



ORDINANCE NO. 28644

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to neighborhood councils; amending Chapter 1.45 of
2 the Tacoma Municipal Code to adopt proposed changes to the
3 Neighborhood Council Program.

4 WHEREAS Chapter 1.45 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, relating to the
5 Neighborhood Council Program ("Program"), mandates a review of the Program
6 every five years, and

7 WHEREAS, in 2018, as part of the Livable City Year initiative, students at
8 the University of Washington provided analysis and recommendations to update the
9 Program, and these recommendations, as well as outreach to the Neighborhood
10 Councils conducted through 2018, were the basis of Program update
11 recommendations presented to the City Council at a December 2018 Study
12 Session, and

14 WHEREAS, in January 2019, the Program was transferred from the
15 Community and Economic Development to the Neighborhood and Community
16 Services Department ("NCS"), and NCS staff hosted a community meeting in
17 February 2019 to receive feedback on the proposed changes, and

19 WHEREAS, based on the feedback received, it was determined that
20 additional analysis should be completed prior to making any amendments to the
21 Program, and

22 WHEREAS, in mid-2019, staff took prior feedback and reports, as well as
23 information from other jurisdictions' neighborhood council programs, to present a
24 revised set of proposed changes, and conducted a new round of outreach on the
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proposed changes, which included an online survey, community meetings, and an offer to meet with each Neighborhood Council individually, and

WHEREAS, based on feedback from the outreach process and best practice research, staff is proposing Program amendments in the following areas:

(1) clarifying the role of Neighborhood Councils; (2) creating a process to establish new Neighborhood Councils and adjust existing boundaries; (3) changing the definition of “membership” to focus on participation; (4) updating the Program to bring it into alignment with the City’s Equity Framework; and (5) revamping standards and guidelines to serve as a dynamic operational document that will give staff greater flexibility to best serve the Neighborhood Councils; Now, Therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

Section 1. That Chapter 1.45 of the Tacoma Municipal Code is hereby amended as set forth in the attached Exhibit “A.”

Section 2. That the City Clerk, in consultation with the City Attorney, is authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance, including, but not



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limited to, the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any references thereto.

Passed _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney



EXHIBIT "A"

CHAPTER 1.45
NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

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Sections:

- 1.45.010 Purpose.
- 1.45.020 Intent.
- 1.45.030 Standards and guidelines.
- 1.45.040 Neighborhood Council ~~functions and responsibilities~~duties and expectations.
- 1.45.050 Neighborhood Council boundaries and ~~membership~~participation.
- 1.45.060 Community Council of Tacoma ~~functions and responsibilities~~duties and expectations.
- ~~1.45.070 City responsibilities.~~
- 1.45.080 Administrative provisions.
- 1.45.090 Review and revision.
- 1.45.100 *Repealed.*

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~~ the Neighborhood Council Program, and ~~to~~ establish a Standards and Guidelines document that defines administrative responsibilities and ~~procedures for the recognition~~expectations and funding of the Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council of Tacoma.

1.45.020 Intent.

~~It is the intent of the City to engage its neighborhoods as broadly as possible in the issues and concerns that directly affect them. The City will~~It is the intent of the City Council to support and promote a Neighborhood Council Program to foster ~~open a partnership of 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.~~ meaningfully discuss City programs and policies that affect the neighborhood, bring neighborhood concerns, priorities, and goals to the attention of the City, and encourage diverse relationships, representative participation, and the inclusion of differing viewpoints and perspectives that allow all residents to feel included and empowered to contribute to improving the livability of their communities.

~~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 recruiting and developing diverse Neighborhood Council representation among participants that is equitable in its community engagement and seeks to that creates an inclusive and accessible atmosphere ~~process including by the engagement of community members~~where neighbors from low-income communities, communities of color, and other historically underrepresented populations are represented in a way that reflects the neighborhood.

~~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~~created by the City Manager, or designee. In order to be eligible for funding or ~~to act in an advisory capacity to the support from the~~ City ~~to advance neighborhood priorities,~~ the Neighborhood



Councils and Community Council must ~~comply with administrative and procedural~~ meet the expectations and requirements contained in the Standards and Guidelines. The Standards and Guidelines document will outline the administrative responsibilities of the City. The Community Council of Tacoma will be notified of any changes to the Standards and Guidelines and be given opportunity to provide input on changes.

~~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.~~

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

1.45.040 Neighborhood Council ~~functions and responsibilities~~duties and expectations.

Neighborhood Councils will serve independent of the City as the primary forum for discussions on City programs, policies, and neighborhood concerns for residents and participants within the Neighborhood Council boundaries. in an advisory capacity to City government on matters concerning the general health, safety, and welfare of their neighborhoods. Neighborhood Council actions shall ~~should~~ reflect the needs and wants of the neighborhoods existing within their boundaries and demonstrate equitable involvement in those actions. ~~The responsibilities and functions~~ expectations of the Neighborhood Councils are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

1.45.050 Neighborhood Council boundaries and ~~membership~~participation.

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~~The Community Council may propose boundary adjustments for consideration by the City Council, so long as there is written agreement by any impacted/affected existing Neighborhood Councils prior to request for consideration by the City Council, and no boundaries overlap. Individual Neighborhood Councils shall not submit proposed boundary changes to the City Council directly. The Community Council shall not reject any proposals by Neighborhood Councils to adjust boundaries as long as the proposal meets the above requirements, but may note its support or opposition to a proposal.

B. Formation of New Neighborhood Councils. The Community Council of Tacoma must consult with City staff prior to approval in order to create new Neighborhood Councils. New Neighborhood Councils may be considered to better represent diverse interests, provide fair and equitable representation, and better advocate for the needs of the neighborhood, but must meet the following requirements.

1. No more than two Neighborhood Councils will be created by the City Council in a calendar year.
2. There may be no more than five Neighborhood Councils per City Council District.
3. Neighborhood Council boundaries must have a population of at least three percent of the total population of Tacoma.

In order to create a new Neighborhood Council, both the affected Neighborhood Councils and the new proposed Neighborhood Council must affirm, in writing, their consent to changing their boundaries so that no Neighborhood Council boundaries overlap. The proposed Neighborhood Council must hold a public meeting in the proposed boundary area to get public input on whether to form a new Neighborhood Council, and what form of governance the new body will take prior to submitting their proposal to the Community Council. The public meeting must be announced and advertised at a minimum two weeks in advance, and have at least 30 attendees signed in and/or have a petition with 80 unique signatures, including addresses from the proposed boundary area supporting the proposed Neighborhood Council. After the public meeting, the Community Council of Tacoma must submit the public meeting notes, proposed boundaries of affected Neighborhood Councils, proposed leadership and governance of the new Neighborhood Council, and their recommendation to City staff for review. Following City staff review, the proposal will be submitted and go to the City Council for consideration. The City Council must adopt by resolution the new Neighborhood Council and adjusted boundaries before they can operate. Following adoption, the Neighborhood Council will



1 be in a one-year probationary period where they must operate in compliance with the City Code and
 2 Standards and Guidelines. Should the Neighborhood Council fail to comply or fail to establish a governing
 3 board and regular meetings within this period, staff will propose a resolution to the City Council, revoking the
 4 Neighborhood Council’s status and reinstating the boundaries that existed prior to the New Neighborhood
 5 Council forming.

6 CB. Neighborhood Council membership participation. Any resident, renter, or owner of property, business, or
 7 nonprofit and their employees, who live or work within a Neighborhood Council Boundary, may participate
 8 fully in that Neighborhood Council without conditions. Participation means attending meetings and events,
 9 voting, engaging in the creation of annual reports, budgets, and plans, and utilizing Neighborhood Council
 10 resources. Individual Neighborhood Councils may choose to adopt bylaws that limit members of the
 11 governing board to residents that live within the Neighborhood Council boundaries. Although the primary
 12 purpose of the Neighborhood Council Program is to foster open communication in which residents are
 13 afforded an opportunity to participate in government decisions in an advisory role, the ability to participate on
 14 a Neighborhood Council Board and/or to vote at general meetings shall not be restricted to neighborhood
 15 residents only. No Neighborhood Council may discriminate against any individual nor limit participation
 16 based on race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation,
 17 age, marital status, familial status, or the presence or perceived presence of any sensory, mental or physical
 18 disability. It is the objective of the City Council for neighborhood residents, property owners, and business
 19 owners to have the opportunity to participate in the Neighborhood Council Program.

20 **1.45.060 Community Council of Tacoma functions and responsibilities duties and expectations.**

21 The Community Council of Tacoma shall act as a coalition of the ~~independent individual~~ Neighborhood
 22 Councils. The Community Council shall ~~and~~ serve as a forum for discussion of issues of broad
 23 ~~interests interest or Citywide impact, and the advocacy of the needs of individual Neighborhood Councils.~~ The
 24 Community Council of Tacoma will consist of ~~three~~ representatives from each of the Neighborhood Councils
 25 selected by the means identified in the bylaws of the Community Council. The responsibilities and functions
 26 of the Community Council are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

1 **1.45.070 City responsibilities.**

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

8 1. Support and promote property owner, business, and neighborhood participation within the Neighborhood
 9 Council program.

10 2. Promote and facilitate open communication between the City and the Neighborhood Councils and
 11 Community Council.

12 3. Act as an information clearinghouse and resource to the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council.

13 4. Notify the Neighborhood Councils, the Community Council, and other interested persons of meetings and
 14 hearings of citizen participation events.

15 5. Assist the Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council in planning and developing programs for
 16 citizen participation.

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

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



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~~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. 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. 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, 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).~~

~~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 the Community Council.

E. Citizens-Residents of the City of Tacoma retain all duties and obligations to participate in existing processes for legislative enactment, policy formulation, and 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.

1 The Neighborhood Council Program shall be reviewed ~~and revised, if necessary,~~ by the City Council at least
2 every five years, ~~with a corresponding presentation to the City Council by Neighborhood Council Program~~
3 ~~Coordinator or other staff regarding~~ The City Manager, or designee, will provide a presentation to the City
4 Council on the state of the Program overall and recommendations, if any, for revisions to the Tacoma
5 Municipal Code.

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

1.45.100 Repealed.

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