



# City of Tacoma Economic Development Committee Minutes

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 868 2412 7684

Webinar Link: [www.zoom.us/j/86824127684](https://www.zoom.us/j/86824127684) Passcode: 614650

**April 27, 2021**

**10:00 AM**

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Chair Robert Thoms, Vice Chair Conor McCarthy, Keith Blocker,  
Catherine Ushka, Chris Beale (alternate)

## Call To Order

Chair Thoms called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

## Roll Call

**Present:** 3 - Blocker, McCarthy and Thoms

**Absent:** 1 - Ushka

All Council Members participated virtually.

## Briefing Items

1. [21-0403](#) Broadband - How it is Working for Tacoma's Residents, Businesses, and Schools  
[Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:05 a.m., Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development, made opening remarks, and introduced Brian Haynes, CEO, Rainier Connect; Ernest Goody, Director of Infrastructure and Cloud Services; and Ed Grassia, Chief information Officer, Tacoma Public Schools (TPS). Mr. Haynes presented information on Rainier Connect's broadband service, including re-engineering the network during the pandemic, the importance of broadband in Tacoma, partnerships, and equitable access.

Discussion ensued regarding Rainier Connect taking over Click, internet access issues and how to overcome them, how to build out network capacity, details about internet packages, the digital divide and how to close it, and a 2016 residential technology access report.

Mr. Goody gave a presentation on current TPS network information.

Discussion continued regarding the institutional network, who provides the internet bandwidth for the school district, a survey of who can connect, virtual school attendance, getting Click customers onto Rainier Connect, challenges for opting in, what can be done to correct those challenges, and how the City can work with partners to close the digital divide.

Mr. Grassia provided information regarding what is available within the TPS network, extending TPS's wireless network into the community, the Tech Refresh Program and how it evolved during the pandemic, that every student in TPS was provided with a laptop, working with partners to get students connected to the internet, internet access after the end of this school year, and TPS's budget for technology going forward.

Discussion continued regarding vendors, improving accessibility to broadband, challenges of getting people signed up to broadband, disconnect of low income families, discussing the digital divide without data, Rainier Connect's commitment to preexisting connections, increasing speeds, and clarification on numbers of people making up the digital divide.

2. [21-0404](#)

Outdoor Business Options

[Jennifer Kammerzell, Principal Engineer, Public Works;  
Jana Magoon, Planning Manager, Planning and Development Services]

At approximately 11:05 a.m., Chair Thoms introduced Jennifer Kammerzell, Principal Engineer, Public Works, and Jana Magoon, Planning Manager, Planning and Development Services. Ms. Kammerzell presented on outdoor business options, including the curbside café and market program, including an overview, background, and temporary parking zones. Ms. Magoon further reviewed the update, including photos of temporary curbside cafes and markets, temporary and permanent sidewalk café permits, and applications processed for the programs. Ms. Kammerzell concluded with future program considerations, noting staffing, parking, and community support; timeline; and next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding encouraging outdoor activities, Puyallup's parklet program, opportunities to extend to-go beverage options, making outdoor options permanent, use of American Rescue Plan Act funding, and projects in Chehalis.

Chair Thoms spoke about his proposed Council Consideration Request (CCR) directing the City Manager to develop permanent outdoor dining.

Discussion ensued regarding the time frame of the CCR, the success of Wooden City's outdoor seating, and future infrastructure investments.

## Topics for Upcoming Meetings

3. [21-0405](#) May 11, 2021 - Interviews for the City Events and Recognitions Committee

Chair Thoms stated the next meeting will be on May 11, 2021, and will include interviews for the City Events and Recognitions Committee. Lynda Foster, Committee Liaison, stated the May 25, 2021, meeting will include a presentation on the purchase and sale agreement and development agreement for sites on the Foss Waterway. She concluded by stating the June 8, 2021, meeting will include a permitting and development update.

## Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

## Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.



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Robert Thoms, Chair



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Jered Lobban, City Clerk's Office