



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Hyun Kim, City Manager
FROM: Mayor Victoria Woodards and Chief Policy Analyst Bucoda Warren
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: A resolution relating to equitable, inclusive, and thriving employment conditions for quality jobs in Tacoma; recognizing the City's role as a convener, investor, and planner to strengthen conditions where quality jobs flourish; and directing the City Manager to evaluate the quality jobs characteristics described in the draft Tacoma Quality Jobs Framework and develop recommended practices and actions for consideration in 2027. – Requested for December 16, 2025
DATE: November 26, 2025

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution relating to equitable, inclusive, and thriving employment conditions for quality jobs in Tacoma; recognizing the City's role as a convener, investor, and planner to strengthen conditions where quality jobs flourish; and directing the City Manager to evaluate the quality jobs characteristics described in the Tacoma Quality Jobs Framework and develop recommended practices and actions for City Council consideration in 2027.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards, Council Member Kiara Daniels, Council Member Kristina Walker, and Council Member Olgy Diaz

BACKGROUND:

Over the last couple years, Mayor Woodards has been working with workforce development, labor, and business partners to develop a draft Tacoma Quality Jobs Framework, grounded in eight characteristics of quality jobs informed by best practices across federal, state, and regional leaders. Aligned with Tacoma's values of equity, representation, and upward mobility, this framework supports shared goals around inclusive workforce development and economic opportunity.

This work builds on the foundation of Tacoma's participation in the Good Jobs, Great Cities Academy in 2023-2024, a partnership between the National League of Cities and the U.S. Department of Labor to help cities connect workers with quality, in-demand jobs in infrastructure, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing. Inspired by the U.S. Department of Labor's Good Jobs Principles under President Biden and learnings from this Academy, we have developed this draft local quality jobs framework to define what the characteristics of quality employment could look like in our community. While aspirational in nature, further analysis will be needed to ensure that any future recommended practices and actions to achieve the goals of the Quality Jobs Framework balances those goals with what is feasible, cost effective, and right for Tacoma's economy.

Quality jobs are the cornerstone of a thriving, inclusive economy where workers, families, and businesses all succeed together. When jobs provide stability, dignity, and opportunity, they not only improve individual well-being but also strengthen the broader community and local economy. Workers understand the life-changing impact of a job that offers security, fair pay, and respect. Employers, in turn, recognize that being known as a provider of quality jobs enhances their ability to attract and retain top talent, boost performance, and achieve their mission.



This framework outlines the characteristics of labor standards in Tacoma that will highlight that all work has value and that every worker deserves a job that supports their growth, health, and contribution to our shared prosperity. We believe that the City of Tacoma has a unique role in shaping the environment for quality jobs to thrive and that we must work closely with businesses and workforce partners to create this environment. This draft framework offers a starting place for shared language for both public and private sector leaders to guide collective efforts to support a safe, welcoming, and resilient economy where everyone can thrive. This foundational understanding of the goals of the City Council will guide the City Manager to work with staff, partners, and the community in a way that brings the best solutions to light that will advance labor standards in a meaningful way while balancing feasibility, costs, and economic impact.

For the City, creating an environment for quality jobs to thrive can take many shapes. One early step could be to review the city's employment opportunities and organizational culture and how it aligns with this draft framework so that we can lead by example. To reiterate, this framework document is not intended to and does not establish labor standards or working conditions for city employees or establish a policy for labor negotiations. Beyond that, the City of Tacoma can advance quality jobs through integrated strategies such as:

- Workforce pipeline development including Jobs 253, Tacoma Training & Employment Program, Local Employment and Apprenticeship Program, and EPA Brownfields Job Training Programs.
- Place based economic development focus in areas such as downtown, Nally Valley, the Tideflats, the Tacoma Mall subarea, and neighborhood business districts.
- Promotion of 15-minute Neighborhoods and Complete Streets Initiatives which attracts a high-quality workforce.
- Targeted employer recruitment through Community and Economic Development, The Economic Development Board, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, and soon to be launched International Soft-Landing Initiative for Sister Cities.

Together, these efforts provide a strong foundation for expanding access to quality jobs and fostering an environment where workers and businesses can succeed.

No one organization is likely to have all these characteristics across their employment opportunities, and some organizations may pursue similar but varied solutions that are in line with their operational needs that align with these definitions. This framework is meant to be a starting place to guide further research and engagement with partners to bring forward solutions that work for Tacoma's employees and businesses. Over the course of the research, this framework or how we define each characteristic is likely to change, and as such this framework is not meant to be a prescriptive directive or inflexible definitions.

By sharing this draft Tacoma Quality Jobs Framework, we are highlighting a starting place together that defines the characteristics that make up a quality job based on our past engagement. By moving this legislation forward, we are demonstrating the Council's focus on creating an environment where quality jobs are available and giving our staff direction to further research this framework and bring forward recommendations that enhance programs and initiatives that support quality jobs in a way that balances our aspirations and the economic reality of our community. However, the quality jobs framework document is not intended to operate as a policy or directive of the City, and does not establish labor standards, working conditions, a policy or practice for labor negotiations, or form the basis for terms and conditions of employment. It is intended only as a guide for evaluation of potential future City Council action.



The eight characteristics that make up the draft framework are included below as shared aspirations and language for both workers and employers to guide collaborative efforts as further research is conducted. Each characteristic is shown below next to the City's potential role in meeting that definition which gives staff a starting place for future recommendations. A more in-depth series of definitions for each characteristic is included in the attached draft framework.

Quality Job Characteristic	City's Potential Role
Inclusive Access and Representative Workforce	Invest in youth and adult pipelines that provide underrepresented residents access to nearby job opportunities
Shared Voice and Agency	Promote civic collaboration, public sector leadership, and strong workforce agencies-management relationships
Fair and Transparent Hiring Practices	Convene employers and workforce partners to promote inclusive and connected taken pathways
Livable Wages and Fair Compensation	Prioritize sectors and employers that offer upward mobility through CED recruitment
Stability, Safety, and Flexibility at Work	Invest in stable neighborhoods, affordable housing, and transit access to support worker safety
Comprehensive Benefits	Partner with health, childcare, and training providers to support total worker wellbeing
Respectful Workplace Culture	Foster inclusive neighborhood spaces and organizational values that reflect Tacoma's diversity
Skill Building and Career Growth	Align city workforce programs to build visible ladders from first jobs to long-term careers

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Mayor's Office has consistently engaged with leaders across the workforce community from the workforce development board, economic development staff, labor partners, community colleges, and private employers in addition to those that had been a part of the City's Good Jobs, Great Cities Academy team. These leaders provided feedback and guidance on what definitions they have already been using, and how to best position these definitions for widespread support with various organizations and employers. This feedback gives a good foundation for initial goals that require further research and engagement.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

This legislation advances equity and access by setting a clear goal: that job creation in Tacoma centers on fair wages, stable employment, and inclusive opportunities for all residents. By further researching the draft framework, the legislation encourages a focus for the city and employers on worker-centered practices that not only strengthen retention but also enhance the long-term competitiveness of Tacoma's businesses in a way that balances feasibility, impact to the city and businesses, and overall economic impacts.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the number of diverse livable wage jobs.

Increase the number of Tacoma households that have livable wage jobs within proximity to the city.



Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s)?

Supporting meaningful, stable work strengthens pathways to economic mobility, reduces household financial strain, and contributes to a more affordable and livable community where residents are better able to meet basic needs like housing and transportation.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Do no pass	Staff will have additional capacity to study other priorities.	Further research into the draft framework and labor standards will not be prioritized and may take longer to learn about and achieve.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

As a part of further research and development of future recommendations, the City Manager or designee should provide an initial progress update to the City Council ahead of the next biennial budget process in case additional funding should be considered. By the end of 2027 the City Manager or designee should bring recommendations to the City Council for consideration on how portions of the framework may be implemented, balancing economic impact, costs, and feasibility with aspirational goals.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend the adoption of this resolution to highlight the City's role as a convener, investor, and planner to create those conditions where quality jobs flourish and support further research into the draft framework for how Tacoma might implement these ideas.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Existing grant funding will be made available to fund initial research into the draft framework. Future efforts may require additional funding depending on timeline and outcomes thus far which should be considered in future budgeting processes.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. Non-Dept Community Programs	658000	6530200	\$29,350
TOTAL			\$29,350

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

Grant funds received from the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize will be used to support the initial costs of further researching this framework.

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Costs are attributed to existing grant funds available for this purpose.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No



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Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

There may be future impacts should more funding be required for study of the draft framework, or changes to city programs be required.

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2025 Draft Tacoma Quality Jobs Framework