



TO: Hyun Kim, Interim City Manager
FROM: Tanja Carter, Community and Economic Development
COPY: Economic Development Committee
PRESENTERS: Carol Wolfe, Division Manager, Community and Economic Development
SUBJECT: Neighborhood Business District Program Refresh
DATE: October 14, 2025

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Informational Briefing

SUMMARY:

Staff will share insights from Neighborhood Business District (NBD) Program refresh to include direction of program adjustments, increased partnership between the Cross District Association (CDA) and Tacoma Neighborhoods Together (TNT) 501(c)3 organization, and alignment with the updated Community and Economic Development (CED) Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND:

- 1999: The city partnered with active business district associations, beginning with the first six (6) districts: 6th Avenue, Dome, Hilltop, Lincoln, Proctor, and Stadium.
- 2008: Council adopted Tacoma Municipal Code 1.47 to formalize the program after it had grown to 14 NBDs, including Fern Hill, McKinley Hill, Oakland Madrona, Old Town, Portland Avenue, Ruston Point Defiance, South Tacoma, and Tacoma Narrows. Pacific Avenue was onboarded in 2010, bringing the total to 15 Neighborhood Business Districts.
- TNT obtained 501(c)3 status in early 2000 through a partnership between CED and the CDA to help fundraise for vital Neighborhood Business District events and beautification projects that were beyond the organizational capacity dollars provided by the city.

ISSUE:

Senior NBDs have evolved away from the program, such as Portland Avenue and Dome. Further, new Business Districts have been emerging, including the Hosmer Business Association, Waterfront Association, 3 Bridges, 64th and McKinley, 23rd and Tacoma Avenue, 74th and Pacific Avenue, and 72nd and Portland Avenue. These areas not served by the current NBD Program.

CED staff is reframing the NBD Program to a **Business District** Program prioritizing:

- a) redevelopment of underutilized buildings;
- b) enhanced business and commercial property owner relations in Mixed-Use Centers;
- c) strategic partnership with TNT to build capacity of the CDA to deliver authentic and current small and local business perspectives to CED and the City of Tacoma; and
- d) tiered approach of support to business districts in varied stages of project and stewardship capacity.



ALTERNATIVES:

The City could make no changes and leave the NBD program as-is. As a result, the City would continue to not serve emerging neighborhood business districts and former business districts. In turn, the City would not benefit from the economic growth associated with serving more NBDs. The NBD Program's priorities would not be refreshed to reflect current economic needs and opportunities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an informational briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an informational briefing only. No recommendation is being made.