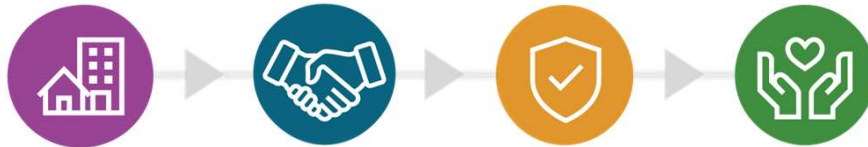# Community Safety Action Strategy

City Council Study Session

August 13, 2024

Office of Strategy

Overview

- Community Safety Action Strategy Purpose

- Engagement Results and Vision

- Strategy Overview and City Action Examples

- Next Steps

Community Safety Action Strategy Purpose

- Builds a shared vision of community safety
- Highlights how residents experience safety differently
- Leads with antiracism and equity
- Aligns how City actions can address community vision to address perceptions of safety
- Is a tool for decision making and a call to partnership
- Aligns city actions with existing plans for a cohesive, strategic approach
- Does not cover all issues, like school safety, though these are crucial for community well-being

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Coming Together on a Shared Priority

- City Council
- Executive Leadership Team
- City of Tacoma Staff
- Community
- Residents with Lived Experience
- Committees, Boards, and Commissions
- Partners

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Improving Equity through Coordination

Residents Shared Their Vision for Community Safety

Engagement methods:

Website
Online Idea wall
Social Media
Mailers
Neighborhood Councils
Boards and Commissions
Community Meetings
Lived Expert Interviews
Visioning Workshops
Interactive Art

Our Approach is Collaboration and Partnership

"Everyone involved must be open to fresh approaches and trust that diverse community partners are working toward a common goal:

A SAFER TACOMA"

Recommendation from *Building a Safer Tacoma: Research-Informed Strategies*

Themes from Engagement

A
"what do you think makes an ideal neighborhood or community"

B
Tacoma's vision of community safety conversations with stakeholders

C
"What makes you feel safe?"

"Identify opportunities for "placemaking"—such as efforts to add green space, increase neighborly interactions, and foster civic pride—to promote a feeling of community, safety, and belonging"

"Prioritize resources and reduce crime through behavioral health support and rehabilitation"

"People shouldn't get in trouble when they call 911 just because of how they look – the opposite of that is safety"

"Approach safety not from a reactionary side but from a preventative side. Promote healing and connection"

"Sidewalks are a big deal for people with disabilities. You're inclined to avoid the sidewalk if you can't get over the humps. You take chances that you shouldn't."

"Sustain an unwavering, communitywide commitment to and investment in safety"

"Build, heal, and repair relationships with law enforcement"

"Develop opportunities for youth outside of school"

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Community Safety Starts with a Community Vision

In Tacoma, we collaborate to make healthy and vibrant neighborhoods and places where everyone can feel safe. We invest in people and prevention to create a sense of belonging. We respond with care and respect to many different community safety needs. We support healing and repair, helping everyone thrive together.

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Co-create Healthy PLACES and Neighborhoods

Invest in PEOPLE and Prevention

Effective RESPONSE with Care

Promote Healing and REPAIR

Support economic and environmental conditions that make Tacoma feel safe for everyone to live, learn, work and play

Co-create Healthy PLACES and Neighborhoods

1.1 Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured while traveling in Tacoma
1.2 Enhance neighborhood safety with infrastructure and utilities
1.3 Support clean neighborhoods free of litter and debris
1.4 Support access to safe, affordable transportation
1.5 Support access to stable, affordable housing
1.6 Improve access to safe, vibrant neighborhoods
1.7 Support access to safe, vibrant businesses
1.8 Facilitate equitable economic growth
1.9 Support access to safe, healthy food
1.10 Protect the natural environment and reduce the impacts of climate change

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

1.1 Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured while traveling in Tacoma.

1.1.1 Design streets that make safe behavior the default

1.1.2 Make codes and policies changes that result in safer roadways for all

1.1.3 Use every transportation project as an opportunity to improve safety

1.1.4 Educate and empower drivers to be safe and respectful of all road users

1.1.5 Increase investments in active transportation projects

"Curb bulbs are helpful to slow cars and prevent drivers from going around stopped cars. Build more! Everywhere!"

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

1.1.5 Support investments in active transportation projects

Secure funding to implement and evaluate active transportation projects and ensure long-term maintenance of improvements, including sidewalks, crossings, bikeways, and safe routes to school. Prioritize the safety of all road users in design and revisions, accommodating pedestrians, users of assistive mobility devices, cyclists, drivers, transit riders, and others.

Measures:

Amount of City funding committed

Number of full-time positions focused on
   implementation

Number of grants applied to,
   and amount of funding secured

Regular pedestrian and bicyclist counts at
   consistent locations

SAFE ROUTES
— to School —
TACOMA, WA

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

1.3 Support clean neighborhoods free of litter and debris

1.3.1 Keep the city clean and protect public health through waste management

1.3.2 Collaborate with residents, businesses, and partners to keep neighborhoods clean

1.3.3 Conserve, manage and protect open space, critical areas and urban forest lands

1.3.4 Continuously improve the Tacoma First 311 reporting system

1.3.5 Increase prevention and accountability for littering and illegal dumping

20% of the top 10 TacomaFIRST 311 requests involved complaints of illegal dumping, garbage, and debris

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

1.3.1 Keep the city clean and protect public health through waste management

Regularly remove litter, debris, and graffiti from public spaces. Maintain trails and public garbage cans. Ensure garbage service is convenient, cost-effective, and accessible to all communities in Tacoma. Provide bill credit payment assistance to alleviate burdens related to waste management costs. Facilitate regular waste pickups and address sanitation issues at encampments. Manage hazardous waste effectively. Offer curbside recycling, food, and yard waste collection, as well as drop-off services. Promote waste reduction and sustainable practices through zero waste initiatives and educational programs. Support community clean-ups and provide large item pick-up services. Reduce construction and demolition debris. Prioritize services, programs, and funding using the Equity Index.

Measures:

Locations cleaned by litter Crew

Tidy-Up requests

Pounds of garbage and debris removed from public spaces

Call 2 haul requests

TIDY-UP TaComa
BEFORE
AFTER

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Invest in PEOPLE and prevention

Support focused approaches to specific community needs to create a sense of safety and belonging

2.1 Coordinate efforts and resources to support Youth

2.2 Support systems of supports for caregivers and families

2.3 Invest in people to prevent them from experiencing homelessness and reduce its impacts

2.4 Encourage inclusive policies, programs, and services

2.5 Support opportunities for social connections, civic and community engagement

2.6 Support access to Mental Health Support

"…sometimes it feels like the city is designed for particular people. I want the city to facilitate resources for the community, not be dictating what happens— centering on the things for the people that live in the community"

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

2.1   Coordinate efforts and resources to support youth

2.1.1 Support access to safe, free, welcoming spaces

2.1.2 Support connections to caring adults and mentors

2.1.3 Support access to antiracist, multicultural programming and activities

2.1.4 Strengthen youth and young adult skills

2.1.5 Encourage a Whole Child approach to solve problems

2.1.6 Improve communication and coordination among agencies

2.1.7 Involve credible messengers to support individuals at risk of violence

"Hope Gives Connection…Connectivity is consequential…creating community spaces where community members can gather and get to know each other-less likely to commit crime against each other."

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

2.1.1 Support access to safe, free, welcoming spaces

Create safe spaces for youth with relevant activities. Support a multidisciplinary approach among providers to address needs and reduce service gaps. Prioritize free, unstructured activities without formal curricula or registration. Ensure diverse locations to reach youth both physically and digitally. Involve youth in decision-making and planning. Make spaces welcoming, reduce barriers and stigma, and keep them open and accessible.

Measures:

Locations of supportive spaces
Youth Served
Amount of funding

"We know when young people are connected to things like sports, work, school, and community they are less likely to get in trouble with the law, but some young people need additional support in making positive connections, especially in communities without adequate resources."

In 2023, Summer Teen Late Nights reached 10,000 duplicated youth. 69% identified as a person of color.

FREE!
SUMMER LATE NIGHTS
MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL
JUNE 24 - AUGUST 30

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Effective Response with Care

Act with respect and understanding to address community safety needs

3.1 Provide Immediate Incident Response

3.2 Provide transparency and accountability in policing

3.3 Develop Alternative Response programs to connect people to the right resources at the right time

3.4 Build resilience through collaborative Emergency Management

3.5 Use equity-informed data to track progress, allocate resources and address gaps

3.6 Support the organizational health of response functions

"As it appeared from discussions with Tacoma stakeholders that the critical discussion going forward is about how to re-imagine public safety rather than whether to do so."

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

3.1   Provide Immediate Incident Response

3.1.1 Provide effective response to violent crime

3.1.2 Provide effective response to property crime

3.1.3 Provide effective response to medical emergencies and fire-related emergencies

3.1.4 Reduce reliance on fire and emergency medical services for non-emergencies

"Regardless of the web of reasons for why there are disparities, police departments occupy a singular place in helping to consider and implement solutions that might address and affect disparate outcomes."
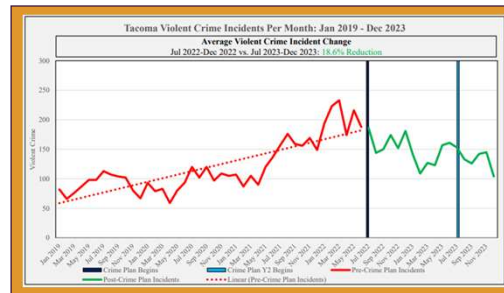
COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

3.3.1   Provide effective response to violent crime

Strengthen the city's ability to respond promptly and appropriately to violent crime through appropriate staffing and training, best practices for violent crime reduction (data-driven police visibility, coordinated place-based environmental design, focused deterrence) and updated policies such as use of force.

Measures:

Violent Crime (Homicide, Assault, Robbery)

Number of arrests

Calls for service

Homelessness-Involved Crime

Fidelity Rate (Being in the right place at the right time)

Tacoma Violent Crime Incidents Per Month: Jan 2019 - Dec 2023

COMMUNITY SAFETY
ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Promote Healing and Repair

Support individuals, families, and neighborhoods to overcome trauma, rebuild relationships, and work towards a community where everyone belongs

4.1 Improve relationship between the community and Police

4.2 Improve relationship between the community and City employees

4.3 Create alternatives to, and supports for, jail and fines

4.4 Increase protections and resources for those impacted by crime

4.5 Support individuals impacted by domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and child abuse

4.6 Support City employees who assist during emergencies

4.7 Further Anti-racist transformation by prioritizing belonging and resilience

4.8 Ensure safe, supportive reentry after the criminal legal system

"Approach safety not from a reactionary side but from a preventative side. Promote healing and connection"

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

4.2 Create alternatives to, and supports for, jail and fines

4.2.1 Divert minor offenses away from incarceration

4.2.2 Use therapeutic courts for support and treatment

4.2.3 Improve equity of bail, sentencing and access to legal representation

4.2.4 Support use of Community Service Programs

"Diversion is very successful but not equitably distributed. First misdemeanors are diverted out but police give black and brown youth felony charges."

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Example City Action

4.2.2 Use therapeutic courts for support and treatment

Address unmet needs that have led to court. Create more options that focus on recovery, equitable access to resources. Use a holistic approach that promotes well-being, independence, accountability.

In 2023 Tacoma Municipal court launched two different Therapeutic Courts. Mental Health Court serves community members with serious, persistent mental health diagnosis. Community Court is available to community members with unmet needs that led to court involvement, which may include housing needs, substances use disorder, minor mental health conditions, unemployment, and more. Both programs connect participants to community resources, while maintaining high accountability. Participants who complete the program have their charges dismissed.

TACOMA COMMUNITY COURT

"There are many people who have had negative experiences, but healing is starting to happen when people see that they don't come here to get in trouble."

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Next Steps for Moving to Action

- Incorporate final data:
  - 2024 community survey results
  - One Tacoma engagement results
  - University of Washington Tacoma Action Mapping Project
  - Lived expert interviews
- City Council adoption in 2024
- Implementation of strategy is already underway

COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION STRATEGY
Places · People · Response · Repair

Community Safety Action Strategy

City Council Study Session

August 13, 2024

Office of Strategy