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COPY: Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee
PRESENTERS: Kristi Lynett, Sustainability Officer, Environmental Services
Beth Jarot, Resilient & Green Building Specialist, Environmental Services
SUBJECT: Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Strategy Update
DATE: May 12, 2021

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Informational briefing.

SUMMARY:

Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability staff will be presenting an update on the Climate Action Plan and the Climate Adaptation Strategy. Draft strategies and actions will be shared and upcoming community engagement methods will be addressed.

BACKGROUND:

The Climate Action Plan serves as an update to the Environmental Action Plan. This update is a compilation of meaningful, high-priority actions that the City and our community will take to meet the City's greenhouse gas and community goals outlined in the Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan and the Climate Emergency Resolution. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) consolidates the priorities of multiple city departments, providing a centralized plan and reporting system for tracking progress toward environmental goals. In this way, it functions both as a management tool for city staff and as a public document providing transparency on the actions the city is taking on behalf of the broader community. The City has contracted with Sustainability Solutions Group and Citizens for a Healthy Bay to support Plan development and community engagement and ensure that it will serve as a guiding document for shared climate solutions, environmental protections, and community resilience – putting people first and prioritizing those communities most vulnerable to climate impacts. Input from diverse community voices, through Environmental Justice Leaders and Climate Action Ambassadors, will help develop a transformational plan, and help build a safe and sustainable future. This plan will direct strategies, investments and actions that work to create a better Tacoma for all.

The Climate Adaptation Strategy follows up on the Climate Resiliency Study conducted in 2015-2016. The City has contracted with Cascadia Consulting to produce a comprehensive Climate Adaptation Strategy (CAS) to identify responsibilities and timelines for tasks that will reduce risks from climate change and build resiliency into municipal operations and to the Tacoma community. The report will include targeted, cost-effective, and appropriately scaled adaptation strategies to protect its infrastructure, economy, and community in the face of increasing climate threats. This report will serve as a mechanism to tie together the City's existing and developing sustainability initiatives and plans with community goals. A steering committee made up of representatives from the City, Tacoma Public Utilities and outside organizations is providing input and guidance throughout the process. Key recommendations from CAS will be incorporated into the updated CAP.

ISSUE:

The City Council passed Resolution No. 40509 in December 2019, declaring a climate emergency in Tacoma, and affirming Council's support of initiatives that mitigate impacts.



The CAP responds to the directives of the Climate Emergency Resolution by responding to the threats posed by climate change to Tacoma. The CAP not only addresses the critical issue of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, but will also prioritize actions with multiple benefits such as health, safety, access, and equity.

In addition to mitigation efforts, Tacoma needs to prepare for the anticipated impacts of climate change including, but not limited to: rising sea levels, more frequent significant rain events, more power coastal storms, wildfire smoke and more frequent days with heat over 90 degrees Fahrenheit. By establishing an action plan to address climate adaptation measures, the City will be positioned to maintain a high quality of life, with livable neighborhoods, healthy open spaces, parks and tree canopy and a growing business environment. A particular focus should be taken on social equity with clarification of climate change impacts on diverse communities.

ALTERNATIVES:

This is an information briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information briefing only. There is no fiscal impact

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information briefing only. There is no recommendation