



RESOLUTION NO. 41310

1 BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS

2 A RESOLUTION relating to citywide, state and federal priorities; adopting the
3 priority issues for the 2024 sessions of the United States Congress and
4 Washington State Legislature.

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

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 ("Legislature") and United States Congress
12 ("Congress"), and

13 WHEREAS identifying this set of issues fosters efficient and effective
14 communication to the state and federal policymakers, and provides transparency
15 to the public about state and federal issues that are most important to the City
16 Council, and

17 WHEREAS a briefing on proposed General Government policy positions
18 and priorities was provided to the City Council on October 3, 2023, and

19 WHEREAS the PUB received a briefing on Tacoma Public Utilities ("TPU")
20 priorities on October 11, 2023, and

21 WHEREAS, on November 7, 2023, the proposed citywide legislative agenda
22 was presented to a Joint Study Session of the PUB and City Council, and
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WHEREAS, on November 15, 2023, the PUB adopted Resolution

No. U-11419, adopting the State and Federal Legislative Agendas for TPU, and

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 priority issues for the 2024 sessions of the United States Congress and 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

Tacoma Public Utilities 2024 Legislative Agenda

TPU-Wide

- **Actively pursue available funding:** TPU will actively monitor federal and state funding opportunities and apply for funding consistent with current and emerging capital and operating needs.
- **Infrastructure financing tools:** TPU supports legislation that promotes the availability of tax-exempt municipal bonds and will support proposals that revoke changes made in 2017 relating to advance refunding. TPU supports providing comparable tax incentives to consumer-owned utilities. TPU also supports restoring direct-pay bond payments back to their originally-enacted levels.
- **TPU supports programs to assist limited-income residents:** TPU supports policies and additional funding for programs that provide assistance to limited-income residents.
- **Support policies that address supply chain impacts:** TPU supports policies that adequately address supply chain issues that affect service to customers and utility operations.

Tacoma Power – Federal

- **Support proposals that maintain and improve BPA’s competitiveness:** TPU will continue to support federal proposals to maintain and improve BPA’s cost competitiveness.
- **Carbon reduction policies:** TPU will actively engage in and seek to support proposals that decarbonize the economy at reasonable costs to customers and that appropriately acknowledge and credit hydropower as a carbon-free generating resource.
- **Support investment in zero-emission transportation infrastructure:** TPU will support additional funding for zero-emission transportation infrastructure.
- **Support equal treatment of hydropower:** Tacoma Power customers have invested in renewable, carbon-free hydroelectric generating facilities for decades. These facilities will continue to require significant reinvestment to ensure their future safe and reliable operation. TPU will continue to advocate for consistent tax treatment or alternative approaches that support equal treatment of all renewable, carbon-free resources.

- **Support legislation to maintain municipal utility control over poles and pole attachment rate setting:** TPU supports legislation that would ensure that municipally-owned utilities maintain their historic authority to safely manage pole attachments on utility poles.

Tacoma Water – Federal

- **Support implementation of the Howard Hanson Dam – Additional Water Storage Project:** Tacoma Water continues to support federal authorization, appropriations, and actions necessary to complete the Howard Hanson Dam – Additional Water Storage Project. Any federal action must respect federal/non-federal cost share agreements already in place. TPU believes Howard Hanson Dam fish passage and the Additional Water Storage Project are critical to salmon and orca recovery as a construction-ready project with broad impact.
- **Support funding of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA):** Tacoma Water supports appropriations to fully fund the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA).
- **Support funding of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund:** Tacoma Water supports adequate appropriations for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.
- **Protecting Tacoma Water from PFAS treatment liability:** Tacoma Water supports legislation that clearly and explicitly exempts drinking water systems from CERCLA liability related to PFAS, in situations when the water system has disposed of the contaminants in accordance with all applicable laws.

Tacoma Rail – Federal

- **Explore opportunities for infrastructure funding:** Tacoma Rail intends to pursue funding opportunities for investments in locomotive modernization, track upgrades, decarbonization projects, and other infrastructure improvements.

Tacoma Power -- State

- **Carbon reduction policies:** Washington lawmakers have indicated that they will continue to focus on legislative solutions aimed at decarbonizing Washington State’s economy. TPU will actively engage in and seek to support proposals that decarbonize the economy at reasonable costs to customers and that appropriately acknowledge and credit hydropower as a carbon-free generating resource and align with existing and emerging regional organized markets.
- **Building decarbonization policies:** TPU will support 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. Any comprehensive building decarbonization policy must be based on sound cost/benefit analysis to understand the impacts on energy capacity and reliability.

- **Support investment in zero-emission transportation infrastructure:** TPU will support additional funding for zero-emission transportation infrastructure.
- **Support equal treatment of hydropower:** Tacoma Power customers have invested in renewable, carbon-free hydroelectric generating facilities for decades. These facilities will continue to require significant reinvestment to ensure their future safe and reliable operation. TPU will continue to advocate for consistent tax treatment or alternative approaches that support equal treatment of all renewable, carbon-free resources.

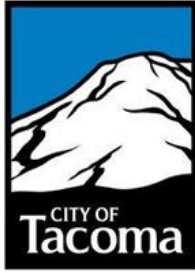
Tacoma Water – State

- **Support for infrastructure funding:** Tacoma Water 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. Low-interest loans and grants are vital for the long-term protection of many public water systems.

Tacoma Rail – State

- **Explore opportunities for infrastructure funding:** Tacoma Rail intends to pursue funding opportunities for investments in locomotive modernization, track upgrades, decarbonization projects, and other infrastructure improvements.

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City of Tacoma

General Government

2024 State Legislative Policy Priorities

Emergency Shelter Operations: The City asks for the state's partnership in preventing 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. With the ARPA funds no longer available, the City needs the state's partnership to prevent the closure of these shelter beds.

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 and, due to the closure of the bridge, the City is also seeking assistance to complete the cleaning necessary to permit the inspection necessary to reopen the bridge.

Equitable and Structurally Sustainable Fiscal Structure: 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 also supports investments in programs, such as the

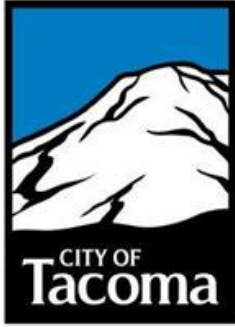
guaranteed basic income program, that aim to uplift those who have been negatively impacted by the state's historically regressive tax code.

Climate Commitment Act Investments: The City of Tacoma is strongly committed to the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) as a cornerstone of statewide climate strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Tacoma City Council has passed resolutions declaring a climate emergency in Tacoma and calling for a transformative climate action plan, including restricting the use of natural gas and new fossil fuel for existing City buildings and future City capital investments. To further these objectives, the City has conducted a Municipal Facilities Decarbonization Study to identify and prioritize the implementation of projects to further the City's carbon reduction goals.

As the state's partner in addressing climate change, the City of Tacoma requests that the State allocate Climate Commitment Act funds directly to cities and to allocate CCA funds to projects and programs identified in the City's community-developed Climate Action Plan, allowing the funds to reduce greenhouse gas emissions efficiently and equitably in an environmentally just manner that uplifts those communities most impacted by climate change.

Capital Funding:

- The City supports the following MetroParks capital requests:
 - People's Community Center: \$400,000 to support a study of design concepts for the replacement of this 45-year-old building owned by the City of Tacoma and operated by Metro Parks. This is the oldest of the four active community centers and is functionally obsolete with failing systems.
 - South End Community Center: \$400,000 to support a feasibility study to consider the siting, program needs and design concepts for a new community center based in Southeast Tacoma. This is an under-served area of the city. The Park District will complete its update to the Metro Parks System and Strategic Plan in the spring, and that will shed more light on services needed in that part of the City. This study will focus on the facility needs.



City of Tacoma

General Government

2024 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.¹

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.²

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

¹ 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.

² 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 of Tacoma, 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.

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. 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.

Courts

- ***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.
- ***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.

Community Violence

- ***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.

Drug Possession

- ***Funding:*** 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.

- **Opioid Use:** Opioid-related overdoses are the most [common cause of accidental death](#) in Pierce County, taking more lives than traffic or firearm fatalities,³ 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:

- **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.

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.
- **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.

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

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 welcomed transit-oriented development in many areas of the Tacoma community. 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. 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 supports policies to reduce displacement and provide opportunities for those on limited incomes to remain housed. 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:*** 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.

Affordable Housing

- ***State Funding:*** 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, 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.
- ***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.

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 envisions transitioning 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 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.
 - The City encourages the state to provide additional resources for litter and abatement of unsolicited graffiti, particularly on rights-of way inside city jurisdictions, including review of and expanding the state litter tax.
- ***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.

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.
- **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;
- ***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. 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.

Transportation and Infrastructure: 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, 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 38th to Joint Base Lewis McChord, the Tacoma to Puyallup Trail, and Schuster Parkway Promenade.

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.
- ***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.
- ***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 policies to expand access to affordable, quality childcare and preschool, including Universal Pre-Kindergarten, as well as early childhood mental health services.

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. The City supports advocating for Cultural Access Washington legislation adoption and expansion beyond Tacoma Creates.

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.
- **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.

- **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:** 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.

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).
- **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.
- **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.
- **Asarco Smelter Plume:** 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.
- **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.

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 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.
- **Revenue:** 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.

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.

Immigration and Detention

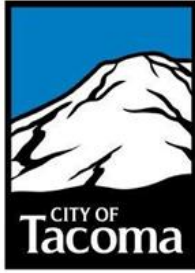
- **Limit Transfers to NWIPC:** The City supports policies that limit transfers into the Northwest ICE Processing Center (NWIPC) and any other proposals to further regulate the facility.
- **Support for Health, Safety, and Welfare of Individuals Detained at the NWIPC:** The City supports ensuring the 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 increase in local jurisdictions and states to decriminalize the substance.
- **Rights-of-Way:** The City supports state efforts to create murals and local art on blank walls along the freeway to discourage graffiti.
- **Litter and Graffiti:** Litter, trash, and graffiti are concerns that exist beyond the issues related to homelessness. The City requests the state support City efforts to address litter, trash, and graffiti including, but not limited to, in rights-of-way areas.

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City of Tacoma

General Government

2024 Federal Legislative Policy Priorities

Federal Priorities

1. Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge Replacement Phase II

Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge is an important commercial arterial linking Tacoma to the City's industrial area, Port of Tacoma facilities, the City of Fife and Puyallup Tribe of Indians. This bridge is meant to provide freight mobility, emergency response and system resiliency for the Port, and is a bypass route when Interstate 5 is blocked. Built in 1925, Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge requires now extensive maintenance and will eventually need to be replaced. The City successfully completed construction of Phase I in 2019 and will now seek federal support to complete Phase II. The City appreciates the historic, once in a generation infrastructure investments available to local governments in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and will pursue grants, including but not limited to the RAISE program, as well as other funding opportunities to complete the 2nd phase of bridge replacement.

2. Housing & Homelessness

The City has been facing a homelessness crisis with the number of people experiencing homelessness in Pierce County rising 40% from 2017 to 2022, an impact that is felt acutely in Tacoma where 80% of the shelter services for the county are provided. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City invested American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in shelters to house the region's most vulnerable as part of a long-term Homelessness Strategy. This investment saved lives. The City's strategy is to transition those living in shelters to permanent supportive housing; however, the demand for shelter beds has continued and sufficient permanent housing units are not yet available. With the ARPA funds ending next year, the City requests the state's partnership to prevent the closure of 300 shelter beds. The City also strongly supports legislation that encourage affordable housing development, as well as policies that promote homeownership, affordable rental housing, and provide special needs housing and transitional housing for the homeless.

3. Community Violence Reduction

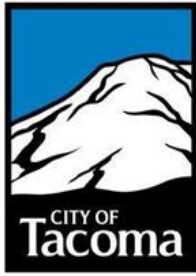
The City is in the process of implementing programs and services focused on reducing community violence. In situations involving individuals experiencing behavioral health issues, programs such as behavioral health co-responder, diversion, and other alternative programs improve outcomes for the community and law enforcement. Additionally, programs that allow non-commissioned, civilian officers 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 supports federal funding opportunities

that support implementation of programs, which provide responses that are alternatives to traditional law enforcement.

The City has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, programs and services focused on reducing community firearm violence. The City supports funding opportunities to allow the implementation of community and law enforcement programs to address firearm violence and to provide programs for young people with the goal of violence prevention.

4. Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Tacoma declared a [climate emergency](#) in 2017 and adopted a [local climate action plan](#). The City is appreciative of the Inflation Reduction Act's historic level of environmental funding ever enacted by an American government. The City supports continuing efforts to take bold steps to advance transformative climate policies and will seek federal support for local climate, mitigation, and green initiatives.



City of Tacoma

General Government

2024 Federal 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 [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.¹

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 City policy positions.²

Consistent with these priorities, the following are the City of Tacoma positions on federal legislative issues and concerns.

Safety

Public safety is a priority for the City. The City objectives 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

¹ 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.

² 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.

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

- ***Alternatives to Traditional Law Enforcement Response:*** Programs that provide 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-responder, diversion, and other alternative programs improve outcomes for the community and law enforcement. The City supports funding and programs to assist local jurisdictions with the establishment, expansion, and operation of alternative response programs, such as co-responder, diversion and other models that provide options beyond law enforcement for responding to situations involving individuals experiencing from behavioral health issues.
- ***Recruitment and Retention:*** The City of Tacoma, 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 supports adequate funding levels for programs that help cities recruit and retain local law enforcement personnel.

Court Alternatives

- ***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 issues underlying the criminal behavior. The City supports maintaining funding and programs, such as the Bureau of Justice Assistance Adult Treatment Court Program, that provide assistance to local governments to plan, implement, and enhance the operations of adult treatment courts.

Community Violence

- ***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 supports funding opportunities to allow the implementation of community and law enforcement programs to address firearm violence and to provide programs for young people with the goal of violence prevention.

Specific Criminal Offenses

- ***Hate Crimes:*** In light of the recent surge in hate crimes against specific communities in Tacoma and across the country, including the Asian American community following the COVID-19 pandemic, the City supports federal initiatives that address and prevent hate crimes and hate incidents.

- **Fentanyl Use:** Opioid-related overdoses are the most [common cause of accidental death](#) in Pierce County, taking more lives than traffic or firearm fatalities,³ 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 federal government to help federal, state, and local law enforcement address the substance addiction crisis in cities.

Fire

- **Support Tacoma Fire Department:** The Tacoma Fire Department’s (TFD) call volume has increased by approximately 42% since 2006; of these, 80% have been for Emergency 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. These include, but are not limited to, protecting public safety grant programs, FirstNet reauthorization, and legislation similar to the HERO Act.

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

- **Federal Flexibility:** Cities are on the frontlines of addressing the affordable housing crisis and as such, are best suited to determine how to best deploy federal assistance to serve the neediest communities. The City urges the Administration and lawmakers to maintain increased flexibility in the administration of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant programs, including the extension of the use of HOME Community Housing Development

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

Organization funds and increased administrative allowance for HOME funds, to most effectively respond to project and program oversight requirements.

- **Reducing Displacement:** Many of the efforts to increase the housing supply impact the ability of individuals on limited incomes to remain housed, including senior residents. The City supports policies to reduce displacement and provide opportunities for those on limited incomes to remain housed, including allowing senior residents to age in place.

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. The cost of rental homes increased by nearly 40 percent and home values nearly doubled since 1990, and within the last few years, these costs have begun to accelerate. In response to this urgent need, the City developed 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.

- **Federal Funding:** The City supports robust annual appropriations in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) spending bill to fully fund housing programs, including tenant- and project-based rental assistance, public housing operating and capital funds, the HOME Investment Partnerships program, and the Section 202 Aging in Place program.

Housing Financing

- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit [LIHTC]:** LIHTC is the primary tool for building low and moderate-income rental units in the United States. The City supports legislation that will expand this tool to promote housing development, such as the [Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act](#).

Access to Housing

- **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, homeownership has failed to benefit Black homeowners as much as white homeowners. The City supports federal efforts to enhance homeownership opportunities among Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities by providing assistance to homebuyers, modifying existing federal programs to support homeownership or fair housing practices, addressing bias in the market, and expanding access to credit and counseling for disadvantaged home buyers. The City also supports federal policies that incentivize local governments to eliminate or reform exclusionary housing policies, including bills like the [Yes in My Backyard Act](#).

Federal Funding

- **Community Investment:** Community development investments build stronger and more resilient communities. The City supports robust funding for programs that support economic development at the local level, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program that provides significant financial

resources to local governments working to address a variety of needs such as infrastructure, economic development, public facilities, community centers, housing rehabilitation, small business assistance, homeowner assistance, and more.

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. This 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 envisions transitioning 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.

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 federal 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.

Jobs

A City goal is that Tacoma be a growing economy where residents can find livable wage jobs in key industry areas 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 businesses surviving and thriving in the City, including increasing the number of BIBOC owned businesses and the diversity of types 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 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 federal government should encourage and support similar programs. The City supports additional federal 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.
- **Apprenticeship Programs:** Fully funding apprentice, pre-apprentice programs and other workforce development programs, and reauthorizing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- **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.
- **Anchor Networks:** Tacoma has invested in developing increased community impact through the development of the Tacoma Anchor Network (TAN), where the City plays the role of the Backbone organization. Anchor institutions are Anchor institutions are public, non-profit, and private organizations that are rooted in place and wield significant economic influence, including purchasing power, hiring and workforce development, and place-based investments. The City supports federal programs and funding in support of public-private partnerships with the goal of increasing positive community impacts.

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.
- **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 support for the siting and expansion of manufacturing, research and development activities that support the creation of tradable sectors jobs in the emerging Green Economy and expansion of manufacturing tax incentives to assist with these efforts.
- **Green Jobs:** Developing green jobs including in urban forestry growth, renewable energy growth, natural storm water infrastructure, urban farming, and green technology development, making sure that these jobs are promoted within highly vulnerable communities.
- **Career Pathways:** Establishing career pathways to livable wage jobs in the community, including identifying apprenticeship opportunities to support the public sector.

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.

Access

A City goal is to ensure that all residents are treated equitably and have access to services, facilities, and financial stability. 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 increasing access to transportation and mobility.

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

Equity and Empowerment: The City supports federal initiatives that address the disparate impacts of systems and institutions on communities of color. The City supports policies that bolster gender and racial equity including, but not limited to the following:

- **Tax Credits:** Federal tools such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, which support low and moderate-income earners. The City supports continuing and expanding these tools.
- **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 national guaranteed income program to stabilize needy families and interrupt cycles of poverty. It is important that the guaranteed income policy proposals include specific language that mitigates any impact additional income may have on the recipient’s eligibility for other public assistance programs.
- **Reparations:** The City supports federal efforts to acknowledge and address the impacts of discriminatory laws and policies on formerly enslaved people and their descendants.
- **Voting Rights:** Voting is fundamental to democracy. The City supports legislation to protect and expand access to voting.

Transportation and Infrastructure: The City is working to improve access and proximity by residents of diverse income levels and race or ethnicity to community facilities, services, and infrastructure. The City appreciates the historic, once in a generation investments available to local governments in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The City will seek federal support for projects of importance to the City, such as Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge Phase II.

- **Public Transit:** Fund public transportation programs as authorized levels in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in the annual T-HUD appropriations bill.

- **Safety:** The City supports funding increases for existing transportation safety programs, including but not limited to the Highway Safety Improvement Program, Safe Routes to School, Safe Streets and Roads for All, and the Transportation Alternatives Program.
- **Funding:** While infrastructure financing programs provide flexible funding for major transportation projects and help local governments to leverage private and other nonfederal investments, the City recognizes that limited budget capacity, authorities, and delays in the federal approval process limit the effectiveness of these programs, particularly in disadvantaged communities. The City supports greater technical support at the USDOT Build America Bureau and flexibility for their approving multimodal and jurisdictional projects that can take advantage of favorable federal financing. The City also recommends raising the federal population cap for communities accessing the best available borrowing rates to ensure growing communities can appropriately utilize financing options.
- **Pedestrian and Bike Accessibility:** The City supports maintaining and expanding sustainable funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian trails and facilities, such as the Transportation Alternatives set asides in the Surface Transportation Block Grant program.
- **Bridges:** The City supports maintaining the Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation program with sufficient funding to repair bridges that are structurally or operationally deficient. Off-system bridges should continue to be eligible for federal bridge funds, and the discretionary bridge program should be preserved. The City will seek federal funding for design and construction of the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge Phase II project.
- **Harbor Maintenance and Dredging:** The Port of Tacoma is an economic driver for the City and the South Sound, with over 42,000 jobs and \$2.84 billion in income across the Washington state economy. The City supports policies and appropriations that will maintain the competitiveness of the Port of Tacoma, such as legislation to allow Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund dollars to be spent on port infrastructure uses beyond dredging.

Telecommunications

- **Preserving City Right of Way:** The City supports policies that retain local government authority to manage rights-of-way to ensure the siting of cell towers and small cells is safe and appropriate. The City opposes legislation that seeks to preempt local land use and zoning authorities on broadband deployment projects, such as [H.R. 3557](#).
- **Franchise Fees:** The City supports reversal of an FCC order to allow franchise fees and EG Fees to be calculated as they have been for over 35 years as monetary-only fees.
- **Digital Access:** Access to the Internet is essential for education and employment opportunities, business development, healthcare, government services, and community involvement. The City supports action by the federal government to provide matching grants, technology grants, tax credits, subsidies and other types of aid that would increase broadband deployment and affordability. The City also supports sustained funding of programs such as E-Rate, ReConnect, and other programs that support the buildout of broadband infrastructure. The City urges the federal government to ensure that these and other broadband grant programs are accessible to

all communities, whether large or small, rural or urban, as well as municipal broadband network owners and operators.

- **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:** Access to childcare is important to Tacoma residents. The City supports policies to expand access to affordable, quality childcare and preschool, including Universal Pre-Kindergarten and early childhood mental health services.

Health

Health of Tacoma residents includes physical and behavioral health, which includes both mental health and substance use disorder; however, it also includes 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:

Health

- **Healthcare:** The City supports the right to access reproductive and gender affirming care.
- **Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault:** The City supports policies, programs, and funding to assist people impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. We urge Congress to fully fund programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act as reauthorized in 2022.

Behavioral Health

- **Access to Services:** The City supports programs that provide funding to increase access to mental health and substance abuse services.
- **Community Health Centers:** Adequately fund community health centers, which play a critical role in providing uninsured and underinsured people with health care services, including mental health and substance abuse treatment.
- **Programs to Support Vulnerable Populations:** The City supports funding for programs that serve our most vulnerable populations.

- **988 Suicide Crisis Lifeline** The City supports increased federal coordination with state, county, and local officials on 988 mental health line implementation to ensure coordinated access to service providers
- **Behavioral Health Workforce:** The City supports policies and funding that assist local efforts to build out a behavioral health work force. This includes reducing the barriers posed by regulations/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.

Environment The City is appreciative of the Inflation Reduction Act’s historic level of environmental funding ever enacted by an American government. The City will seek federal support for local climate and green initiatives. Tacoma declared a [climate emergency](#) in 2017 and adopted a [local climate action plan](#). The City applauded the Administration’s rejoining the Paris Agreement, as well as passage of President Biden’s signature climate legislation, the Inflation Reduction Act. The City supports continuing efforts to take bold steps to advance transformative climate policies.

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:

- **Climate Mitigation and Adaptation:** The City supports federal financial and technical assistance to support local government vulnerability assessments and climate change mitigation and adaptation implementation efforts to ensure that cities have the information, resources and tools to adequately plan for and respond to climate change effects.
- **Environmental Justice:** The City encourages the federal government to recognize that historically underrepresented, underserved, and vulnerable communities are expected to experience the first and worst impacts of climate change. The City supports programs and funding that equitably support these communities by ensuring parity in accessing new technologies.
- **Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities:** The City supports the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities formed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate housing, community development, transportation, energy, and environmental policies that will help local communities create better and more affordable places to live, work and raise families. The City urges Congress to pass legislation to officially authorize the partnership and to continue funding.
- **Superfund Sites:** The City supports federal actions to assist local governments in Superfund site identification and remediation, such as reauthorization of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund) to ensure that existing hazardous waste disposal sites can continue to be identified, evaluated and cleaned up. Congress should increase the size of the Hazardous Substance Response Trust Fund that supports the Superfund program so it will be adequate to clean up sites already on the National Priority List (NPL) as well as any additional sites added to the list.

- **Brownfields:** The City calls on Congress to reauthorize and fully fund the EPA Brownfields program, which supports the assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of sites that are contaminated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. The economic redevelopment and environmental restoration of these properties is essential to revitalizing communities and protecting public health.
- **Reuse and Recycling:** The City supports investments in domestic infrastructure, support for local and regional recycling programs and education efforts, and policy changes will ensure recycling remains environmentally and economically sustainable.
- **Landfills:** The City requests that any new federal mandates that retroactively reclassify specific segments of waste, thus requiring new and more costly disposal methods and/or retrofitting of existing and closed disposal facilities be accompanied by financing to assist local government with compliance.
- **PFAS Contamination:** The City supports federal policies that ensure that the parties responsible for PFAS contamination, including the federal government but excluding local governments, are held fully liable for costs of cleanup and mitigation and to ensure that sites are cleaned up in a timely manner. The City supports PFAS clean up standards that are sufficiently stringent to permit reuse of the site and to obviate the need for additional cleanup and mitigation costs by affected local governments.

Additional Policy Positions

Civil Rights

- **Discrimination:** The City supports federal legislation to expand protections to include discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, such as the Equality Act.
- **Equal Pay:** The City encourages the federal government to enact legislation to close gender pay gaps, such as the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Other

- **Immigration** Tacoma supports comprehensive immigration reform legislation and other policy reforms that better protect human dignity and promote a welcoming environment in our community including, but not limited to:
 - Limiting transfers to the Northwest ICE Processing Center
 - Adequate health and safety in detention
 - Limiting local cooperation with federal immigration agencies
 - Banning private detention facilities
 - Ending mandatory detention
 - Policies to provide DREAMERS with a path to citizenship
 - Policies that support refugee and asylum seekers

- **Joint Base Lewis McChord:** Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) is one of twelve joint bases in the United States and the largest DOD installation west of the Mississippi River, with over 52,000 service members and their families. The installation accounts for \$5 billion in local payroll and a total of \$9.2 billion in regional economic activity. Any downsizing at JBLM would have serious economic consequences for Tacoma and the Puget Sound region. The City opposes any Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) considerations for JBLM. The City supports federal initiatives that support the health and well-being of our service members and their families.
- **Reconciling Federal and State Cannabis Policy:** Retail cannabis is a multi-million dollar industry in Pierce County, which drives wealth building, economic opportunity, and entrepreneurship. However, local cannabis retailers are not able to access traditional banking services as cannabis remains classified as a controlled substance at the federal level. The City supports legislation that will facilitate local retailers' access to federal financial institutions and business products, including the SAFE Banking Act.
- **Trade Act Assistance:** The City supports direct federal aid to workers whose employment is impacted as a result of global trade agreements.
- **Community Project Funding/Community Directed Spending:** The City supports Congressionally Directed Spending and Community Project Funding that provides a singular influx of federal funds for important local projects and requests our Congressional delegation's continued support of these requests and their participation in this process.
- **Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP):** The City supports continued appropriations for the LIHWAP program to aid low-income water utility ratepayers.
- **Local control:** The City prioritizes public input and community engagement in local decision-making. The federal government should honor local decision-making authority and the public processes that support local decision-making.
- **Daylight Savings:** The City supports legislation that would make U.S. Daylight Saving Time permanent.