



# City Council Workshop Minutes

---

<http://www.ci.tacoma.wa.us/agendas/council>  
La Quinta Inn, 1425 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Tacoma, Washington

February 12, 2000

Mayor Ebersole called the City Council Workshop to order at 8:29 a.m.

**Council Members Present:** 8 ~ Crowley, De Forrest, Evans, Kirby, Miller, Moss, Phelps, and Mayor Ebersole.

**Council Members Absent:** 1 ~ McGavick.

Mayor Ebersole stated the agenda items for the meeting was background, status of major capital projects, capital budget system, and ranking of emerging capital projects.

Mr. Ray E. Corpuz, Jr., City Manager, described the financing options for capital projects, including General Obligation Bonds (Limited), General Obligation Bonds (Unlimited), Utility Purpose Indebtedness, Open Space and Parks Facilities Indebtedness, Revenue Bonds, Special Assessment and other Special Purpose Debt.

Council Members discussed the use of Limited Tax Obligation Bonds for the construction of the Convention Center and other funds that could supplement the bonds. Those funds include hotel/motel taxes, real estate excise tax and sales tax credit.

Ms. Juli Wilkerson, Director of the Tacoma Economic Development Department, led a staff presentation on the status of the seven major capital projects identified by the City Council at its February 9, 1999 workshop.

## 1. Convention Center

Ms. Wilkerson described the status of the convention center. Council Members and staff discussed the site selection process and level of public involvement in the project.

## 2. Foss Waterway

Ms. Wilkerson provided an overview of the redevelopment project. Craig Sivley, Assistant Director of Public Works, described the Chihuly Bridge of

Glass status. He stated that project will go out to bid later this year and open at the same time as the future International Glass Museum.

### **3. LeMay Museum**

Ms. Wilkerson described the status of the museum's effort to organize and determine the feasibility of a large-scale development. Council Members discussed the use of the Tacoma Dome parking lot as the site for the museum, potential funding and fundraising options, and visitor estimates. Council Members agreed that the City of Tacoma's role in the project, at this point, is to provide the site for the museum. Mr. Corpuz indicated that within the next few weeks, the City Council would be able to vote on a resolution committing the Dome site to the museum project. By doing so, the museum can market the site and raise funds more effectively.

### **4. Old City Hall Development (Multiplex)**

Ms. Wilkerson described the demise of the OliverMcMillan/Regal Cinemas effort to create a retail/housing/movie theater development in the Old City Hall area. Since that occurred in 1999, a new developer—Lorig & Associates—has shown an interest in a smaller, \$23 million retail/housing/parking development on part of the same property that was proposed for the multiplex. Council Member Crowley mentioned that a multiplex might become part of the Opus Pacific Steps development.

### **5. Parking System**

Ms. Wilkerson indicated that Don Hines, Assistant Director of the Economic Development Department, would provide more details on downtown parking later in the workshop.

### **6. Public Safety Facility**

Ms. Wilkerson provided a brief status report on the \$33 million project.

### **7. Tacoma Art Museum**

Ms. Wilkerson indicated that the City of Tacoma's work in the future art museum is done since the City Council agreed in 1999 to invest \$5.2 million in that project. Council Members expressed concern about apparent delays in the construction of the museum. Staff members indicated the museum still needed to get design approvals from the neighboring federal court before proceeding.

## **Downtown Housing**

1. Mr. Hines provided background information on the City's role in housing development and funding since 1980. He stated that development of affordable housing is created through incentives or through direct funding. Current methods of promoting housing include the Housing Trust Fund and the property tax incentive. In addition, the Destination Downtown code

approved by the City Council in 1999 promotes residential development downtown.

2. Ms. J.J. McCament from the Economic Development Department reviewed a list of recent or current housing projects in the greater downtown area. Council Members discussed the need for more condos downtown as opposed to apartments. Ms. McCament indicated that most multi-unit housing developments start as apartments and later convert to condos. Ms. McCament indicated that during the last year the asking price for downtown properties for housing have increased tremendously. Part of the increase is due to unrealistic expectations by property owners who react to repeated reports that Tacoma has "cheap land." Council Members discussed various housing projects. Ms. McCament then presented the results of a recent focus group conducted by the City of Tacoma on behalf of the owners of the Perkins Building. The results showed that potential downtown residents want larger condos rather than smaller apartments. Ms. McCament recommended to the Council that they continue to invest in public projects in the downtown area, because they clearly have served and will serve as catalysts for private development.
3. Mayor Ebersole asked for a briefing on the Hope VI effort of the Tacoma Housing Authority (THA). Mr. Hines described how THA wants to demolish the aging Salishan housing development and replace it with modern housing. Mayor Ebersole asked City staff to be as supportive as possible in helping THA with its effort. Deputy Mayor De Forrest said he would like to see the Hope VI grant process leverage park development of the Swan Creek area.

### **Downtown Parking System**

Mr. Hines showed a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed the various options facing the City Council and funding necessary to create additional parking in the downtown area. Council Members discussed issues surrounding the City's financial ability to build additional parking. Council Member Phelps said the dilemma is that to get additional housing downtown and attract and retain businesses, the City needs to figure out how to create more parking. He stated that without the parking, Tacoma risks losing businesses to other areas around Tacoma that offer cheaper parking. Mayor Ebersole indicated that the parking system development should be a major priority.

Mayor Ebersole indicated that he would skip over the agenda item: Capital Budget System.

### **Emerging Capital Projects**

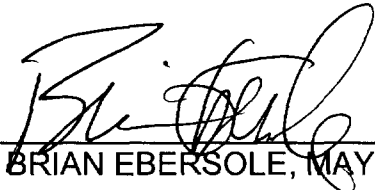
Mayor Ebersole said the progress in 1999 on the Tacoma Art Museum and the demise of the multiplex project mean they should be removed from the Council's priority list. Council Members reviewed a list of project rankings and discussed the merits of several projects that ranked highly. Council Member Crowley said

the City should convene a local committee to look at Cheney Stadium reconstruction. Mayor Ebersole asked to have the Greenspace project put on an upcoming study session agenda and recommends it for the priority list because of its visibility and high impact. Council Member Phelps described the development potential of the parking lot areas around the Tacoma Dome and advocated an aggressive approach to marketing those spaces to raise money for improvements to the Tacoma Dome. Deputy Mayor De Forrest advocated the redevelopment of McKinley Park. Council Members discussed the potential of maintaining a portion of the park property for park purposes and using the lower section near the freeway for commercial development. Mayor Ebersole asked for a study session presentation by Mr. Steve Williams from Asset Management on all available City/Utilities properties. He indicated that some of those properties could be sold off to raise money for the City Council's priority projects. Council Member Miller suggested that Ruston Way improvements should be on the priority list.

Mayor Ebersole recapped the discussion and consensus indicating that the final top priority list would include the following nine projects:

- Convention Center
- Foss Waterway
- Tacoma Dome area/LeMay Museum
- Parking system
- Public Safety Facility
- Housing & Housing Trust Fund
- Neighborhood and Business District improvements
- Greenspace and Ruston Way improvements
- Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

There being no further business, the Workshop was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

  
BRIAN EBERSOLE, MAYOR

ATTEST:   
RICK ROSENBLADT, CITY CLERK

18