



City of Tacoma's Community and Economic Development Quarterly Newsletter - March 2019

Our mission is to facilitate equitable economic growth and opportunity by supporting existing businesses, enabling reinvestment and revitalization, and promoting the attraction and creation of new businesses, living wage jobs, and housing options to enhance the quality of life in the community.



Mayor Delivers State of the City

The 2019 State of the City – Our Destiny in Motion is available in its entirety [here](#). Check out the 2018 Community and Economic Development Annual Impact Report [here](#).



Agreement Reached for Old City Hall

A resolution authorizing the execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement, Development Agreement, and Public Benefits Agreement with Surge Tacoma, d.b.a. Tacoma Old City Hall LLC, in the total of \$4 million, was adopted during the [March 26 City Council meeting](#). The highly visible project is important for many reasons, among them Old City Hall's value as a historic government center for the people, which compel that the chosen development team ensure continuity of its role as a central place for city life.

The project is the first to require an Equitable Access Plan, which will be approved by Community and Economic Development and the Office of Equity and Human Rights, and a Public Benefits Agreement. These agreements focus on: local hiring through the City's Small Business Enterprise and Local Employment & Apprenticeship Training Programs, measures taken for environmentally sustainable building practices and energy efficiency, and equity through tenant leases and an entrepreneurial education program. This last piece has a requirement that 50% of the student pool live and/or work in underserved areas and that employed educators are representative of student demographics.

The development proposal includes:

- \$15 million retrofit of the historic Old City Hall building
- 100 construction and 150 full time jobs

- A minimum of 40 micro-apartments on fifth level with half of constructed units affordable at 60% of area median income
- Two restaurants – at street level on Pacific Avenue and on the rooftop
- A bar on Commerce Street
- ≈ 20,000 square feet of retail space on first and second levels
- ≈ 20,000 square feet of office and co-working space on third and fourth levels
- Potential event space in clock tower, which is to be restored and maintained

Reduced rent is also being offered to the Tacoma Historical Society. The exhibit space will have free admission, monthly workshops and is required to reserve 20% of space to reflect the history of Tacoma's communities of color and women.

Construction is scheduled to begin in 2020.



Tacoma Works

Tacoma Works is a multi-agency initiative to increase employment of Tacoma-Pierce County residents in the construction field. The strategy was developed in response to the shortage in labor needed to meet unprecedented demand for public infrastructure and construction throughout the Puget Sound region. Tacoma Works cultivates living wage jobs in the construction industry for local talent through a combination of recruitment, training and opportunity matching.

Needs and project strategies were developed during a 2017 summit convened by the City of Tacoma. Project partners include major employers in the construction industry, education providers, and a range of institutions and nonprofits which scale from the City to the State level of workforce development. [Themes](#) reflected the need for on-the-job training opportunities, wraparound social

support networks for employees, improved training for educators to understand career demands and the furthering of technology as a tool to engage potential talent.

Key activities of Tacoma Works empower workers and employers alike. [Torqly](#), developed by a local team and final five project in University of Washington Tacoma's 2017 [VIBE Business Plan Competition](#), is a mobile application/database that connects talent with employers in high-demand sectors. A City of Tacoma [webpage](#) is devoted to resources for job seekers to access training/job resources, for employers to easily access the labor pool, and provides background on the initiative's development. During the Summer of 2019, a 12-week pre-apprenticeship program will be held that offers integrated occupational skills training and career coaching.



Opportunity Zone Update

Assistant Director of Community and Economic Development, Elly Walkowiak, attended [Accelerator For America's Opportunity Zone Investor Summit](#) at Stanford University. The summit connected local officials and nongovernment organizations from across the nation with Opportunity Zone investors, philanthropies, financial institutions and advisers, and developers. In order to attend, cities were required to have an approved [Opportunity Zone Investment Prospectus](#). Investors, institutions and developers were required to demonstrate active interest in empowering vulnerable communities and mitigating displacement.

The final rules from the U.S. Treasury have yet to be released and are anticipated to be finalized in 2019. The movement is underway however, to attract an estimated \$6 trillion in unrealized capital gains to businesses and real estate located in designated tracts, while shaping investment to meet local needs. The strategy undertaken by City of Tacoma focuses on partnering with local experts to

ensure our technical preparedness, leveraging the program to attract increased federal funding, serving the city's demand for more housing and jobs, and tracking the impact of community needs met.

**WHATEVER YOUR BUSINESS SIZE -
WE'RE YOUR PARTNER!**

Technical Assistance Access friendly, experienced business guidance, workshops, industry data and targeted referrals to partners like Spaceworks or the Small Business Development Council.	Tips & Checklists We offer technical assistance for pre-application and pre-acquisition, assisting you with leasing and build-out processes. Visit: makeittacoma.com/checklists/	Financing Programs Our Small Business Loan Funds provide gap financing to support business expansion. Visit: makeittacoma.com/incentives/additional-incentives/
Business Incentives The City has a variety of incentives for business, job creation and neighborhood development. Visit: https://makeittacoma.com/incentives/additional-incentives/	Workforce Referral These sources can connect you with qualified jobseekers. ResCare (253) 573-6810 WorkForce Central (253) 254-7335	TacomaFIRST-311 Need to access non-emergency services? Download the TacomaFIRST311 app -or- Dial 311 from within city limits to get answers and make non-emergency requests.

2019 Business Retention and Expansion Strategy

To provide enhanced services to local Tacoma businesses, the Community and Economic Development Department has initiated an outreach strategy designed to retain existing companies and support their expansion efforts. Our 2019 Business Retention and Expansion Strategy is a joint effort with Mayor Victoria Woodards and City Councilmembers to focus on equitable retention, expansion and attraction of businesses and commercial construction activities across the City's five council districts.

Initial activities include the creation of a preliminary list of businesses which are looking to expand, have expressed issues that we can assist in solving, and companies which may not have been contacted previously. A flier has been created that lists City resources, among these [TacomaFIRST-311](#) and [local incentives](#), and will be distributed as a convenient reference point for business owners. The strategy's performance will be tracked and analyzed in an ongoing effort to provide exceptional service to Tacoma's valuable business community.



Pacific Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) + Tacoma Link Extension Updates

Pacific BRT:

In the summer of 2018, Pierce Transit Board of Commissioners identified BRT as the best option to increase capacity on the Pacific Avenue/ SR-7 corridor between downtown Tacoma and Spanaway. This high-performing public transit system is designed to integrate dedicated bus lanes with existing infrastructure, offering the flexibility to meet changing local conditions and a lower cost than rail transit modes.

Buses will run about every ten minutes, traffic signals will prioritize buses at intersections, and fares will be collected in advance of boarding. These efficiencies could decrease public transit times on Pacific Avenue by as much as one-third. The anticipated increase in ridership has significant potential to reduce traffic congestion.

Pierce Transit is actively working with the community to gather input on the placement of dedicated bus lanes (curbside or down the center median) and to identify potential station locations. Efforts are being undertaken to understand and minimize impacts on corridor neighbors and to maximize economic benefit to business owners.

Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension:

In winter of 2018, ground broke for the construction of a 2.4-mile extension of Sound Transit's Tacoma Link light rail. The \$217 million construction project more than doubles the length of the existing line and expands service from Downtown Tacoma's Theater District to the Hilltop and Stadium neighborhoods. What U.S. Senator Patty Murray describes as "years of planning and collaboration between community, state, and federal leaders" will result in an important, affordable

public transit option for the growing local population, estimated to increase by 64% in the next twenty years.

Significant efforts were taken to gather [community input](#) from corridor users. Partnerships with Downtown on the Go, Sound Outreach, Hilltop Action Coalition and Tacoma Housing Authority enabled outreach corridor neighbors, identifying important needs such as pedestrian safety, design elements that encourage gathering and shared community space, enhanced technological services such as Wi-Fi and charging stations, and accommodation to businesses during and after construction.

Completion is anticipated in 2022. Work details from [Sound Transit's project page](#) include:

- Total project length: Approximately 13,200 feet.
- OMF building expansion: Approximately 10,000 square feet.
- Total linear feet of track installed: 26,500 feet.
- Total cubic feet of excavated dirt along the alignment: 50,000 cubic yards.
- Total linear feet of conduit to be installed: 105,000 feet.
- Total tons of concrete to be poured: 30,000 tons (15,000 cubic yards).



McMenamins Tacoma Elks Temple

McMenamins Tacoma Elks Temple began taking hotel reservations in December of 2018 and has scheduled a grand opening for Wednesday, April 24th, 2019. The location will offer a brewery and bottle shop, an interactive fountain, several restaurants, outdoor dining on the Spanish Steps, secret bars, a ballroom with live-music space and an indoor atrium. The lodge will offer views of the City and the Puget Sound, including Old City Hall, and is enhanced by restored graffiti artwork.

