



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services Department
COPY: Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee
SUBJECT: Unified Development Code Project Briefing
DATE: October 25, 2017

SUMMARY:

At the October 25 meeting of the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee, staff will provide an update on the development of the Unified Development Code (UDC). The project began in 2014 as part of an effort to improve the development process. Creation of a UDC for the City of Tacoma would consolidate existing permitting regulations into a single Title in the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) and would resolve any conflicts within the code.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Tacoma's development-related regulations are housed in several different Titles in the TMC. In some cases, the regulations are duplicative or contradictory. Occasionally, they can lead to unintended outcomes or cause delays. As part of improvements to the permit system, in 2014, PDS hired a consultant to research and benchmark jurisdictions which had adopted a UDC. The study looked into early implementers with strong UDCs as examples for how best to approach preparing a consolidated set of development and permitting regulations for Tacoma. Assisted by the information in the consultant study, staff worked on consolidation of the regulations during 2015 through early 2016 and made progress toward delivering a UDC.

ISSUE:

The staff who are experts in the City's development regulations and who have been working on the UDC project are also the staff who perform permit plan review. These staff members have been, and continue to be, needed to review permit applications in an environment of increasing development. With existing resources needed for plan review, staff have been unable to work toward completion of the UDC project. Staff will brief the Committee regarding the updated schedule for the completion of the UDC.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is an information briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information briefing only. There is no recommendation.