

# TACOMA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## Strategy and Action Worksheet, DRAFT 2: 4-9-2019

### I. FOUNDATIONS

- Coordination** An underlying foundation of this plan will be the close coordination, communication, and alignment of the City of Tacoma's efforts with those of its partners in economic development throughout the City, County, and region. Numerous specific Actions articulated below will depend on close coordination with other departments, agencies, and outside partners. These Strategies and Actions will be denoted with an **ICON**, and the various roles to be coordinated will be spelled out in Section III. Implementation.
- Equity** The City of Tacoma will strive to support equitable economic development that benefits all of the City's workers, employees, entrepreneurs, and businesses, and pays particular attention to its low-income residents, vulnerable populations, and communities of color. As such, every specific Action in this section that directly supports economic equity will be highlighted with an **ICON**, and collected in a summary section in this document.

### II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

#### FOCUS AREA 1 >> BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND RECRUITMENT

- Strategy 1A: Retain & Expand Local Businesses:** Continue focused engagement with local businesses throughout Tacoma to leverage opportunities and address challenges related to retention and growth of valued existing businesses.
- Strategy 1B: Identify Target Sectors:** Conduct an annual evaluation of sectoral performance to identify and prioritize Tacoma's growth sectors for Business Retention, Expansion, and Recruitment efforts.
- Strategy 1C: Support Retail Citywide:** Fill needed gap to consistently support Tacoma's retail sector citywide by protecting and expanding customer access, crafting local retailer programs, and coordinating with Neighborhood Business Districts.
- Strategy 1D: Recruit New Businesses & FDI:** Formalize a process and the required relationships to focus consistent, strategic recruitment of target and synergistic sectors, firms, and foreign direct investment (FDI) in Tacoma.
- Strategy 1E: Advise Infrastructure Needs:** Formalize the Community & Economic Development (CED) Department's role as an advocate and consultant on infrastructure development priorities, timing, and coordination.
- Strategy 1F: Develop Coordinated Recruitment Marketing:** Work with the Chamber, Port, Pierce County, Puyallup Tribe, and the EDB to develop a strategic marketing campaign with consistent messaging based on Tacoma's primary business recruitment assets.

## II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

### FOCUS AREA 2 >> SMALL BUSINESSES & ENTREPRENEURIALISM

- Strategy 2A: Assist Small- and Mid-Sized Businesses:** Expand engagement to further develop and communicate policies and programs aimed at assisting small- and mid-sized businesses in Tacoma.
- Strategy 2B: Prioritize Local Businesses:** Protect local businesses and foster a unique, authentic Tacoma commercial-cultural identity by limiting the growth or footprint of chain businesses in certain areas of Tacoma.
- Strategy 2C: Facilitate Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:** Partner with local partners, institutions and developers to create tools, space, consulting, and other resources to connect, expand, and market Tacoma-based entrepreneurs.
- Strategy 2D: Develop More Co-Working, Maker, & Other Spaces:** Directly recruit and / or partner with local institutions to develop and expand Co-working, Maker Spaces, Commercial Kitchens, and other offerings in Tacoma.
- Strategy 2E: Redesign Small Business Lending:** Evaluate and enhance the City of Tacoma's Small Business Lending package by filling in lending gaps and leveraging additional lending sources and partnerships.
- Strategy 2F: Understand Home-Based Businesses:** Understand Tacoma's home-based business base and provide opportunities to transition interested entrepreneurs into growing local business locations.

## II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

### FOCUS AREA 3 >> WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & HUMAN CAPITAL

**Strategy 3A: Fully Utilize UW-Tacoma, UPS & Evergreen:** Continue to support the University of Washington - Tacoma, University of Puget Sound, Pacific Lutheran University, and Evergreen State College - Tacoma in their roles as primary drivers of workforce development for Tacoma's target economic sectors.

**Strategy 3B: Address Skills Gaps:** Facilitate strengthened interconnections between workforce development partners and assure coordinated programming to identify top skills gaps facing workers in Tacoma target sectors and enhance existing programs to address them.

**Strategy 3C: Leverage Anchor Institutions:** Engage local anchor institutions to incorporate an “anchor mission”—consciously applying their long-term, place-based economic power, in combination with their human and intellectual resources, to better the welfare of the communities in which they reside.

### FOCUS AREA 4 >> NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT REVITALIZATION

**Strategy 4A: Nurture Authentic District Identities:** Work with Neighborhood Business Districts (NBDs) to articulate and support authentic District identities via specific profiles of business mix, scale, and design.

**Strategy 4B: Utilize Vacant Properties:** Develop programs for temporary and / or pop-up utilization of vacant NBD properties for local businesses or those that wish to locate or expand there.

**Strategy 4C: Coordinate Subarea Planning:** Recognize CED's role to inventory, coordinate and mitigate the impacts of concurrent Subarea planning on Neighborhood Business Districts as necessary.

**Strategy 4D: Reverse Neighborhood Blight:** Work with NBDs to fight and reverse neighborhood blight in coordination with other agencies, and businesses, and by utilizing all tools at the City's disposal.

**Strategy 4E: Bridge Tacoma's Divides:** Develop a "One Tacoma" campaign aimed at connecting vibrant but disparate, disconnected neighborhood commercial and cultural assets across the City.

**Strategy 4F: Support Vacant Housing Program:** Support the City's critical ongoing effort to inventory vacant housing, clarify ownership, transition it to receivership, and prepare it for re-development or new development.

## II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

### FOCUS AREA 5 >> DOWNTOWN TACOMA

- Strategy 5A: Create Downtown Business Alliance:** Lead the formation of a Downtown Business Alliance to promote the greater downtown area and coordinate programs to strengthen and tie local business community and assets together.
- Strategy 5B: Connect Downtown Nodes:** Identify zones to focus urban design, infrastructure, private development, and marketing resources to physically and conceptually connect existing nodes of vibrancy downtown.
- Strategy 5C: Think Big in Downtown:** Continue to prioritize planning and resources for game-changing investments in Downtown Tacoma aimed at making it the focus - the physical, cultural, and commercial heart of the City of Tacoma.

### FOCUS AREA 6 >> COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY ACTIVATION

- Strategy 6A: Develop Nalley Valley:** Continue to work closely with key landowners and local stakeholders to transition important industrial and commercial land supply in Nalley Valley to "shovel-ready" condition.
- Strategy 6B: Support Growth on UW-Tacoma Campus:** Work closely with UW-Tacoma and partners to ensure efficient and strategic permitting and development of the significant land capacity that exists on the campus of one of the City's most important economic engines.
- Strategy 6C: Protect & Grow Port of Tacoma:** Work closely with the Port of Tacoma, the Puyallup Tribe, and local businesses in the Tideflats to help mitigate pressures, mediate land use needs and conflicts, and assist in expansion, new, or re-development.
- Strategy 6D: Balance TOD & Other Pressures:** Advocate strongly on behalf of economic development in citywide and Subarea planning discussions regarding TOD and corridor strategies with the potential to displace existing employment nodes.
- Strategy 6E: Identify Key Properties & Infill:** Empower CED to take the lead on maintaining an inventory of the top vacant or redevelopable sites in Tacoma, transitioning the sites to development readiness, and marketing them to potential users.
- Strategy 6F: Grow Office & Industrial Product:** Lead direct recruitment of developers and anchor tenants, as well as other methods at the City's disposal, to increase the supply of office and industrial development products currently lacking in the City.

## II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

### FOCUS AREA 7 >> BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT CLIMATE

**Strategy 7A: Formalize CED as Ombudsman:** Further develop and formalize the CED Department's role as economic development ombudsman at the City of Tacoma, coordinating or advising the actions of various City departments with regard to projects impacting economic development or commerce in Tacoma.

**Strategy 7B: Cultivate Confidence in Tacoma:** Build on the precedent of the Mayor's Business Advisory Group to further gather and incorporate the perspectives of business owners when making policy decisions related to commerce.

**Strategy 7C: Speed Development Permitting:** Participate with City Planning & Development Services to assist in evaluating and improving on development permitting in Tacoma with a particular focus on furthering a "Getting To Yes" culture.

**Strategy 7D: Identify Efficiencies in Development Regulations:** Continue to work closely with City of Tacoma Planning & Development Services, Public Works, and other departments to identify and mitigate obstacles to development related to code requirements.

**Strategy 7E: Help Reduce Construction Costs:** Coordinate public-sector actions to help mitigate high construction costs in Tacoma and Pierce County for projects driving economic development.

**Strategy 7F: Plan for Opportunity Zones:** Continue coordinated planning for the designated Opportunity Zone in Tacoma as a major tool for future community and economic development.

**Strategy 7G: Evaluate Developer Incentives:** Work with City Planning & Development Services in assessing and analyzing current real estate development incentives and amending or expanding as appropriate and necessary.

## II. STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

### FOCUS AREA 8 >> PLACEMAKING & CITY IMAGE

**Strategy 8A: Protect & Grow Cultural Assets:** Support and leverage the growing arts, entertainment, and cultural assets in Tacoma to attract new firms, industries, residents, and visitors while supporting existing businesses and sectors.

**Strategy 8B: Leverage Tourism:** Grow tourism and convert visitation to economic development in Tacoma in coordination with other agencies and the private sector.

**Strategy 8C: Communicate Tacoma's Livability:** Articulate Quality of Life as a central asset for economic development efforts in Tacoma and continue to coordinate with other City departments on projects & programs enhancing Tacoma's unique character and livability.

**Strategy 8D: Continue Clean & Safe:** Continue to support the tremendous progress that has been made in the perception and reality of safety and cleanliness in the public realm in Tacoma.

**Strategy 8E: Expand Hospitality Base:** Continue to support expanded diversity and quality of hospitality and visitor services options in the City that directly support and enable the growth of other critical sectors.

**Strategy 8F: Improve Parking & Wayfinding:** Advocate for progressive, City-led parking and wayfinding solutions to support Neighborhood Business Districts and commercial zones citywide.

**Strategy 8G: Expand Housing Affordability:** Continue to advocate and actively plan for a greater diversity of housing types - especially affordable typologies - to maintain one of Tacoma's central strategic advantages in an increasingly costly region.

**Strategy 8H: Brand & Communicate:** Initiate a new strategic City effort to communicate placemaking and city image assets, progress, and improvements - comprising Tacoma's "brand" - regionally and even nationally.

## III. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

**Strategies** Priorities, Measures, Lead and Supporting Departments, Timing, and Budget

**Actions** Priorities, Measures, Lead and Supporting Departments, Timing, and Budget

## IV. REFERENCES