



City of Tacoma

Mayor Victoria Woodards

April 16, 2020

Honorable Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Re: Restarting the Construction Industry

Dear Honorable Governor Jay Inslee,

As public servants and leaders who are passionate about our work and who tremendously love our communities, we find ourselves in challenging times with high stakes. These times demand our greatest effort and the Tacoma City Council is grateful for the opportunity to work alongside you as we fight for the people we serve. We write to you today to express our support for your effort to convene stakeholders in the construction industry and to encourage you to swiftly bring the industry back online upon recommendations from these stakeholders.

Health and safety for workers are our top priorities, without exception. It is our hope that the workgroup you have convened can bring forth recommendations for sound practices with regard to social distancing and other important precautions that should be taken at work sites to ensure worker safety. We also wish for these stakeholders to daylight the importance of the construction industry on our state's economy and its crucial role in helping to solve the shortages of market-rate and affordable housing in many of our communities. In Tacoma, where the rental housing vacancy rate is in the single digits, we are especially attuned to the negative impacts that the lack of housing has on our residents, including housing insecurity and homelessness.

Additionally, we are concerned for small contractors and construction workers as individuals who depend on the industry to provide for their households. As the construction work closure turns from weeks to months, we are fearful for the economic devastation that many in our community may face as they seek relief through the rapidly burdened small business loan or state unemployment benefit systems. Tacoma has implemented micro loans for small businesses and a rental assistance program, but our resources are limited and may be exhausted by the time that all residential and commercial construction activity is allowed to resume.

The fact that you have convened stakeholders to help inform your decision making on how best to restart the construction industry in Washington State is laudable and demonstrates that this issue is truly at the top of your mind during these uncertain times. We hope to see some forward movement on resuming the construction industry soon, with worker safety at the forefront of those plans. Please consider the Tacoma City Council a partner to you in this work.

Yours in Service,


Mayor Victoria Woodards


Council Member Conor McCarthy – Position 7

CC: The Honorable Laurie Jenkins, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Jeannie Darnielle, 27th LD State Senator
The Honorable Jake Fey, 27th LD State Representative
The Honorable Steve O’Ban, 28th LD State Senator
The Honorable Christine Kilduff, 28th LD State Representative
The Honorable Mari Leavitt, 28th LD State Representative
The Honorable Steve Conway, 29th LD State Senator
The Honorable Steve Kirby, 29th State Representative
The Honorable Melanie Morgan, 29th LD State Representative