



# City of Tacoma Economic Development Committee Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

Conference Room 248

**December 10, 2019**

**10:00 AM**

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Chair Robert Thoms, Vice Chair Conor McCarthy, Lillian Hunter,  
Catherine Ushka, Chris Beale (alternate)

## Call To Order

Chair Thoms called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Present:** 3 - Hunter, Thoms and Ushka

**Absent:** 1 - McCarthy

## Approval of Minutes

1. [19-1402](#) Approval of the minutes of the November 12, 2019 meeting

**MOTION:** Council Member Ushka moved to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2019 meeting.

**SECONDED BY:** Council Member Hunter.

**ACTION:** Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

**Ayes:** 3 - Hunter, Thoms and Ushka

**Absent:** 1 - McCarthy

## Briefing Items

2. [19-1398](#) Food Innovation  
[Carol Wolfe, Division Manager, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:06 a.m., Carole Wolfe, Division Manager, Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD), made opening remarks and introduced Gabe Moaalii, Health Promotion Coordinator III, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department; Shari Hart, Program Development Specialist, CEDD; and Wesley Nguyen, Contract and Program Auditor, CEDD. Ms. Moaalii presented background and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's community engagement efforts. Ms. Hart reviewed current conditions on the Eastside, including eastside food-related assets and opportunities. Mr. Nguyen outlined possible models for impacting food equity, including a food innovation district definition, goals, Detroit's Eastern Market, Pennsylvania, Anaheim, King County innovations, and next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding clarification on the map of food-related businesses, time spent traveling for grocery shopping, gentrification issues, incubators involving commercial kitchens, budget resources for feasibility study and research, zoning, leveraging opportunity zones, east-west connection for public transportation, updating existing districts versus creating new districts, identifying opportunities and challenges from the feasibility study, and using existing businesses as resources.

3. [19-1399](#) Tacoma Economic Development Strategic Plan  
[Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:33 a.m., Jeff Robinson, Director, CEDD, introduced Chris Mefford, President and CEO, Community Attributes, Inc. (CAI), and presented the draft Economic Development Strategic Plan, including background and an overview of the plan, noting eight primary objectives, 37 strategies, and 124 actions. Mr. Mefford further presented the draft strategic plan, including engagement; CAI's economic development pyramid; and the executive summary, noting the objectives, strategies, and actions.

Discussion ensued throughout regarding time horizon goals, partner collaboration, bringing the topic to Committee of the Whole, obtaining the full draft strategic plan for review, feedback from local businesses, economic development activities, publicly traded companies, business recruitment and generating networks, working with local companies, and retaining workforce.

4. [19-1400](#) Lead Agency Discussion  
[Steve Victor, Deputy City Attorney, City Attorney's Office, and Shirley Schultz, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Services]

At approximately 11:02 a.m., Steve Victor, Deputy City Attorney, City Attorney's Office, introduced Shirley Schultz, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Services (PDS), and made opening remarks. Together, Mr. Victor and Ms. Schultz presented State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) lead agency procedures, including definitions of SEPA, responsibilities of a SEPA lead agency, how an entity becomes a lead agency, jurisdictional differences, and the difference between the SEPA review process and permitting requirements and criteria.

Discussion ensued throughout regarding the SEPA process, roles of the lead agency and the permitting agency, what happens after SEPA closes, requesting a SEPA review, examples of classic SEPA lead agencies, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping process, if the SEPA lead agency can change processes, and programmatic nonproject SEPA.

5. [19-1401](#) Community and Economic Development and Planning and Development Services Collaboration/Communication opportunities with the Economic Development Committee  
[Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development, and Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services]

At approximately 11:35 a.m., Mr. Robinson and Peter Huffman, Director, PDS, presented a list of active projects estimated at \$1,000,000 or more, an outline of topics of interest for the Committee, and next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding thresholds, why the report is necessary, and a pre-application meeting.

## Topics for Upcoming Meetings

6. [19-1403](#) December 24, 2019 - Cancelled  
December 31, 2019 - Cancelled

This item was not addressed.

## Other Items of Interest

This item was not addressed.

## Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.



Robert Thoms, Chair



Mary Crabtree, City Clerk's Office