

Age Friendly Tacoma Action Plan

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Executive Summary

Tacoma's first Age Friendly Action Plan is the City's commitment to ensuring our aging residents can remain in place and be fully supported in our community. This plan builds upon the City's Strategic Plan, Tacoma 2025, and focuses on the acute needs of aging residents to ensure we are funding and developing services that make an impact. This plan identify's near term steps to further analyze the gaps in services and ensure proper resources are going towards the development of these services.

Using the 8 Domains of Livability developed by AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities as the foundation of this focus, a team of service experts serving aging residents came together to help prioritize initial work and necessary investments in our senior population. Tacoma's Age Friendly Action Plan will focus on the following domains;

- Community Health Services
- Communication and Information
- Housing
- Transportation

The domains of Respect and Social Inclusion and Social Participation are integral to this work and building a strong foundation, and they will be integrated naturally into the priority domains even though they are not priority focuses. Two other items that encompass many of the 8 domains and are important to mention, is the importance of public safety, and the desire to ensure communications to the community are culturally sensitive and in languages that the elders speak. Public safety is already a huge priority across the city, and this work can align with those existing conversations. The City is also very focused on culturally sensitive outreach and language access is coming together as a part of our city-wide outreach strategy that can meet those identified gaps. This plan will help to include age friendly considerations in those vital conversations.

With the adoption of this plan, departments will have direction to include specific indicators and work items to their own plans to ensure the needs of aging residents are called out. Partnerships across departments will ensure that existing work is including age-friendly considerations, and that new work is being developed to expand access and services. Departments will be expected to integrate the Age-Friendly recommendations into their existing work, and if necessary in future budget processes request funding and staffing to continue the development of an Age Friendly Tacoma.





Mayor Victoria Woodards

Letter from Mayor Woodards and Council Member Hunter

Dear Community Members,

It is our pleasure to share with you our Age Friendly Tacoma Action Strategy, a guide to ensuring Tacoma is the place to live, learn, work, and play for residents of all ages. This plan is a reflection of the leadership of Council Member Hunter, and the hard work of staff and our partners to identify gaps in services to aging residents. Under this leadership, our staff and partners were able to chart a path to address the immediate gaps in services, and make a plan to incorporate the specific needs of an aging population into other city-wide plans and initiatives.

With our commitment to AARP's Age Friendly Communities Initiative in 2019, we have joined communities across the globe in ensuring our city is welcoming and accessible to our aging population, and allows them to age in place with comfort and dignity. In partnership with organizations serving older residents, we designed an action plan that would address the 8 domains of livability highlighted by AARP, and meet our community's most pressing needs.

Our community needs to be welcoming for residents of all ages and ability, all the time. We need to engage all of our residents in the direction of our city, and ensure all residents have opportunities for social and civic engagement, and that the right health and community services are in place to ensure optimal aging.

Through the help of our community and partners, we will measure our progress and continue the learning process so that we are always striving to do better by our residents. It is a pleasure to be a part of a community committed to addressing the concerns of not only our aging population, but our families as well. It is our honor to submit this action plan, our next step to a more Age Friendly Tacoma.

Sincerely

Mayor Victoria Woodards

Victoria R. Woodards Lolunter

Council Member Lillian Hunter



Community Profile

Tacoma is a mid-sized urban port city and the county seat of Pierce County with a population of almost 220,000. Located 30 miles south of Seattle and 140 miles north of Portland, Tacoma is surrounded by Puget Sound to the west and Mount Rainier to the east. A little over a third of Tacoma's residents are from communities of color, and almost 1 in 5 residents do not speak English at home. Home to the Port of Tacoma, the 4th largest container Port in the US and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the nation's 4th largest military installation. Tacoma has roots in industry, transportation and entrepreneurship, but enjoys a robust outdoor adventure lifestyle and thriving artsmaker community. The award-winning Metro parks Tacoma manages a robust network of parks, including Point Defiance, the second-largest urban park in the nation, and Tacoma boasts eight universities, colleges and technical colleges, including University of Washington-Tacoma. Tacoma is also the hometown of renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly, and Tacoma's creative ecosystem includes a variety of artists and glassworks.

The City of Tacoma's community-driven vision of Tacoma 2025 is the driving document that sets a course for the City and the community through 2025 ensuring a great place for residents to live, learn, work, and play. This document is the umbrella that guides department level strategic plans and guides our Council in meeting the community vision. While the majority of Tacoma residents have a high standard of living in Tacoma, many community members struggle to maintain that quality of life as they age. In Tacoma about 15% of the population over 65 is below the federal poverty level, and often these are communities of color.

As of the 2019 American Community Survey data, 13% of Tacoma residents are over 65, and that number is expected to rise over the coming years. Of these, about 65% identify as white, 10% as black, 9.5% as multiracial, 9% as Asian, 2% as native, and 1% as Pacific Islander or native Hawaiian. About 80% of these residents speak only English, and of the 20% of those that do not speak English as a primary language, about half speak little to no English. According to "An Aging World", a 2015 report from the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of the global population aged 60 years or over increased from 8.5 percent in 1980 to 12.3 percent in 2015, and is projected to rise further to 21.5 percent in 2050. This is supported by the Pew Research Center that estimates one in five US residents are expected to be aged 65 or over by mid-century.

With the increasing need to support our aging residents, Tacoma joined AARP's Network of Age Friendly States and Communities to highlight the acute needs of this population, and create more focus on older Tacoma residents in our guiding documents and plans. One July 30, 2019 the City Council adopted resolution 40387 directing the City Manager to take the steps necessary to receive the Age Friendly Communities designation, and on February 18, 2020 AARP presented the City with the designation, and set us on a path to create a plan for an age friendly Tacoma. This action plan will guide initial actions to make Tacoma more age friendly, and guide future outreach and planning for the next update to Tacoma's Strategic Plan to ensure older residents needs are met in that plan.

AARP's 8 Domains of Livability

Tacoma's Age Friendly Action Plan comes from our participation in AARP's Network of Age Friendly States and Communities program. The 8 Domains of Livability framework is used by many of the towns, cities, counties and states enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities to organize and prioritize their work to become more livable for both older residents and people of all ages. Below are the 8 domains and how AARP conceptualizes the areas of focus for communities ordered by priority for the Tacoma community.

Community Health Services

At some point, every person of every age gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs some help. While it's important that assistance and care be available nearby, it's essential that residents are able to access and afford the services required.

Communication and Information

We now communicate in ways few could have imagined a decade ago. Age-friendly communities recognize that information needs to be shared through a variety of methods since not everyone is techsavvy, and not everyone has a smartphone or home-based access to the internet.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

People need public places to gather — indoors and out. Green spaces, seating and accessible buildings (elevators, zero-step entrances, staircases with railings) can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.

Housing

AARP surveys consistently find that the vast majority of older adults want to reside in their current home or community for as long as possible. Doing so is possible if a home is designed or modified for aging in place, or if a community has housing options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages and life stages

Transportation

Driving shouldn't be the only way to get around. Pedestrians need sidewalks and safe, crossable streets. Public transit options can range from the large-scale (trains, buses, light rail) to the small (taxis, shuttles or ride share services).

Social Participation

Regardless of a person's age, loneliness is often as debilitating a health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities.

Respect and Social Inclusion

Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.

Work and Civic Engagement

Why does work need to be an all or nothing experience? An age-friendly community encourages older people to be actively engaged in community life and has opportunities for residents to work for pay or volunteer their skills.



Developing the Action Plan

Tacoma started on the path of developing an Age Friendly Action Plan after receiving its Age Friendly Community designation on February 18, 2020, but due to the events of the COVID-19 pandemic the work was sidelined. In February 2021, Council Member Lilian Hunter brought together various community organizers and elder-serving organizations to start the conversation on developing Tacoma's plan as Tacoma's Age Friendly Advisory Group. Through multiple conversations, learning, and surveys, the advisory group has helped to create a focused plan to address aging residents' needs. The members of the Age Friendly Tacoma Advisory Group can be found in the acknowledgements section.

Each month, the advisory group came together to learn more about the needs of residents, and identify gaps not already being served. In Tacoma and Pierce County, the County Aging and Disability Resource Center already provides many services to residents, and Tacoma funds other local services to meet the needs. The advisory group started by identifying policies and programs within the City and County that already aligned with livable community metrics, and identified gaps in services they saw that kept the city from meeting the strategic goals in Tacoma 2025.

The group primarily evaluated existing services and contracts provided by the City, and the work/services already being provided by Pierce County's Aging and Disability Resource Center to identify gaps. The following services are what is currently provided by the City of Tacoma, and Pierce County. This mapping of existing funding contracts, and services through Pierce County formed the foundation of the gap assessment. The intent of the gap analysis is to realize clear gaps in service to current residents over 65, and identify gaps that future generations may see as they age.

This first plan prioritizes plugging those current gaps, and will see future iterations of this work dive more deeply into the analysis of gaps that currently aging populations will face:

City of Tacoma Contracted Services	Senior Centers (Lighthouse, Beacon, and Pt Defiance) Daily lunch distribution Social and emotional supports Senior Wellness Checks o Transportation to Beacon and Lighthouse	Financial empowermentGraffiti RemovalBehavioral health
	Immigrant Senior Services Culturally relevant meals Health Navigator (geriatric specialist) Congregate meals Referral to medical providers Cultural programming Wrap around services for immigrant seniors (including meals, Medicare & Medicaid, Food Stamps & Housing Application Assistance, Energy & Telephone Assistance, Social Security Income, and Social Security).	 Temporary financial assistance Rental assistance Home furnishing Utility assistance Education services for those with AIDS Co-responder (TPD and Mental Health Services) Needle Exchange Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse Prevention Education and Victim Services Shelter Donated health care Homeless Adult Services Food banks
	Yard Assistance and Resources for Elderly and Disabled (YARD) Services	
Pierce County Contracted Services	 Adult Day Services Alzheimer's/Dementia Support Services Counseling Services Falls Prevention Family Caregiver Support Foot Care Services Home Delivered Meals 	 In-Home Care Support Kinship Caregiver Services Legal Assistance LGBTQ Services Senior Centers Senior Meal sites Specialized Transportation
Pierce County Services Provided Directly	 Aging & Disability Resource Center Case Management/Nursing Services Health Home Care Coordination Family Caregiver Support 	 Long Term Care Ombudsman Senior Drug Education Senior Farmers Market Program

After identifying existing services, programs, and funded partners that were available, the advisory committee identified areas where the City could be doing better to meet the needs of older residents and better support and age friendly community. Staff and volunteer members gave their expert advice to help develop these goals and gaps based on their organizations and areas of focus. These gaps were aligned with AARP's 8 domains of livability, and based on each advisory group member's experience and organizational needs, a prioritized list of the domains was created to focus the City and its partners.

Two items that encompass many of the 8 domains and are important to mention, is the importance of public safety, and the desire to ensure communications to the community are culturally sensitive and in languages that the elders speak. Public safety is already a huge priority across the city, and this work can align with those existing conversations. The City is also very focused on culturally sensitive outreach and language access is coming together as a part of our city-wide outreach strategy that can meet those identified gaps. This plan will help to include age friendly considerations in those vital conversations.

This initial plan is really only the first step in a more robust system of support for Tacoma's older residents. With initial steps and guidance from our Age Friendly Advisory Group, the City will highlight the needs of older residents and include more specific indicators within the next strategic plan as we start that outreach in the future.

Age Friendly Tacoma Action Plan

To focus the near term work, the advisory group determined that the City should focus on the top 4 domains, Community Health Services, Communication and Information, Housing, and Transportation rather than all 8 domains of livability. However, the domains of Respect and Social Inclusion and Social Participation are integral to this work and building a strong foundation, and they will be integrated naturally into the priority domains. These domains align with strategic priorities and focus areas of Tacoma 2025, and can be combined with existing workflows. This also creates additional opportunities to specifically call out these focus domains in the update to the strategic plan and department specific action plans. The relevant indicators in Tacoma 2025 are listed below each domain area to show overlaps in focus with this plan, and highlight age-friendly specific goals that are not clearly communicated in the existing strategic plan. The overall goal will be to incorporate specific age friendly indicators and outreach events into the next community survey, and the next strategic plan, as well as department specific work plans.

The action plan is organized under the 8 Domains of Livability, with Age-Friendly specific goals highlighted with specific actions to meet that goal. This plan is meant to direct immediate work to support Tacoma as an Age-Friendly community, and highlight specific needs for older residents to ensure those needs are enshrined in Tacoma's strategic documents in the future.

1. Community Health Services

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: All people should have access to affordable health care and community services that help them live safely and with dignity. Age Friendly Tacoma supports coordination and promotion of services to help meet the needs of older adults and caregivers, and advocacy with state and federal partners to build support.

2025 Objective: Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents

2025 Objective: Improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

Actions	Performance Indicators	Lead Department	Target Start
	Expand Job Pathways to train new Home Caregivers through Workforce Central and community college partners such as Tacoma Community College's in home CAN program	Community and Economic Development	Q1 2023
Increase the Availability of	Partner with culturally responsive organizations to bring new caregivers into the job pathway	Community and Economic Development	Q1 2023
Affordable Long-term Care	Create supportive networks for in home caregivers who often are sole care givers for older relatives and residents	Office of Equity and	
	Support training of health providers to recognize hidden bias around treatment based on race and other aspects of identity so that BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and others are receiving equitable treatment	Human Rights	Q2 2022
	Advocate for lower costs with state and federal representative	Government Relations	Q1 2023
Address the Rising Cost of	Build local advocacy through letters of support for lower costs	Government Relations	Q1 2023
Prescription Drugs	Explore and document existing resources for affordable prescriptions	Office of Equity and Human Rights, Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2022
	Support Increase access for people with disabilities through use of electronic readers for prescription drug labels and physical ease for those with limits to fine motor abilities in opening prescription bottles	Office of Equity and Human Rights	Q1 2023
Increase Access to Affordable, Healthy, and Easy Food Access	Ensure funding for meals on wheels programs for seniors is secure	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2023
	Provide nutrition and support that is culturally relevant to different BIPOC, and other communities to encourage more participation	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2023
Expand Protections against	Explore and document current programs for senior protections	Office of Equity and Human Rights	Q1 2022
Abuse for Elders	Evaluate the disparate impacts elder abuse can have on LGBTQIA+ elders, and elders of color	Office of Equity and Human Rights	Q1 2022
Expand Access to Dental, Eye care, and Hearing Healthcare Services	Explore new opportunities to fund additional healthcare services not covered by Medicare and Medicaid	thcare services not covered by Medicare and	
Include sexual orientation and gender as measures of success in the 2025 Objective. (2025 Objective included in housing, transportation, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Work and Civic Engagement) Expanded definition is included in indicators of future plans		Office of Strategy, Engagement, and Communication	Q1 2024

2. Communication and Information

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Older adults receive information in a variety of ways, and no one way reaches every person. Age Friendly Tacoma promotes accessible print and digital communications, and community partnerships that increase access to information that older adults need for optimal aging.

2025 Objective: Increase digital access and equity across the city.

Actions	Performance Indicators	Lead Department	Target Start
Increase Access to Broadband and Digital Services for seniors	Support training and staff navigators who can walk seniors through digital media challenges	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2023
	Ensure Wi-Fi connection points in community gathering spaces such as community and senior centers	Office of Strategy, Engagement, and Communication	Q1 2023
	Support and fund in home Wi-Fi for low income seniors	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q2 2023
Ensure Residents can Navigate Age Friendly Resources	Dedicate Staffing Support for Age Friendly Resources	Office of Equity and Human Rights	Q1 2023
	Utilize City Media Channels to Highlight Resources in Culturally Sensitive Ways	Office of Strategy, Engagement, and Communication	Q1 2023
	Provide resources in print for seniors who cannot access digital services	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2022
	Support the City's Language Access Policy to provide print and digital resources in other languages	Office of Strategy, Engagement, and Communication	Q1 2023

3. Housing

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Older adults want to age in place—stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible—and benefit from living in affordable, age friendly housing. Age Friendly Tacoma supports diverse housing options that allow older adults of all incomes to live in clean, safe, comfortable, and well-maintained housing; design that encourages the ability to visit for all ages and abilities; and availability of a strong network of home-based services in age-friendly neighborhoods.

2025 Objective: Decrease the percentage of individuals who are spending more than 45% of income on housing and transportation costs.

2025 Objective: Improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

2025 Objective: Increase the percentage of people relocating to the city and affordability of housing compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

Actions	Actions Performance Indicators		Target Start
Support and Advocate for additional affordable housing in Tacoma	Support the Affordable Housing Action Strategy which sets the City's plan for addressing missing middle housing, zoning, preservation of housing, and creation of new housing	Multi-department Team	Q1 2022
	Support single family, multifamily housing, and rental options throughout the city to offer elders affordable options to homeownership	Multi-department Team	Q1 2022
Expand Programs that help Seniors stay in their Homes	Expand and identify sustainable funding for the Single Family Housing Rehab Program to Support Seniors	Community and Economic Development	Q1 2023
	Support and expand rental and utility assistance programs for seniors on fixed income	Neighborhood and Community Services	Q1 2023

4. Transportation

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Community mobility is essential to optimal aging. Age Friendly Tacoma supports safe, reliable, and easy-to-use travel options—including accessible and affordable public transit, rideshare, ride-hailing, walking, and biking— to get people of all ages where they need to go.

2025 Objective: Decrease the percentage of individuals who are spending more than 45% of income on housing and transportation costs

2025 Objective: Improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

Actions	Performance Indicators	Lead Department	Target Start
Increase Access to Affordable and Available Taxi/Shuttle/ Rideshare and public transportation Services	Support the Accessible Taxi Service Study and resulting Recommendations	Office of Equity and Human Rights	Q1 2022

Acknowledgements

The work of the Age Friendly Advisory Group that was led by Council Member Lilian Hunter was vital to the development of this plan. The community leaders and subject matter experts gave important guidance in the development and priorities of the plan, and invaluable support in making this happen. Below are the members of the advisory group that engaged in the conversations to make Tacoma a more age friendly community.

- Lua Pritchard, Asia Pacific Cultural Center and Asia Pacific Islander Coalition of Pierce County;
- Bob Riler, Pierce County Aging and Disability Resources;
- Connie Kline, Pierce County Aging and Disability Resources;
- Paulina Kura, Pierce County Aging and Disability Resources;
- Matthew Santelli: Pierce County Aging and Disability Resources;
- Marina Becker, Metro Parks Tacoma;
- Suzanne Pak, Korean Women's Association;
- Pat McIntyre, Tacoma Older LGBT Board and Pierce County Aging and Disability board and State Council on Aging;
- Christina Clem, AARP;
- Amanda Frame, AARP;
- Maria Holt, Lutheran Community Services Dementia Services;
- Paulina Kura, Pierce County Human Services;
- Todd Holloway, Center for Independence, and Tacoma Commission on Disabilities;
- Connie Kline, Social Services Supervisor at Pierce County Aging and Disability Resources;
- Jacki Skaught, Community Member;
- Reverend Harlan Shoop, Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church;
- Bucoda Warren, City of Tacoma Strategy, Engagement, and Communications;
- Vicky McLaurin, City of Tacoma Neighborhood and Community Services:

Appendix 1

Domains of Livability and Connected 2025 Indicators

In order to focus and prioritize work, not all domains of livability are a part of the first Tacoma Age Friendly Action Plan. Below you can find the domains of livability that were not the highest priority, along with a draft vision statement and the 2025 Indicators that are related to those domains. This appendix can be used to support future updates to the plan.

Social Participation

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Social participation and physical activity are essential for both quality of life and longevity. Age Friendly Tacoma supports learning, fitness, social, cultural, and spiritual activities for older adults as well as intergenerational activities that are accessible, affordable, safe, and fun.

2025 Objective: Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Respect and Social Inclusion

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Everyone wants to feel valued. Age Friendly Tacoma celebrates and draws upon the wisdom and experience of older adults, encourages intergenerational and multicultural understanding, and works to eliminate ageism and ensure consistent levels of high-quality service for all ages.

2025 Objective: Demonstrate community support for education by increasing support for school levies and bonds; volunteering and mentoring youth.

2025 Objective: Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: People need public places to gather—indoors and out. Age Friendly Tacoma supports parks and other green spaces, safe streets, sidewalks, outdoor seating, and accessible buildings that can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of Complete Compact Communities/ 20-Minute Neighborhoods throughout the city.

2025 Objective: Improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of infrastructure projects and improvements that support existing and new business developments.

Work and Civic Engagement

Age Friendly Tacoma Vision: Whether working for pay or volunteering time and talent, many older adults find value in contributing to their communities. Age Friendly Tacoma supports services for mature jobseekers who need or want to work, promotes age-friendly business practices, and encourages older adults to share their skills to address community needs.

2025 Objective: Improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

2025 Objective: Increase the availability of industry-specific education programs to support identified growth sectors.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of Tacoma households that have livable wage jobs within proximity to the city.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of diverse livable wage jobs.

2025 Objective: Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

2025 Objective: Elected officials, boards, commissions, and volunteer leadership will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community.

2025 Objective: Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

2025 Objective: Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community.