

CITY OF TACOMA

OFFICE OF  
EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

OFFICE OF EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016**



## A LETTER FROM MAYOR STRICKLAND:

To City of Tacoma Community Members and Supporters of the Office of Equity & Human Rights:

The Tacoma City Council adopted the Equity & Empowerment policy in October 2014 with the goal of achieving equity in our service delivery, decision-making and community engagement. In the year following, the Office of Equity & Human Rights was created in order to implement the policy.

On behalf of the City of Tacoma and the Office of Equity & Human Rights (OEHR), we are proud to submit this Annual Report which highlights the work accomplished by the office through this calendar year. OEHR provides education and technical support to City staff and elected officials as a catalyst for change and the elimination of systemic barriers to the fair and just distribution of resources. OEHR has focused internally first, by mining the best national equity practices for institutionalizing this work within our city government, and as a way to bring our very best to Tacoma's diverse communities and residents. The office plans to continue to strengthen relationships across departments so, together, we can promote and implement more equitable practices throughout the entire organization.

In the short time since its inception, the office has influenced significant changes: developed the Handbook for Recruiting, Hiring & Retention, created an interdepartmental citywide champion team and developed and conducted equity training for over 500 employees.

We are especially proud to support inclusive community engagement such as Project PEACE, Latino Town Halls and Tacoma 2025. We are members of a growing group of 100+ local government agencies across the nation focused on achieving racial equity.

As public servants, we must be responsible stewards of resources and work to ensure that every person we serve has the opportunity to realize their full potential. The work of OEHR helps remove barriers and moves us closer to a more just and inclusive community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marilyn Strickland". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marilyn Strickland  
Mayor

## LETTER FROM DIRECTOR DIANE POWERS:



I am honored to have the opportunity to serve the community members of the City of Tacoma in the Office of Equity & Human Rights. The talented staff working in this office are committed to achieving the goals outlined in our Equity & Empowerment policy. Over the next two years, we plan to delve more deeply and reach more broadly to connect and empower those unheard voices in our community. In this spirit, we will listen, learn and respond when and wherever we can. It is of the utmost importance that the principles of equity are continually embedded in the work of the City and ways in which we engage with our residents.

I believe local government has a unique ability to create collaborative community partnerships that are inclusive and offer new models of civic engagement. Please join us in the effort to make Tacoma a place where everyone feels welcome.

I look forward to continuing to serve this wonderfully diverse community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane Powers,  
Director



*"The establishment of the Office of Equity and Human Rights by Tacoma's City Council marked a significant step forward for our city. Racial equity and human rights are important issues for us to discuss and examine as a community, and we must do more; we must put those ideas into action. OEHR is helping our city do this through many avenues including equity training that will reach over 3,000 city employees, and through purposeful partnering and outreach.*

*That partnering included organizing community and police dialogues through the program Project Peace, which led to numerous recommendations and action steps which our police department is now adopting.*



*I continue to believe that what binds us together is a force stronger than anything that can keep us apart and OEHR is helping the city take collective action in the right direction."*

**— VICTORIA WOODARDS, COUNCIL MEMBER 2010-2016**

*"The Office of Equity and Human Rights does important work to ensure our City's work is fully inclusive of historically marginalized people.*



*For example, OEHR worked with me to organize a Latino Town Hall series in my district to listen to the concerns of Latinos in the community in a way that was comfortable for them. This is the type of work I am eager to continue with this office going forward."*

**— MARTY CAMPBELL, COUNCIL MEMBER 2010-PRESENT**



*"The Office of Equity and Human Rights continues to do critical work. Especially in this current political climate, their work to structurally change our systems at the local level to be more equitable, responsive and in tune with all aspects of our community is invaluable."*

**— RYAN MELLO, COUNCIL MEMBER 2010-PRESENT**



# OFFICE OF EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OVERVIEW

**“Cowardice asks the question is it safe?  
Expediency asks the question is it politic?  
Vanity asks the question is it popular?  
But...Conscience asks the question is it right?”**  
— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. —

The Office of Equity and Human Rights’ (OEHR) mission is to achieve equity in the City’s service delivery, decision making and community engagement. We will do this by identifying and eliminating the underlying drivers within our community that perpetuate racial inequity and provide opportunity and advancement for all. Ultimately, we want to change the way we do business as an organization and work with our community to make Tacoma a city that is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to everyone.

Equity is when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being, and achieve their full potential. Additionally, it is when one’s identity doesn’t predict outcomes.

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## 2015 City Council

Marilyn Strickland, Mayor  
David Boe, Deputy Mayor  
Anders Ibsen, District 1  
Robert Thoms, District 2  
Lauren Walker Lee, District 3  
Marty Campbell, District 4  
Joe Lonergan, District 5  
Victoria Woodards, At-Large Position 6  
Ryan Mello, At-Large Position 8  
City Manager T.C. Broadnax

## 2016 City Council

Marilyn Strickland, Mayor  
Ryan Mello, Deputy Mayor  
Anders Ibsen, District 1  
Robert Thoms, District 2  
Keith Blocker, District 3  
Marty Campbell, District 4  
Joe Lonergan, District 5  
Victoria Woodards At-Large Position 6  
Conor McCarthy, At-Large Position 7  
City Manager T.C. Broadnax

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# OFFICE OF EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS STAFF



Diane Powers  
Director

Diane Powers provides leadership and strategic direction for OEHR. She serves as a member of the Executive Leadership Team for the City of Tacoma, ensuring equity is part of every leadership decision. Diane's foresight led the Office through its initial formation in early 2015. Her responsibilities include community outreach and working with community and City leaders to help achieve the Equity and Empowerment goals established by the City Council.

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## Policy and Program Section

Ensures City staff have tools for applying an equity lens to City services; also works with community to ensure equitable access to services and resources and inclusive community engagement.



Mary Morrison  
Manager



Manisha Paudel  
Senior Policy Analyst



Lucas Smiraldo  
Policy Analyst

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## Human Rights Section

Responsible for investigating employment and fair housing complaints; also provides tenants and landlords tools for ensuring safe, healthy, equitable and crime-free housing rentals.



Andreta Armstrong  
Manager



Malik Gbenro  
Fair Housing Investigator



Marissa Vining  
Civil Rights Investigator



ChiQuata Elder  
Landlord Tenant/Crime Free  
Housing Coordinator



Jerry Lee  
Equal Employment  
Opportunity Officer

## Equal Employment Opportunity Officer

Ensures City staff and operations provide inclusive employment opportunities and compliance with Federal, State, and local Civil Rights laws and policies.



Ann Martin  
Office Manager

## Office Manager

Provides executive level assistance to director and OEHR staff.

# WHY EQUITY MATTERS

In the 2014 National Community Survey, residents of Tacoma were asked to rank how important it was to focus on equitable access to facilities, services and infrastructure to people of diverse races/ethnicities, disability and income levels over the next two years. Seventy-one percent of respondents said that this work was “essential” or “very important.”

While conducting public outreach for the Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan, staff and consultants identified four major themes that were consistently brought up in discussions with community members:

- Equity
- Opportunity
- Partnerships
- Accountability

More specifically, community members have indicated a strong desire to see equity and racial justice, race and social equity analysis of public programs, and support for new immigrants. A combination of community input, direction received from the City Council, and the support of City Manager T.C. Broadnax established the foundation for the Office of Equity and Human Rights.

## City of Tacoma Diversity

Tacoma is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in Washington State. According to 2015 census estimates, more than 35 percent of people living in Tacoma are Latino, African American, Asian or Pacific Islander, Multiracial, or Native American. Yet, communities of color in our city experience stark inequities, such as significantly higher rates of unemployment and poverty, and poorer health outcomes.

Additionally, our residents of color have reported experiencing fewer opportunities for community engagement and limited acceptance for people of diverse backgrounds. Put simply, Tacoma’s communities of color live strikingly different lives than their average White neighbors, and have far different/undesirable outcomes. The Office of Equity and Human Rights is committed to uncovering barriers that prevent people from achieving their full potential, and creating better outcomes for all.

## Diversity Within City of Tacoma’s Workforce

The diversity of Tacoma’s population is not reflected in the City’s workforce. While White population in Tacoma is roughly 61 percent, 80 percent of all City employees are White. Additionally, 51 percent of Tacoma’s population is female, while the City of Tacoma workforce is only 29 percent female.



## Tacoma's Commitment to Equity

The Equity and Empowerment framework, adopted by the City Council in 2014, makes equity a consistent guiding framework across the entire organization and will help the City of Tacoma change the way we do business.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In 2016, during an employee survey process, new guiding principles were introduced. These principles that guide us – **Integrity, Service, Excellence and Equity (ISEE)** – serve as a foundation for how we deliver services in the exceptional manner that our community has come to expect. They speak to the values that we embody as City of Tacoma employees and represent the core of our work in public service.

#### INTEGRITY

We conduct our personal, work group, and organizational actions in an ethical and honest manner, and we serve as responsible stewards of the public resources entrusted to us.

#### SERVICE

We treat everyone with courtesy and empathy. We provide customer-focused municipal services that produce high value and results.

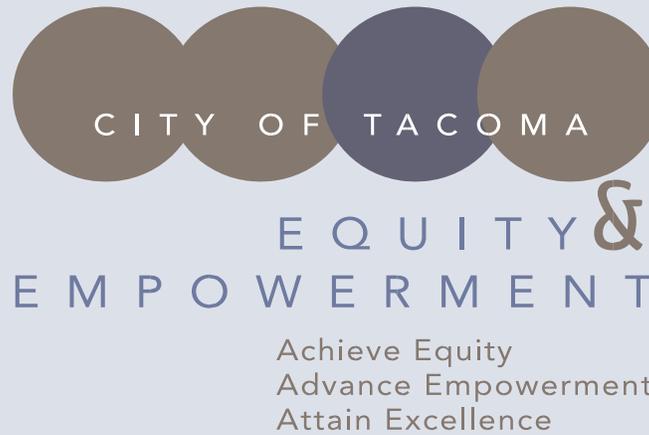
#### EXCELLENCE

We achieve the highest performance possible. We use collaborative and inclusive approaches to organizational and community issues. We are accountable for individually and collectively meeting high standards.

#### EQUITY

We understand and reflect the community we serve. We ensure every community member has services and opportunities that will enable people to satisfy their essential needs and advance their wellbeing.

# EQUITY AND EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORK



## WHAT IS EQUITY?

Equity is when **everyone** has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential

## VISION

Our vision is for Tacoma to be an inclusive and equitable place to live, work and play

## MISSION

Our mission is to achieve equity in our service delivery, decision-making and community engagement. We will do this by identifying and eliminating the underlying drivers within our community that perpetuate racial inequity and provide opportunity and advancement for all

## PRIMARY GOALS

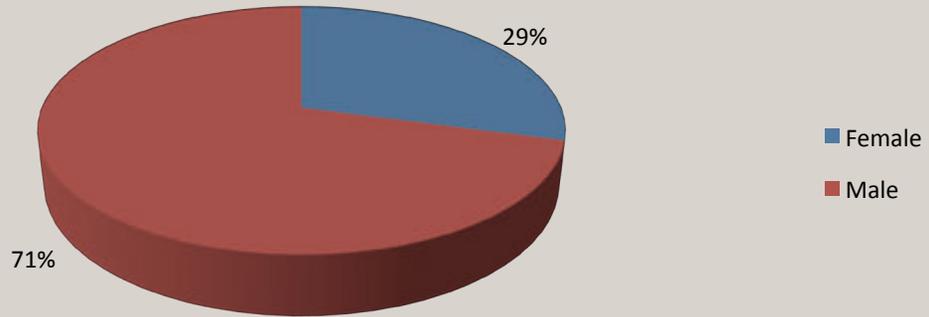
If our proposed framework is successful, we believe that our municipal workforce and community will achieve five goals:

- 1 City of Tacoma Workforce Reflects the Community it Serves**  
Actively work to eliminate racial and other disparities and provide accommodations for people with disabilities in hiring, promotion, retention and contracting
- 2 Purposeful Community Outreach and Engagement**  
Work with community partners and businesses to promote equity and inclusion within Tacoma and throughout the region, producing measureable improvements and disparity reductions
- 3 Equitable Service Delivery to All Residents and Visitors**  
Provide guidance, education and assistance to all departments as they develop sustainable methods to build capacity in achieving equitable outcomes and services
- 4 Support Human Rights and Opportunities for Everyone to Achieve Their Full Potential**  
Promote, support and build capacity for compliance with civil rights laws, ordinances and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, within the city of Tacoma
- 5 Commitment to Equity in Policy Decision-Making**  
Be transparent and collaborative with internal and external individuals and groups, holding ourselves and our partners accountable for measurable improvements and outcomes

[equity@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:equity@cityoftacoma.org)

# CITY OF TACOMA DEMOGRAPHICS

## Total City of Tacoma Workforce - Gender

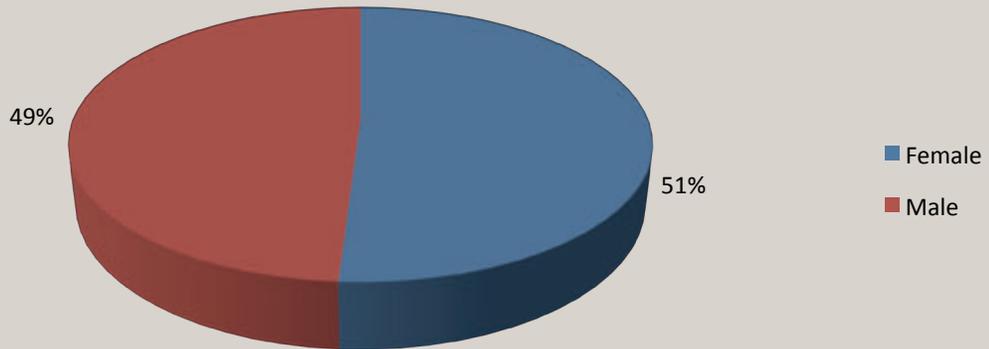


Tacoma Residents (2010 Census)

51%

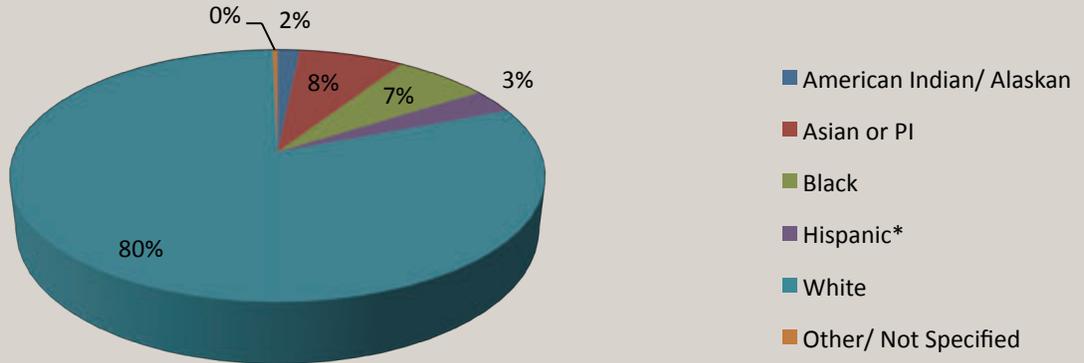
49%

## Tacoma Residents - Gender



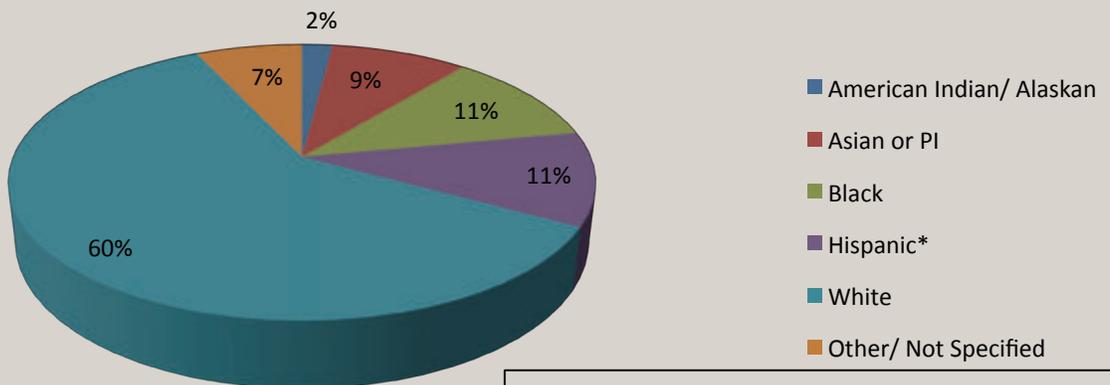
# CITY OF TACOMA DEMOGRAPHICS

## City of Tacoma Workforce - Race/Ethnicity



2%      9%      11%      11%      60%      7%      100%

## Tacoma Residents - Race/Ethnicity



\*The U.S. Census defines Hispanic as an ethnicity which may correspond with any race.



# EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In this image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports.

◀ They are being treated equally.

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In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game.

◀ They are being treated equitably.

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In the third image, all three individuals can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed.

◀ The systemic barrier has been removed.

# GOAL 1: CITY OF TACOMA WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE COMMUNITY IT SERVES

## Overview

Goal 1 of the Equity and Empowerment framework is to eliminate racial and other disparities, and provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities in hiring, promotion, and retention.

The Office of Equity and Human Rights (OEHR), in collaboration with Human Resources Department and other city departments, has taken a number of steps to change organizational policies, procedures and practices to achieve the goal.

## Accomplishments

- OEHR published a Handbook for Recruiting, Hiring & Retention: Applying an Equity Lens to Recruiting, Interviewing, Hiring & Retaining Employees. The handbook considers policy and practices for every step in the hiring process.
- Distribution of the Hiring Handbook to government and organizations nationwide, including Seattle, Portland, Boston, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Madison, Dubuque, Louisville, King and Multnomah counties, National Forum for Black Public Administrators, and Government Alliance for Race & Equity.
- “Ban the Box” policy was adopted by Tacoma City Council to remove the check box on job applications asking candidates about felony convictions. Asking candidates about felony convictions was nationally identified as a deterring factor for individuals with even minor offenses to consider applying for job opportunities. Given that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by our criminal justice system, this box became one of the primary barriers to even being considered for a job. Later in the hiring process, City of Tacoma conducts appropriate screening, including a background check.
- Developed and presented history of federal, state and local policies and practices of institutional and structural racism and other discriminations.



Handbook for  
**RECRUITING, HIRING & RETENTION**

Applying an Equity Lens to Recruiting, Interviewing,  
Hiring & Retaining Employees



City of Tacoma | Office of Equity and Human Rights

- Other practices adopted from the hiring handbook include diversifying and training interview panels so that the unconscious bias of hiring managers and interviewers do not have a negative impact on applicant's outcomes, particularly for applicants of color. The handbook has also provided opportunities to review and revise applicant testing and broaden outreach and recruitment for job openings.
- City of Tacoma's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer provided monthly new employee orientation training on EEO policies and diversity training.
- Developed and piloted Equity 101 Training, with more than 100 staff members taking part in the pilot process.
- Multiple training workshops attended by staff, including Undoing Institutional Racism, Race: Power of an Illusion, and Unconscious Bias.
- Established the first affinity group: a regional chapter of the National Forum of Black Public Administrators, which is part of the International City Management Association (ICMA). The chapter will include members from other Puget Sound cities.



## Next Steps

- 80 percent of the workforce trained in one or more equity-related class by the end of 2018.
- Increased outreach for recruitment for job vacancies.
- Establish and cultivate various affinity groups for City employees, as a way to enhance the City work experience through networking, resources, and professional development and support for the City's diverse workforce, including a local chapter of the International Hispanic Network.



# GOAL 2: PURPOSEFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## OVERVIEW

Goal 2 states the City will work with community partners and businesses to promote equity and inclusion within Tacoma and throughout the region, producing measureable improvements and disparity reductions.

“Nothing About Us Without Us” (source unknown) is the best way to describe Tacoma’s philosophy about community engagement and equity. It conveys the idea to truly achieve equity, those most impacted by the processes and decisions are included in the processes and decision-making.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### • Project PEACE

- o Project PEACE (Partnering for Equity And Community Engagement) is a program generated out of community concerns about police-related conflicts, like those in Baltimore and Ferguson. The program was designed to build trust, relationships and understanding between community members and law enforcement officers.
- o A series of community conversations took place in late 2015, and a community culminating event took place in February 2016. As a result, a number of deliberate actions have been implemented, primarily based on community input. Many actions have been directly implemented by Tacoma Police Department (TPD), and others have been in strong partnership with the OEHR.
- o More than 800 community members, police officers and City staff actively participated in six community-wide conversations with a goal to build trust. Almost 200 completed online surveys following the events, agreeing that Project PEACE community conversations would improve community-police relations. TPD incorporated the community feedback into its strategic planning, and proposed action items to be carried out in the next few years. The report is accessible on the City’s website ([www.cityoftacoma.org](http://www.cityoftacoma.org)) by searching “Project PEACE Tacoma”.
- o Project PEACE participants also joined a Police Training Selection committee in April 2016 to review, evaluate and provide feedback on external trainers to potentially deliver anti-racist, multicultural bias-free training to all officers. Based on committee input, no selection was made. Later in the process, based on committee and other community members’ input, the Fair and Impartial Policing organization was chosen to provide a train the trainer version of the fair and impartial policing training.
- o Beginning in July 2016, 13 community members formed the Project PEACE Executive Committee (PPEC). This committee, comprised of youth and adults, aims to assure relationships between communities of color and law enforcement are improved and strengthened; information relevant to Project PEACE actions is shared with the larger community; and opportunities are created for law enforcement and communities to engage in dialogues and learning opportunities. PPEC members have participated in other community-based events, and are planning a youth-police dialogue forum in early 2017.
- o Two geographically-focused sessions were organized to inform community members about TPD’s participation in the White House Police Data Initiative, followed by a brief dialogue between community members and police executives. Over 150 participants attended the first two events. Due to the loss of a police officer in late 2016, the third event focused on the South side of Tacoma was postponed to 2017.
- o New police cadets and community members participated in three facilitated conversations to build mutual understanding and trust.
- o Conversations have taken place with focus groups and neighborhoods about the feasibility of a Community Trauma Response Team (CTRT), proposed by a community group, The Conversation.



*"We can't build trust until we talk to one another and dare to listen. When we don't, we make a lot of dangerous assumptions. The only way we can build that trust and tear down the barriers, is to get together in deep reciprocal dialogue that can ultimately lead to positive action. This is what Project Peace has been all about.*

*Project Peace created an opportunity for citizens and our police department to hold an extended conversation that is now building toward a durable trust. Without that trust we will never be able to tear down the walls that have plagued us for so long.*



*I am so proud to have worked with the Office of Equity and Human Rights to make Project Peace a reality and encouraged by a new wave of dialogues with emerging young leaders as those walls of historical distrust continue to crumble and are being replaced with new understanding and mutual trust."*

**— VICTORIA WOODARDS, COUNCIL MEMBER 2009-2016**

*"The Tacoma Police Department is committed to building and maintaining a culture of positive community engagement which is essential to sustaining strong working relationships between our department and the citizens we serve. Recent events in communities across the country prompted the City of Tacoma to examine our efforts and interaction with our community members. It is important that we continuously seek opportunities to enhance relationships within our community through effective community engagement and interactions. We recognize the fact that over the years, we have developed many strong and resilient relationships throughout our community, which have been extremely positive and productive for both our citizens and our department.*

*The primary goals of Project PEACE include: fostering positive working relationships between the police department and local community; providing a transparent process in engaging the public in policing practices; promoting effective crime reduction while strengthening public trust; setting the pace for future police-related initiatives; and allowing the public to provide input into the department's Strategic Planning Process.*



*Project PEACE has provided a platform for us to engage in facilitated dialogue with residents to discover ways to better understand each other and build trusting relationships between the community and our department."*

**— DON RAMSDELL, TACOMA CHIEF OF POLICE**



# PROJECT PEACE







## • Welcoming Cities and Latinos Unidos del South Sound

- The City of Tacoma joined the Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative in February 2015, a national network comprised of over 40 cities that work to make their communities more welcoming, immigrant-friendly environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and cultural vitality.
- The City of Tacoma partnered with a local group of Latino community members to host two Town Hall forums: at Mount Tahoma and Lincoln high schools. The town halls provided an opportunity for Latino residents and service providers to come together and learn about barriers the former experience in daily life.
- The original group of Latino community members formed a permanent group: Latinos Unidos del South Sound (LUSS).
- LUSS produced and presented a report with policy recommendations adopted by the City Council in October 2016.
- OEHR collaborated with Tacoma Community House to celebrate National Welcoming Week—a ten-day period every September when all the Welcoming Cities and Counties nationwide host events that highlight and celebrate the contributions immigrants make to our communities.
- OEHR and Tacoma Community House hosted an Immigrant and Refugee Youth Forum at the University of Washington-Tacoma, in which five immigrant and refugee youth shared their life experiences and suggestions on how Tacoma can continue to be a more welcoming city, increasing the likelihood that they will establish successful lives here.



- **Flip the Script**

- o Early in 2016 OEHR helped plan and facilitate a “Flip the Script” event. The program used multi-media, panel discussion and small group work to explore the impact of stereotypical narratives in the United States regarding young men of color. The event shared ways to disrupt these harmful portrayals and transform them into a celebration of men of color as valuable, creative and intelligent assets.



- **Outreach to External Organizations**

- o Puyallup Tribe of Indians: Members of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians contributed invaluable historical knowledge and related documents for inclusion in employee training, ensuring all staff members received accurate information about the history of the Puyallup Tribe.
- o OEHR frequently met with community organizations to share best practices, engage in staff workshops and partner on specific projects. Community organizations included:
  - **Tacoma Art Museum**
  - **Associated Ministries**
  - **Greater Tacoma Community Foundation**
  - **Tacoma Community House**
  - **Center for Dialog and Resolution**
  - **Russell Foundation**

*“Thank you both for taking the time to prepare and present so beautifully to our TAMily, the museum family. You gave us much to consider, to learn about and to reflect upon in our work and our lives. I most appreciated your invitation to keep the conversation going about race. We hope to be in conversation with you and others about that in the future. We have a vision of ourselves as a safe place to discuss difficult things in the exhibitions we choose to present.”*

— **STEPHANIE STEBICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
TACOMA ART MUSEUM**



## **Next Steps**

- Project PEACE youth outreach to be a focus of Project PEACE efforts in 2017
- Continue Welcoming Cities efforts
- Provide staff support to LUSS
- Provide staff support to My Brother’s Keeper and Cities United
- Convene an Immigrant and Refugee Task Force
- Develop a model for community outreach for use in immigrant and refugee communities
- Establish standards for translation of City information

# GOAL 3: EQUITABLE SERVICE DELIVERY TO ALL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

## Overview

Goal 3 ensures all departments have the guidance, education and assistance needed as they develop sustainable methods and build capacity in achieving equitable outcomes and services.

Analyzing city services to identify and eliminate the underlying drivers and barriers to equity is core to the work of the OEHR.

## Accomplishments

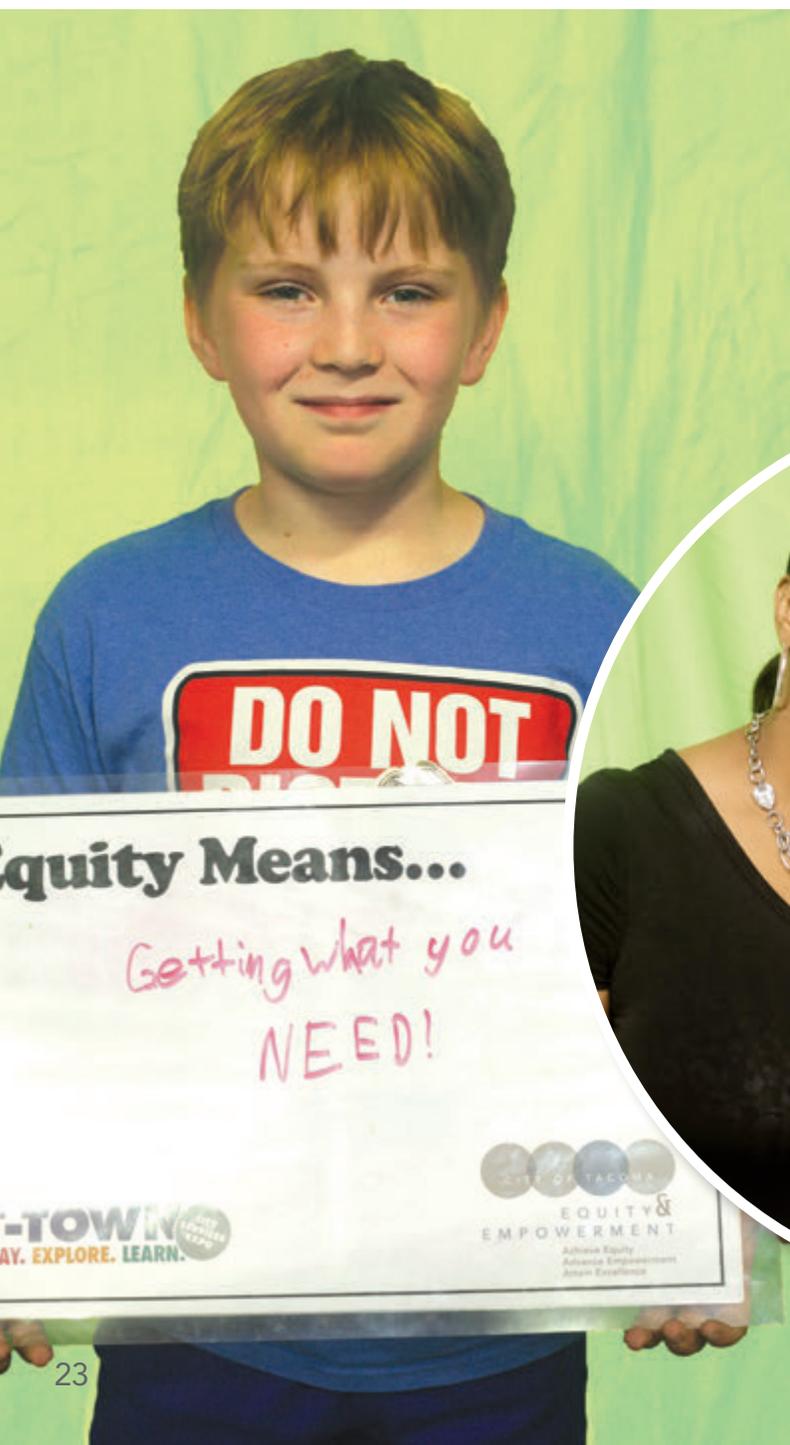
- OEHR established an interdepartmental staff team, based on a best practice recommendation by the cities of Portland and Seattle. Team members participated in training, including Race: The Power of an Illusion, Leading with a Racial Equity Lens, Equity 101 and Culturally Specific Services Contracting. They also play a key role in analyzing and vetting important city processes using an equity lens.
- Designed and delivered training to more than 150 community service providers, Neighborhood and Community Services staff and Human Services commissioners on the importance of and ways to apply an equity lens in all aspects of program development, evaluation, and decision-making.
- Included equity questions in the budget development process, and created opportunities for all departments to analyze the unintended negative impact of budget enhancements and changes on historically underrepresented communities.
- Provided input on a digital equity survey conducted by Information Technology Department, to help ensure the survey questions were culturally relevant.
- Participated in the development of the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan, led by Planning and Development Services.
- Provided funding to nine non-profit organizations through the Equity and Empowerment Capacity Building Fund, which help organizations that serve under-represented populations build their organizational infrastructure to compete in the Human Services application process.



## Next Steps

- Develop and implement an equity analysis toolkit
- Identify and prioritize city services used to apply the racial equity analysis tools
- Work with City departments to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities, review barriers to equity and identify outcomes

- City departments identified a number of major equity initiatives taking place in 2017-2018, including:
  - Small Business Enterprise Contracting Disparity Study
  - Lincoln Business District Revitalization
  - Woodstove Replacement Program
  - Community Relations Staff for Police
  - McCarver Elementary Library Support
  - Summer Jobs 253
  - Equitable Access to Healthy Foods
  - Funding for County Behavioral Health Hospital
  - Fire Cadet Program
  - Human Resources Hiring Disparity Study



# GOAL 4: SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

## Overview

Goal 4 promotes, supports and builds capacity for compliance with civil rights laws, ordinances and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, within the City of Tacoma.

The Human Rights section, which has existed in City government for many years, became part of OEHR when the office was created. It is the section primarily responsible for working with the Human Rights Commission in leading the city's effort to achieve this goal.

The Commission works with the Human Rights section to end discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age (40+), marital status, familial status, honorably discharged veteran or military status, disability, or retaliation. The commission meets monthly to discuss acts of discrimination and assists in ending discriminatory practices in the areas of employment, education, housing, credit, and access to public accommodations. The Commission consists of 15 community representatives appointed by the City Council to serve two-year terms.

The Landlord-Tenant Program is also part of the City's Human Rights Section. Its focus is to improve the quality of life of Tacoma residents by equipping landlords and tenants with the tools needed to sustain safe, healthy, and crime-free communities.



## Accomplishments

In 2016, the Human Rights Unit's accomplishments include the following:

- Completed 37 civil rights violation investigations
- Settled seven civil rights claims, with monetary relief to claimants, in excess of \$24,000
- Completed 977 landlord-tenant intakes
- Led three Crime Free Housing workshops, with 55 participants

## Next Steps:

In 2017, The Human Rights Division will increase its anti-discrimination and outreach activities to help a greater number of residents understand their civil rights under law. In this spirit, the Human Rights Division aspires to increase the annual average of Landlord-Tenant Intakes by nearly 10 percent.



# GOAL 5: COMMITMENT TO EQUITY IN POLICY DECISION MAKING

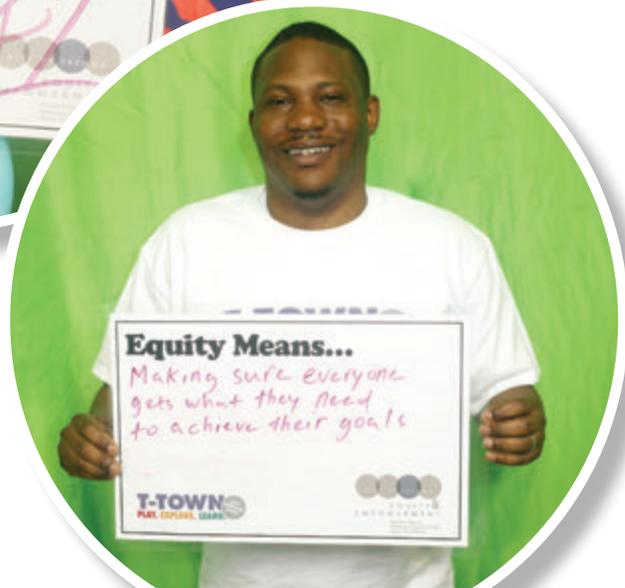
## Overview

Goal 5 makes the commitment to be transparent and collaborative with internal and external individuals and groups, holding ourselves and our partners accountable for measurable improvements and outcomes.

This goal often incorporates accomplishment and plans from the other goals listed in the framework.

## Accomplishments

- Participated in Government Alliance for Race and Equity, a national network of local and state governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.
- Late 2014, Mayor Strickland and Deputy Mayor Woodards accepted President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Challenge on behalf of the City of Tacoma. The challenge was aimed at ensuring all young boys and men of color have the opportunity and necessary skills to succeed.
- Convened an Action Summit of local community organizations to form a coalition charged with developing strategies to accomplish the goals of My Brother's Keeper.
- Convened a second action summit to confirm partnering commitments and finalized a My Brother's Keeper Logic Model that provided a plan for change, including establishing common goals and shared indicators.
- Flip the Script celebrated men of color as valuable, creative and intelligent community members and assets.
- Flip the Script was followed a month later by a report out of My Brother's Keeper, facilitated by OEHR, in which numerous Tacoma educational, social service and outreach agencies and organizations offered a progress report based on their initial 2015 commitments.
- Served on steering committee for Racism and Homelessness initiative, sponsored by Center for Social Innovation.
- Included an equity analysis for funding in the 2017-2018 budget process.
- Joined the National Forum for Black Public Administrators, an organization dedicated to the advancement of black public leadership in local and state governments. Established a local chapter in Tacoma.
- Revised the Guiding Principles to include Equity: We understand and reflect the community we serve. We ensure every community member has services and opportunities that will enable people to satisfy their essential needs and advance their wellbeing.



## Next Steps

- Plan the next forum for My Brother's Keeper partners as the program moves into Phase II.
- Convene community members to form an Immigrant and Refugee Task Force.
- Refine the budget analysis tool to ensure budget decisions reflect the City's priority for equity.

# PLANS FOR 2017-2018

Tacoma 2025, the City of Tacoma's Ten-Year Citywide Strategic Vision, was adopted by the City Council in 2015. Since City Council approved the community vision, a 2025 Advisory Committee reviewed the Strategic Vision document and developed community-wide goal areas to help guide City Departments and community partners to actionable plans.

**The community-wide goals incorporated the values set by the community during the visioning process.**



## Education

Ensure that Tacoma has talented and educated citizens with opportunities for lifelong learning.



## Livability

Ensure high-quality neighborhoods that are thriving and connected throughout the city.



## Economy & Workforce

Ensure a strong economy that provides growth and attracts and retains talent and opportunities.



## Civic Engagement

Ensure meaningful opportunities for community engagement and leadership for all Tacoma citizens



## Equity & Accessibility

Ensure access, availability, and equitable distribution of resources to citizens.



## Government Performance

In addition to the community goals articulated by the vision, it is clear that citizens wanted a government that works for them, one that is efficient, fiscally responsible, and effective.

**OEHR, like all City departments, developed 2025 goals and 2017-2018 biennial goals and performance measures based. The 2017-2018 goals and performance measures will help the City track its progress towards its vision of Tacoma 2025.**

# OEHR 2017-2018 GOALS

1

## **City Staff, Boards, and Commissions are Representative**

To ensure decision-making and community engagement is representative of the community, OEHR will increase participation of under-represented populations serving on committees, boards and commission to 30 percent by 2025.

3

## **Perception of City Government**

To improve the relationship between the City of Tacoma and communities of color, OEHR will increase the percentage of residents who believe Tacoma government welcomes community involvement to 45 percent by 2018 (as measured by the National Citizen Survey).

2

## **Equitable Service Delivery**

To improve equity and accessibility of City services, OEHR will work with City departments and community partners to eliminate identified disproportionate impacts of complaint based City services and reduce the identified disproportionate impacts related to complaint-based service delivery by 2018.

4

## **Enforcement of Anti-Discrimination Laws**

To protect civil rights, OEHR will improve enforcement of anti-discrimination laws in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations by increasing the number of cases investigated and closed to at least 40 per year by 2018.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

We've provided some links and resources in case you want to learn more about the Equity and Empowerment work taking place at the City of Tacoma.

## **OEHR Website**

[https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/equity\\_and\\_human\\_rights](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/equity_and_human_rights)

## **Project Peace Report**

<http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/projectpeace/Project%20PEACE%20Report.pdf>

## **Hiring Handbook**

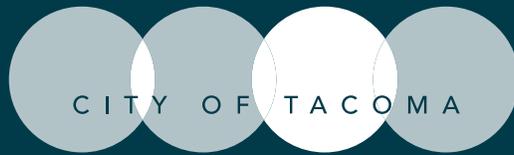
[http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/OEHR/facilitating\\_change/COT\\_Handbook\\_for\\_Recruitment\\_and\\_Hiring\\_October\\_2015.pdf](http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/OEHR/facilitating_change/COT_Handbook_for_Recruitment_and_Hiring_October_2015.pdf)

## **Capacity Building**

[http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/equity\\_and\\_human\\_rights/facilitating\\_change/](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/equity_and_human_rights/facilitating_change/)

## **Government Alliance on Race and Equity**

[www.racialequityalliance.org](http://www.racialequityalliance.org)  
<http://www.racialequityalliance.org>



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