



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 894 9617 1192

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/89496171192 Passcode: 896569

November 23, 2021

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:04 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, McCarthy, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 2 - Hunter and Thoms

Council Member Thoms arrived at 12:28 p.m.

All Council Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [21-1158](#) Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group Update

At approximately 12:05 p.m., Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, Planning and Development Services, provided opening remarks and introduced Imad Bahbah, Chair, and Donald Erickson, Vice Chair, Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG). Together, they presented an update on the TODAG, including an agenda; the group's creation in 2019, noting duties, coordination with the Transportation Commission, and initial term of 24 to 30 months; accomplishments; progress reports, noting area evaluations, conclusions, and recommendations for the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE), Tacoma Dome Station, Portland Avenue Station, and the Tacoma Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Toolkit; status of the Puyallup Avenue Transit/Complete Street Improvement Project and the Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, noting TODAG's recommendations; milestones of major projects; a proposed future work plan; outlook and TOD implementation; and the path forward, noting TODAG's recommendation that the City Council acknowledge TODAG's accomplishments, approve the Tacoma TOD Toolkit progress report, authorize TODAG to continue through the end of 2022, clarify the TODAG's reporting protocol, and reassess TODAG in late 2022 as part of the 2023-2024 biennial budget.

Discussion ensued regarding racial and geographic diversity of existing TODAG members; and the BRT project, noting the need for improved transit options on Portland Avenue.

Council Member Thoms arrived here, at 12:28 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding a suggestion to expand TODAG's scope to include design review for projects in transit corridors; the current and proposed process for addressing TODAG requests; TODAG's relationship and integration with other committees, boards, and commissions, noting the Transportation Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group; the original purpose of TODAG; support to continue the group through 2022; impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; appreciation for TODAG members and staff; interest in formalizing the TODAG structure, reporting, and membership requirements; and ways to strengthen TODAG's membership, noting diversity, equity, the number of positions, and the appointment process.

2. [21-1160](#) City Manager's Goals and Performance Check-in

At approximately 12:51 p.m., Shelby Fritz, Director, Human Resources, presented an update on the City Manager's goals and performance, including an overview; timeline since the City Manager's reappointment in May 2021, noting the annual performance review process beginning in February 2022; the City Manager's upcoming presentation of her goals and progress during an executive session on November 30, 2021; and the City Council's performance check-in document.

Discussion ensued regarding next steps.

Other Items of Interest

3. [21-1161](#) Council Consideration Request - Electric Fences

This item was considered later in the study session.

3a. [21-1177](#) Home in Tacoma Amendments

Mayor Woodards provided opening remarks on proposed amendments to the Home in Tacoma Project ordinance, including the 13 possible amendments; options to consider the amendments individually or in groups; whether to refer the amendments to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS)

Committee; and possible timing of review and final City Council action, noting new Council Members will take office in 2022. Mr. Boudet presented a summary of the proposed amendments, including the purpose of this review; and the IPS Committee's recommended mid-scale map. He further reviewed each proposed amendment, including:

- Deputy Mayor Blocker's proposed map change to expand mid-scale along high-capacity transit corridors from one-half block to one block;
- Council Member Hines' proposed map changes, noting a change to switch the mid-scale corridor from North Union Avenue to North 21st Street and North Proctor Street, and to change mid-scale west of South Jackson Avenue to low-scale;
- Council Member McCarthy's proposed map changes, noting a change from mid-scale to low-scale along North 26th Street between the Proctor and Westgate Centers, removing mid-scale transitions around designated centers, and removing mid-scale transitions around neighborhood commercial nodes;
- Council Member Thoms' proposed text change to reduce maximum density in low-scale residential areas to 15 dwelling units per acre;
- Council Member Ushka's proposed map changes, noting switching the mid-scale area on the South Yakima Avenue corridor to the Thompson Avenue corridor south of the Lincoln Mixed-Use Center (MUC), and changing from mid-scale to low-scale along the eastern boundary of the Lower Pacific MUC;
- Council Member Ushka's proposed text changes, noting clarifying that single-family detached housing is not non-conforming in both the low- and mid-scale areas, a view study in Phase 2, and clarifying that map adjustments may be appropriate in Phase 2 after additional analysis is completed; and
- Council Member Walker's proposed text change to clarify that in low-scale areas, infill in historic districts must be consistent with neighborhood scale and defining features, and with policies discouraging demolition.

Discussion ensued throughout regarding the intent, significance, and impacts to density and maps of each proposed amendment; language and activities that are appropriate in the Phase 1 ordinance versus items that should be included in Phase 2; a request for updated maps showing how amendments impact density and mid-scale application; possible additional amendments related to East 84th Street and the Fern Hill Business District; how the proposed amendments could be incorporated and supported in the final ordinance; expected activities in Phase 2 of the Home in Tacoma Project, noting detailed review of building height and scale, design standards, maps, and code changes; a request for further review of the proposed amendments by the full City Council, noting the suggestion to schedule a special meeting, grouping the amendments by type, and the intent to refine and bring forward a consolidated package of amendments to the ordinance; community feedback; density goals and existing build-out; and timing for a special meeting.

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The study session recessed at 2:05 p.m.

The study session reconvened at 2:17 p.m.

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Mayor Woodards stated that a special meeting will be scheduled next week, with the date and time to be determined, to further discuss the proposed amendments to the Home in Tacoma Project Phase 1 ordinance, noting that motions may be taken at the special meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding possible meeting dates; timing to prepare a consolidated package of amendments for the December 7, 2021, City Council meeting; providing information to the public; a request to include any additional proposed amendments at the special meeting; and working with staff to prepare information for the special meeting.

4. [21-1162](#) Manuel Ellis Investigation Update

Ed Wade, Assistant Chief, Tacoma Police Department, presented an update on the Manuel Ellis investigation, including the status of the investigation of officers who were criminally charged, noting the process to complete sufficiency review and submit a recommendation; and that review of the three other officers is still underway.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Other Items of Interest - Continued

3. [21-1161](#) Council Consideration Request - Electric Fences

Council Member Thoms presented a Council Consideration Request for a resolution to add an application to the 2022 Land Use Regulatory Code amendment process, to consider increasing districts where electric fences are allowed, noting requests received from business owners.

Discussion ensued regarding where electric fences are currently allowed; how fencing is installed; whether warning signs are required; and the intent to consider expansion for specific business districts or commercial areas, but not in residential areas.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

5. [21-1163](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, November 18, 2021

City Manager Elizabeth Pauli stated there is one ceremonial on tonight's meeting agenda, proclaiming Saturday, November 27, 2021, as Small Business Saturday; and a systems transformation update. She concluded by stating that no changes are expected to tonight's agenda, staff will present a summary of the Home in Tacoma Project amendments, and Virtual Forum will be held at the conclusion of the meeting.

Closed Session - Class and Compensation

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to convene to a Closed Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(b) to discuss class and compensation, not to exceed 30 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 8 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 1 - Hunter

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

The Closed Session was held after adjournment of the study session.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk