



**CITY OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

**TO:** Mayor & City Council  
**FROM:** Deputy Mayor Conor McCarthy and Council Assistant Lynda Foster  
**COPIES TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager; Tadd Wille, Deputy City Manager; Bill Fosbre, City Attorney  
**SUBJECT:** Amending the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force Membership Limit  
**DATE:** December 3, 2019

---

**I ask for your support for a resolution removing the 12 - 15 member limitation from the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force.**

**LEGISLATIVE INTENT:**

**Resolution Request:**

In December of 2017, the Tacoma City Council created the Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force at the request of professionals and permit applicants who interface with the City and who had convened various groups to discuss process improvements to the permitting system and provide feedback to the City. They requested the City bring the various stakeholders together to formalize discussions.

The Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force was directed to:

- **Make Permit System Recommendations:** Meet monthly with City staff to review, discuss, and provide recommendations to City Manager and City Council for the improvement of City policies, codes, and procedures for the issuance of residential and commercial permits. Review best practices in peer communities. Monitor implementation progress and recommend adjustments.
- **Review of City Policies Under Consideration:** Review and provide recommendations to the City Manager and City Council regarding proposed City policies and laws which affect the permitting system.
- **Consultation on Customer Problems:** Consult and advise on customer issues that arise in the permitting process.
- **Establish Guiding Principles:** Establish guiding principles to guide policy and best practice recommendations made by task-force.

The task force consists of 12-15 members representative of a broad base of permit applicants who regularly apply to the City for permits. Members are appointed by the City Manager.

At the Nov. 14, 2019 Task Force meeting, Task Force members discussed future priorities and what perspectives were not yet represented in the Task Force membership that would be valuable for the work ahead. A need was identified to have representatives from affordable housing, legal, and restaurant industries as part of the Task Force. The Task Force formally requested its membership limits be removed to provide greater flexibility for the City Manager to appoint representatives to the Task Force as deemed appropriate.

**DESIRED RESOLUTION DATE:** December 10, 2019

**ALIGNMENT WITH TACOMA 2025 KEY FOCUS AREAS:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

An efficient, predictable, safe, and customer-orientated permitting process is essential to all individuals in Tacoma being able to access our permit system and resolve challenges when they arise. Improvements to the permit system have the greatest impact on individuals who aren't familiar with how permitting works and who don't know how to navigate the system. The Tacoma Permit Advisory Task Force is also reviewing how they can assist in encouraging affordable housing in the City of Tacoma and would like to bring in membership with expertise that would augment their work on this topic. This work would support the Affordable Housing Action Strategy and be in alignment with City Council goals.

**Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity**

Increase the number of Tacoma households that have livable wage jobs within proximity to the city.  
Increase the number of infrastructure projects and improvements that support existing and new business developments.

Increase the percentage of people relocating to the city and affordability of housing compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

Decrease the number of vacant properties downtown and in the neighborhood business districts.

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

**Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity**

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.


Construction is a major economic driver in Tacoma, annually producing millions of dollars in local income and tax revenue, and hundreds of jobs. An efficient, predictable, safe, and customer-orientated permitting process is essential to the growth and transformation of our City by boosting investment and development in our City. The City is responsible for regulating and administering the growth and renewal of its built environment. Having a proficient permitting regime can truly facilitate and accelerate the revitalization of downtown, the rejuvenation of the single family home stock, the ascension of multi-family and residential infill, and the renaissance of commercial development.

Daily, City staff and the development community, (including contractors, engineers, architects, and homeowners), work hand in hand to co-produce permits which ensure that new structures and places are built safely and meet the City's planning objectives and aspirations. This partnership is destined to improve through honest and relevant dialogue with the permit system's primary users. The Permit Advisory Task Force will provide constructive feedback to City staff and policy makers for the continual improvement of the City's policies, codes, and procedures for the issuance of residential and commercial permits

**If you have a question related to the Council Consideration Request, please contact Lynda Foster at 253.591.5166 or [Lynda.Foster@CityofTacoma.org](mailto:Lynda.Foster@CityofTacoma.org).**

**SUBMITTED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION BY:**

  
Deputy Mayor McCarthy

1.  POS# 2

2.  POS# 6