

DRAFT 2016 City of Tacoma Federal Agenda

Summary agenda:

- The City supports adoption of the Innovative Stormwater Solutions Act to establish centers of excellence and innovation in treating stormwater and the Puget Sound SOS Act which would establish a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office in the State of Washington.
- The citizens of Tacoma have called for and the City supports an increased minimum wage and mandatory paid sick leave in order to advance economic prosperity for all.
- The City will continue to work with Federal and local agencies to protect the long-term sustainability of Joint Base Lewis McChord and support veterans' transition to successful civilian careers and entrepreneurial enterprise in Tacoma.
- The City supports continued Federal funding for locally administered housing solutions such as Moving to Work, HOME, CDBG, and Choice Neighborhoods which have helped many Tacoma citizens.
- Initiatives to support opportunity youth are a key component of economic equity for our community. The City will seek continuing support for these programs.
- The City supports new Federal investment in infrastructure, including highways, bridges, and transit funding.

Detail agenda:

Clean water innovations anchored by the Center for Urban Waters:

At the Center for Urban Waters, world class laboratories are creating, evaluating, and applying the best possible scientific and engineering clean water technologies to protect and restore Puget Sound and to lead development of solutions for all urban coastal communities. The Center supports innovative surface water projects across the community making Tacoma a leader in green infrastructure such as downtown rain gardens and the nation's highest concentration of Greenroads™.

The City supports legislation that would acknowledge and build upon innovative stormwater work such as that being done at the CUW. The Innovative Stormwater Solutions Act will create between three and five centers of excellence in the country for innovative stormwater control infrastructure and the PUGET SOS Act would establish in the Environmental Protection Agency a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office in the State of Washington.

Economic prosperity for all:

In a recent resident survey, nearly half said the City should do more to support small and growing businesses. Especially in older cities like Tacoma, one common need is for improvements to older

commercial buildings. The City seeks to create a revolving loan fund to assist small business owners who have difficulty accessing traditional capital for tenant improvements.

Immigrant business owners make important contributions to the United States economy. Fifteen percent of business owners in Washington are immigrants. In the Puget Sound metropolitan area, the foreign-born share of business owners is nearly 20%. It is a priority of the City to make Tacoma a “Welcoming City” and cultivate an immigrant-friendly environment.

By more than 70%, Tacoma voters approved a measure to increase the local minimum hourly wage to \$12.00 beginning January 2018. Tacoma joins a growing number of cities who are choosing to raise hourly wages above State and Federal rates. The City supports an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) and veterans support:

Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) is the largest military installation on the west coast, the third largest employer in Washington State and the largest employer in Pierce County. In 2016, JBLM is projected to support 136,000 soldiers, airmen, dependents, employees and contractors.

Tacoma proudly supports our active military community, as well as the more than 117,000 military retirees already present. The City continually seeks to develop and transition the talent of military veterans into employment in the civilian environment. As one example, the City has established a veterans internship program (VIP) as a way to provide professional development opportunities aimed specifically for transitioning military veterans who have an interest in local government service.

The City has been an active participant in the Joint Land Use Study and its action strategies that commit Tacoma to evaluating its local land use plans for conflicts with the military installation’s operations and, where incompatibilities are identified, work with technical staff and leaders to develop recommendations that will protect the long-term sustainability of the installation.

Housing:

Since the Housing Act of 1949, the goal of a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family – and the expectation for economic stability to maintain it – has been foundational to federal housing programs. Programs such as HOME (established in 1990), Moving to Work (established 1996), CDBG (established in 1974) and the recent Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Program (established 2010), have been key in helping communities design and advance local strategies that achieve this nationally shared goal.

In Tacoma, the McCarver Elementary School Initiative, an element of the Tacoma Housing Authority’s Moving to Work Plan, is drawing national acclaim for its demonstration of how academic performance in one of the city’s poorest schools is significantly improving as a result of investing in the housing and economic stability of students’ families. Moving to Work allows THA

the flexibility to invest public housing program dollars in innovative, comprehensive ways that not only support tenants to succeed as tenants, but also as “parents, students and wage earners.”

The City joins the National League of Cities and the United States Conference of Mayors in advocating for funding of federal housing programs such as HOME, Moving to Work (MTW), CDBG, and Choice Neighborhoods. Tacoma has invested these programs wisely in our community and will continue to draw on their support to catalyze the array of public and private investments needed for individuals, families and neighborhoods to gain stability.

Opportunities for youth and community building:

Tacoma’s Gang Reduction Project was launched in 2013 and has been recognized by both the National Gang Center and Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). In 2014, the Mayor accepted the My Brother’s Keeper Challenge, one of nearly 200 mayors, county executives and tribal leaders who have accepted the challenge to develop locally driven, comprehensive cradle-to-college-and-career strategies to ensure all young people can reach their full potential, regardless of who they are, where they come from, or the circumstances into which they are born.

In 2015, the City launched Project PEACE with a series of community conversations to respond to national events that exposed the polarizing and difficult relationships between some law enforcement agencies and the communities they protect and serve, and to proactively address underlying issues of community distrust in Tacoma and create a space for dialogue, healing and action. The manner in which local law enforcement and the community it serves interact with one another is critical to successful community policing, the community’s sense of comfort and safety, and the level of respect police are afforded. This is an on-going and multifaceted process. The Federal government can assist with funding these efforts as well as by adjusting laws that make achieving good community/police interaction more difficult. The City will seek grants and other opportunities to assist in its efforts to strengthen the relationship between law enforcement and the community.

The City will continue to actively pursue partnerships and initiatives that aim to make Tacoma residents and youth feel safe and secure and propel the next generation to success. The City is a partner with Metro Parks, Tacoma Public Schools, Tacoma Housing Authority, and a growing group of government, private sector and nonprofit partners to build a facility that provides healthy and safe activities for youth and residents in Tacoma’s underserved Eastside community. The City advocates for healthy, evidence-based methods of raising children such as the Nurse-Family Partnership Program administered by the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department which allows nurses to deliver the support first-time moms need to have a healthy pregnancy, become knowledgeable and responsible parents, and provide their babies with the best possible start in life.

Transportation:

The City is encouraged by the effort in Congress to advance a multi-year surface transportation bill and joins the United States Conference of Mayors in increases revenue commitments, growing highway and transit program funding to levels that more adequately address the transportation infrastructure needs of our cities and regions.

In Tacoma, over 50% of residential roads and 44% of arterial streets are in poor or failed condition. Residents are multi-modal with 47% frequently using public transit and 62% walking or biking instead of driving. The City will continue to seek to make sound investments in transportation to ensure a multimodal system that is focused on the mobility needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

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