



## ORDINANCE NO.

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to the City's Neighborhood Council Program; repealing  
2 and reenacting Chapter 1.45 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, "Neighborhood  
3 Councils," to update language and policies relating to the City's  
4 Neighborhood Council program.

5 WHEREAS, at the Neighborhoods and Housing Committee of February 4,  
6 2013, staff presented the approach for a comprehensive review of Chapter 1.45 of  
7 the Tacoma Municipal Code ("TMC"), "Neighborhood Councils," to include  
8 community outreach to existing Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council  
9 of Tacoma, stakeholder surveys, and focus groups, as well as Peer City review for  
10 Neighborhood Engagement best practices, and

11 WHEREAS, at three separate meetings during October 2013, a working  
12 group consisting of Chairs from each Neighborhood Council and the Community  
13 Council for Tacoma, along with members representing neighborhood groups  
14 Citywide, provided feedback to staff on the proposed revisions to TMC 1.45 for the  
15 purpose of removing language related to Neighborhood Council governance and  
16 administrative and procedural requirements in order for that language to be placed  
17 in a revised Standards and Guidelines document, and

18 WHEREAS the same working group provided feedback on the revised  
19 Neighborhood Council Program Standards and Guidelines ("Standards and  
20 Guidelines"), and

21 WHEREAS the Standards and Guidelines contain governance, administrative  
22 and procedural requirements for funding, as well as responsibilities and other  
23 direction for the Neighborhood Councils and for the Community Council, and  
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WHEREAS progress updates and summaries were presented to the  
Neighborhoods and Housing Committee on July 1, August 19, and November 4,  
2013, and

WHEREAS, at its meeting of November 18, 2013, the Neighborhoods and  
Housing Committee recommended for review and adoption by the City Council the  
proposed revisions to TMC 1.45 and the revised Standards and Guidelines, and

WHEREAS the revised Standards and Guidelines will be presented for  
consideration by the City Council at its meeting of December 17, 2013; Now,  
Therefore,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:**

That Chapter 1.45 of the Tacoma Municipal Code is hereby repealed and  
reenacted as set forth in the attached Exhibit "A."

Passed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy City Attorney



**EXHIBIT "A"**

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## Chapter 1.45 NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL PROGRAM

1  
2 Sections:

- 3 1.45.010 Purpose.  
4 1.45.020 Intent.  
5 1.45.030 Standards and guidelines.  
6 1.45.040 Neighborhood Council functions and responsibilities.  
7 1.45.050 Neighborhood Council boundaries and membership.  
8 1.45.060 Community Council of Tacoma functions and responsibilities.  
9 1.45.070 City responsibilities.  
10 1.45.080 Administrative provisions.  
11 1.45.090 Review and revision.

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13 **1.45.010 Purpose.**

14 The purpose of this chapter is to establish policies in support of neighborhood involvement in the deliberations  
15 and actions of City government through a Neighborhood Council Program, and to establish a Standards and  
16 Guidelines document that defines administrative responsibilities and procedures for the recognition and  
17 funding of Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council of Tacoma.

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19 **1.45.020 Intent.**

20 It is the intent of the City to engage its neighborhoods as broadly as possible in the issues and concerns that  
21 directly affect them. The City will support and promote a Neighborhood Council Program to foster open  
22 communication between the City and its neighborhoods and to create an environment in which residents are  
23 afforded an opportunity to participate in City government decisions in an advisory role.

24 The City's Neighborhood Council Program will support cooperation and consensus among residents and other  
25 diverse interests to craft solutions to mutual problems and to build a sense of personal pride in and  
26 responsibility for their neighborhoods. The City will support the Neighborhood Council Program in developing  
27 Neighborhood Council representation that is equitable in its community engagement and seeks to create an  
28 inclusive and accessible process including by the engagement of community members from low-income  
29 communities, communities of color, and other historically underrepresented populations.

30 Involvement with the Neighborhood Councils is not intended to limit the activities, role, or importance of  
31 existing neighborhood organizations, neighborhood business districts, and block watch groups or other similar  
32 neighborhood advisory or advocacy groups. While it is expected that these groups will take an active part in  
33 the Neighborhood Council Program, it is intended that they, like the Neighborhood Councils, remain  
34 independent entities.

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36 **1.45.030 Standards and guidelines.**

37 A Neighborhood Council Program Standards and Guidelines document will be adopted by resolution of the  
38 City Council. In order to be eligible for funding or to act in an advisory capacity to the City to advance  
39 neighborhood priorities, the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council must comply with  
40 administrative and procedural requirements contained in the Standards and Guidelines. The Neighborhood  
41 Council Program Coordinator will review the Standards and Guidelines document and provide  
42 recommendations for changes to the City Council at least every five years. Sixty (60) days' notice will be  
43 provided to the Community Council of Tacoma and the Neighborhood Councils in advance of any changes  
44 recommended to the City Council.

45 The Community Council of Tacoma may request a formal review of the Standards and Guidelines document  
46 every two years for the purpose of determining whether changes should be proposed to the City Council.

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48 **1.45.040 Neighborhood Council functions and responsibilities.**

49 Neighborhood Councils will serve in an advisory capacity to City government on matters concerning the  
50 general health, safety, and welfare of their neighborhoods. Neighborhood Council actions shall reflect the



needs and wants of the neighborhoods within their boundaries. The responsibilities and functions of the Neighborhood Councils are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

1 **1.45.050 Neighborhood Council boundaries and membership.**

2 A. Neighborhood Council boundaries. The City Council shall determine the boundaries of the Neighborhood  
3 Councils with the intention of recognizing existing neighborhood groups, and shall set those boundaries by  
4 resolution. A Neighborhood Council may propose boundary adjustments for consideration by the City Council,  
5 so long as there is agreement by any impacted Neighborhood Councils prior to request for consideration by the  
6 City Council.

7 B. Neighborhood Council membership. Although the primary purpose of the Neighborhood Council Program  
8 is to foster open communication in which residents are afforded an opportunity to participate in government  
9 decisions in an advisory role, the ability to participate on a Neighborhood Council Board and/or to vote at  
10 general meetings shall not be restricted to neighborhood residents only. It is the objective of the City Council  
11 for neighborhood residents, property owners, and business owners to have the opportunity to participate in the  
12 Neighborhood Council Program.

13 **1.45.060 Community Council of Tacoma functions and responsibilities.**

14 The Community Council shall act as a coalition of the independent Neighborhood Councils and serve as a  
15 forum for discussion of issues of broad interests. The Community Council of Tacoma will consist of three  
16 representatives from each of the Neighborhood Councils. The responsibilities and functions of the Community  
17 Council are contained in the Standards and Guidelines document.

18 **1.45.070 City responsibilities.**

19 A. The Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator. To further the neighborhood partnership between the  
20 City and its citizens, the Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator is the main contact and support for the  
21 Neighborhood Councils and Community Council, shall be responsible for coordinating assistance to the  
22 Neighborhood Councils and Community Council, and shall request support from other City departments as  
23 necessary. The Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator shall have the following specific responsibilities:

24 1. Support and promote property owner, business, and neighborhood participation within the Neighborhood  
25 Council program.

26 2. Promote and facilitate open communication between the City and the Neighborhood Councils and  
Community Council.

3 3. Act as an information clearinghouse and resource to the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council.

4 4. Notify the Neighborhood Councils, the Community Council, and other interested persons of meetings and  
hearings of citizen participation events.

5 5. Assist the Neighborhood Councils and the Community Council in planning and developing programs for  
citizen participation.

6 6. Receive and file Neighborhood Council bylaws and annual reports, review the bylaws and annual reports,  
and disburse them to the City Council and other City departments and make them available to the public.

7 7. Maintain contact information for all Neighborhood Council board members, officers, representatives to the  
Community Council, and individuals designated to receive all notices and other mailings on behalf of the  
Neighborhood and Community Councils.

8 8. Provide the contact information of those designated to receive all notices and other mailings on behalf of the  
Neighborhood and Community Councils to all City departments, and notify the departments of any changes.

9 9. Maintain a current map of all Neighborhood Council boundaries.

10 10. Maintain a City Resource Guide of key services and contacts for disbursement to the Neighborhood  
Councils and other stakeholders.

11 11. Conduct reviews of the Neighborhood Council Program for recommendations to the City Council.



B. Responsibilities of Other City Departments. All City departments shall:

1. Make a good faith effort to notify affected Neighborhood Councils of any significant policy matter which requires the exercise of City discretion and directly impacts the neighborhood. Notice should be provided as early in the planning or review process as possible. In no case shall notice be provided later than at the time required by established notification procedures. Notice of Citywide matters shall be provided to all the Neighborhood Councils and notice of matters affecting a specific locale of the City shall be forwarded only to the affected Neighborhood Councils. Notice shall be mailed to the officers of each Neighborhood Council. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

a. Notice of pending land use/environmental cases, decisions, and threshold determinations under the State Environmental Policy Act shall be provided to the affected Neighborhood Councils.

c. Notice of all public hearings shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils as requested by each individual council.

d. Copies of agendas for all citizen commissions, boards, and committees and the City Council shall be provided to the Neighborhood Councils as requested by each individual council.

e. Copies of City newsletters or other general communication mediums, as requested by each individual Neighborhood Council.

2. Make a good faith effort to solicit the position and reasoning of affected Neighborhood Councils on any significant policy matter which requires the exercise of City discretion.

3. Provide a list of the Neighborhood Councils and their contacts to the proponents of development and encourage the proponents to discuss their proposal with the affected Neighborhood Council(s).

4. Share information with the Neighborhood Councils and Community Council to assist them in performing their functions and responsibilities.

**1.45.080 Administrative provisions.**

A. This chapter does not limit the right of any person or group to participate directly in the decision-making process of the City Council or any City department.

B. Compliance with the Neighborhood Council program is not jurisdictional. Failure of the City or any City department to comply with any provision of this chapter will not invalidate any later action taken by any officer of the City; any City commission, committee, or board; or the City Council.

C. It is not the intent of this chapter to provide for new procedures or processes for legislative enactment, policy formulation, quasi-judicial decision-making or administrative practices.

D. It is not the intent of the City to delegate any portion of its authority to the Neighborhood Councils or Community Council.

E. Citizens retain all duties and obligations to participate in existing processes for legislative enactment, policy formulation, quasi-judicial decision-making or administrative practices. Participation in the Neighborhood Council program does not limit such duties and obligations.

**1.45.090 Review and revision.**

The Neighborhood Council Program shall be reviewed and revised if necessary by the City Council at least every five years, with a corresponding presentation to the City Council by Neighborhood Council Program Coordinator or other staff regarding the Program overall.

It is suggested that the Community Council of Tacoma conduct a review of the Neighborhood Council Program every five years and provide recommendations for updates to the City Council.