The purpose of the banner program is to enhance the appearance of Tacoma’s downtown streetscape and call attention to community-based activities and events that capitalize on public and private investment in our vibrant urban center.

The Local Development Council encourages banners that are attractive and communicate the inviting characteristics of downtown’s civic amenities and neighborhoods. Banners may not be used for for-profit enterprises, commercial advertising or to promote political candidates, parties, or issues.

Tacoma has many year-round special events, visitor attractions and conventions. Including banners in your marketing plan for upcoming events or celebrations can enhance your event.

These guidelines are provided to assist your group in design, location and fabrication details. The submittal process for approval to use the LDC’s banner hardware is also provided with an application form.

The LDC contracts with the City of Tacoma to manage the downtown banner program within the Business Improvement Area (BIA).

There are a total of 214 banner locations within the BIA as shown on the enclosed location plans:

- **A Street** 34 banners
- **Pacific Ave—University** 21
- **Pacific Ave—Museums** 20
- **Pacific Ave—Convention Center** 16
- **Pacific Ave—Business District** 48
- **Broadway** 35
- **Market Street** 35

---

**Local Development Council**

The Local Development Council (LDC) is the non-profit corporation 501(c)(4) created in 1988 to administer Tacoma's BIA. The LDC’s corporate leadership is comprised of both large and small ratepayers. The mission of the LDC is to provide common services for property owners in the BIA and to be an advocate for the general economic well being of downtown properties.

**Business Improvement Area**

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) comprises 84 key blocks within Tacoma's downtown core. Properties in the BIA are the focus for enhanced services, creating an environment for reinvestment that has helped stimulate revitalization. The BIA’s rough boundaries are currently 9th (to the north), Tacoma Ave. (to the west), ‘A’ Street (to the east), and 21st (to the south).
Street banners are an excellent way to communicate the vitality of a city and its community events. Banners add life and color to the streetscape and when done well, help distinguish one neighborhood from another. District banners are helpful wayfinding elements for visitors.

When you consider the visual complexity of urban environments, street banners present a very special design challenge. It’s not surprising that the most successful banners are often extremely simple, colorful, and bold in design. Images with a strong focus help attract the viewer’s attention. While complex designs with small details become just more street clutter.

Imagery and type should be appropriately scaled for long-range visibility by drivers and pedestrians. Text is often limited on banners and designed to be read very quickly, since the time to take in the message is short for a passing vehicle.

Banners are a communication tool, so it is strongly recommended that a professional graphic designer be hired to design and coordinate the production of your organization’s banners. This will help you achieve the most effective results. Decisions on correct scale, contrast, and typestyles, are just a few of the designer’s skill set.
Banner text should be concise and limited to as few words as possible—for reasons of size (legibility) and readability. A good rule of thumb is the area for type should be limited to a maximum of approximately 20% of the image area of the banner. The exception is when an expressive type-treatment is the major focus of the artwork.

We recommend you consider whether to include event dates on your banners. Banners with dates must be updated each year. In the case of more detailed information, web addresses serve as the public’s best resource to learn more about your event.

Acceptable text content includes:
- Event name
- Name of the organization
- A brief tagline
- Web address

Unacceptable content includes, but is not limited to:
- Prices
- Addresses
- Phone numbers

For best readability only a 20% area would be allocated to type.

Welcome to Antique Row. Please enjoy our many unique shops.

This is too much type to be read comfortably. It is too small and may distract drivers and

Avoid too much text and too small of letters.
These examples show how great banner design uses strong, simple elements. Like great posters, singular, easy to recognize images, or designs with a central focal point attract the eye and quickly communicate your message. Bright colors and easy text add to your message.
The size of Tacoma's banners is 30 x 60 inches, which is determined by the furnished hardware. With professional design, this banner size is appropriately scaled for both pedestrian and vehicular visibility.

Avoid this casing area for important details of your artwork and text since it will be wrapped around the banner arm.

Pole side grommet at top (sample of this detail available from LDC)

4" casing

4" casing

30"

60 overall"

Right Reading

Wrong Reading—banners are to be 2-sided to avoid this problem. They should read correctly coming and going.

Please confirm all specifications with the LDC before producing your banners.
Things to consider when sending out large print graphics for banner art:

- Use a vector based software (Adobe Illustrator™ preferred because of the handling of typography and the availability of CAD software extensions such as CAD Tools™ (by Hot Door), or Macromedia Freehand™ is another option)

- Have high quality, high resolution images—especially photography or scanned raster files.

- Allow a good amount of image for “bleed” to accommodate for sewn edges

- Create the file to a common scale, makes it easier to work with and save the file and also makes the printing job easier.

- Converting type to outlines alleviates any problems with font conversion at your fabricator.
A sponsor's symbol/logo is permitted provided that it occupies a maximum area of 8” x 8”.

Due to a limited size, it is recommended the sponsor’s logo should be positioned in one of the lower corners of the banner for best legibility.
Approved banners are installed on furnished brackets by the LDC.

Mounting

2” diameter arms hold the banner at the top and bottom. A round finial is untwisted to insert the banner casing around the banner arm and secures with the finial ball back in place.

NOTE: Banners are mounted in-board to the sidewalk, avoiding issues of street clearance for large passing vehicles.