



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services
COPY: Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee
SUBJECT: **Right-of-Way Occupancy Amendments and Permitting Process Improvements**
DATE: February 14, 2018

SUMMARY:

At the February 14, 2018, Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, staff from Planning and Development Services (PDS) will present a series of proposals aimed at streamlining the permit review process. The proposals would revise codified processes and procedures relating to Street Occupancy Permits and Performance Bonds that are associated with development of new and/or altered single family homes in the City. The proposals have been developed over the last year in collaboration with the Master Builders Association of Tacoma Pierce County (MBA).

BACKGROUND:

In July 2016, the MBA submitted to PDS a comprehensive list of suggested permitting process improvements relating to the construction of single family homes in Tacoma. Suggested improvements ranged from improvements in customer service approaches to revisions to the Tacoma Municipal Code. City staff has worked collaboratively with the MBA since then to develop and implement a series of changes in permitting processes and proposed revisions to the municipal code. To date, several customer service improvements have been put in place at the suggestion of the MBA, including improvements to on-line electronic permitting, a fee calculator, improved staff contact information, and other services aimed at facilitating the permitting of single family dwellings.

ISSUE:

Staff will present a series of code changes to implement improvements that have been collaboratively developed with the MBA with the goal of improving permitting within Tacoma. Specifically, staff will present a summary of work completed by staff and the MBA and provide an overview of detailed proposed revisions to the following:

- Right-of-Way Occupancy Permits
- Performance Bonds

The proposed work has been developed with the MBA in response to improvements suggested by the MBA that would expedite and improve the permitting review of single-family construction and alterations in Tacoma.

ALTERNATIVES:

Multiple alternatives related to Right-of-Way Occupancy Permits have been discussed. These include removing Commercial Use Fees entirely or in-part, removing the requirement to name the City as an additional insurer, removing the requirement for a separate right-of-way permit, removing the annual renewal fee, and/or increasing the permit fee to get closer to full cost recovery.



The current proposal is to focus on removal of barriers to single family and duplex development, limit the fiscal impact related to reduction of Commercial Annual Use fees, and to implement partial cost recovery through permit fees. Additional changes will be proposed in 2019.

The proposed changes to bonding requirements imbed alternatives into the code. Developers will have additional choices to meet their development obligations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed changes to Right-of-Way Occupancy Permits includes the removal of certain Commercial Annual Use Fees. This will result in an approximate impact of \$75,000.00 to the General Fund in 2018.

There is no fiscal impact associated with the changes to bonding.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend proceeding with changes as proposed.