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**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager *ELP TW*  
**FROM:** Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director, Environmental Services *GMS MPS*  
**COPY:** Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee  
**SUBJECT:** Sustainable Tacoma Commission Annual Activities and Priorities Report  
Informational Memorandum  
**DATE:** August 6, 2021

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**PRESENTATION TYPE:**  
Informational Memorandum

**SUMMARY:**

The [Sustainable Tacoma Commission](#) (STC) was created by Tacoma City Council to advise Council Members and staff on sustainability initiatives. The Commission reports annually to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee about activities and priorities. In the place of a presentation, this memo intends to inform IPS Committee about the STC in coordination with Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability staff liaisons.

**BACKGROUND:**

Formed in 2008 by Resolution 37631, the STC's purpose is to bring community expertise, accountability, and urgency to Tacoma's sustainability goals and initiatives. The STC's bylaws require an annual report to the IPS Committee to ensure regular information sharing with Tacoma City Council around policy priorities, research, and recommendations. To that end, the STC reports to the IPS Committee each summer.

Before COVID-19, STC chairpersons provided an in-person presentation to the IPS Committee to discuss recent and upcoming STC activities as well as the priorities of the STC and the City. Typically, the presentation serves as an opportunity for Council Members to request specific research and policy advice from the STC. This discussion helps guide both City Council policy and further STC research and recommendations to support them.

To excel in its advisory role, the STC seeks a diverse membership. The STC is composed of 13 members with various relevant experiences that benefit of our city. Members volunteer their expertise from many fields and perspectives, including climate change, forestry, energy and water systems, materials management, resource conservation, public and environmental health, healthy housing, sustainable business, environmental education, food systems and programming, environmental science, advocacy, policymaking, and anti-racism. Members also offer their lived experiences. Members are residents from across Tacoma's five Councilmanic districts, and seven of thirteen live in districts three, four, or five. Nine members identify as women, five as people of color, and two as seniors or youth. Since January 2020, STC monthly meeting attendance is about 83%.

Since 2020, the STC has sought to advise Tacoma City Council and staff on weathering the COVID-19 crisis and then investing in a just, sustainable recovery that promotes community resiliency and climate protection. The STC made specific recommendations with letters regarding the following topics:

- 2021-2022 biennial City budget (2020)
- Anti-racist, sustainable systems change opportunities for the Mayor (2020)
- Decarbonization (2020)



- Tacoma’s climate emissions target and climate jobs list (2021)
- Tideflats non-interim regulations (2021)
- Home in Tacoma project (2021)
- Annual recommendations to Tacoma City Council (2021)

In their annual recommendations to City Council, conveyed through meetings with pairs of Council Members, the STC emphasized four priorities:

1. Invest now in a rapid transition away from fossil fuel energy by developing bold policies and funding streams to empower the new Climate Action Plan
2. Support Community Food Projects and food access with ongoing funding
3. Support Sustainability Small Grants with General Government funds in the next biennium
4. Prioritize external funding for staff’s list of green and socially just, shovel-ready projects

At the request of City Council and with support from staff, the STC will seek informational presentations, conduct research, and deliver recommendations in coming months about green industries and jobs for Tacoma, vehicle electrification and clean fuels, waste prevention, tree preservation and maintenance, and decarbonization of Tacoma’s buildings and transportation. In addition, after many months of process updates and recommendations to staff, the STC is enthusiastic about supporting the City in launching its next climate action plan.

**ISSUE:**

In order to achieve Tacoma’s ambitious vision for a safe, equitable, sustainable community, the STC advises and reports to the IPS on sustainability policies and initiatives.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This is for information only. There are no alternatives presented.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is for information only. There is no fiscal impact.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is for information only. There is no recommendation