



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
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SUBJECT: Establishing a 5G Innovation Lab for the Tacoma tideflats
DATE: June 8, 2021

PRESENTATION TYPE:
Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

Community and Economic Development, 5 G Open Innovation Labs, Washington Maritime Blue and the Port of Tacoma/NW Seaport Alliance have been discussing the potential to establish a private, stand-alone 5G network and lab with edge computing power in the Tacoma tideflats. Joshua Berger and Nate Tolbert of Maritime Blue and Jim Brisimitzis of 5 G Open Innovation Labs will provide a briefing on the project and opportunity as well as an overview of 5G and edge computing capabilities.

BACKGROUND:

Traffic congestion and lack of connectivity in and around the Port of Tacoma are causing negative impacts to productivity and the environment. Miles of queueing tractor-trailer trucks raise costs, impact air quality, pose a threat to water quality and stymie innovation as commerce expands but traditional systems remain within the fixed geographical footprint of the tideflats. Through bringing the benefits of 5G networking and edge computing to the tideflats, the Port of Tacoma could improve the efficiency and safety of cargo movement and make the tideflats a destination for startup innovation, industry collaboration and academic research.

ISSUE:

Ports in the United States have been unable to take advantage of emerging technology because of a lack of infrastructure for networking, computing and connectivity. Implementation of 5G and edge computing in the Port of Tacoma could provide cost-efficiency and environmental benefits through the ability to track cargo, traffic patterns, air quality and water quality in real time, making Tacoma's Port the most advanced Port in the United States. Implementing such a project is consistent with stated goals in the City's One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, the Tacoma Climate Action Plan, Tacoma 2025 and the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan.

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.