



Chapter 1.45

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL PROGRAM

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1.45.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish policies in support of neighborhood involvement in the deliberations and actions of City government through a Neighborhood Council Program, affirm commitment to purposeful engagement with neighborhoods as a part of the City of Tacoma's Civic Engagement Strategy. and to establish a Standards and Guidelines document that defines administrative responsibilities and procedures for the recognition and funding of Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council of Tacoma.

1.45.020 Intent.

It is the intent of the City to engage its neighborhoods within each Neighborhood Council as ~~broadly~~ equitably as possible in the issues and concerns that directly affect them. The City will support and promote a Neighborhood Council Program to foster open communication between the City and its neighborhoods and to create an environment in which residents are afforded an opportunity to participate in City government decisions in an advisory role.

The City's Neighborhood Council Program will support cooperation and consensus among residents and other diverse interests to craft solutions to mutual problems and to build a sense of personal pride in and responsibility for their neighborhoods. The City will support the Neighborhood Council Program in developing Neighborhood Council representation that is equitable in its community ~~engagement involvement~~ and seeks to create an inclusive and accessible process ~~including by the which includes~~ engagement of community members from low-income communities, renters and owners of property, communities of color, and other historically underrepresented populations.

Involvement with the Neighborhood Councils is not intended to limit the activities, role, or importance of existing neighborhood organizations, neighborhood business districts, and block watch groups or other similar neighborhood advisory or advocacy groups. While it is expected that these groups will take an active part in the Neighborhood Council Program, it is intended that they, like the Neighborhood Councils, remain independent entities.

1.45.030 Standards and guidelines.

A Neighborhood Council Program Standards and Guidelines document will be adopted by resolution of the City Council. In order to be eligible for funding or to act in an advisory capacity to the City to advance neighborhood priorities, the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council must comply with administrative and procedural requirements contained in the Standards and Guidelines. The Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator will review the Standards and Guidelines document and provide recommendations for changes to the City Council at least every five years. Sixty (60) days' notice will be provided to the Community Council of Tacoma and the Neighborhood Councils in advance of any changes recommended to the City Council.



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The Community Council of Tacoma may request a formal review of the Standards and Guidelines document every two years for the purpose of determining whether changes should be proposed to the City Council.

1.45.040 Neighborhood Council functions and responsibilities.

Neighborhood Councils will serve in an advisory capacity to City government on matters concerning the general health, safety, and welfare of their neighborhoods. Neighborhood Council actions shall reflect the needs and wants of the neighborhoods existing within their boundaries. The responsibilities and functions of the Neighborhood Councils are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

1.45.050 Neighborhood Council boundaries and membership.

A. Neighborhood Council boundaries. The City Council shall determine the boundaries of the Neighborhood Councils with the intention of recognizing existing neighborhood groups, and shall set those boundaries by resolution. A Neighborhood Council may propose boundary adjustments for consideration by the City Council, so long as there is agreement by any impacted Neighborhood Councils prior to request for consideration by the City Council.

B. Neighborhood Council membership. ~~Although the primary purpose of the Neighborhood Council Program is to foster open communication in which residents are afforded an opportunity to participate in government decisions in an advisory role, the ability to participate on a Neighborhood Council Board and/or to vote at general meetings shall not be restricted to neighborhood residents only. It is the objective of the City Council for neighborhood residents, property owners, and business owners to have the opportunity to participate in the Neighborhood Council Program. It is the intention of the Neighborhood Council Program to be as inclusive as possible for participation from existing neighborhoods and that there be no requirements for Neighborhood Council Officers or Board Members that excludes participation by an existing neighborhood or creates an undue burden on Tacoma residents to participate.~~

C. Neighborhood Council Officers. It is the intention of the Neighborhood Council Program to build civic capacity within its existing neighborhoods and to empower its residents to make a positive impact on their community and therefore the program will require term limits for Neighborhood Council Officers. Term limits will be established in the Standards and Guidelines Document.

1.45.060 Community Council of Tacoma functions and responsibilities.

The Community Council shall act as a coalition of the independent Neighborhood Councils and serve as a forum for discussion of issues of broad interests. The Community Council of Tacoma will consist of ~~three~~ representatives from each of the Neighborhood Councils. The responsibilities and functions of the Community Council are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

1.45.070 City responsibilities.

A. The Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator. To further the neighborhood partnership between the City and its citizens, the Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator is the main contact and support for the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council, shall be responsible for coordinating assistance to the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council, and shall request support from other City departments as necessary. The Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator shall have the following specific responsibilities:

1. Support and promote ~~property owner, business, and neighborhood~~ participation within the Neighborhood Council program.
2. Promote and facilitate open communication between the City and the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council.
3. Act as an information clearinghouse and resource to the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council.
4. Notify the Neighborhood Councils, the Community Council, and other interested persons of ~~meetings and hearings of citizen participation events of opportunities for civic engagement.~~
5. Assist the Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council in planning and developing programs for citizen participation.



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6. Receive and file Neighborhood Council bylaws and annual reports, review the bylaws and annual reports, and disburse them to the City Council and other City departments and make them available to the public.

7. Maintain contact information for all Neighborhood Council board members, officers, and representatives to the Community Council, ~~and individuals designated to receive all notices and other mailings on behalf of the Neighborhood and Community Councils.~~

8. Provide the contact information of those designated to receive all notices and other mailings on behalf of the Neighborhood and Community Councils to all City departments, and notify the departments of any changes.

9. Maintain a current map of all Neighborhood Council boundaries.

~~10. Maintain a City Resource Guide of key services and contacts for disbursement to the Neighborhood Councils and other stakeholders.~~

11. Conduct reviews of the Neighborhood Council Program for recommendations to the City Council.

B. Neighborhood Council Program Liaisons (NCPL) include but are not limited to staff from City of Tacoma General Government (GG) Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU), Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) and Tacoma Police Department (TPD). NCPL's attend general meetings to support neighborhood involvement in the deliberations and actions of City government. The responsibilities and functions of the NCPL's are contained in the Standards and Guidelines Document.

BC. Responsibilities of Other City Departments. All City departments shall:

1. Make a good faith effort to notify affected Neighborhood Councils of any significant policy matter which requires the exercise of City discretion and directly impacts the neighborhood. Notice should be provided as early in the planning or review process as possible with standards for notification contained in the Standards and Guidelines Document. Notices include but are not be limited to:

a. Notice of pending land use/environmental cases decisions and threshold determinations under the State Environmental Policy Act.

c. Notice of all public hearings shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils.

d. Copies of agendas for all citizen commissions, boards, and committees and the City Council shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils.

e. Copies of City newsletters or other general communication mediums.

~~-In no case shall notice be provided later than at the time required by established notification procedures. Notice of Citywide matters shall be provided to all the Neighborhood Councils and notice of matters affecting a specific locale of the City shall be forwarded only to the affected Neighborhood Councils. Notice shall be mailed to the officers of each Neighborhood Council. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following:-~~

~~a. Notice of pending land use/environmental cases, decisions, and threshold determinations under the State Environmental Policy Act shall be provided to the affected Neighborhood Councils.~~

~~e. Notice of all public hearings shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils as requested by each individual council.~~

~~d. Copies of agendas for all citizen commissions, boards, and committees and the City Council shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils as requested by each individual council.~~

~~e. Copies of City newsletters or other general communication mediums, as requested by each individual Neighborhood Council.~~

2. Make a good faith effort to solicit the position and reasoning of affected Neighborhood Councils on any significant policy matter which requires the exercise of City discretion.

3. Provide a list of the Neighborhood Councils and their contacts to the proponents of development and encourage the proponents to discuss their proposal with the affected Neighborhood Council(s).



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4. Share information with the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council to assist them in performing their functions and responsibilities.

1.45.080 Administrative provisions.

A. This chapter does not limit the right of any person or group to participate directly in the decision-making process of the City Council or any City department.

B. Compliance with the Neighborhood Council program is not jurisdictional. Failure of the City or any City department to comply with any provision of this chapter will not invalidate any later action taken by any officer of the City; any City commission, committee, or board; or the City Council.

C. It is not the intent of this chapter to provide for new procedures or processes for legislative enactment, policy formulation, quasi-judicial decision-making or administrative practices.

D. It is not the intent of the City to delegate any portion of its authority to the Neighborhood Councils or Community Council.

E. Citizens retain all duties and obligations to participate in existing processes for legislative enactment, policy formulation, quasi-judicial decision-making or administrative practices. Participation in the Neighborhood Council program does not limit such duties and obligations.

1.45.090 Review and revision.

The Neighborhood Council Program shall be reviewed and revised if necessary by the City Council at least every five years, with a corresponding presentation to the City Council by Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator or other staff regarding the Program overall.

It is suggested that the Community Council of Tacoma conduct a review of the Neighborhood Council Program every five years and provide recommendations for updates to the City Council.