



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Nicole Emery, City Clerk  
Chris Bacha, Interim City Attorney  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution - To create a Charter Review Committee - October 17, 2023  
**DATE:** October 11, 2023

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**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution creating a Charter Review Committee consisting of 15 citizens (residents), for the purpose of reviewing the existing Charter of the City of Tacoma and making such recommendations for change as the committee may deem necessary and proper to amend the provisions of the Charter with reference to improving the mode and manner of operation and efficiency in conducting the affairs of the City.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:**

None.

**BACKGROUND:**

This Department's Recommendation is Based On: The existing City Charter was adopted in 1953. Pursuant to Section 2.25 of the City Charter, the City Council shall commence a comprehensive review of the City Charter no less frequently than once every ten years, by appointing citizens to a Charter Review Committee, or by the election of a board of freeholders in a manner provided in state law. The last review was in 2014. Staff presented a review of past Charter reviews at Study Session on October 11, 2023.

The City Clerk's Office now needs the Charter Review Committee to be created in order to solicit applications and allow for the appointment of committee members. The Charter Review Committee meetings will begin in January 2024.

**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

The City Charter was enacted to avail the people of the City of Tacoma to avail themselves of "all powers granted [to first class] cities and to obtain the benefits of local self-government". Amendments to the City Charter may be submitted to the voters by the City Council or by initiative petition of the voters. The Charter Review process, conducted every 10 years, provides another method for public input, through the creation of a Charter Review Committee and placement of proposed amendments before the voters in a Special Election.

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

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

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.

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

The Charter Review process will offer multiple opportunities for community engagement, including applying to serve on the Charter Review Committee, viewing meetings and presentations, reviewing reports, and voting on any amendments that the City Council places on the ballot for the November 2024 Election.



**ALTERNATIVES:**

<b>Alternative(s)</b>	<b>Positive Impact(s)</b>	<b>Negative Impact(s)</b>
1. Do not create the Charter Review Committee.	None	If the review does not occur in 2014, the City will be out of compliance with the City Charter.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

Staff members and offices will be designated to support the Charter Review Committee and the Charter Review process through scheduling and staffing meetings, public hearings, and presentations; preparing agendas, notices, minutes, and reports; providing research and support; maintaining official records; and supporting the voting process for all proposed Charter amendments, including the City Council legislative process and November 2024 Election as determined by a vote of the City Council.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Charter Review Committee be created.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact for creating the Charter Review Committee.