

Appendix A

Needs Assessment Approach and Methods

APPROACH

Based on the Tacoma's human services budgeting process, we structured the needs assessment by focusing on three research topic areas.

- **Homelessness and Household Stability.** We sought to understand how homelessness is changing, who in our community is at risk of homelessness, and what services are needed to address and/or prevent homelessness. To gain insight, BERK analyzed local homelessness, household instability, food security, and mental health data. EnviroIssues interviewed and gathered data with Positive Interactions and Healthy Homes.
- **Human and Social Wellness.** We sought to identify barriers to health services and opportunities to reduce those barriers. BERK analyzed the wellness of Tacoma's senior citizens, risk factors facing the community's children and youth, domestic violence, and mental health trends.
- **Workforce Development.** We sought to understand the barriers community members face to economic advancement and the scale and location of those barriers in the community. BERK analyzed the demographic barriers local residence are facing to economic advancement, education, employment, and mental health trends within the City.

METHODS

POLICY AND PLAN REVIEW

- City of Tacoma. **2011 Gang Assessment.**
- City of Tacoma. **2015-2019 City of Tacoma Human Services Strategic Plan.** June 2014
- City of Tacoma. **A Community Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Assessment.** December 2012
- City of Tacoma. **Equity & Empowerment Framework.**
- City of Tacoma. **Tacoma 2025.** 2015
- City of Tacoma. **The National Citizen Survey™:** Tacoma, WA. 2014
- City of Tacoma, City of Lakewood, Pierce County. Tacoma, Lakewood, **Pierce County Continuum of Care: Plan to End Homelessness.** April 2012
- Cunningham, Bruce. **The TOOL Center - Trade Occupations Opportunity Learning Pre-Apprenticeship Program: An Evaluation of TOOL Center** January – December 2014. January 2015
- Leadership ICMA 2015 – Team Tacoma, Washington. **Human Services Funding: A Framework for Improved Outcomes Through Strategic Investments.**
- Tacoma - Pierce County Health Department. **Fairness Across Places? Your Health in Pierce County: 2015 Health Equity Assessment.** February 2016
- Pierce County. **The 2015 Homeless Point-In-Time Report.** July 2015
- Washington State Department of Social & Health Services. **Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse Prevention in Pierce County.** July, 2015.

- Washington State Department of Social & Health Services. **Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse Prevention in Washington Locales:** Locale 69. July, 2015.
- Washington State Office of Financial Management. **Washington State Data Book: Human Services.** 2015

SECONDARY DATA SOURCES

The report relies on the most current data available; however, there is frequently a lag between the time the data is collected and processed and the time of the analysis for this report.

Specific sources include:

- **Poverty and Income:** U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
- **Homelessness and Household Instability:** Department of Commerce, Continuum of Care, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Access Point 4 Housing, United Way of Pierce County, RealtyTrac
- **Education and Employment:** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, Puget Sound Regional Council
- **Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Wellness:** Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, DSHS Research and Data Analysis, Healthy Youth Survey, Tacoma School District
- **Crime and Domestic Violence:** Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, City of Tacoma
- **Food Insecurity:** Emergency Food Network, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To inform the content of the report, BERK and EnviroIssues conducted a series of interviews or attended meetings with City of Tacoma staff and key stakeholders. In some instances, those interviews identified data sources that could be analyzed further to provide a more complete assessment of community needs.

Specific interviewees for the report include:

- **Homelessness and Household Stability**
 - Colin DeForrest, City of Tacoma
 - Jaime Jackson, City of Tacoma
 - Carol Wolfe, City of Tacoma
 - ChiQuata Elder, City of Tacoma
 - Healthy Homes
 - Positive Interactions
 - Tacoma Avenue business district meeting
 - Tacoma Police Department Community Liaison Officer focus group
- **Human and Social Wellness**
 - Melissa Cordiero, City of Tacoma
 - Kim Dodds, City of Tacoma

- Gang Reduction Task Force meeting
- City of Tacoma Youth Advisory Council
- Jacques Colon, Health Equity Coordinator, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
- **Workforce Development.**
- Christopher Wright, City of Tacoma
- Bruce Cunningham, Evaluator for TOOL, PSESD
- Tashiko Hardy, SureHouse Open Bible Church
- Julia Brooks, RESCARE