



## RESOLUTION NO. 41560

1 BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS

2 A RESOLUTION relating to citywide and state priorities; adopting the priority  
3 issues for the 2025 session for the Washington State Legislature.

4 WHEREAS the City's State Agenda is developed through engagement  
5 with operational departments and divisions, policymakers, and other  
6 stakeholders to determine a set of priority issues to which City advocacy  
7 resources will be devoted for the coming year, and  
8

9 WHEREAS, each year, the Public Utility Board ("PUB") and City Council  
10 adopt a slate of priority issues that the City would like to see addressed by the  
11 Washington State Legislature, and

12 WHEREAS identifying this set of issues fosters efficient and effective  
13 communication to the state policymakers, and provides transparency to the  
14 public about state issues that are most important to the City Council, and  
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16 WHEREAS a briefing on proposed General Government policy positions  
17 and priorities was provided to the City Council on October 1 and October 29, 2024,  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, on November 13, 2024, the PUB received a briefing on  
20 Tacoma Public Utilities ("TPU") priorities and adopted Resolution No. U-11493,  
21 adopting the State Legislative Agenda for TPU, and  
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23 WHEREAS, on November 19, 2024, the proposed citywide legislative  
24 agenda was presented to a Joint Study Session of the PUB and City Council, and  
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WHEREAS City Council Resolution No. 37550 requires the City Council to ensure that the legislative agenda or position of the General Government and the PUB are not in conflict, and the City Council has made that determination; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That the policy positions and priority issues for the 2025 session of the Washington State Legislature, as set forth in the attached Exhibit "A," are hereby adopted.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

# EXHIBIT "A"



## City of Tacoma General Government 2025 State Legislative Policy Positions

The City of Tacoma has identified strategic priorities for the City based on a community designed vision developed by Tacoma residents in the [Tacoma 2025, the Strategic Plan for the City of Tacoma](#). Based on these community priorities, the Tacoma City Council has identified the City's [current priority areas](#) of focus.<sup>1</sup>

Integral to these priorities is the City's commitment to equity. The City Council adopted [Resolution 40622](#) affirming the City Council's dedication and commitment to comprehensive and sustained transformation of all of the institutions, systems, policies, practices, and contracts impacted by systemic racism and directing the City Manager to work with the Mayor and City Council to build a legislative platform at the local, state, and federal levels that works to transform institutions impacted by systemic racism for the greater equity and wellbeing of all residents of Tacoma.

In addition to the City priorities, the City will continue to collaborate and coordinate with community partners, organizations, educational institutions, nonprofits, local businesses, service providers, and other local governments on issues of importance to our city and region. The City will support legislative efforts and partner initiatives that are consistent with the City policy positions.<sup>2</sup>

Consistent with the current City Council priority areas, the following are the City of Tacoma positions on state legislative issues and concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> The City has prioritized increasing belief and trust within the community. Focus on increasing belief and trust is a core part of all of the City priorities. Because it is integral to the plans in every area it cannot be divided out into a separate section and is incorporated into priorities of every section. A few examples of efforts to increase belief and trust include participatory budgeting, neighborhood planning with community input, improving the clarity and frequency of communication, providing increased transparency, reducing use of force incidents, and improving community survey results.

<sup>2</sup> Members of the Joint Municipal Action Committee, serving the Tacoma/Pierce County region, align common community initiatives under three strategic themes: 1) Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI); 2) public health and safety; and 3) community wealth building. Areas of legislative interest include, but are not limited to, leveraging the collective impact of local purchasing, removing barriers to government contracts, connecting youth pipelines to careers, ending homelessness, and dismantling systems that perpetuate systemic racism.

## Safety

Public safety is a priority for the City. The City objectives related to safety include reducing the number of crimes occurring, particularly firearm related offenses, and increasing effectiveness of our response by enhancing coordination with appropriate behavioral health services. The City objectives also include increasing the percentage of residents who feel safe and decreasing response times for 911 calls for assistance.

In furtherance of these objectives, the following are specific policy positions related to safety:

### Law Enforcement

- ***Recruitment and Retention:*** The City, like most jurisdictions in the country, faces a critical shortage of officers in our law enforcement agency, the Tacoma Police Department (TPD). While the TPD is making progress in hiring officers and is using data-driven strategies along with creative alternatives such as creating a unit of non-commissioned civilian officers, there remains a gap in staffing that is detrimental to public safety. The City requests the state support recruitment and retention efforts through increased funding and local revenue options, and to ensure there is sufficient capacity at the state Criminal Justice Training Commission to provide the necessary training for all officers in the state. The City also supports efforts to expand the pool of potential officers such as modifying eligibility requirements to allow those in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status to serve as police officers and changes that allow for part-time positions to be covered in the LEOFF 2 pension system.
- ***Independent Prosecutions of Police Use of Force:*** The City actively supported the establishment of the Office of Independent Investigations (OII) to conduct transparent, unbiased, and thorough investigations of police use of force cases. While this is an important step, the work is not complete. The state must establish an Office of Independent Prosecutions to review the OII investigations and make transparent, unbiased decisions in these cases. This is critical to the credibility of these investigations and to our community.
- ***Automated Enforcement:*** The City encourages the state to support, retain, and expand local automated enforcement programs to improve traffic safety. Additionally, the City supports efforts to increase the portion of automated enforcement proceeds collected through these programs that can be retained by the City to implement additional traffic safety measures.
- ***Public Defense Funding:*** Criminal indigent defense is a constitutional right. While the state has provided some funding to cities to improve public defense, additional funding is needed to provide appropriate public defense services, particularly given the increased demand anticipated following the changes to the possession of controlled substances laws, and potential implementation of new caseload standards.

- **Business Support:** The City supports efforts to support businesses including prevention of organized retail crime, and state funding to provide security enhancements such as shatterproof windows.

### **Alternative Response**

- **Alternatives to Traditional Law Enforcement Response:** Programs providing responses that are alternatives to traditional law enforcement are critical to improving public safety. In situations involving individuals experiencing behavioral health issues, programs such as behavioral health co-responders, diversion, and other alternative programs improve outcomes for the community and law enforcement. It is important to ensure there are services available to people experiencing behavioral health issues when they are in need. The City also supports programs that provide supportive services for individuals experiencing cognitive decline. Additionally, programs that allow appointed unarmed officers with a limited scope of responsibilities and authority to respond to certain low-risk calls will improve community safety, increase feelings of security with community members, and improve relationships between the community and law enforcement. The City encourages the state to expand support of local government efforts to increase alternative response programs.
- **Problem-Solving Courts:** Problem-solving courts differ from traditional courts in that they focus on a type of offense or the person committing the offense. They offer therapeutic and interdisciplinary approaches to addressing the issues underlying the criminal behavior. Therapeutic and community courts are types of problem-solving courts. The City supports increased funding for problem-solving courts, particularly as the need for alternatives to the traditional court system is increasing as a result of the City responsibility for possession of controlled substance and public use of controlled substance cases.
- **Community Violence Reduction Programs:** The City has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, programs and services focused on reducing community firearm violence. The City requests the state to continue and increase funding opportunities to allow the implementation of community and law enforcement intervention programs to address firearm violence and to provide programs for young people with the goal of violence prevention. The City encourages the state to support, and provide funding for, prevention programs such as the Summer Teen Late Nights program funded by the City and other partners, to provide young people a safe place to engage in activities.
- **Community Safety:** The City is developing a community safety action strategy that will include city actions to support public safety, including actions beyond traditional police and fire responses, and will identify opportunities to support additional community and state actions that further enhance community safety. The City supports state efforts to address the root causes of poverty which will increase community safety, consistent with the City plans.

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design:** Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) programs help reduce the chance of criminal activity by providing guidelines for property owners to use to lower or prevent environmental factors from creating opportunity for crime. The City supports state funding efforts to augment CPTED efforts

### **Drug Possession**

- **Adequate Funding for implementing Drug Laws:** The legislative changes to the controlled substance possession offenses require the cities to be responsible for enforcement of these statutes. The City supported the legislation making the possession offenses gross misdemeanors in most cases based on the emphasis on treatment. The City encourages the state to ensure there are adequate services for behavioral health needs, including access to a continuum of services. The City also encourages the state to direct funding to help offset the cost of implementing the drug possession laws, including funding for staffing; law enforcement assisted diversion; alternative response programs, including co-responder teams; problem-solving courts; and diversion programs.
- **Funding and Assistance to Address Substance Abuse Crisis:** Opioid-related overdoses are the most [common cause of accidental death](#) in Pierce County, taking more lives than traffic or firearm fatalities,<sup>3</sup> due largely to increased use of fentanyl. Opioid deaths in Washington are growing most quickly among people ages 18-24. The City supports additional resources and technical assistance from the state to help local, state, and federal law enforcement address the substance addiction crisis in cities.

### **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention:**

- **Surrender of Weapons:** The City supports state legislation requiring the surrender of firearms in cases involving domestic violence and sexual assault, including following conviction and related to orders for protection and no-contact orders.
- **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Programs and Services:** The City supports funding for programs and services to support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and encourages the state to ensure there is ongoing funding for these services. The City also supports funding for domestic violence and sexual assault prevention educational programs, such as teach-the-teacher programs.

### **Fire**

- **Support for Tacoma Fire Department (TFD), including the TFD Medical Services:** TFD personnel provide essential services in dangerous and crisis situations. The City supports policies, programming and resources that assist municipal fire departments to provide services and training, purchase technology and equipment, and address the mental health needs of first responders.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tpchd.org/i-want-to/public-health-data/overdose-data>.

- **Battery Fires:** Electric battery fires pose unique risks to first responders and those responsible for the disposal of the burnt battery material. The City supports a study of fires related to electric batteries to inform policies and practices to reduce risk and improve opportunities for safer disposal.

## Housing and Homelessness

Housing and homelessness are issues impacting cities across the state and nation. Homelessness is a complex situation that will require short-term and long-range efforts to address immediate needs such as shelter, while also addressing housing availability and affordability in our community. The City of Tacoma has been operating under a Declaration of State of Public Health Emergency since 2017 to address the health and safety concerns caused by growing encampments and has subsequently extended the ordinance several times.

The City has prioritized focusing on addressing housing and homelessness issues within the City and recognizes that affordable and diverse housing types are the long-term solution to the homelessness crisis. The City priorities include providing diverse shelter options to meet the needs of our unhoused community; reducing unsanctioned encampments and issues associated with these encampments; increasing units of permanent supportive housing; creating new units of affordable housing through production of new units of affordable housing; preserving existing affordable housing; and preventing the displacement of longtime Tacoma residents.

In furtherance of these objectives, the following are specific policy positions related to housing and homelessness:

### Housing

- **Housing Development and Land Use Regulations, Codes, and Policies:** Housing issues within the state are not uniform across cities; therefore, there must be flexibility in legislation adopted to ensure cities are able to implement policies in ways that meet the local constraints and needs, as well as minimize displacement. Consistent with this policy, the City supports the state's efforts to increase density.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** The City has been a leader in planning for housing development and welcomes transit-oriented development. As the state engages in a policy discussion on transit-oriented development, the City encourages the state to look at those strategies the City has utilized as a resource, including partnerships with transit agencies and collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders. Any statewide policy should strive for the highest densities to occur nearest transit stops, with tiered reducing densities further out from the stop. Additionally, the City encourages the state to keep equity central to the discussion and to

consider robust anti-displacement measures, including financial support for local programs meant to reduce displacement of longtime residents.

- **Reducing Displacement:** Many of the efforts to increase the housing supply impact the ability of individuals on limited incomes to remain housed, including seniors, renters, BIPOC residents, people with a disability, and those on fixed incomes. The City has adopted an Anti-Displacement Strategy which includes 21 policy and program actions to prevent and mitigate displacement of Tacoma residents from their homes and communities. The City supports policies to reduce displacement and provide opportunities for those on limited incomes to remain housed. The City supports increased state funding for programs such as rental and housing assistance, home repairs for low-income homeowners, down payment assistance, mortgage assistance, relocation assistance, tenant legal counsel, and acquisition of land or multifamily buildings in high-displacement areas will allow low-income Tacoma residents to stay in their homes and in their communities.
- **Implementation Support:** The legislature made significant changes to housing requirements during the past session. The City is also implementing housing policy adopted by the City Council, much of which is consistent with the state efforts. The City requests the state allow time to implement the recently adopted planning and zoning changes consistent with comprehensive plan update schedules. Additionally, the City requests the state provide adequate time, and technical and financial support for land use and planning requirements.
- **Local Decision-Making:** Housing issues within the state are not uniform across cities; therefore, there must be flexibility in legislation adopted to ensure cities are able to implement policies in ways that meet the local constraints and needs, as well as minimizes displacement.
- **Extreme Weather Response:** Climate change is creating greater demand on public resources. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent with climate change and are putting our most vulnerable at risk. The City supports grant programs and other funding to support response to extreme weather conditions, including to prepare and modify our buildings to keep residents safe during extreme weather events.
- **State Funding for Affordable Housing:** The City of Tacoma lacks affordable housing. Nearly 33,000 households in Tacoma pay at least 30 percent of their income on housing costs each month, reducing their ability to pay for other necessities. Since 2015, average rent in Tacoma has increased by 85 percent and home values increased by 148%. In response to this urgent need, the City adopted the [Affordable Housing Action Strategy](#) to guide its efforts to dramatically increase investments in new rental and homeownership opportunities and establish broader anti-displacement measures. While this effort has resulted in an increase in affordable housing units, there is a significant demand that will continue to increase. To further the City efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing the City supports increasing state funding for programs supporting the acquisition, construction, and operation of shelters, permanent supportive housing, and affordable housing, such as the Housing Trust Fund, rapid acquisition funding, establishing Housing Benefit Districts (HBDs), funding mechanisms that can



assist with land banking for future affordable development, efforts to enhance home ownership opportunities, and the Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program (CHIP). The City also supports efforts to provide incentives to developers to build affordable housing, including utility infrastructure incentives and other tools. The City supports incentives to convert market-rate residential and commercial buildings into affordable housing units. The City supports efforts to incentivize options for affordable housing by allowing property tax exemption for ADUs rented to low-income households.

- **BIPOC Homeownership:** Homeownership is the primary tool for building wealth, and for Black families it plays a bigger role in creating wealth than for white families; however, as shown in the City's 2021 Homeownership Disparity Study, homeownership has failed to benefit Black homeowners as much as white homeowners. The City supports state efforts to enhance homeownership opportunities among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities through assistance to homebuyers, including down payment assistance, and modifications to existing programs to support homeownership.
- *Area Median Income Calculation:* Many of the state's housing programs utilize a percentage of area median income (AMI) to calculate eligibility. AMI is generally calculated using county data. However, the AMI for the City is significantly different from Pierce County as a whole. The City supports statutory changes, clarifications, and other state and federal efforts to allow AMI to be calculated by city, or metropolitan statistical area rather than by county.

### **Homelessness Services**

- **Funding for Shelters:** With over 1600 people experiencing homelessness in Tacoma, the City has implemented a [Homelessness Strategy](#) to respond to this crisis. The strategy includes implementation and operation of temporary shelters to address immediate needs while also encouraging development of affordable housing in our community as a long-term strategy to mitigate incidences of homelessness. The City's strategy to transition from our current investment in shelter beds to deeper support of permanent and supportive housing as well as the intervention and stabilization services described in the strategy. Even with this shift in funding, the City will need to explore revenue options to support services that are currently supported with one-time funds.
  - The City supports state funding that can be utilized to maintain operations and to continue implementation of the strategy to move towards more permanent solutions for people experiencing homelessness. The state funds should be equitably distributed to ensure that temporary and emergency shelters operated by the City receive funding to allow continued operations.
  - The City supports funding for programs and services to assist people experiencing homelessness, including mental health and substance use disorder treatment services.
- **Rights-of-Way :**

- The City has adopted [an ordinance](#) regulating encampments on public property near shelter locations. Any legislation adopted by the state should ensure this regulatory authority is maintained.
  - The City supports ongoing funding for the partnership between the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the City of Tacoma to remove homeless encampments from rights-of-way, offer shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness, and undertake reclamation activities which includes graffiti abatement.
- **Recreational Vehicles:** A growing issue is the number of people experiencing homelessness who are living in recreational vehicles (RVs) and, in some cases, individuals are renting the RVs from third parties. There are many health and safety concerns associated with the RVs; however, there are unique challenges addressing RVs. The City supports a statewide response to homelessness issues related to RVs given their potential impacts to the environment and transient nature that allows them to move between local jurisdictions making local enforcement more challenging. The City supports a statewide response that leads with compassion, prioritizes siting and services, and is consistent with the position and priorities of the Council. Additionally, the City supports review and modification of state laws and policies related to the disposal of abandoned or unused RVs that are not being used for habitation and are posing an environmental risk to reduce the barriers to disposal of these RVs.

### Rental Housing

- **Rental Assistance and Tenant Protections:** The City supports rental assistance and tenant protections to keep rents affordable and individuals housed. The City supports state efforts to enact rent stabilization policies.
- **Professional Civil Legal Assistance:** The City supports funding for civil legal aid services for low-income clients to prevent or mitigate risks of eviction.
- **Prior Criminal History:** The City supports legislation that would ban discrimination against renters based on a prior criminal record.

### Infrastructure

- **Infrastructure Investments:** The City supports state infrastructure investments aimed at reducing housing construction costs and accommodating growth. The City has embraced growth and increased density throughout its planning code. To successfully accommodate this growth, the City supports increased state resources for infrastructure such as sidewalks, street lighting, green spaces, electric vehicle charging stations, and other infrastructure integral to urban living. Additionally, investing funding in water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure necessary to the development can help offset rising housing constructions costs to make housing more affordable. The City supports programs such as the Connecting Housing to Infrastructure grant

program that direct state funding to these infrastructure needs, and expanded and reliable funding for the Public Works Assistance Account allowing low interest financing for local infrastructure projects.

- **Sidewalks:** The City’s sidewalks are part of its transportation system and therefore it is important they are maintained in a safe usable condition. The City supports state policy and budget efforts that would assist the funding of construction and repair of sidewalks city-wide, including allowing for a sidewalk service charge.

## Jobs

A City goal is that Tacoma be a growing economy where residents can find livable wage jobs in key industry sectors and for Tacoma to be a place of choice for employers, professionals, and new graduates. To achieve these goals the City has prioritized workforce development and increasing the number of livable wage jobs in Tacoma. The City also prioritizes increasing the number of small and medium-sized businesses surviving and thriving in the City, including increasing the number of BIPOC owned businesses and the diversity of small businesses.

In furtherance of these objectives, the following are specific policy positions related to jobs:

**Livable Wage Jobs:** Tacoma has established alignment between the City and the local workforce development board, allowing us to braid funding across initiatives to increase impact while leveraging the expertise of the private sector, labor, and technical colleges that make up the workforce board, with the goal of increasing the pool of skilled workers who can compete for high wage jobs. The state should encourage and support similar programs. The City supports additional assistance for local workforce efforts including, but not limited to:

- **Skills Training:** Support for upskilling/reskilling workers to meet the evolving demands of emerging industries and workforce gaps, including training for veterinary students to address workforce shortages restricting the delivery of veterinary medical services. The City supports efforts to expand skills training access to underserved areas, such as the Eastside Skills and Training Center.
- **Apprenticeship Programs:** Support for apprentice, pre-apprentice programs, and other workforce development programs.
- **Cross-Sector Partnerships:** Support for cross-sector initiatives involving labor, business, workforce providers, governments, education, and training entities to develop strategies prepare workers for high-wage jobs.
- **Barriers to Employment:** Support for programs that remove barriers to employment for vulnerable populations, including barriers to employment for refugees and immigrants.

**Economic Development Tools and Supports:** To achieve the City goals for the economy and workforce, there must be support for large and small businesses, and increased economic development tools and supports. The City supports strategies and partnerships that advance these areas including, but not limited to, the following:

- ***Small and Medium-Sized Businesses:*** Funding and policies that support small and medium-sized businesses, including subsidies and incubators to support disadvantaged businesses struggling with rising market-rate rents and workforce challenges.
- ***Small Business Technical Assistance:*** Funding and policies that provide technical assistance and financial literacy programs to assist small businesses access capital and available grants.
- ***Economic Development Tools:*** Expanding and creating economic development tools, including expanding commercial and industrial development tools.
- ***Advanced manufacturing and jobs in the Green Economy:*** With the adoption of the City’s Green Economic Development Strategy, the City supports the expansion of the Strategic Reserve Fund to help support the siting and expansion of manufacturing, research and development activities that support the creation of tradable sectors jobs in the emerging Green Economy. The City supports the creation and expansion of manufacturing tax incentives to assist with these efforts.
- ***Green Jobs:*** In alignment with the City’s Green Economic Development Strategy, the City supports developing green jobs including in clean energy, green building products, industrial symbiosis and maritime, making sure that these jobs are promoted within highly vulnerable communities. The City supports utilizing a greater portion of the Climate Commitment Act funding to support green jobs development, as well as training needed for these jobs.
- ***Career Pathways:*** Establishing career pathways to livable wage jobs in the community, including identifying apprenticeship opportunities to support the public sector.
- ***Interstate Licensure Compacts:*** Adopting additional interstate licensure compacts and policy changes to expedite and ease the occupational licensing process for military spouses.

**Equity and Diversity:** It is important to ensure there is an emphasis on equity and diversity in efforts to support, expand, and strengthen workforce development activities, including retraining for emerging industry sectors.

- ***Hiring and Contracting:*** The City supports measures that improve equity in hiring and contracting.
- ***Cannabis Industry:*** The state has made efforts to establish greater equity within the cannabis industry. The City supports ensuring that these efforts continue and include assistance such as providing technical and financial assistance to social equity applicants to reduce barriers to entry in the industry and help these new businesses thrive.

## Access

The City has prioritized using data to make decisions, direct funding, and develop strategies to address disparate outcomes. The data-driven [City Equity Index](#) is utilized to identify, track, and close disparities, as well as to prioritize investments based on access to opportunity. Utilizing an equity lens to inform investments will increase access including language access, and access to transportation and mobility.

In furtherance of these objectives, the following are specific policy positions related to access:

**Equity and Empowerment**: The City would like to work in partnership with the legislature to advance reforms that address the disparate impacts of systems and institutions on communities of color. The City supports statewide policies that bolster gender and racial equity including, but not limited to the following:

- ***Washington Future Fund***: The City supports programs and funding that will help to close generational wealth gaps.
- ***Guaranteed Income***: Many Tacoma families struggle with financial instability. Tacoma launched a guaranteed income pilot program in 2021, Growing Resilience in Tacoma (GRIT), which granted 100 needy families a monthly, no-strings attached payment. The City supports a state guaranteed income program to stabilize needy families and interrupt cycles of poverty, including funding to extend the local GRIT program for an additional biennium. It is important that the guaranteed income policy proposals include specific language that mitigates any impact the additional income may have on the recipient's eligibility for other public assistance programs.
- ***Reparations***: The City supports efforts to acknowledge and address the impacts of discriminatory laws and policies on formerly enslaved people and their descendants.
- ***Election Reform***: The City supports legislation that increases voter participation, including supporting the option for jurisdictions to choose whether local elections are conducted on odd or even years, and the option to choose whether to utilize ranked choice voting.
- ***People with Disabilities***: The City encourages policies to support individuals with disabilities, including non-apparent disabilities, to ensure access to services and opportunities and to provide equal opportunities, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion. The City also supports policy options to enhance and incentivize employment options for people with disabilities.

- **College Promise:** The City supports efforts to create a college promise program that links already existing state-level financial aid and guaranteed admissions programs, and that addresses non-tuition cost barriers and incentivizes postsecondary enrollment and persistence through direct cash assistance, as well as investing in student navigation assistance.
- **Community Reinvestment:** The legislature previously set aside funding into the Community Reinvestment Account to invest in communities disproportionately harmed by the historical design and enforcement of state and federal criminal laws and penalties. This initial investment represents the first steps to begin addressing racial, economic, and social disparities within communities, but continued investments are needed to broaden the reach and to impact the long-term economic benefits of the program. The City supports continued funding into the Community Reinvestment Account to promote long-term benefits in the form of community healing, new jobs, home ownership, job retention, increased personal wealth, and higher incomes.

**Transportation and Infrastructure:** The City is strategically guiding investment to develop a safe, accessible, and multimodal transportation system that prioritizes safety, equity, sustainability, and public health. The City has prioritized safety including through committing to Vision Zero and the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries in the City of Tacoma by 2035. The City is working to improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels, abilities, and race or ethnicity to community facilities, services, and infrastructure.

- **Transportation Network:** The City is dedicated to building out a local transportation network that supports all modes and is well maintained and safe. As such, the City supports:
  - Increased funding and local revenue options to maintain and preserve local bridges, roadways, ferries, sidewalks, parks, and trails.
  - Policies and investments that facilitate accessible transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure and access.
  - Timely delivery of projects funded in the 2015 Connecting Washington and 2022 Move Ahead Washington transportation packages, including the Puget Sound Gateway, Puyallup Avenue Complete Streets Project, HOV lanes on I-5 from 38<sup>th</sup> to Joint Base Lewis McChord, the Tacoma to Puyallup Trail, and Schuster Parkway Promenade.
  - State partnership to respond to the worsening conditions of the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge. The City is seeking state funding to assist the replacement of the bridge.
  - Policies and investments that support the modernization of short line railroads, including establishment of a rail modernization tax credit.

- **Access:** The City supports efforts to ensure access to transportation, including wheelchair accessible rideshare opportunities, and increased funding to make Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements such as sidewalk ramps.
- **City Authority:** The City opposes legislation that infringes on the city's ability to manage and maintain the right-of-way, such as proposals mandating telecommunications infrastructure or micro-trenching.
- **Transportation System Revenue Source:** The City supports efforts to replace the fuel tax with a new revenue source, such as a road usage charge, to support the maintenance and operation of the state and local transportation network. In recognition that the transportation system is a state and local responsibility, funds from a new revenue source should be shared between state and local governments.
- **Transportation and Infrastructure Funding:** The City supports ongoing and increased funding for transportation and freight mobility grant opportunities including grants that have historically been offered through the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB), WSDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, and the Safe Routes to Schools Program, and the Climate Commitment Act.

### **Telecommunications**

- **Digital Access:** The City supports and encourages efforts to increase digital access including access to low-cost internet service, affordable computers, and digital literacy training resources.
- **High Speed Broadband:** The City supports the extension of pandemic-era initiatives including the Affordable Connectivity Program to promote broadband access in qualified low-income households, including 38,000 eligible households in Tacoma.

**Childcare:** Access to childcare is important to Tacoma residents. The City supports funding and policies to expand access to affordable, quality childcare and preschool, including Universal Pre-Kindergarten, as well as early childhood mental health services. The City also supports state efforts to expand quality childcare in underserved areas and for people in the building and construction trades.

**Arts and Cultural:** Tacoma Creates is a voter-approved initiative to increase access to arts, culture, heritage, and science experiences throughout Tacoma by reducing barriers to access and expanding offerings, particularly for underserved youth.

- **Cultural Access Washington:** The City supports advocating for Cultural Access Washington legislation adoption and expansion beyond Tacoma Creates. The City supports funding and policies to increase access to arts, culture, heritage, and science experiences.

- **Arts and Creative Economy:** The City supports state funding and policies that support growth of the arts and creative economy.

## Health

Health of Tacoma residents includes physical and behavioral health, including both mental health and substance use disorders; however, it also includes other factors that impact the health and well-being of residents including environmental and safety issues. The Council prioritizes improving health outcomes in these various areas and reducing disparities.

In furtherance of these objectives, the following are specific policy positions related to health that impact the physical and behavioral health of residents, as well as the health of the environment:

### Physical and Behavioral Health

- **Access to Community-Based Behavioral Health Services:** The City supports creating greater access to community-based behavioral health services to include substance use disorder, mental health, and dual diagnosis treatment facilities.
  - **Opioid Crisis:** Given the significant impacts of opioid and fentanyl use, the City supports additional funding for services and supports to address opioid use, including fentanyl.
  - **Effective Behavioral Health Treatment.** The City supports efforts to significantly enhance treatment efficacy and patient outcomes by extending Medicaid coverage to at least 10 days for withdrawal management.
- **988:** The City supports the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and the need to develop a robust system to triage, provide rapid response, follow-up services, as well as to coordinate 911, law enforcement, and behavioral health.
- **Behavioral Health Workforce:** The City encourages the legislature to advance policies and funding that support a behavioral health workforce: This includes reducing the barriers posed by regulations and certifications on workforce entry into behavioral and medical health fields without improperly impacting quality of care, and investing in local workforce development systems to directly support upskilling and reskilling workers on behalf of behavioral healthcare providers.
- **Programs to Support Vulnerable Populations:** The City supports funding for programs that serve our most vulnerable populations, including Housing & Essential Needs (HEN) and Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD) Cash Assistance Program. The City also supports state efforts to provide services, including street medicine for vulnerable populations.



## Environment

Tacoma has [declared a climate emergency](#) and adopted a [Tacoma Climate Action Plan](#) and Green Economic Development Strategy. The City supports continuing efforts to take bold steps to advance transformative climate policies and support of those emerging industries that further the goals of the City's policies. As the state leads the nation in making this transition, the City encourages the state to recognize that historically underrepresented, underserved, and vulnerable communities are expected to experience the first and worst impacts of climate change. The state should equitably support these communities.

The City supports efforts that will improve the health of our environment and align with the City climate action goals including, but not limited to, the following:

- ***State Funding for Local Climate Efforts:*** The City supports continuation of the Climate Commitment Act. The City requests the state to support local strategies toward decarbonization and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City encourages the state to allocate a portion of the funding generated through the Climate Commitment Act to cities for activities and projects identified in locally developed Climate Action Plans. The City also supports continuing, and increasing, investments into accounts that support local efforts to address environmental justice, equity, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including the Carbon Emissions Reduction Act (CERA), the Climate Investment Account (CIA), and the Air Quality & Health Disparities Improvement Account (AQHDIA). The City supports efforts to assist tree canopy programs consistent with the policies implemented by the City. The City also supports state grants related to tree inventories, tree canopy assessments, urban forestry plans, and funding for tree maintenance efforts.
- ***Environmental Justice:*** The City encourages the state to implement policies and provide funding to advance environmental justice and to ensure environmental justice considerations factor into policy decision-making.
- ***Electric Vehicles:*** The City encourages the state to support funding for vehicle and bicycle electrification, including continuing to offer the e-bike incentive program with additional funding. The City supports efforts to support zero emissions truck program to provide equitable access to heavy duty electric trucks and high speed truck charging to ensure highly impacted communities in Tacoma benefit from the Climate Commitment Act. The City supports state funding related to establishing electric vehicle charging stations, including accessible vehicle charging stations, and related necessary infrastructure improvements.
- ***Climate Adaptation:*** The City encourages policies and investments that support the City in preparing for the changes occurring due to climate change, including intensifying rainfall events, extreme heat and wildfire smoke such as heat pump installation and development of resilience centers. Additionally, sea level rise is a significant concern for our shoreline habitat and vulnerable infrastructure and will need investments to protect these assets.

- **Carbon:** The City encourages policies and investments that reduce the carbon intensity of new and existing buildings, including expanding energy efficiency, electrification through heat pumps, green building standards, upgrades to public buildings, and other measures. The City supports utilizing a greater portion of the Climate Commitment Act funding to support decarbonization efforts.
- **Investments to Improve Fish Passage and Water Quality:** The City encourages investments in local culvert and stormwater projects to improve fish passage and water quality.
- **Reuse and Recycling:** The City encourages policies and investments that prevent waste and create opportunities for reuse and recycling markets, including extended producer responsibility and product stewardship models.
- **Tree Impact Fees:** The City supports efforts to provide incentives to developers for tree preservation and planting, such as tree impact fees or reductions to impact fees related to trees.
- **Asarco Smelter Plume and Soil Contaminants:** The City encourages continuing to fund the Department of Ecology’s program to address legacy contamination from the Asarco smelter plume in Tacoma, as well as increased notification to homebuyers purchasing a property within the area impacted by the smelter plume, as well as notification to homebuyers for other soil contaminants such as pesticide residue from former apple orchards.
- **Parks Rx:** The City supports efforts to incentivize access to nature and wellness programs by creating partnerships among health providers and park systems to improve physical and mental health outcomes such as Parks Rx, legislation supported by Metro Parks Tacoma and The Tacoma Pierce County Health Department.
- **Reducing Air Pollution from Local Production Facilities.** The City supports legislative efforts to provide cities with more authority to address nuisances or complaints regarding perceived nuisances from production facilities in their jurisdiction. The City also supports efforts to place restrictions on certain types of facilities, such as based on their location and the population of the jurisdiction.
- **Environmental Support for Businesses:** The City supports state efforts to provide protections and assistance for business lessees and owners related to grease interceptor systems, including requirements to share information, lease supports, and environmental facilities upgrade grants.

It is also important that the work to address environmental impacts are based on science and data, including, but not limited to the following issues:

- **Nutrients:** Ensure that policies and requirements that are intended to protect the health of the Puget Sound, such as with the Department of Ecology’s nutrient general permit, are based in

science and that the state works with, and supports, the City to improve practices based on science.

- **Biosolids:** Ensure that environmentally friendly programs, such as the City’s TAGRO “Tacoma Grow” products, are supported and preserved.

## Additional Policy Positions

### Fiscal Issues

- **State-Shared Revenue:** Cities provide many services residents rely upon including transportation, affordable housing, and public safety. These services need to expand each year due to population growth, aging infrastructure, and changing community needs. Cities rely on state-shared revenue funds to assist in continuing to provide these critical public services. The City supports efforts to protect and enhance state-shared revenues, including but not limited to liquor taxes, cannabis excise taxes, and the Municipal Criminal Justice Assistance Account.
- **Capital Improvements:** The City requests the state to support City efforts to achieve capital improvements to City property aligned with the Facility Advisory Committee report. The City also supports an increase in the Library Capital Improvement Program.
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** In addition to the increase in service needs, revenues are fluctuating and the City is anticipating a reduction in revenue. To assist with providing critical public service needs, the City supports legislation that protect or increase the City’s authority and ability to raise revenue, including but not limited to increasing the 1% property tax limit and ensuring there are not restrictions on the City’s authority to impose a local business and occupation (B&O) tax and business license requirements. Additionally, the City supports legislation that clarifies that the city can collect B&O tax on royalties.

The City supports efforts to review and revise both state and local tax structures such that they rely less on regressive revenue options. Changes to the state tax structure should not negatively impact cities’ revenue authority and should allow cities revenue flexibility to address their community’s needs.

- **Retirement Investments:** The City operates its own retirement program for city employees, as well as the city’s LEOFF 1 retirement program. The City is opposed to any proposal that requires the City to cede these operations to the Washington State Investment Board, that transfers reserves out of the programs or otherwise negatively impacts the operations.
- **State Infrastructure Bank:** The City supports the creation of a state-sponsored financing cooperative option that provides low interest (less than market rate) public infrastructure

financing specifically targeting urban areas to support the creation and retention of livable wage jobs.

- **Participatory Budgeting:** The City of Tacoma has piloted Participatory Budgeting and achieved great success in engaging thousands of community members. The City supports state efforts to increase participation in civic and community building through direct budget decision-making.

## Planning

- **Local Control:** The City prioritizes public input and community engagement in local decision-making. The state should honor local decision-making authority and the public processes that support the local decision-making. The City opposes preemption, particularly in areas the City currently has ordinances in place such as in the area of adult entertainment establishments.
- **Growth Management Act (GMA) Reform:** The City supports the objective of the Growth Management Act (GMA) to focus growth in urban centers. The City recognizes that additional changes are needed to the Act to ensure its effectiveness in spurring growth near infrastructure and avoiding unintended consequences. The City supports proposals that further facilitate annexations, growth within urban centers, and provides dedicated planning funding to local jurisdictions to implement any new policies or responsibilities.
- **Annexation:** The City encourages the state to consider policies that address the financial challenges involved with annexations, including the funding needed to upgrade infrastructure in newly annexed areas.
- **Transfer of State Obligations:** The City supports statutes and practices that provide sufficient input and controls over the obligations and responsibilities created for the City with the transfer of property from the state. This includes when the state transfers obligations to the City, such as the transfer of portions of state highway to City responsibility.
- **Local Planning Implementation:** The City supports state efforts to assist local jurisdictions implement planning processes including but not limited to the Tideflats Subarea Planning Project in Tacoma. This may include brownfields, transportation studies, or infrastructure investment.

## General Government

- **Public Disclosure, Participation, and Transparency:**
  - The City support providing protections for municipal employees to the same extent as those provided to state employees.
  - The City supports exploring ways to reduce the impact of abusive public records requests and litigation while maintaining transparency.

- The City supports expanded opportunities for public comment and participation in public meetings when done in a manner that the city can implement efficiently and cost-effectively.
- **Protecting Library Workers:** Tacoma Public Libraries supports protecting library employees in the same manner as all public sector employees.
- **Challenges to Intellectual Freedom:** Tacoma Public Libraries opposes legislation that restricts intellectual freedom. The City support ensuring access to a wide range of materials, free of charge, through our public library system.
- **Liability:** The City supports protecting against liability expansion and new policies that would drive additional claims and litigation increasing costs especially in the area of law enforcement and public safety. The City opposes legislation that would negatively impact the City’s self-insurance program.
- **Public Works Contract Thresholds:** The City supports state modifications to public works contract thresholds that provide the City with flexibility.
- **Surplus State Property:** The City supports offsetting economic rent for the lease of state surplus property by a public agency or community-based non-profit organization when the property is used for community purposes such as for housing; parks; enhanced public spaces; or public recreation.

**Immigration and Detention**

- **Limit Transfers to NWIPC:** The City supports policies that limit transfers into the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC) and any other proposals to further regulate the facility.
- **Support for Health, Safety, and Welfare of Individuals Detained at the NWIPC:** The City supports ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of individuals in the NWIPC are protected, as well as legislation that impacts sharing of information or individuals being placed in the facility consistent with the position of the City Council.

**Other Issues:**

- **City Codes and Policies:** Ensure that state laws and policies are consistent with, or allow for the continuation of, policies adopted by the Council in areas that impact residents of the City of Tacoma including, but not limited to, electric fences, control of rights-of-way, clean energy sites, and animals.
- **Events and Venues:** The City operates venues, including the Tacoma Dome, and hosts events that attract tourism and economic benefits to Tacoma and Pierce County that are important to

the region. The City supports efforts to improve transparency but opposes additional state regulations that will negatively impact the venues' operations.

- **Youth School Enrollment:** Many young people did not return to school when in-person learning resumed following COVID. The City supports efforts to obtain and review the data on the youth who did not return to school and implement programs to re-engage these youth and provide appropriate services.
- **Psilocybin Substances:** The City encourages the legislature to consider decriminalizing psilocybin substances in light of the growing research indicating potential medical uses for the substances and the number of local jurisdictions and states that are decriminalizing the substance.
- **Litter and Graffiti:** Litter, trash, and graffiti are concerns that exist beyond the issues related to homelessness.
  - Yearly litter accumulation rates per acre are highest on urban freeway on-ramps and off-ramps. The City supports the state increasing its efforts to address litter, trash, and graffiti in areas that are its responsibility including, but not limited to, freeway on-ramps and off-ramps, and in rights-of-way areas. The City also supports funding for City cleanup efforts in these areas.
  - The City encourages the state to provide additional resources for abatement of unsolicited graffiti, particularly on rights-of way inside city jurisdictions, including review of and expanding the state litter tax. Additionally, City supports state efforts to create murals and local art on blank walls along the freeway and rights-of-way to discourage graffiti.
- **Civil Asset Forfeiture:** The City supports state efforts to expand the uses of civil forfeitures to include prevention programs and behavioral health treatment.



# City of Tacoma

## General Government

### 2025 State Legislative Priorities

**Fiscal Sustainability:** The City asks the Legislature to correct a longstanding structural imbalance within city budgets as part of its ongoing effort to establish a sustainable, progressive, and equitable tax system. State law limits local property tax levy growth to 1%, while inflation and the costs to maintain services increase at a higher rate. This levy growth limit results in continual budget deficits that make it challenging to provide ongoing services to the community. The city supports a modest and sensible proposal to allow local elected officials to adjust property tax revenue by up to 3% to better serve our communities and keep up with the costs of providing basic services like police, fire, street maintenance, and valued community amenities like parks and libraries. The city supports additional proposals that the Legislature advances aimed at providing local governments greater fiscal sustainability.

**Emergency Shelter Operations:** The City requests \$9 million to prevent the closure of over 300 shelter beds. During the pandemic, the City faced an unprecedented homelessness crisis and invested American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in shelters to house the region's most vulnerable. This investment saved lives. The City plans to transition those living in shelters to permanent supportive housing. However, the demand for shelter beds is far greater than originally anticipated and sufficient permanent supportive housing units are under development but not yet available. As the ARPA funding ended, the state provided some shelter operation funding through the current fiscal year. The City does not have the resources to continue operating these beds and needs the state's partnership to prevent their closure.

**Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge:** The City requests the state's partnership to respond to the worsening condition of the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge. The bridge provides freight mobility, emergency response, and access for the Port of Tacoma, the cities of Tacoma and Fife, and the Puyallup Tribe. The bridge is also a vital part of the bicycle and pedestrian network and is integral to the Tacoma to Puyallup Regional Trail Connection. Additionally, it provides an important bypass route when I-5 is blocked. The City was required to close the Bridge on October 20, 2023 as a result of the inability to complete inspections of the bridge due to an accumulation of debris preventing a full inspection, as full encapsulation of the bridge is required. The condition of the bridge continues to deteriorate and the bridge must be replaced. In 2019, the Phase 1 of the bridge replacement was completed and the City has received federal funding to begin design work for Phase 2. The City is continuing to seek funding for this critical work.

## Other Issues of Importance

- **Property Tax Exemption for ADUs Rented to Low-Income Households:** The City is requesting legislation that would allow municipalities to provide a Property Tax Exemption for ADUs Rented to Low-Income Households.
- **Transfer of State Obligations:** The City is requesting legislation to update the statutory framework for the process WSDOT uses to transfer state property to local jurisdictions, in order to allow more input from local jurisdictions and to require appropriate due diligence prior to the transfer.
- **Sidewalk Utility:** The City is interested in the development of new tools for local infrastructure needs related not just to expansion and growth, but also for maintenance of aging systems. The City will be asking the Legislature to explore options for additional revenue sources for sidewalks and infrastructure needs, including creation of sidewalk utilities.





# City of Tacoma

## General Government 2025 State Capital Requests

### Capital Funding Priorities:

**New South Tacoma Fire Station:** The City requests \$2.0 million to support the relocation and construction a new Fire Station #7 and provide better emergency response to the community. Located in a shared library facility, the current fire station does not have enough space to support modern firefighting activities and meet the growing emergency response needs of the community. The call volume for this station far exceeds department target and national standards, and the station serves a lower opportunity area according to the City's equity index map. The state funds would be matched with \$2.0 million in city real estate excise tax revenues to acquire property, design and produce construction documents to make the project shovel ready.

**Puyallup Avenue Sewer Utility Replacement Project:** The City requests \$1.0 million to support a progressive design-build delivery for the Puyallup Avenue Sewer Replacement Project to reduce flooding events in Pacific Avenue and South Tacoma Way/26th Street. During major rain events the intersection of South 26th and Pacific Avenue floods, resulting in street closures and safety issues.

### Other Capital Funding Requests of Importance:

- **Eastside Skills & Training Center:** The City supports WorkForce Central's request for \$15 million to purchase and retrofit a building to create a centralized Eastside Workforce Training Center that would function as a workforce center where multiple workforce training providers, including community & technical colleges, pre-apprenticeship programs, and others, could all access space to train Eastside residents looking to upskill and reskill into good jobs and careers.
- **Leach Creek Stormwater Holding Basin Modifications:** The City requests \$700,000 to design modifications to the Leach Creek Stormwater Holding basin. The project would help alleviate future destructive flooding events that could occur downstream of the holding basin in Leach Creek and Chambers Creek.

- **Northshore Golf Course Stormwater Pond Rehabilitation:** The City requests \$1.2 million to support restoration of three stormwater ponds to the original design requirements to ensure compliance with the City's Stormwater permit.
- **New Eastside and South End Tacoma Fire Station:** The City requests \$2.0 million to support replacement of temporary Fire Station #15 to enhance emergency response to the community. Relocating and construction a new Fire Station #15 is a priority recommendation from the Fire Facilities Master Plan, as the existing stations lacks expansion capability to support modern firefighting activities and the growing emergency response needs of the community. This project will provide for property acquisition in the vicinity of the temporary station, design and produce construction documents to make the project shovel ready.
- **Tacoma Municipal Building Exterior Preservation:** The City requests \$1.1 million to support the initial phase of the Historic Tacoma Municipal Building (TMB) exterior preservation. The TMB formerly known as the Rhodes Medical Arts Building opened 1931 and is listed on the Local, State and National Register of Historic Places. Extensive repairs are needed to preserve the exterior cast stone and façade features, this funding will provide for the implementation of the first phase to clean and repair the building exterior.
- **Tacoma Public Works Maintenance Facility:** The City requests \$4.0 million to support preconstruction phases for relocation and construction of a New Public Works Maintenance Facility.
- **Tacoma Police Headquarters Decarbonization (CCA):** The City requests \$2.0 million to support implementation of energy efficiency and decarbonization measures to the Tacoma Police Headquarters. The building is a significant contributor to the City's commercial building emissions and its Energy Use Intensity is 67% over the state-mandated target as established in the Washington Clean Buildings Performance Standard.
- **Tacoma Main Library Decarbonization (CCA):** The City requests \$2.6 million to support decarbonization of the Tacoma Main library. The building's existing natural gas boilers are over 30 years old and nearing the end of their useful life.
- **Tacoma Municipal Building North Energy Efficiency (CCA):** The City requests \$800,000 to support implementation of energy efficiency and decarbonization measures to the Tacoma Municipal Building North (TMBN). The project will reduce the building's Energy Use Intensity (EUI), enhancing compliance with the Washington State Clean Buildings Performance Standard.



TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

3628 South 35th Street

Tacoma, Washington 98409-3192

## **Tacoma Public Utilities – 2025 State Legislative Agenda**

### **Tacoma Power**

- Carbon reduction policies: TPU supports proposals aimed at decarbonizing the economy in ways that are cost-effective for customers. These proposals must recognize hydropower as a carbon-free energy source and be consistent with current and developing regional energy markets.
- Building decarbonization policies: TPU supports reasonable policies to decarbonize the state's residential and commercial building sector, including proposals to provide state funding for limited-income customer fuel conversion and proposals for municipal electric utilities to adopt beneficial electrification plans.
- Investment in clean energy infrastructure: TPU advocates for increased state funding to expand zero-emission transportation systems, strengthen transmission and distribution networks, and expand renewable energy generation.

### **Tacoma Water**

- Support for infrastructure funding: TPU supports funding for maintaining and preserving critical water system infrastructure. This includes funding for the Public Works Trust Fund, state revolving loan funds, grant funding, and other state resources.

### **Tacoma Rail**

- Explore infrastructure funding opportunities: TPU will pursue opportunities for investments in locomotive modernization, track upgrades, decarbonization projects, and other infrastructure improvements.