to achieve, and/or what problem it is trying to solve. How did the problems develop? What was the root cause and in what time period?

Include prior City Council actions, including Ordinance/Resolution numbers and dates passed/adopted; information or materials from the item's creation, review, or action by a Council Committee, the Public Utility Board, or a resident committee, board, or commission; and information on the bid/purchase process. If you have qualitative or quantitative data, reference this to ensure Council and staff you have done thorough due diligence.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/CUSTOMER RESEARCH

Community engagement and customer research are critical to the policy-making, program development and service delivery process. In this section, please state who may potentially benefit and who may be negatively affected if the legislation is enacted. Provide a brief overview of the engagement and research you did to inform your conclusion and recommendation. Intentional considerations should be made for underrepresented communities.

If your legislation is a service or program that involves customers (e.g. City employees, venue customers, rate payers) please include information about how you conducted your customer research to inform your final decision.

For guidance, below is a short list of historically underrepresented populations to consider. (This list is not comprehensive)

- People of Color
- LGBTQ Residents
- Low-Income Households
- Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods
- Non-English Speakers
- People in Subsidized Housing
- People Who are Experiencing Homelessness
- People who are Undocumented
- People with a GED, High School Diploma or Less Schooling
- People with Disabilities
- Renters
- Elders/ Seniors
- Youth
- Single Parent Households
- Women
- Military Veterans

To gather more information about the various neighborhoods and demographics within Tacoma, please reference the [Equity Index](#). Here is a quick glance of the neighborhoods and demographics within Tacoma:

### Race & Ethnicity

White- Non Hispanic – 65%  
Hispanic - 6%  
Native American – 1%  
Asian – 10%  
Black – 11%  
Pacific Islander – 1%

### Neighborhoods:

Eastside  
New Tacoma  
North End  
Northeast Tacoma  
South End  
South Tacoma  
Tacoma Central  
West End Neighborhood

### Top Non-English Speaking

#### Languages:

Spanish - 7%  
Vietnamese - 2%  
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian - 1%

### 2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Tacoma 2025 represents our community's vision for the future with defined indicators that guide the City of Tacoma. All department proposals and legislation should work towards affecting these strategic goals. This helps ensure that we align the City's work towards making Tacoma an inclusive and equitable place to **Live, Learn, Work, and Play.**

- Review the indicators and identify the main goal area(s) in 2025 that your proposal addresses (Livability, Economy/Workforce, Education, Civic Engagement).
- Use the dropdown menus to choose (up to five) indicators that the proposal will likely impact. You can choose multiple indicators within the same goal area.
- Using the Equity Index, state the Opportunity Score (Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low) for each goal area your proposal is affecting.
  - a. Go to the Equity Index and review the geographic area your legislation will affect (if it is Citywide, then use the Citywide scores).
  - b. This is one of the primary tools to help ensure we are making equitable, data-informed decisions. (There is a user guide available on the Office of Equity and Human Rights website.)
- Finally, provide a brief statement (2-3 sentences) about how your legislation will improve the listed indicators and/or Equity Index Score.

The community made **Equity and Accessibility** a priority goal within the Strategic plan, underlying each of the other four goal areas. As such, the Equity and Accessibility section **must be completed**. (*Exemptions include Union negotiations and CBAs, Hearing Examiner, CBC Council Appointments, and others. Please consult with CMO if you believe your proposal should be exempt from this requirement.*)

### ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action. What are the potential modifications to the legislation to mitigate negative impacts or enhance positive impacts? Please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Explain why your recommendation is preferable to the alternatives. Use the table to write short, succinct tradeoffs.

### EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

What is the roadmap for success? Clearly identify success indicators, performance measures, or progress benchmarks that demonstrate success. Are there provisions to ensure ongoing data collections, public reporting, stakeholder participation, and public accountability? How will impacts on underrepresented communities be documented? Explain how you will follow up with City Council and/or the City Manager to report success or changes. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)?

## STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Clearly state staff or Council Member recommendation and explain how your legislation addresses the issue. Include next steps if appropriate. If you have a recommended effective date, include that in this section.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The intent of the Fiscal Impact section is to provide City Council with a clear picture of the impact of the legislation on the current budget along with any ongoing encumbrances. If a resolution or ordinance will affect staff workload but no new full time employees (FTEs) will be added, please address whether you expect there to be overtime expenses or if it will align with currently budgeted work. "No fiscal impact" should be reserved for resolutions or ordinances that have no cost (either budgeted or unbudgeted) associated with them. In addition, please include the Cost Center and Element name and numbers when filling out this section.

### *Grants, Purchases, or Agreements:*

If you are making a commitment on the City's behalf to receive or expend funds, then the fiscal impact section must be completed. If the action is to accept a donation or grant, note the amount, purpose of the donation or grant, and if required, City match. In the description, state the length of the commitment.

### Example:

The total estimated cost for the replacement of five vehicles is \$116,517. The budget for the vehicles was included as part of the 2019-2020 Re-appropriation Process approved by the City Council.

### *Policy Actions:*

If the item is a policy decision, please speak to the fiscal impacts of the policy decision (potential hard and soft costs) to provide some context on the costs of policy implementation. If implementation costs are unknown, please indicate. If the policy action will require changes in current operations/policy, this may be an indicator of implementation costs/time.

### Example:

There is no immediate fiscal impact of committing to be a more age-friendly city. Data collection can be aligned with currently budgeted work. Future alignment with budgeted activities for 2025 will require no additional funding.

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

Identify funding source for expenses or benefiting fund for revenues. If you have questions about funding, please contact your budget analyst.

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

First reply yes or no, then if no, provide an explanation. Explain how expenditures are to be covered and if budget modifications are required. Include detail on expenditures or commitments that may occur in future biennia, if relevant. If you have questions about whether something is planned and budgeted, please contact your budget analyst.

### Example:

Two of the vehicle costs are within the estimated budget. However, the two Ford trucks came in over budget by approximately \$4,300 combined. These overages will be absorbed in future purchases since other vehicles are coming in under the amounts budgeted. All vehicles will be purchased from various vendors using state bid contracts.

Reply yes or no to the following questions:

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

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

#### Example:

For legislation approving the sale of City property, there would be no ongoing fiscal impact. The purchase of new vehicles has an initial onetime cost, but ongoing maintenance, which will need to be accounted for in future budgets.

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

## ATTACHMENTS:

In this section list your attachments (using bullet points), try to minimize the number of attachments and only include documents that will be presented or referenced during the meeting (agreement, map, fiscal impact memorandum, and legislation/recommendations from another group). Please include a map if the Council action is specific to an area of Tacoma.



**TO:** Click or tap here to enter [City Manager's Name]  
**FROM:** Click or tap here to enter [Subject Matter Expert], [Title], [Department]  
Click or tap here to enter [Department Director]  
**COPY:** Click or tap to enter City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Click or tap to enter [Resolution/Ordinance - Brief Description of Action] - [Requested City Council Date]  
**DATE:** Click or tap to enter a date.

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

Begin by summarizing your recommendation and stating why this topic is of importance. Clearly identify the response you are seeking from City Council.

*Please see examples below:*

A resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with (state the vendor (s)), in the amount of \$ (amount), budgeted from (fund), for (what), from (time period).

An ordinance amending (chapter/title) of the Municipal Code, relating to (official chapter/title name), to (do what).

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

Include the names of the City Council sponsors, **if there are none, please delete this section.**

**BACKGROUND:**

Provide only the information needed to orient Council, provide context, and frame the issue or topic. Start with the statement: **This Department's Recommendation is Based On:**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

Within this section, please state who will potentially be affected by this proposal and give a brief overview of the engagement and research you did with the community/customers to shape your recommendation. Also, emphasize how your legislation has included underrepresented communities' input.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)**

Please state how this legislation will reduce racial and other inequities, disparities, or discrimination to underrepresented communities. Please state what positive impacts on equity, equality, diversity or inclusion, if any, would result from enacting this legislation.

Identify which Tacoma 2025 strategic goals your legislation most relates to, and then identify the [Equity Index Score](#) for those goals in the geography your proposal will affect. Select the indicator(s) this legislation is most related to, then briefly explain how this legislation will impact the selected indicator(s) and/or improve the Equity Index Score. **Use the dropdowns below and refer to guide for more information.**



**Economy/Workforce:** *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.  
Select an indicator.  
Select an indicator.

**Education:** *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.  
Select an indicator.  
Select an indicator.

**Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.  
Select an indicator.  
Select an indicator.

**Livability:** *Equity Index Score:* Select Index Score.  
Select an indicator.  
Select an indicator.

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**  
Click or tap here to enter text.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1.		
2.		
3.		

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Please include what performance measures and/or benchmarks you have identified that indicate success. Explain how you will follow up with staff and/or Council to report success or changes.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Clearly state your recommendation and explain how your recommendation addresses the issue. Include next steps if appropriate. If you have a recommended effective date, enter here.



**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Please provide a short summary of the fiscal impacts associated with the grant, agreement, policy action, or other action.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1.			
2.			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

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

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

Choose an item.

Please enter Explanation.

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

Choose an item.

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

Choose an item.

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

Choose an item.

Please enter Explanation.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

List attachments using bullet points.