



Tacoma Climate and Sustainability Commission

October 1, 2025

Dear Chair Walker and IPS Committee,

The Climate and Sustainability Commission is writing to share our recommendation that the City of Tacoma move forward with implementation of new mechanisms to fund growth in infrastructure—namely impact fees for transportation and system development charges for wastewater and stormwater. These new revenue sources are badly needed as Tacoma struggles to accommodate the expected growth in population density without the financial ability to upgrade and expand aging infrastructure.

We believe these fees need to be adopted now for the following reasons.

1. We cannot continue to increase the immense backlog of deferred capacity investments in our critical systems.
2. Tacoma is one of the only jurisdictions without impact fees in Pierce Co, and it hasn't stopped investment in neighboring jurisdictions. Developers are already paying these fees (most higher) in most cities in Puget Sound. Finally, implementing them in Tacoma would just level the playing field.
3. It's inequitable to continue to force existing residents and businesses to pay for new development's strain on our existing systems. New capacity needs should not get pushed onto existing ratepayers and property owners.

Transportation is the #1 source of greenhouse gas pollution and stormwater pollution. Investments in enhancements, including safe pedestrian and bicycle connections, is imperative and occurring too slowly. With the failure of Street Initiative II, the City must find other funding sources as the General Fund is overstressed. With the recent reductions in parking minimums across much of the City, developers no longer have to fund those expensive parking stalls. In most cases, impact fees are still lower than creating parking. The Commission appreciates that there are exemptions for affordable housing and that fees are equal across the districts (minus NE), but we need to ensure that any freed up general fund dollars are still put towards projects in highest need areas. Impact fees should mean more money for all projects, not an excuse to put off needed projects in South and East Tacoma.

With climate change bringing new risks due to increases in severity of rainfall events, capacity investments in the wastewater and stormwater systems are vital. The City should support developers to be able to offset system development charges and similar costs for affordable housing development via the CHIP grant program.

Growth should pay for growth. Yes, we want it to happen in Tacoma but not at the expense of a livable and affordable city for all.

Sincerely,

Evlondo Cooper III

Evlondo Cooper, Co-Chair

Casey Twiggs

Casey Twiggs, Co-Chair
Sustainable Tacoma Commission

Cc:

Romero Chavez, Environmental Services Director

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