



Tacoma Permit Task Force Advisory Committee

Summary Overview

October 1, 2019

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Purpose and Goal



- Sponsored by Council Member Conor McCarthy
(Established by Resolution 39894 Adopted December 12, 2017)
- **Purpose:** Evaluate the current City of Tacoma permitting processes and procedures
- **Goal:** Make Tacoma a place where the permit process is easily navigated and a welcome place for Development

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Guiding Principles



The Task Force Should

- Bring a customer focus
- Always ensure public safety
- Bring a systemic lens and recommend systemic changes
- Not change for change's sake – be intentional
- Be output and accomplishment focused
- Establish participation guidelines
- Select the topics for evaluation
- Develop recommendations for City of Tacoma consideration

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Participation Guidelines



- Show up and be on time
- Have an open mind and collaborate
- Be courteous
- Be respectful of all participants
- Be a liaison
- Members of the Task Force have one vote
- A quorum of seven members is required for a vote to occur

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Task Force Strategy



- Establish a current state understanding on every topic prior to discussions of proposed changes – foundation of relatedness
- Engage in collaborative discussions regarding proposed changes to achieve the Purpose and Goal of the Task Force
- Develop recommendations for City of Tacoma consideration

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Program Format



- Establish topics for evaluation
- Two meeting per topic format
- Meeting #1
 - Current state presented by City Staff
 - Open discussion by the Task Force and City Staff
 - Task Force requests of City Staff
- Meeting #2
 - City Staff presentation
 - Task Force Discussion
 - Recommendations

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Task Force Topics



- Adaptive Re-use Permits (includes TI permits)
- Work Order Permits (includes off-site improvements)
- Pre-Application Process
- Expedited Permits
- Partnership Building
- Next Steps

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Task Force Meetings



- Thirteen (13) Task Force members
- Thirteen (13) Task Force meetings
- February 22, 2018 to June 13, 2019
- Monthly (mostly)
- One topic/two meeting format
- Some exceptions – needed three (3) meetings
- June 13, 2019 meeting – Discussed next steps

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Agenda Format



- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Icebreaker
- Topic: City Staff Presentations
- Topic: Task Force Discussion
- Brainstorm: New Approaches and Improvements
- Closing Comments
- Next Meeting
- Adjournment

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Topic Evaluation



- Already improved and implemented
- Recently improved and in a Beta Test implementation
- Currently in progress for improvement
- On the list for improvement
- Not yet considered for improvement

In all cases, Task Force recommendations were recently improved and/or currently in progress with improvements.

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Example: Off Site Improvements



The Task Force identified the following challenges they face with off site improvements and work orders:

- Predictability – cost and timing
- Consistency – across all reviewers and departments
- Proportionality – off site improvements that are proportional to the size and scope of the project
- Funding Mechanism – capital bond, proposition, other? Need to plan.
- Development Culture – supportive or gouging?

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Results



Examples of recommendations resulting from the Task Force meetings includes:

- “Approved as Noted” Policy change – to allow permit reviewers to use their own discretion. Saves time and cost for all parties
- Require TPU to integrate its process for pre-application review with P&DS process – not have them separate
- Approval of the pre-application fee structure proposed to Council

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Results



Examples of recommendations resulting from the Task Force meetings includes:

- Memorialize Off-Site improvements determination off ramps
- Maintain option for expedited reviews and related costs
- Creation of more TIP sheets
- Enhance and improve Consistently Prepared Applicant (CPA's) submittal requirements – “VIP” lane options

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Partnerships – Final Meeting



Identified Partnership Next Steps

- Develop and implement a program that reviews selected permit application case studies – continuous understanding of what is working, what is not working and why not
- Develop and implement a “Road Show” to convey permit process improvements – what has been done and what is in planning – utilize Task Force members
- Road Show candidates may include:
 - CMAA Puget Sound Chapter
 - Local design firms
 - Local general contractors
 - Local professional societies

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Task Force Comments



- We all learned a lot – Staff and Task Force
- Task Force better understands internal City permitting processes and practices – frequently surprised
- Staff better understands the critical value of developers needing more information sooner – cost of time
- Almost everything the Task Force desired was already in progress or already available
- That P&DS is in a continuous improvement mode and is incrementally implementing all of the desires of the Task Force
- Desire to continue – from administrative changes to policy evaluation

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Final Comments



- Thank you – for the opportunity
- Thank you – Task Force Members, City Leadership and Staff
- Time well spent – valuable and important
- Phase 2 – critical that the Task Force work continues
- Capable of incorporating recent MBA permitting requests
- Support City of Tacoma Initiatives evaluation
- Phase 1 – low hanging fruit and overall understandings
- Phase 2 – deeper dive into more complicated subjects
- Implement a Road Show – broaden permitting understandings

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Thank You

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