

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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## **Elope 253 Offers Tiny Tacoma Weddings**

*Grand Opening: Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 1-4pm  
700 Court A, Tacoma, WA 98402*



*Photo courtesy of Elope 253*

TACOMA, Wash. – After 17 years of daydreaming, a Tacoma entrepreneur decided to take the plunge and open a small-scale wedding chapel that offers couples a stress-free, intimate experience. Owner and wedding officiant Rochelle Bergstrom hopes that Elope 253, with the support of the community, gives couples the courage to marry who and how they wish.

The elopement chapel is adjacent to Fireman's Park in downtown, surrounded by iconic and historic Tacoma buildings. The location merges urban and natural environments with a view of Commencement Bay. Visit Elope 253 for an open house during their grand opening, Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1-4pm.

Although her idea was churning for almost two decades it wasn't until summer of 2016 that Bergstrom found a way to shape and execute it. The business idea grew out of a need Bergstrom experienced when she was getting

married in 2000. "We didn't belong to a specific church, and didn't exactly feel like we belonged anywhere," remembers Bergstrom. "And we wanted to feel taken care of and simply show up with everything ready so we could just focus on us." Without a convenient elopement chapel nearby, the couple traveled to Las Vegas for an affordable, small, and memorable experience.

Since then, she wanted to open a small elopement chapel to provide a modern, charming space for people to tie the knot. While listening to an episode of the local podcast *Move to Tacoma* featuring Heather Joy, manager of Spaceworks Tacoma, she learned about the Creative Enterprise program and decided to make the next move and apply.

After accepting her application into the *Creative Enterprise Tier I* program, Spaceworks provided 14-weeks of training that taught Bergstrom about how to start a business and what local resources were available. By the end of the course, she developed a fully fleshed out business plan and pitched it to a panel of experts for feedback at Spaceworks' small business pitch event, Fish Tank in November 2016. Bergstrom was grateful for the support her idea received from other entrepreneurs and community members. "Spaceworks gave me the courage to express my dream out loud," said Bergstrom.

Bergstrom believes that community support is very important for couples who may want to elope or have a small wedding but, because of past societal pressures, may not always feel supported in their decision on how to marry.

Elope 253 offers three packages to meet the needs of different couples. There is the true, elopement-style wedding called "Elope & Go" with a quick but legal ceremony in their beautiful "chapel". Afterward, the couples receive a complimentary gift and go enjoy the city and their wedding day however they wish. Then there is the "Let's Elope" package that offers everything you need for a tiny, stress-free wedding including the venue, customized ceremony by an ordained officiant, flowers, champagne & donuts, and professional photography. Couples need only show up wearing something that makes them feel amazing. And, finally, they have the "Elope & Celebrate" package that includes everything from the "Let's Elope" package plus a small reception in the venue's downstairs lounge.



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*Spaceworks makes Tacoma culturally vibrant and economically strong through training and support for artists and creative entrepreneurs. Since launching in June 2010, Spaceworks has worked with over 250 artists and creatives in at least 43 spaces around Tacoma. Funders include the City of Tacoma, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber, Community Development Block Grant, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, South Sound Together, Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, USBank Foundation, The Bamford Foundation, and Point Ruston.*

For more information about Spaceworks visit: [www.SpaceworksTacoma.com](http://www.SpaceworksTacoma.com)