



# ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a  
Vibrant, Connected and Sustainable City

Adopted June 2025

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## Acronyms

<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act	<b>TOD</b>	Transit-oriented Development
<b>ADU</b>	Accessory Dwelling Unit	<b>UGA</b>	Urban Growth Area
<b>AMI</b>	Area Median Income	<b>UWT</b>	University of Washington Tacoma
<b>BIPOC</b>	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color	<b>WAC</b>	Washington Administrative Code
<b>BMP</b>	Best Management Practices	<b>WTU</b>	Warehousing, Transportation, and Utilities
<b>CFP</b>	Capital Facilities Program	<b>WUTC</b>	Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
<b>CAP</b>	Climate Action Plan		
<b>CPP</b>	Countywide Planning Policies		
<b>DADU</b>	Detached-Accessory Dwelling Unit		
<b>EMS</b>	Emergency Medical Service		
<b>EIS</b>	Environmental Impact Statement		
<b>FAR</b>	Floor Area Ratio		
<b>FIRE</b>	Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate		
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse Gas		
<b>GMA</b>	Growth Management Act		
<b>IRP</b>	Integrated Resource Plan		
<b>JBLM</b>	Joint Base Lewis-McChord		
<b>LEHD</b>	Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics		
<b>LOS</b>	Level of Service		
<b>MGD</b>	Million Gallons per Day		
<b>MIC</b>	Manufacturing Industrial Center		
<b>MUC</b>	Mixed-Use Center		
<b>mRFEI</b>	Modified Retail Food Environment Index		
<b>NPDES</b>	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System		
<b>PM2.5</b>	Particulate Matter 2.5		
<b>PAA</b>	Potential Annexation Areas		
<b>PSE</b>	the Puget Sound Energy		
<b>PSRC</b>	the Puget Sound Regional Council		
<b>RCW</b>	Revised Code of Washington		
<b>SMP</b>	Shoreline Master Program		
<b>SWM</b>	Solid Waste Management		
<b>TDR</b>	Transfer of Development Rights		
<b>TFD</b>	Tacoma Fire Department		
<b>TMC</b>	Tacoma Municipal Code		
<b>TMP</b>	Transportation and Mobility Plan		
<b>TPCHD</b>	Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department		
<b>TPL</b>	Tacoma Public Library		
<b>TPS</b>	Tacoma Public Schools		
<b>TPU</b>	Tacoma Public Utilities		





BOOK ONE

# Core Policy Elements



A stylized, light blue map of Tacoma, Washington, is visible in the background. The map shows the city's layout, including the waterfront, major roads, and surrounding areas. The map is rendered in a simplified, grid-like style with various shades of blue and white.

# 01 Introduction + Vision





# Introduction and Vision

# 01

## 1.1 Introduction

In 2024, Tacoma is the second largest city in the Puget Sound region and the most important business employment center in the South Sound region. Over the past two decades, Tacoma has seen a significant renaissance, with substantial reinvestment downtown and increased growth and vitality in the city’s eclectic neighborhoods. Recognizing Tacoma’s role in the region, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) designated Tacoma as a Metropolitan City, serving as Pierce County’s civic, cultural and economic hub and a focal point for future population and employment growth. As one of Washington State’s first-class cities empowered by its home rule charter, Tacoma retains broad legal authority to shape and invest in its future. This Comprehensive Plan guides those decisions toward a future where Tacoma is comprised of vibrant, inclusive, equitable communities where all residents have access to affordable housing, quality transportation, green spaces, and economic opportunity. This Comprehensive Plan builds on the City’s 2015 periodic review, responds to community needs, and fulfills the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements to plan for a 20-year period (till 2044). It also conforms to Pierce County’s Countywide Planning Policies (2022) and guidance from the PSRC’s VISION 2050.

Book I: Core Policy Elements

1	Introduction and Vision
2	Growth Strategy
3	Complete Neighborhoods
4	Environment and Watershed Health
5	Housing
6	Transportation
7	Economic Development
8	Parks and Recreation
9	Public Facilities and Services
10	Historic Preservation
11	Engagement and Administration

Contents

1.1	Introduction
1.2	Planning Framework
1.3	One Tacoma Plan Development
1.4	One Tacoma Plan Implementation

### TACOMA'S GROWTH TARGETS

	NEW HOUSING UNITS	NEW JOBS	PEOPLE
2044	42,865	70,800	105,977
2050	60,000	94,000	137,000

## WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan guides a community's development over the long term and describes how the community's vision for the future will be achieved. In short, it's a blueprint for the future of the city. It guides decisions on land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, parks, and the environment. It also sets standards for roads and other infrastructure, identifies how they'll be paid for, and establishes the basis for zoning and development regulations.

The plan takes a long-range perspective on topics that address the physical, social, environmental, and economic health of the city. Plan guidance is intentionally general, providing broad policy direction. The policy guidance established in the plan will be translated into action through specific implementation programs or regulatory actions developed by the City to fulfill the Plan's direction. This Plan is also a living document, adaptable to evolving conditions, and offering a framework for the consideration of policy changes.







# ONE TACOMA 2050

## What makes this plan unique?

One Tacoma 2050 is a next-generation Comprehensive Plan. It articulates a possible blueprint for the future of all climate-friendly cities, moving away from a downtown-centric growth pattern to a pattern of complete neighborhoods and employment centers. In the context of global and regional changes related to climate and demography, this Plan uniquely takes a community-defined approach to direct resources toward the future Tacomans want. Based on several years' worth of community engagement findings, this Plan focuses in measurable and observable ways on local priorities of equity, opportunity, public health, safety, and sustainability.



Several of these themes are integrated across all elements, creating mutually reinforcing actions and opportunities for inter-departmental collaboration on some of the City's most complex and pressing issues. Goals and policies supporting climate resilience, equitable and sustainable economic opportunity, community safety, and housing affordability can be found in several elements.

This strategic integration paves the way for smart investments that address multiple benefits at once. For example, a single City program can tackle environmental restoration at the same time as green job creation.



This Plan structure also reinforces and sustains important local initiatives such as the Climate Action Plan (CAP), Climate Resilience Strategy, Home in Tacoma, and the Green Economy Strategy. With this Plan, Tacoma also celebrates unique approaches to Historic Preservation and Environment and Watershed Health and Tribal partnership.

Building on its legacy as the first Historic Preservation program in Washington State, Tacoma now has a full element dedicated to Historic Preservation, and one that emphasizes the complex history of Tribal communities, Black communities, and other communities of color.



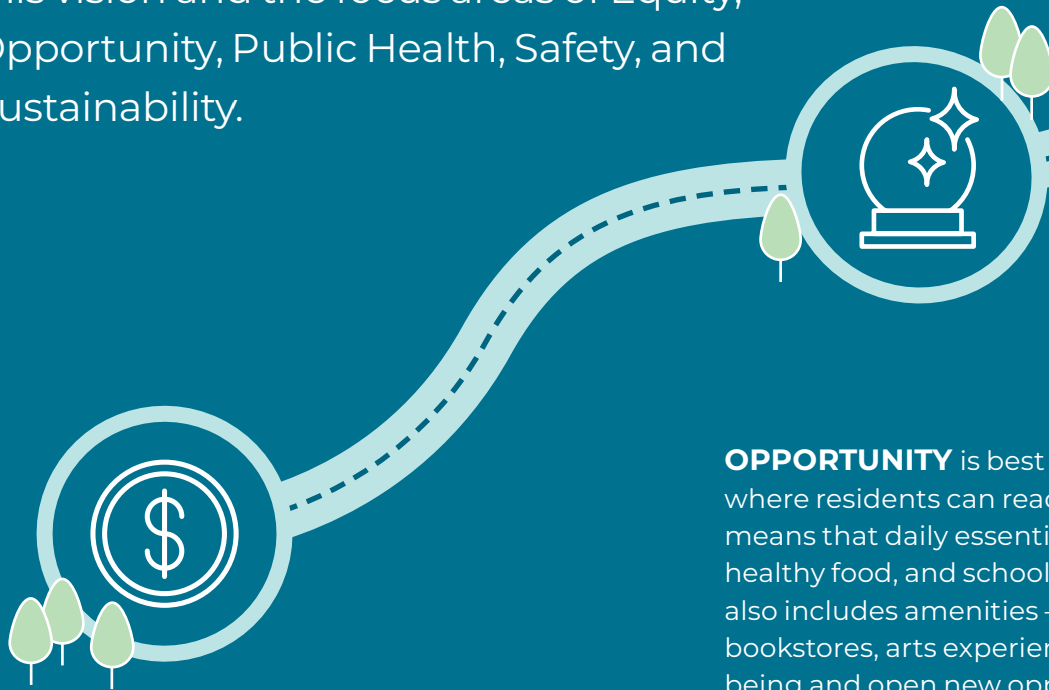
The Environment chapter is uniquely organized by watershed, setting the groundwork for managing services and resources in harmony with the natural environment. This Plan also sets new precedents for Tribal collaboration, including the recently adopted Tideflats subarea plan and alignment with the Puyallup Tribe's first Comprehensive Plan.

Source: [www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov](http://www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov)



# A VISION FOR TACOMA'S FUTURE

The One Tacoma 2050 Vision is that **every Tacoma resident is a safe and short walk, roll, bus, train, or bike ride away from daily essentials and community amenities, such as groceries, schools, parks, and healthcare.** The chapters of the plan are focused on contributing to this vision and the focus areas of Equity, Opportunity, Public Health, Safety, and Sustainability.



**OPPORTUNITY** is best reflected in neighborhoods where residents can reach their full potential. This means that daily essentials, such as healthcare, healthy food, and schools are within easy reach. It also includes amenities – gyms, personal services, bookstores, arts experiences – that inspire well-being and open new opportunities.

**EQUITY** refers to the ability for every resident to share in community progress. As Tacoma grows, care and attention must be paid to ensure that the benefits of this growth are equitably distributed. This includes attention to potential displacement and to how processes for public investment and access to services can be improved.



**Five cross-cutting focus areas** shaped this update. These focus areas capture priorities that were the result of many community conversations and reflect themes that Tacoma has already started to address in recent years.



→ **Throughout the following plan elements, key policies that attend to these five focus areas are highlighted.**

## WHAT'S IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The One Tacoma Plan is organized into “books.”

Book One comprises the core policy chapters or “elements” with goals, policies, and actions identified for each element. The goals and policies are numbered and labeled according to their respective elements. Goals and policies are aspirational and provide the means for Tacoma to achieve its vision for the future.

Book Two includes functional and programmatic elements that more directly span both policy and code/implementation.

### Book I Comprehensive Plan Elements and Descriptions

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION AND HOW IT SUPPORTS THE VISION
Growth Strategy (GS)	This chapter describes which land uses are allowed in which places across the city—and how growth in population, housing, and employment will be distributed across these places. It also addresses key transportation connections between these places, to form an overall planned network for the city.
Complete Neighborhood (CN)	This chapter articulates how Tacoma’s unique neighborhoods should look and feel to the people that live in and visit them. This includes policies affecting local building and site design, such as energy and resource-efficiency, safety, views, public realm, and historic and cultural resource preservation. It also addresses connectivity at the neighborhood scale.
Environment and Watershed Health (EN)	Using an ecological watershed approach, this chapter addresses ways in which Tacoma will invest in trees and forests, open space lands, and quality of air, water, and habitat to support healthy people and places.
Housing (H)	This chapter includes policies that support Tacoma’s housing goals, including the ability for all Tacomans to access and maintain safe and affordable housing that meets their household needs. This includes policies to grow overall housing diversity and stock and programs for anti-displacement and to create equitable access to housing.
Economic Development (EC)	Policies in this chapter promote access to a diversity of quality economic opportunities, including growth opportunities within an easy and accessible commute. This includes green economy strategies, and a favorable business climate for a range of priority industries.
Transportation and Mobility Plan (TMP)	This chapter includes the policies that affect how people move within Tacoma and connect to the regional transportation system. It describes the investments in mobility options necessary to achieve connected, compact, and equitable neighborhoods throughout Tacoma.
Parks and Recreation (P)	This chapter describes investments and programming to achieve a complete parks system for the residents of and visitors to Tacoma. A complete system reflects the city’s unique cultural communities and ecological settings and provides high-quality equitable access to recreational opportunities for people of all walks of life.
Public Facilities and Services (PFS)	This chapter sets standard levels of service and a plan to achieve and/or maintain them given anticipated development. Services and facilities such as police and fire response, libraries, utilities, and schools represent significant public investment and are a core part of a quality neighborhood experience.
Historic Preservation (HP)	This chapter defines the City of Tacoma’s preservation goals, policies, and actions for preservation and neighborhood conservation. It provides a framework for organizations engaged in community-based initiatives with interests in protecting and experiencing cultural resources.
Engagement and Administration (AD)	As this chapter describes, continued equitable community engagement, transparency, and accountability are fundamental to the work of plan implementation. Policies in this chapter describe the City’s effort to build and sustain partnership with community members in planning for and realizing this vision for Tacoma.

Book II Comprehensive Plan Programs

PROGRAM	PROGRAM FOCUS
Capital Facilities Program (CFP)	Implements the Comprehensive Plan Capital Facilities Element, documents priorities for the capital improvements the City intends to build in the next six years and plans for how to pay for these improvements. Functions as a budgeting tool, providing guidance for appropriations that are made through adoption of the budget.
Shoreline Master Program (SMP)	Includes goals, policies and development regulations for all shoreline areas including Commencement Bay and its waterways, the Tacoma Narrows, and Wapato Lake.
Tideflats Subarea Plan	Long-term function and viability of the Port of Tacoma maritime industrial activities and services, compatible transition between maritime industrial area and surrounding development, essential capital facilities, and an efficient multi-modal movement of goods.
Hilltop Subarea Plan	Smaller area plans to help implement the vision for the Downtown Regional Growth Center. Includes to North Downtown Subarea, South Downtown Subarea, and Hilltop Subarea. Each subarea plan focuses on issues and opportunities at a scale that is responsive to the subarea's specific needs.
North Downtown Subarea Plan (NDT)	Supporting a balanced, health economy, achieving vitality downtown, sustainable city, city of the arts, urban design, downtown circulation, and policies for each downtown district.
South Downtown Subarea Plan (SDT)	Smaller area plans to help implement the vision for the Downtown Regional Growth Center. Includes to North Downtown Subarea, South Downtown Subarea, and Hilltop Subarea. Each subarea plan focuses on issues and opportunities at a scale that is responsive to the subarea's specific needs.
Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan	Tacoma Mall is a designated Regional Growth Center. As such, a focused subarea plan will explore issues and opportunities at a scale that is responsive to the subarea's specific needs. Topics such as transportation, land use, environment, economy, housing, and public services and facilities are anticipated.





Every Tacoma Resident is a safe short walk, roll, bus, train, or bike ride away from daily essentials and community amenities, such as groceries, schools, parks, and healthcare.



**ONE TACOMA**  
VISION FOR A 15 MINUTE CITY



**FOCUS AREAS** Five cross-cutting priority themes integrated into goals and policies.



**EQUITY**  
Every resident shares in community progress.



**OPPORTUNITY**  
Neighborhoods where residents can reach their full potential.



**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Support to maintain healthy minds and bodies.



**SAFETY**  
A place where everyone feels safe to live, work, and play.



**SUSTAINABILITY**  
Achieving climate goals and planning for future Tacomans.

<div><b>EQUITY OUTCOMES</b></div> <div>Measurable outcomes used to operationalize the Vision and Focus areas by guiding policy writing and identifying potential priority groups</div>	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>HOUSING COST BURDEN</li><li>HOMELESSNESS</li><li>FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYING</li><li>LIFE EXPECTANCY</li><li>ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD</li><li>YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH</li><li>URBAN HEAT</li><li>AIR QUALITY</li><li>HIGH-CAPACITY TRANSIT ACCESS</li><li>BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE</li></ul></div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>TRANSIT DEPENDENCY</li><li>WALKABILITY</li><li>POLICE RESPONSE TIME</li><li>PERCEPTION OF SAFETY</li><li>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</li><li>CHILDHOOD POVERTY</li><li>GOOD AND PROMISING JOBS</li><li>ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, SCIENCE AND/OR HERITAGE</li><li>REPRESENTATION IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION</li></ul></div>
<div><b>POLICY AREAS</b></div> <div>Policies within "Chapters" of the plan are the City's tools for making progress on the Vision and Focus Areas. Targets within each chapter measure successful implementation of those policies</div>	<div><div><b>URBAN FORM</b> Enabling a mix of home types and businesses across neighborhoods<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key Targets: Jobs and residential growth</li></ul></div><div><b>COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS</b> Guiding the design and development of our city's buildings</div><div><b>HOUSING</b> Providing fair and accessible housing for all Tacoma residents<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key Targets: Housing units</li></ul></div><div><b>TRANSPORTATION</b> Building an accessible and affordable transportation network<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key Targets: Multi-modal level of service</li></ul></div><div><b>ENGAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION</b> Ensuring community members meaningfully shape Tacoma's future</div></div> <div><div><b>PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b> Providing services and facilities such as roads, utilities, parks, education, and safety<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key Targets: Levels of service</li></ul></div><div><b>PARKS AND RECREATION</b> Creating fair access to parks and recreation services<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key Targets: Access to a park or open space within a 10-minute walk</li></ul></div><div><b>ENVIRONMENT AND WATERSHED HEALTH</b> Protecting our watersheds, trees, open spaces, and wildlife habits</div><div><b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b> Boosting economic opportunities for all residents</div><div><b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b> Highlighting community histories and the human stories behind them</div></div>

# CLIMATE CHANGE WILL DISRUPT ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS.

The severity of these impacts will depend on the actions communities take to address and mitigate the known consequences of human-induced global warming.

Rising temperatures will lead to more frequent and intense heat waves, increasing risks to public health, particularly for vulnerable populations. Concerns surrounding extreme heat events are rising, especially following the July 2021 heat dome in the Pacific Northwest, which saw 126 Washingtonians die due to heat-related causes according to official estimates. The impact of the heat dome cascaded far beyond deaths as the healthcare system saw spikes in utilization; additionally, the Washington Department of Labor and Industries estimated that the state loses between \$111 million and \$153 million annually due to extreme heat events. In Tacoma, areas with limited tree canopy and high impervious surface coverage will experience worsening urban heat island effects, amplifying the impacts of extreme heat events when they occur, and further increasing public health risks.

As the climate warms, the Puget Sound Region will see warmer winters with heavier rainfall. Increased intensity and frequency of storms will lead to higher flooding risks. Flooding events have the potential of damaging property and infrastructure. Stormwater runoff carrying pollutants will impact water quality. In Tacoma, flooding events could mean disruptions in the transportation system since major highways are located near the Tideflats; it could also lead to increased occurrences of landslides, especially in areas most prone to present-day landslides.



Declining snowpack in the Cascades will disrupt water supply and hydrology, impacting drinking water availability, and ecosystems that depend on consistent stream flows. Mount Rainier's glacial retreat and reduced snowpack will have downstream impacts on the Puyallup River Watershed and disturb seasonal cycles. The fish species within this watershed depend on the cold-water habitat provided by the glaciers. Rivers and streams may become unsuitable for wildlife due to drier conditions and shifting weather conditions that impact breeding. Drier summers will also heighten the potential for droughts and wildfires.

As the 2030 Tacoma CAP outlines, the coming decades will prove critical for addressing and mitigating climate change impacts; meeting the City's net-zero goal while prioritizing communities most at-risk will require collaborative, strategic, and innovative actions. Decades of environmental work, from the City's first CAP in 2008 to its 2021 Climate Adaptation Strategy, lay the foundation for integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and actions into policies, programs, plans, and capital investments.



In the 2050 Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, many of the goals and policies demonstrate the City's holistic approach to fostering climate-resilient communities. Goals and policies address both climate mitigation and adaptation. By guiding growth and development that clusters destinations, creates compact centers, and situates along transit-orientated corridors, community members can reduce their carbon footprint if their daily needs and livelihoods can be fulfilled within their respective neighborhoods (**Growth Strategy, Complete Neighborhoods, Housing**). Flood protection, infrastructure upgrades, disaster management and continuity of services, and monitoring risk are all climate adaptation measures that are supported by policies in the Plan (**Environment and Watershed Health, Complete Neighborhoods, Public Facilities and Services**). Robust transportation planning supports multi-modal options, allowing community members to curtail their vehicle trips and limit greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), which can promote healthier communities overall due to the reduction of air, water, and noise pollution (**Transportation**). Strategic investments in city assets and infrastructure maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits for all Tacomans. Protecting Tacoma's environmental assets, its parks, open space, urban forest, wetlands, shorelines, and natural resources contribute to the community's public health as these assets can mitigate warming temperatures, filter pollutants in the water and air, and protect against flooding (**Parks and Recreation, Environment and Watershed Health**). The incorporation of climate-responsive design in facilities can help manage stormwater runoff and urban heat island; pursuing adaptive building reuse and energy-efficient facilities can limit environmental impacts as well as create opportunities to grow green businesses and develop green trades (**Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Services**).

Communities across Tacoma will experience climate change impacts differently. Communities that are historically overburdened with health, social, and environmental inequities will experience impacts more severely. The 2050 Tacoma Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the climate disparities, as they are amplified inequities, and sets out to close the gap with policies prioritizing overburdened communities through early engagement and involvement, improving access to environmental assets, and responding to social vulnerabilities.

## 1.2 Planning Framework

### WASHINGTON GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT

Adopted in 1990, the GMA requires municipalities to plan for accommodating growth and grants counties, in consultation with cities, the authority to assign growth allocations for population and employment. In general, GMA goals support focused growth in designated urban centers with adequate infrastructure, while preserving the rural area around the urban centers. The GMA identifies specific requirements for comprehensive plans, focused primarily on the required land use, housing, transportation, utilities, and capital facilities elements.

The One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan update has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the GMA.

### VISION 2050

Vision 2050 is the region's plan to provide an exceptional quality of life, opportunity for all, connected communities, a spectacular natural environment, and an innovative, thriving economy.

Over the next 30 years, the central the Puget Sound region will add another million and a half people, reaching a population of 5.8 million. To ensure that all residents benefit from the region's thriving communities, strong economy, and healthy environment as the population grows, PSRC partnered with counties, cities, Tribes, and others to develop VISION 2050. VISION 2050 was adopted in 2020 and includes the region's multicounty planning policies, local and regional actions, and a strategy for how and where we grow through 2050.

The plan includes a Regional Growth Strategy that focuses growth in centers and near transit, with the goal of sustaining and creating different types of urban communities while preserving the region's working resource lands and open spaces. Beyond just the numbers, the Growth Strategy has policies and actions to help cities and counties plan for coming population and employment growth.

VISION 2050 designates Tacoma as one of five Metropolitan Cities in the region, and the only Metropolitan City in Pierce County. As a Metropolitan City, Tacoma will serve as a focal point for accommodating both population and employment growth. By planning for future population, housing, and employment that align with VISION 2050 targets, the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan seeks to fulfill its role and responsibility as a Metropolitan City. At the same time, the Comprehensive Plan seeks to ensure that the vision for Tacoma's character, services, and quality of life are maintained and enhanced as the city grows. The Comprehensive Plan addresses each of the policy areas in VISION 2050 to ensure alignment.



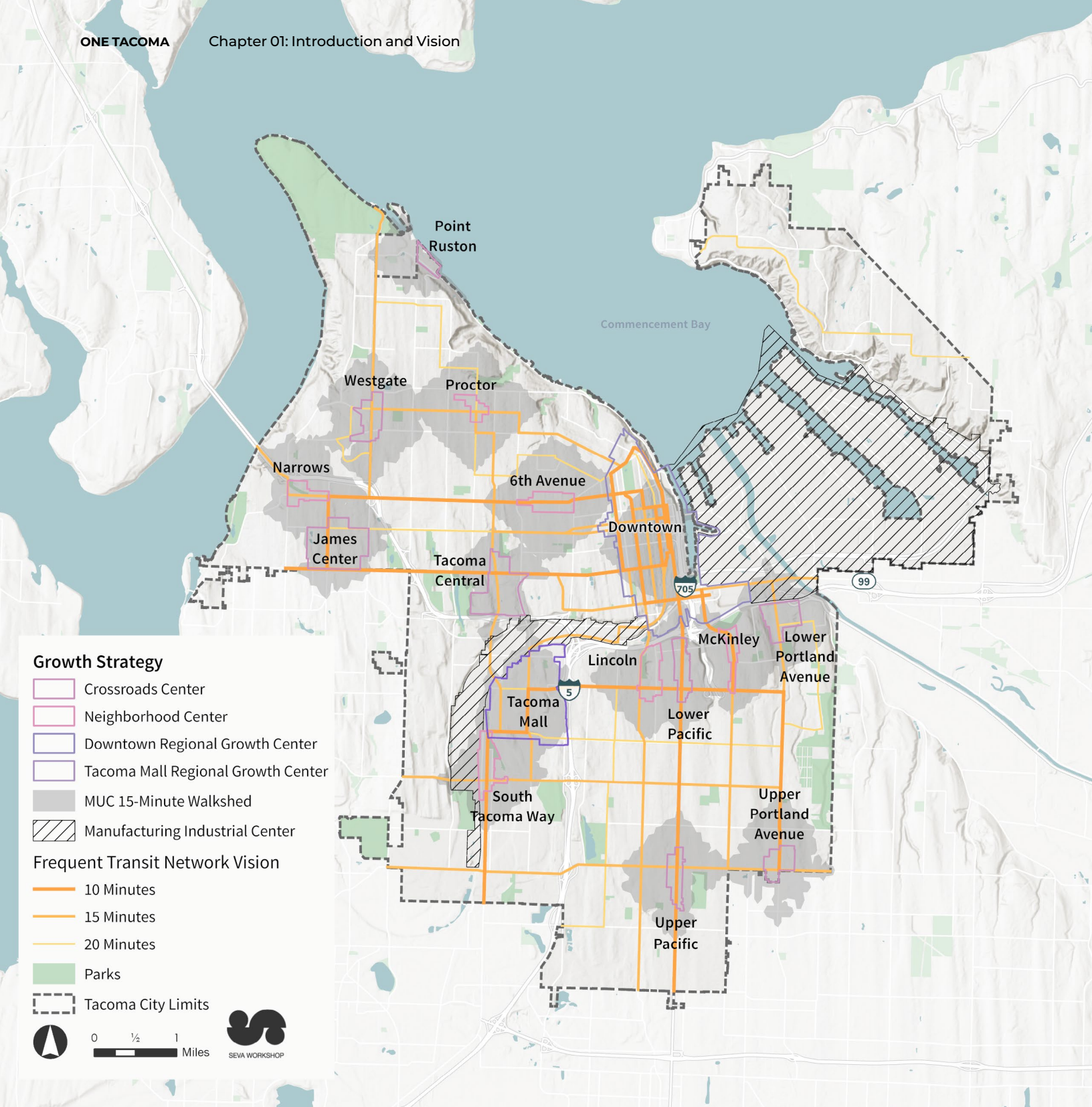


Exhibit 1. Mixed-Use Centers in Tacoma

## PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

In accordance with the Washington GMA, the Pierce County Regional Council maintains the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to coordinate planning on a countywide basis. Last updated in 2022, the CPPs provide guidance to cities on a wide range of topics, including affordable housing, community and urban design, economic development, health and well-being, historic and cultural preservation, natural resources, and transportation facilities. The Tacoma Comprehensive Plan has been prepared consistent with the guidance of the Pierce County CPPs.

In 2020, Tacoma participated in a collaborative county-wide effort led by Pierce County to prepare an updated Buildable Lands Report. This report documents development trends and the capacity of the County's urban growth areas (UGAs). For Tacoma, the 2022 Buildable Lands Report shows that there is available capacity to meet the City's 2044 growth targets (see Appendix 1). However, if 2050 targets are considered, the employment capacity does not keep pace with the growth target. Land use policy will need to be updated over time to expand Tacoma's employment capacity, consistent with the growth strategy.

## LOCAL COORDINATED PLANNING

The City of Tacoma also coordinates comprehensive planning at a more local level to ensure alignment with neighboring jurisdictions such as the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and the Cities and Towns of Fife, University Place, Ruston, Lakewood, and Parkland. Transportation planning is coordinated with neighboring jurisdictions, including level-of-service standards and concurrency provisions. Key points of alignment include:

- ▶ **The Puyallup Tribe of Indians.** The Puyallup Tribe of Indians is a sovereign nation, neighboring jurisdiction (part of Tacoma is on unceded reservation land), and federally recognized Indian Tribe that has stewarded the headwaters of the Puyallup River since time immemorial. Over the last two hundred years, several events including the establishment of the City of Tacoma created a need to coordinate planning between the jurisdictions (more details follow in this chapter). The Puyallup Tribe completed their first Comprehensive Plan in 2022. The City of Tacoma conducted a Tribal Consultation as part of this Comprehensive Plan process, including early formal notice of the plan and ongoing involvement to align Comprehensive Plans in accordance with SHB 1717.
- ▶ **Port of Tacoma.** Established in 1918, the Port of Tacoma is a public deepwater seaport serving as a key economic gateway to Pierce County and the greater the Puget Sound region. The Port is a key partner to the City of Tacoma and the Puyallup Tribe in economic development and land and natural resources stewardship, especially in the New Tacoma/Tideflats area.
- ▶ **Other City Departments and partner agencies.** Many other City departments and partner agencies collaborate with Planning and Development services to develop and deliver the vision set forth in the One Tacoma Plan. These include entities such as the Mayor's Office, Office of Strategy, Office of Equity, Parks Tacoma, Public Works, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).



## INTERNAL ALIGNMENT

- ▶ Consistency with City of Tacoma strategies and initiatives is crucial to the effectiveness of the One Tacoma Plan. Since the last major update, the City of Tacoma has developed strategies and action plans to respond to community priorities including housing, safety, and climate. These include:
  - ▶ **Home in Tacoma**
  - ▶ **Affordable Housing Action Strategy**
  - ▶ **Anti-Displacement Strategy**
  - ▶ **Community Safety Action Strategy**
  - ▶ **Vision Zero**
  - ▶ **Climate Action Plan**
  - ▶ **Climate Adaptation Strategy**
  - ▶ **Tacoma 2035 Strategic Plan.** Tacoma 2035 is a strategic plan and vision for the future of Tacoma. The previous iteration of the strategic plan, Tacoma 2025, was adopted in 2015. The updated strategic plan will continue to guide the City in decision-making and resource allocation, as well as performance tracking and reporting.

As an “umbrella” document of high-level goals and policies, the updated One Tacoma plan links these plans at a holistic level and provides a supportive framework for their continued implementation. Goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan direct a range of actions and investments that help the city achieve these community-centered outcomes.



# COORDINATION WITH THE PUYALLUP TRIBE OF INDIANS

The spuyaləpabš or Puyallup Tribe of Indians have lived on the headwaters of the Puyallup River since time immemorial. The Tribe has traditionally hunted, gathered, and fished throughout the Puget Sound. In the Treaty of Medicine Creek signed in 1854, the Tribe ceded all of its traditional territory except a reservation set aside to house, sustain, and benefit the Puyallup people.



Image above: [www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov](http://www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov); Courtesy of Puyallup Tribe Historic Preservation

Image to the right: [www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov](http://www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov); Lushootseed posters

λ'uʔalalus čəʔ

We practice our culture







*Image Source: [www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov](http://www.puyalluptribe-nsn.gov); Puyallup Canoe Family during Paddle to Puyallup 2018 by Jennifer Squally*

The Puyallup Reservation includes areas of modern day east and north-east Tacoma, as well as parts of Fife, Milton, Edgewood, Puyallup, and Pierce County. Over the next century, the Tribe would see 99% of its lands sold off and taken. Despite this, the Tribe has persevered, continued to regrow its land base, and actively practices its traditional treaty rights.

In 2022, the Puyallup Tribe completed their first Comprehensive Plan which provides an integrated approach to development and related economic and social issues, with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and climate resilience. The Tribe's vision centers on the following themes:



#### CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES



#### PLANNING FOR HEALTHY SALMON



#### COORDINATED LAND USE, CONSERVATION, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



#### TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER



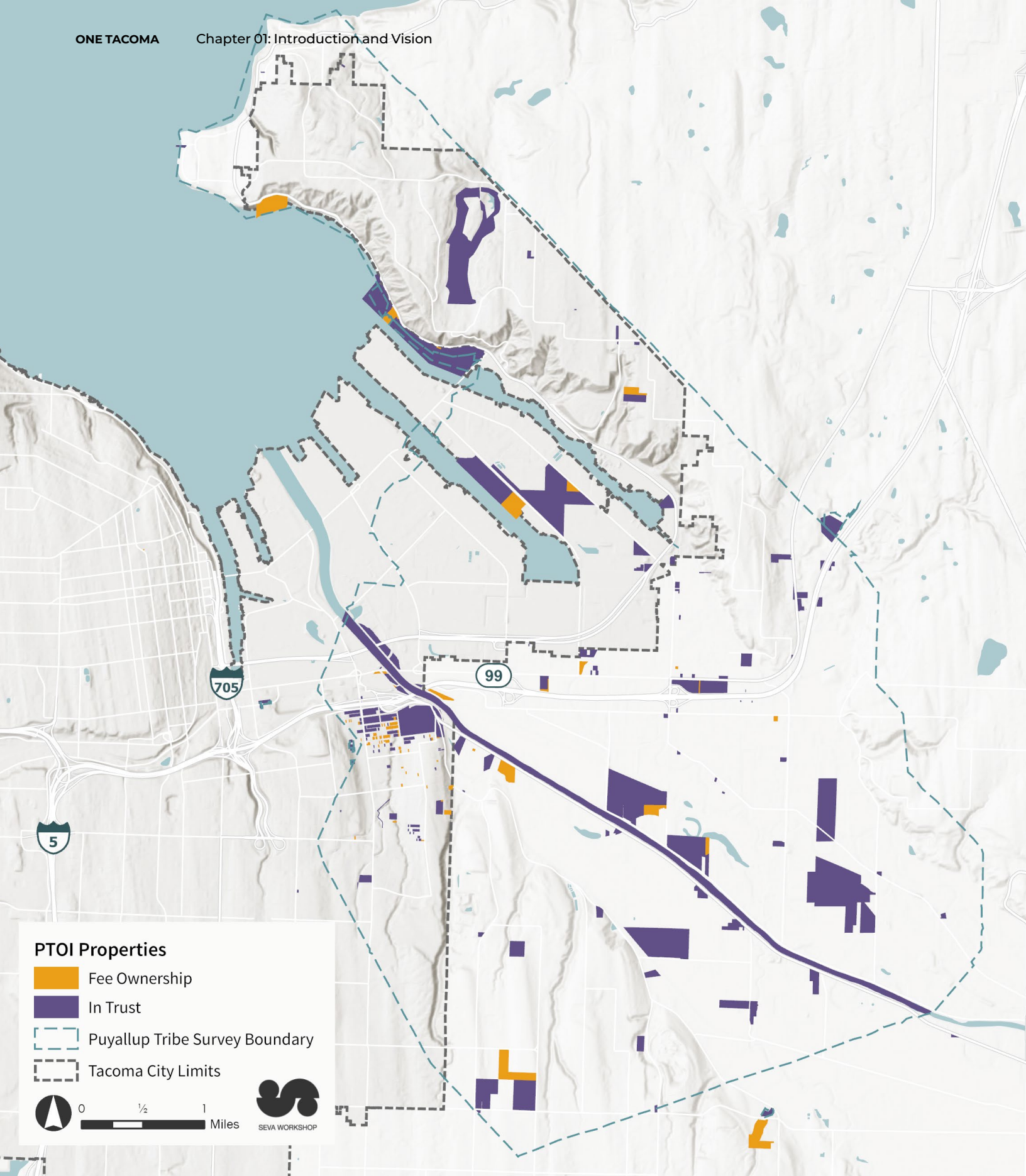
#### ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS WHO WANT A HOME SHOULD HAVE A HOME



#### ACTION AROUND CLIMATE CHANGE



#### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS



**Exhibit 2. Lands in Tribal Trust Status**  
*These lands are under Puyallup Tribal jurisdiction and not subject to City of Tacoma land use and zoning regulations*

## The Puyallup Tribe Land Claims Settlement Agreement

The Puyallup Tribe Land Claims Settlement Agreement passed by Congress in March 1990 binds its signatory members, which includes the City of Tacoma, to adhere to specific provisions when conducting land use planning.

1. The Tribe retains its authority to prevent negative impacts on the fishery resource and habitat.
2. Both the Tribe and local governments will follow federal law for dealing with applications by the Tribe and Tribal members to continue to put land into trust, (refer to Exhibit 2) including Bureau of Indian Affairs regulations.
3. Both the Tribe and the local governments will consult with each other concerning certain kinds of land use decisions, which include plan ordinances, environmental regulations, and other applicable actions triggered under the Settlement Agreement. The Agreement includes a set of guidelines, standards, and factors the parties will consider when they make land use decisions.
4. Fourth, under the Settlement Agreement, signatories are obligated to provide services and utilities to the Tribe's trust lands in situations where there is an agreement in place for those services.

## Opportunities For Coordinated Planning

In addition to the procedures for consultation outlined in the Land Claims Settlement Agreement and SHB 1717, the City of Tacoma recognizes the value of coordinated intergovernmental planning with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians to facilitate a deeper understanding of our shared interests, and as a mode to meaningfully bring together the parties to identify concerns, discuss issues, examine solutions, resolve problems, and employ joint approaches where appropriate.

In particular, the following are opportunities for the City and Puyallup Tribe of Indians to continue to develop a coordinated approach to planning and development:

- ▶ Tideflats Subarea Planning
- ▶ Permit intake and review
- ▶ Portland Avenue Corridor Planning
- ▶ Climate resiliency planning
- ▶ Cultural and archaeological preservation

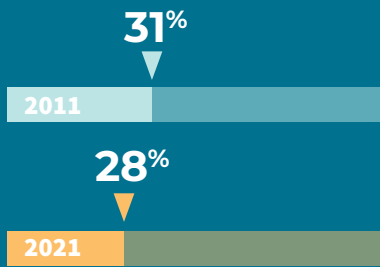


# WHO ARE WE PLANNING FOR?

The years since the last Comprehensive Plan have brought growth and change. The city has an estimated population of 217,332 people (2021), up 9% over the past ten years. While the city has been growing, outlying suburban areas have been growing more rapidly.







In 2021, **28%** of Tacoma households had children compared to **31%** in 2011.

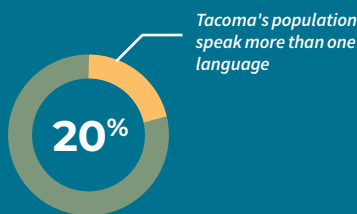
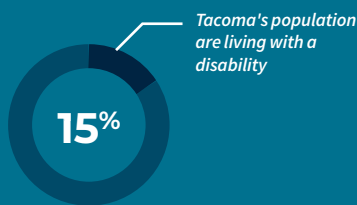
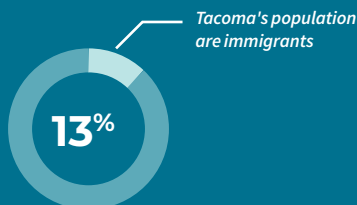
In the most recent decade, Tacoma has experienced demographic shifts. Families with children are declining as a share of the population in Tacoma while growing as a proportion of households in other parts of Pierce County.

Retirees and working age adults without children are growing as a proportion of the Tacoma population.

The proportion of residents who identify as non-Hispanic people of color or as Hispanic or Latino increased from **38%** to **43%**.

Tacoma is home to a diverse population of people of color and continues to diversify.

However, communities of color tend to be concentrated in the New Tacoma, Eastside, South End, and South Tacoma neighborhood council districts.



The City of Tacoma is home to 26,123 foreign-born residents, comprising 13% of its total population, though rates of immigration have slowed over the past decade. Roughly 20% of the population speak more than one language. Eight percent of the population prefer a home language and speak English less than “very well.”

Housing, income, and race are highly linked in Tacoma. Black households are the only racial or ethnic group in Tacoma to experience declining homeownership rate over recent years and the most likely to be renting. Homeownership rates have also declined for the income bracket between 30-50% area median income (AMI). Nearly half of renting households are cost-burdened.

Fifteen percent of the Tacoma population are living with a disability, slightly higher than the rate in Pierce County overall (13%), and a proportion that has been relatively stable over the years.



## 1.3 One Tacoma Plan Development

### COMMUNITY PROFILE

An updated community profile provided a refreshed understanding of who lives in and visits Tacoma, as well as key trends from the last decade. The initial profile, using secondary sources, was also key for developing the community engagement strategy. A few findings are highlighted here and the full community profile is available at this [link](#).

- ▶ While the City of Tacoma has been growing, outlying suburban areas have been growing more rapidly. Though families with children are declining overall, they are highly concentrated in pockets of Tacoma (Eastside, South Tacoma, and South End neighborhood council district), in some places making up over 40% of all households.
- ▶ Families with children are declining as a share of the population in Tacoma and are proportionately more prevalent in outlying parts of Pierce County .
- ▶ Retirees and working age adults without children are growing as a proportion of the Tacoma population.
- ▶ Most communities of color are likely residing in the New Tacoma, Eastside, South End, and South Tacoma neighborhood council districts. A high concentration of Asian, Hispanic, and Latino communities living in those areas have varying degrees of English proficiency. Asian and Pacific Islander households have a lower English proficiency compared to other multilingual households.
- ▶ Housing, income, and race are highly linked in Tacoma. For example, Black households are the only racial or ethnic group to experience a declining homeownership rate over recent years and the most likely to be renting.
- ▶ Home ownership rates among very low-income households (those between 30–50% AMI) are declining in the Tacoma market. In contrast, more *extremely* low-income households are living in homes that they own relative to 10 years ago.



### ENGAGEMENT WITH ARTISTS

An art-forward approach is woven throughout the engagement conducted for the Comprehensive Plan. The City worked with artists in the development and design of communication materials and engagement activities.





“Each of our MUCs should have a public library, a pocket park, and a space for food trucks.”

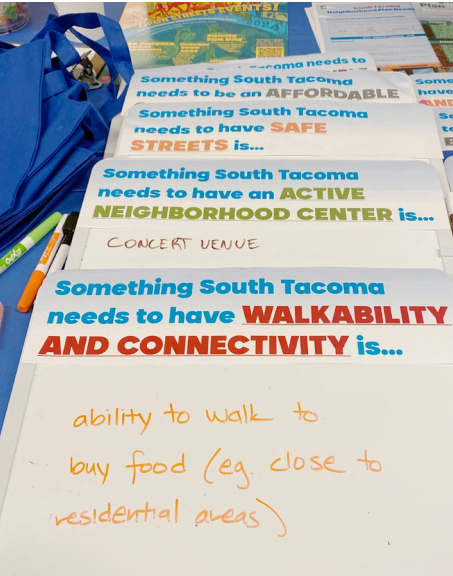
- IDEAS WALL COMMENT

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

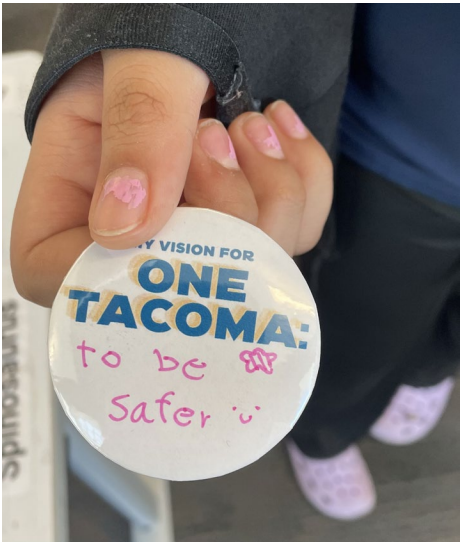
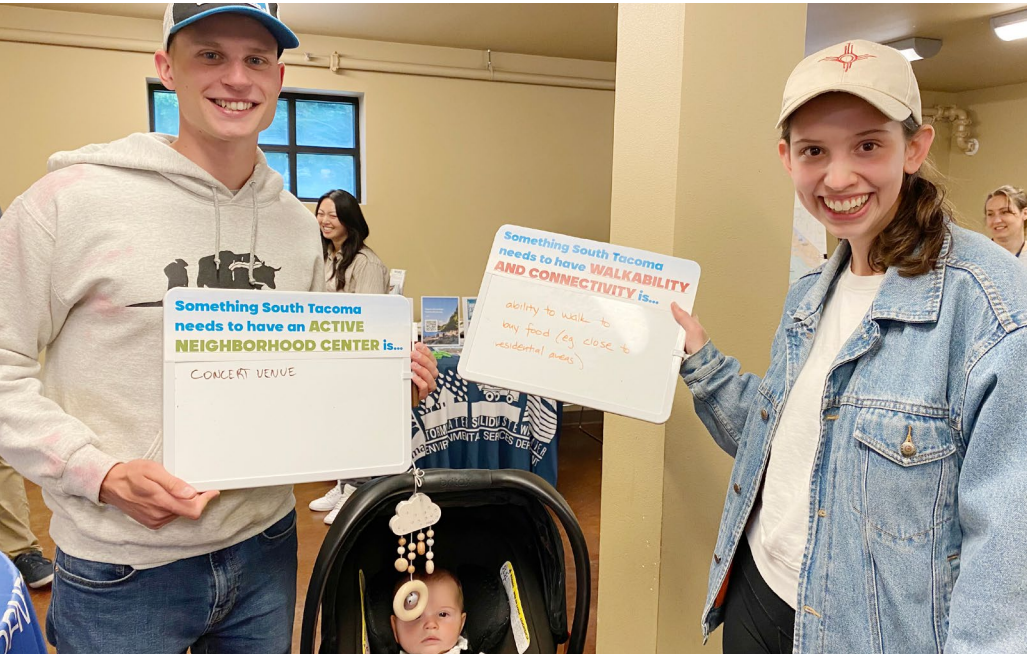
The City of Tacoma updated its Comprehensive Plan (2050) alongside its Strategic Plan (2035) and a new Community Safety Action Strategy. Planning and Development Services (PDS) collaborated closely with the Office of Strategy to create a unified and targeted community engagement strategy that leveraged existing data and engagement efforts to minimize respondent burden and confusion. This strategy included an analysis of recent community engagement (see Recent Engagement Gap Analysis) so that additional engagement could focus on gaps. All plan writers worked from this common knowledge base.

Comprehensive Plan engagement took place in three phases. The objective of Phase One informed initial policy development by broadly socializing the planning effort and attending to gaps in existing engagement. The objective of Phase Two was primarily to inform the community of the Comprehensive Planning process, leveraging summer events to build interest. The objective of Phase Three was to gather broad input on draft policies, including a public hearing.











Engagement activities included in-person and virtual workshops, pop-ups at community events, attendance at meetings of existing neighborhood groups, a Social Pinpoint website that hosted the Ideas Wall open public comment forum, and a community survey that was available in several languages. Collaboration with language and cultural ambassadors was a key accessibility strategy. The City of Tacoma has an existing language and cultural ambassador program with strengths in engaging the Slavic, Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish language speaking communities.

The City hosted a total of nine community visioning workshops, one per neighborhood and one virtual, and received a total of 402 comments on thematic gaps identified in the gap analysis. Workshops included creative hands-on activities to get feedback on topics and were supported with robust outreach and by the City's language ambassador team. The community survey received approximately 800 responses. In sum, the City received roughly 1,600 comments through these engagement efforts.

The full community engagement summary, including description of strategies and findings, is available at this [link](#).



## Building Community Capacity

For the Comprehensive Plan, the City expanded their ambassador concept to include team members with strengths in engaging the Black community. This “Street Team” was a core resource in the execution of engagement tools to co-create culturally and linguistically relevant materials and to identify and implement engagement strategies that would work with focus communities. Street Team members were compensated at \$75/hour.

Street Team members were a primary audience for capacity building.



Building the community's understanding of the planning process, requirements, and opportunities to influence policy development both (1) benefited the One Tacoma planning process, and (2) simultaneously built community support for future engagement.





## EQUITY ASSESSMENT

The One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan update includes an equity assessment. A core project management team of staff from Planning and Development Services and the Office of Strategy collaborated on a priority list of equity outcomes toward which the respective plans could focus attention. These outcomes were also reviewed and vetted by other department partners. An equity analysis described the baseline conditions for these outcomes disaggregated to the extent possible by neighborhood and race and ethnicity. This baseline also included research into the historical context and antecedent policies that have contributed to the inequities that can be observed today.

From here, a policy and language analysis rubric was developed to guide policy writers in strengthening focus and intention on these equity outcomes. A core Equity Assessment team then applied the rubric to an “audit” of the existing 2015 Comprehensive Plan to identify opportunities for improvement. By aligning on these priority outcomes through the update process and applying a systematic approach to examining individual goals and policies, the Comprehensive Plan will be more aligned and impactful on City equity priorities.

The full Equity Baseline Context and Outcomes document are available at this [link](#).

## LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

**Tacoma Planning Commission.** The Tacoma Planning Commission is a nine-member body with three-year terms appointed by the City Council to advise on all land use matters. Composed of one resident from each City Council district, and four residents with expertise in environmental sustainability, public transportation, economic development, and architecture/historic preservation/urban design, the Commission brings a broad perspective to its review and recommendation of the draft plan to the City Council.

Beginning in 2023, the Planning Commission guided and conducted review of the Comprehensive Plan update over the course of several meetings. All meetings were advertised on the [City's website](#) and open to the public, with public comment opportunities provided at the meetings.

**Tacoma City Council.** Comprised of nine elected officials serving four-year terms—including the mayor—City Council is the primary governing body of Tacoma with law-making, budgeting, and decision-making power. City Council conducts public hearings and accept comments prior to any decision, including plan adoption. Information about the hearing for the plan and how to comment was made available on the [City's website](#).

**PSRC.** PSRC reviewed and certified the plan to ensure alignment with Multicounty planning policies. Plan certification is necessary to ensure ongoing eligibility for regional transportation funds.

A public hearing will be held. Following consideration of public comments, the Planning Commission will recommend the draft Comprehensive Plan to the City Council for review and final action.



## 1.4 One Tacoma Plan Implementation

### HOW IS THE PLAN IMPLEMENTED?

City officials and staff are responsible for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Tacoma's blueprint for the future. It helps to focus, coordinate, and direct City actions by providing a comprehensive and common vision. It guides decisions concerning land use regulations, programs, capital improvements, and functional plans.

The City Council plays a key role in Plan implementation by adopting the City's budget, levying taxes, and making appropriations for programs and services. The City Council considers amendments to land use regulations and planning policies recommended by the Planning Commission and also considers actions to support the Comprehensive Plan that are recommended by other advisory groups and the community at large.

The City's Planning and Development Services Department is responsible for many actions that help to implement the Comprehensive Plan, such as enforcing land use regulations and developing and maintaining functional plans such as subarea plans and the SMP. Other City Departments that maintain functional plans that support the Comprehensive Plan include Community and Economic Development, Environmental Services, Neighborhood and Community Services, Office of Management and Budget, and Public Works. Effective coordination between departments is needed to ensure that these different functional plans are consistent with each other. Five key ways the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan are implemented include the enforcement of land use regulations, the development and funding of City programming, capital improvement investments, functional plans, and subarea plans.

- ▶ **Land Use Regulations:** Land use regulations are laws that establish what can or can't be built in a given location. The key regulatory mechanism that implements the Comprehensive Plan is Tacoma's Land Use Regulatory Code. This code contains the development regulations that govern how land is used, developed, or redeveloped in the city. This code is found in Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code and includes regulations for platting, zoning, shorelines, and critical areas. Tacoma delegates appeals regarding land use regulations and enforcement matters to the Office of the Hearings Examiner, a quasi-judicial body empowered to adjudicate administrative decisions (Title 1.23 Tacoma Municipal Code).
- ▶ **Programs:** City programs must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In fact, most City programs are tools for implementing the Plan. Examples include the Affordable Housing Action Strategy, the CAP, and Neighborhoods Plans such as those for the McKinley Hill, South Tacoma, and the Proctor neighborhoods.
- ▶ **Capital Improvements:** All capital improvements undertaken by the City must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including those for public facilities and services. This ensures that the City provides adequate public services and that the City's infrastructure supports the land use pattern envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

- ▶ **Functional Plans:** Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services in the city. Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan provides overarching guidance for the City's many other plans, including the Economic Development Strategic Framework, Human Services Strategic Plan, Environmental Action Plan, ArtFull Tacoma Plan, Urban Forest Manual, Surface Water Manual, Public Works Design Manual, and Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) system plans. These plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. As such, implementation of functional plans supports implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Some functional plans, such as the SMP and CFP, are also formal elements of the Comprehensive Plan and subject to the rules and procedures governing that Plan.
- ▶ **Subarea Plans:** The Comprehensive Plan provides citywide guidance for future land use, transportation, and other infrastructure needs. For smaller geographic areas, subarea planning allows for a more detailed consideration of specific goals, needs, and interests within a specified area. The adoption and incorporation of subarea plans into the Comprehensive Plan adds greater detail, guidance, and predictability to future development. Recent examples of subarea planning in Tacoma includes the Tideflats, Pacific Avenue, and Tacoma Mall subarea plans. Future subarea planning in the City's mixed-use centers (MUCs) would help focus priorities and actions needed to achieve the future vision for each of these areas.

Coordination and partnership with other City departments, community organizations, neighboring jurisdictions, and the sovereign nation of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians was essential during the development of the Comprehensive Plan and will continue to be so during plan implementation. The policies in this plan set the framework for many implementing actions that will require coordination across several stakeholders. For example, the TPCHD Healthy Community Strategy and Parks Tacoma's recently updated Strategic Plan will both include opportunities to implement actions that support Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. The City has a baseline goal of meeting with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians at least annually to compare and coordinate implementation actions, and individual departments, such as Public Works, will meet much more regularly. The City also commits to regular interdepartmental communications to share information about City functional plans and to ensure that they are consistent with one another. Depending on the policies and actions under consideration, the City may set up temporary coordinating groups across departments and/or with community-based organizations or participate in initiatives led by partners outside of the City.







## HOW IS THE PLAN KEPT UP TO DATE?

The Comprehensive Plan articulates the City's long-term strategy for the future. At the same time, the goals and policies in the Plan are designed to be flexible enough to respond to changing conditions.

Stewarding the plan means it is reviewed and evaluated to ensure that it addresses changing conditions in the city, new information, and current state and regional policy guidance. The City seeks to maintain a Comprehensive Plan that is relevant and consistent with current regulatory and policy frameworks and community priorities. A coordinated and intentional approach to community engagement (detailed in the Engagement and Administration Element) will ensure that current community conditions, knowledge, and input are reflected in the Plan, along with priorities, information, and regional, state, and federal policies and regulations.

Two primary means for updating the plan are annual amendments and the 10-year plan revision cycle. This current plan was developed as part of a 10-year revision cycle (or "major update"). The Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing the plan and recommending amendments as necessary. The Planning Department and governing bodies should consider the combined overall effect and equity impacts of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments concurrently and across overlapping geographies.

## ANNUAL AMENDMENTS

Amendments can include the modification, addition, or deletion of policies. They can also involve the addition of new Plan elements. As required by the Washington State GMA, a municipality's Comprehensive Plan generally can be modified only once annually; however, there are a few exceptions as outlined in Tacoma Municipal Code 13.02.045.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan can be initiated by individual community members, neighborhood groups, Neighborhood Councils, the Planning Commission, the City Council, or City staff. Individual or neighborhood groups can apply to propose an amendment. Application materials are typically available mid-summer for the upcoming amendment cycle. Information and application materials can be found on the City's Planning Services webpage and by calling the Planning Services Division and talking with a planner.

Staff initiated amendments usually involve responding to state or federal laws, including changes to these laws, addressing deficiencies and inconsistencies, updating information, responding to a change in existing conditions or community desires, or addressing a combination of these factors.

Both the Planning Commission and the City Council hold public hearings on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing is an opportunity for the public to speak in support of or opposition to amendments; they are often held on the same day as the City Council or Planning Commission meetings.

## 10-YEAR PLAN REVISION CYCLE

In addition to yearly amendments, the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 36.70.A.130) requires that the City revise its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations every ten years. The revision process includes updating the Plan to reflect current growth targets, policy requirements, and information and conditions in the community, drawing on community engagement. The revision process provides the opportunity to conduct a more extensive update to the Plan than happens during the yearly amendment process.

## How do we know the Plan is working?

The Comprehensive Plan was designed to meet several concurrent sets of objectives. First, the Plan meets regulatory requirements set forth by the GMA. Second, the policies and goals in the Plan were developed to align with community priorities for the future growth and character of Tacoma, including as articulated by City Council, the Planning Commission, and the public. Third, an equity policy audit helped identify ways that the Comprehensive Plan's policies could support more equitable outcomes and be more inclusive and accessible. Of course, the Plan is not implemented in a vacuum. There are many external social, economic, and environmental factors that impact ultimate progress on equity outcomes and the One Tacoma Plan vision.

The following selection of performance measures reflects a strategic starting point, focusing on areas where the City has made a direct and measurable difference and those metrics required by the GMA. As a chartered First-Class city, Tacoma possesses legal authority and resources to influence a wide spectrum of social, economic, and environmental outcomes. The first category of measures relate to the accommodation of growth targets allocated for the city in accordance with the GMA. The second category are Level of Service (LOS) measures, related to specific City services required by the GMA. The full gamut of LOS measures are detailed in the Public Facilities and Services Element. Several LOS measures require updating to ensure that they align with department goals and equity outcomes. Finally, the Vision and Equity measures are a few selected measures from the Equity Assessment linked to current priorities defined in the Vision and Focus Areas. These will have data available in the future.

To the extent possible, each of the measures below should be disaggregated by geography, income, and race to examine equity in government performance and service delivery. In the development of this plan, baseline data was often insufficient for the desired level of disaggregation.



Book I Performance Measures

MEASURE CATEGORY	MEASURE	TARGET	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Growth Targets	Housing units	42,865 new housing units by 2044	PDS
	Jobs	70,800 new jobs by 2044	PDS
Level of Service Standards	Parks and open space per capita	100% of Tacoma within a 10-minute walkshed	City of Tacoma and Parks Tacoma
	Solid waste	1.24 tons per capita per year	Environmental Services
	Water (potable)	Resource Adequacy Standard (RAS): 184 gallons per day (gpd) per equivalent residential unit (ERU)	TPU: Tacoma Water
	Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Voltage Level: and/- 5%</li><li>• Average Annual System Outage Duration: 75 minutes or less</li><li>• Average Annual System Outage Frequency: 0.95 or less</li></ul>	TPU: Tacoma Power
	Adopted LOS for transportation facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel Demand Forecast</li><li>• Multi-modal LOS: Level 1 Transit/Pedestrian/Bicycle</li></ul>	Transportation, Public Works

MEASURE CATEGORY	MEASURE	TARGET	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Vision and Equity	Housing cost burden (renters at 50%) Declining trend over time and zero by 2050	Declining trend over time and zero by 2050	PDS
	Walkability	90% of Tacoma considered either Medium or Highly walkable (per their own 2021 analysis). Currently 82% of Tacoma is considered medium or highly walkable.	PDS
	Perception of safety	At least 70% across all districts (In 2022, 72% of Tacomans overall reported feeling very safe or somewhat safe, however this was down to 38% in 2024)	Office of Strategy
	High-capacity transit access. Trips by bike, car, or walk.	49%	Public Works
	GHG reduction	Net Zero by 2050	Environmental Services