



# South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Consideration of a Moratorium Extension

City of Tacoma | Planning and Development Services

City Council Study Session  
February 13, 2024  
Item #2



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## Overview



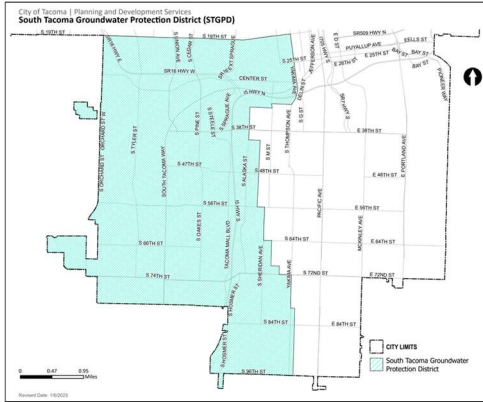
**Purpose of the Meeting:** Provide an overview of the South Tacoma Ground Water Protection District (STGPD) moratorium and the status of the code review, in preparation for a public hearing on February 20, 2024.

1. Project Overview
2. Agency Roles and Responsibilities in STGPD
3. Background
4. STGPD Moratorium
5. STGPD Updated Work Plan
6. Schedule and Next Steps

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# South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD)



- Created in 1988 as an overlay zone in Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.
- Encompasses the South Tacoma aquifer recharge area.
- Created to protect aquifer drinking water from contamination.
- Applies to businesses/commercial uses.
- Prohibits incompatible land uses.
- Establishes standards for hazardous substance storage, stormwater infiltration, spill prevention, and inspections.
- Subject to periodic review and update.

# Agency Roles and Responsibilities in STGPD



Agency	Roles and Responsibilities
<b>Tacoma Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains wells that access the south Tacoma aquifer</li> <li>• Conducts water quality testing and compliance</li> </ul>
<b>Planning and Development Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit authority for land use, building code, site development, critical areas</li> <li>• Maintains the STGPD regulations</li> <li>• SEPA Lead Agency</li> </ul>
<b>Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulates/inspects businesses with hazardous substances on site and infiltration systems meeting certain criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers Stormwater Management Program</li> <li>• Inspects businesses for source control, pollution prevention, stormwater facilities and environmental compliance</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Department</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers Fire Code pertaining to hazardous materials; emergency response</li> </ul>

## ● ● ● Background



### 1. South Tacoma Neighborhood Council Application

- Update the One Tacoma Plan and the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) applicable to the STGPD and the aquifer recharge areas to address environmental and health risks and further prioritize protection of the STGPD
- Transform the South Tacoma Manufacturing/Industrial Center into an Economic Green Zone

### 2. STGPD Work Plan – Amended Substitute Resolution No. 40985

- The City Council adopted the Work Plan on June 28, 2022, directing the Planning Commission to conduct a public process to develop findings of fact and recommendations as to **whether a moratorium on heavy industrial uses and storage of hazardous materials within the STGPD is warranted**, and if so, to recommend the scope, applicability, and duration for City Council consideration within 60 days of the effective date of this resolution

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## ● ● ● STGPD Moratorium



**Adoption: On March 7, 2023, the City Council passed Ordinance No. 28872, enacting a moratorium within the STGPD as recommended by the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee.**

#### Uses Temporarily Prohibited:

- Underground Storage Tanks
- Metal recycling/auto wrecking

#### Existing Uses:


- Prohibit expansion of existing facilities
- Allow normal maintenance, repair, replacement activities, and existing operations
- Allow site and facility improvements to comply with building code, stormwater, and environmental standards

**Duration of Moratorium:** 1 year – Expires on March 20, 2024

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## ● ● ● STGPD Work Plan – Public Input



**Initial Scope of Work:**

- Stormwater Infiltration Policy
- High Impact Use review – focus on Underground Storage Tanks and Metal Recycling facilities


**Public Input:**

- Consider Best Available Science
  - Particular focus on climate science and potential impacts on water resources
- Consider impervious surface limitations for new development to support infiltration
- Conduct a Health Impact Assessment
- Address lack of tree canopy in South Tacoma
- Bring in outside expertise for code review and recommendations

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## ● ● ● STGPD Updated Work Plan



1. Tacoma Water Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) Update - Review and make recommendations regarding the STGPD standards as well as developing new information on groundwater supply and demand forecasts with consideration of climate change.
2. The City’s Planning and Development Services is in discussion with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to partner on the Health Impact Assessment associated with the STGPD code amendments.
3. Periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan and Critical Areas Code (**Mandatory**) – includes a review of critical aquifer recharge areas.

Project	2023	2024				2025	
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Moratorium							
Integrated Resource Plan							
Health Impact Assessment							
Wellhead Protection Plan							
Urban Waters Protection Plan							
Stormwater Comprehensive Plan							
STGPD Code Development							
Comprehensive Plan Update							

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# STGPD Updated Work Plan



- 4. The City and partners are currently engaged in a few programmatic and regulatory updates related to the STGPD, including the Wellhead Protection Plan, Urban Waters Protection Plan, and Stormwater Comprehensive Plan.
- 5. Updating the STGPD Work Plan to include landscaping and tree canopy standards with a particular focus on industrial areas and the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center.

Project	2023	2024				2025	
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Moratorium							
Integrated Resource Plan							
Health Impact Assessment							
Wellhead Protection Plan							
Urban Waters Protection Plan							
Stormwater Comprehensive Plan							
STGPD Code Development							
Comprehensive Plan Update							

# Schedule and Next Steps



2024 Dates (tentative)	Actions
January 30	City Council – Resolution to Set a Public Hearing Date
February 13	Study Session –Public Hearing Preparation
February 20	City Council – Public Hearing
February 27	Study Session – Public Hearing Debrief
February 27	City Council – Ordinance (First Reading)
March 5	City Council – Ordinance (Final Reading)



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