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FROM: Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services *JPM*
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SUBJECT: Residential Right-of-Way Electric Vehicle Charging Pilot Program
DATE: February 13, 2019

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

The Electric Vehicle Coordinating Committee has developed recommendations for a pilot program for right-of-way electric vehicle (EV) charging on residential streets in an effort to reduce barriers to electric vehicle adoption for Tacoma residents who do not have a garage or other off-street parking options.

BACKGROUND:

On May 22, 2018, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 40016 expressing support for initiatives that foster better conditions for electric vehicle adoption. The Resolution stated the City should “identify solutions for residential on-street charging where homes do not have a garage.” City staff reviewed the current requirements in place for installation of an EV charging station in the right-of-way, and has proposed the Right-of-Way Occupancy Permit requirement be waived for EV charging stations in the right-of-way on residential streets for a period of five years.

ISSUE:

While the number of electric vehicles registered in Tacoma has grown significantly over the course of the past few years, there are various conditions that may be barriers to electric vehicle adoption. The City does not have direct control over consumer vehicle purchases, but there are steps that could foster better conditions for future electric vehicle adoption in Tacoma, including finding solutions to the “garage orphan” issue where property owners do not have access to off-street parking to charge an EV.

Research on EV charging behavior indicates that most charging occurs at home. Typically, EV owners will charge their car overnight. The City’s current Right-of-Way Occupancy Code does not prohibit property owners from installing EV charging equipment in the right-of-way, but there are three separate permits required for installation. In addition to the Right-of-Way Occupancy Permit, a Right-of-Way Construction and Electrical permit are also required. In an effort to reduce permit requirements for EV charging installation and reduce barriers to EV adoption in Tacoma, the Electric Vehicle Coordinating Committee recommends waiving the Right-of-Way Occupancy Permit requirement for a period of five years as a pilot program. Because the pilot program is of limited duration, a change to the Tacoma Municipal Code will not be necessary.

Under the proposed program, property owners who wish to install an EV charging station in the right-of-way abutting their home would need to obtain both the Right-of-Way Construction and Electrical permits, but not the Right-of-Way Occupancy permit. This would save the applicant the \$640.00 permit fee as well as the \$90.00 annual fee. This is similar to the approach the City took to encourage sidewalk cafes. Additionally, to manage the City’s risk, applicants will be provided with



standard design plans for how the EV charging equipment should be installed in the right-of-way. This will be helpful for contractors or homeowners who will be performing the installation.

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.