



CITY OF  
**Tacoma**

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Dear Chair Walker and Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee Members,

The Climate and Sustainability Commission (CSC) would like to thank the City Council for advancing key elements of Tacoma's 2030 Climate Action Plan (CAP) over the past year. Funding a Climate Resilience Manager, as well as adopting the Urban Forest & Tree Resolution, One Tacoma, Transportation & Mobility Plan, and Tideflats Subarea Plans achievements that could potentially strengthen the City of Tacoma's ability to enact meaningful climate action and environmental justice policies.

However, climate impacts are accelerating and communities are experiencing more intense heat and more dangerous smoke. In addition, historically overburdened neighborhoods face the ongoing burden of air pollution.

Tacoma now faces a decisive implementation window: the plans are in place, but disciplined follow-through will determine whether the resilience and sustainability efforts detailed in our adopted plans will be in place to improve our City, especially the communities that need them most.

To help rebuild and sustain momentum around climate action, we highlight three priority pillars for the coming year.

## **1. Build Capacity and Accountability**

- **Focus staffing on high-impact sectors**

- a) Prioritize transportation and building decarbonization when allocating limited, new staffing resources. These sectors account for the majority of Tacoma's greenhouse gas emissions, and investments in these areas offer the greatest returns in air quality, affordability, and public health, especially for historically underserved communities. A targeted approach will help ensure near-term progress without requiring major budget growth.

- **Clarify the role of OEPS under the City Manager's Office**

- a) The recent realignment presents a critical opportunity to embed climate across all departments. The Council and the public would benefit from a clear articulation of how the transition has strengthened coordination, decision-making authority, and accountability for implementation. As the CAP enters a delivery phase, internal clarity will be essential.

- **Sustain long-term support for frontline CBOs**

- a) Community-Based Organizations (CBO) are a pillar for community development and services. Although multi-year capacity funding remains essential, so too are sustained relationships grounded in transparency, trust and communication. These

partners are already leading climate education, adaptation, and neighborhood-level engagement. Long-term collaboration, with consistent updates, feedback loops, and shared planning, will allow CBOs to grow, retain staff, and serve as lasting implementation partners as the City advances its climate and equity goals.

## **2. Protect Health, Mobility, and Natural Systems**

- **Advance the Resilience Hub program**
  - a) We must move urgently from planning to deployment by identifying pilot Resilience Hub sites and coordinating across departments. Tacoma's working-class communities—many without access to air conditioning—cannot wait for another summer of extreme heat and hazardous smoke. These facilities are no longer optional; they are life-saving infrastructure for climate-vulnerable households. In the interim, we urge the City to expand hours and improve access to cooling sites across neighborhoods. Longer term, we request that Tacoma not only implement the CAP's Resilience Hub strategy, but also lead regional coordination to ensure system-wide coverage, consistency, and support across jurisdictions.
- **Implement the Urban Forest & Tree Resolution with urgency**
  - a) Translate the City's tree retention policy into operational action. A public-facing work plan, clear staffing assignments, and transparent tracking of code development, planting and maintenance progress will ensure the urban canopy expands equitably. Tree cover is one of the most cost-effective, visible, and community-supported interventions the City can deliver.
- **Maintain investment in active transportation and safe mobility infrastructure**
  - a) To meet the City's mobility and land use climate goals, as well as achieve meaningful implementation of the Transportation & Mobility Plan, the City must maintain investment in infrastructure that promotes safe mobility and active transportation. With limited Public Works resources, it is imperative to identify additional funding sources and allocate existing resources towards the prioritization of safe multi-modal access, as indicated in the TMP's Green Transportation Hierarchy and Multi-Modal Level of Services standards.

## **3. Drive Decarbonization and Industrial Transition**

- **Report regularly on implementation of adopted climate-related plans**
  - a) The Urban Forest & Tree Resolution, One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, Transportation & Mobility Plan, and Tideflats and MIC Subarea Plans all contain climate-critical policies. The challenge now is execution. We recommend Council request regular, accessible updates on implementation progress, including emissions, permitting, land use, and equity outcomes, to ensure these plans deliver on their intended climate, health, and housing goals.
- **Engage industry to accelerate decarbonization**
  - a) Establish a structured dialogue with manufacturers and port-area businesses to identify barriers, co-develop solutions, and accelerate investment in cleaner



technologies. Industrial emissions remain a major source of pollution and climate risk. This sector cannot be an afterthought if Tacoma is serious about meeting its CAP targets and environmental justice commitments.

- **Support 2026 state building code improvements**

- a) Continue Tacoma's leadership in statewide decarbonization by actively supporting the 2026 code cycle and ensuring local staffing is ready to implement higher efficiency and electrification standards. Preparing now will prevent rollout delays and signal that the City is aligned with long-term climate and housing resilience goals.

Tacoma has clear climate action roadmaps. The risk now is fragmentation, delay, or stalled momentum. The Climate and Sustainability Commission will continue to monitor progress, surface gaps, and elevate community priorities to help ensure the City delivers on the commitments outlined in the Climate Action Plan, among others.

We urge the Council to keep focus on execution, equity, and results as it enters the next phase of climate leadership.

Yours sincerely,

*Evlando Cooper III*

Evlando Cooper, Co-Chair

*Casey Twigg*

Casey Twigg, Co-Chair

Climate and Sustainability Commission

Cc:

Sonja Hallum, Interim Deputy City Manager  
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