



eleven



ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION + IMPLEMENTATION



ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION + IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

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GOAL AD-1 Engage the interests of the entire community in planning for the future.

GOAL AD-2 Build and sustain robust partnerships with individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, organizations, institutions and other government agencies.

GOAL AD-3 Ensure that city decision-making processes are clear and transparent, with good understanding from the community about who is responsible for making decisions and how community input is taken into account.

GOAL AD-4 Implement Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in accordance with state law and in the best interests of City residents.

GOAL AD-5 Implement Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in a coordinated and efficient manner by City officials, staff and partners.

GOAL AD-6 Maintain Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in order to ensure that it remains relevant and is consistent with current regulatory and policy frameworks.

ELEVEN

ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION + IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT IS THIS CHAPTER ABOUT?

The goals and policies in this chapter convey the City's intent to:

- Conduct engagement efforts that increase the community's meaningful participation in decisions that shape Tacoma's future.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for involvement in planning for the future, including seeking feedback in non-traditional spaces and through innovative mediums.
- Provide transparent and thoughtful public processes in planning for the future that are respectful of people's right to know and be heard.
- Achieve greater equity in decision-making by intentionally engaging across the different demographic, racial, cultural and economic spectrums that make up our community.
- Build trust and fostering positive relationships between citizens and the City.
- Leverage existing opportunities to engage with residents, such as community events and meetings of appointed citizen advisory groups, such as the Planning Commission, Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Transportation Commission.
- Coordinate among City departments and with partner agencies to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- Update the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that it remains relevant and is consistent with current regulatory and policy frameworks.
- Allocate appropriate funding resources for public engagement and Comprehensive Plan implementation.

Book I: Goals + Policies

- 1 Introduction + Vision
- 2 Urban Form
- 3 Design + Development
- 4 Environment + Watershed Health
- 5 Housing
- 6 Economic Development
- 7 Transportation
- 8 Parks + Recreation
- 9 Public Facilities + Services
- 10 Container Port
- 11 Engagement, Administration + Implementation
- 12 Downtown

Book II: Implementation Programs + Strategies

- 1 Shoreline Master Program
- 2 Capital Facilities Program
- 3 Downtown Regional Growth Center Plans
- 4 Historic Preservation Plan

EQUALITY:

a measure of equal treatment.

EQUITY:

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

*“Public engagement is a process through which **COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE EMPOWERED** to own the change they want to see and involves communication, problem-solving, governance and decision-making skills and strategies.”*

Policy Link’s Community Engagement Guide for Sustainable Communities

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Decisions are better—more equitable, resilient, and accountable—when all interested parties are involved in considering the issues and weighing in on decisions. Collaborative and inclusive community participation are essential to supporting Tacoma’s core values of opportunity, equity, partnerships and accountability, as well to as creating and sustaining a prosperous, healthy and equitable Tacoma.

In order to consider all community members’ needs and concerns, particular efforts must be made to improve communication with traditionally under-represented and under-served groups, including low-income communities and communities of color. Meaningful engagement is inclusive of voices in our community that may have been historically marginalized and excluded. Consistent with the City’s core values and vision for government performance, deep and inclusive community involvement is essential to transparency and equity in long-range planning decisions. It also makes it possible to create and work towards a shared vision for the future.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION + ADMINISTRATION

The Comprehensive Plan anticipates land use and significant capital project investment needs for the next 25 years. It is generalized so that it can apply to variety of circumstances and provide flexibility in implementation. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that Comprehensive Plan will remain relevant for 25 years without amendments and revisions to reflect changing conditions and community needs. This chapter provides guidance on how to implement and amend the Plan.

GOALS + POLICIES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Inclusive + Equitable Community Engagement

Tacoma is committed to authentic public engagement and recognizes that the complexity and changing character of planning issues, technology and the city itself requires thoughtful innovation to ensure inclusive and equitable community engagement. Increasingly diverse demographics, as well as past failures to fully engage all members of the community, point to the need for new approaches to citizen engagement that promote inclusive participation. Changes in communication technology allow, and even require, the city to offer new avenues for engagement, and hopefully, collaboration. Finally, the city's natural and built character and infrastructure are constantly evolving and continually require citizen input. The following policies challenge City staff to assess current practices and develop new tools through an ongoing evaluation and improvement of public engagement methods.

The city's commitment to diverse and inclusive public engagement is demonstrated by the Equity and Empowerment Initiative framework, which was adopted by City Council in September 2015. The framework has been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan (see Figure 42 on the next page) and the following goals and policies are designed to be consistent with the framework.

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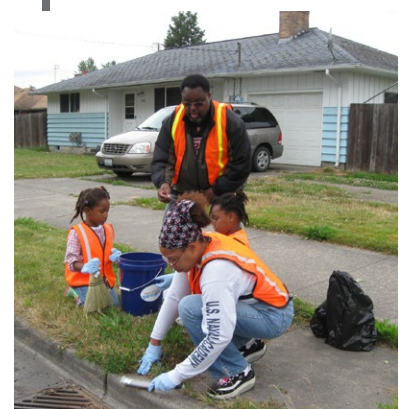
GOAL AD-1 Engage the interests of the entire community in planning for the future.

Policy AD-1.1 Create, maintain and actively implement a community involvement program manual that details how to conduct inclusive and equitable community involvement.

Policy AD-1.2 Ensure that community engagement opportunities are broadly accessible and incorporate a range of locations, times and formats, including accommodations that allow people with disabilities, people with childcare responsibilities, and people with first languages other than English to fully participate.



Residents celebrate 13 new miles of bike lanes and pedestrian improvements



Volunteers attach "No Dumping, Drains to Puget Sound" markers next to storm drains



"Talking the Walk" public meeting in District 4



FIGURE 42. Equity + Empowerment Initiative Framework

Policy AD–1.3 Provide broad and timely notification of public meetings and events through a variety of methods, including social media.

Policy AD–1.4 Collaborate with communities to design culturally appropriate processes to meet the needs of traditionally under-served and under-represented groups.

Policy AD–1.5 Develop and implement innovative methods, tools, and technologies for community involvement processes, as well as reaching out to our community partners to learn what has worked for them.

Policy AD–1.6 Where they are effective at enhancing awareness and understanding, use new and emerging technologies, as well as social media, to promote engagement.

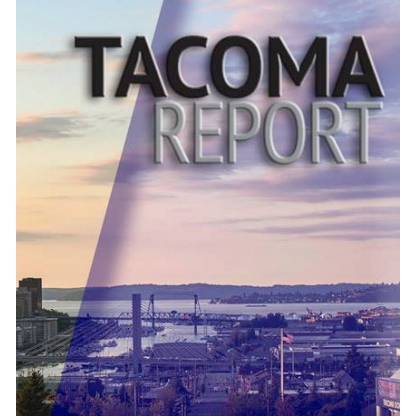
Policy AD–1.7 Collect data on participant demographics in order to assess whether the City is successfully engaging all members of the community in its engagement efforts.

Policy AD–1.8 Evaluate community involvement processes on a regular basis, considering available data, feedback and lessons learned to determine whether any changes are needed to City practices in order to enhance future involvement efforts.

Policy AD–1.9 Utilize community members' knowledge and input on policy priorities to update the Comprehensive Plan and ensure that it remains relevant and consistent with community needs.

Partnerships

By building and maintaining partnerships with individuals and organizations that represent a wide variety of interests, the City gains a better understanding of diverse needs and concerns and the community as a whole benefits from more equitable decision-making. The following goal and policies support building and maintaining strong and supportive relationships with the many individuals and organizations that represent the diverse interests in Tacoma.



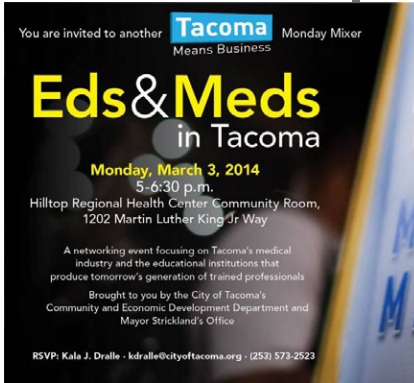
TV Tacoma



City's Instagram account



Announcement flyer
for Puget Sound
Starts Here month



Mayor Strickland addresses local students chosen for they City's youth summer job program (left)

Announcement for one of the City's Monday Mixer networking events (above)



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GOAL AD-2 Build and sustain robust partnerships with individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, organizations, institutions and other government agencies.

Policy AD-2.1 Maintain partnerships and engagement with:

- a. Individual community members
- b. Historically under-served and under-represented communities, including low-income communities and communities of color
- c. Neighborhood and business associations, including groups without formal affiliations
- d. Businesses, unions, employees and related organizations
- e. Interest and affinity organizations and groups
- f. Institutions, governments, and tribal sovereign nations

Policy AD-2.2 Work with neighborhood associations and business districts to better reflect demographic diversity and diverse interests within the areas they represent.

DIVERSITY:
the range of human differences that include the primary or internal dimension such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability and sexual orientation; and the secondary or external dimension such as thought styles, religion, nationality, socio-economic status, belief systems, military experience and education.

Source: Boston College



Transparency + Accountability

Consistent with Tacoma’s core values, the city is committed to transparency in community involvement processes. When community members have a good understanding of a process, they are better able to participate effectively. Improved transparency and communication allows the city to better understand community opinions and needs.

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GOAL AD-3 Ensure that city decision-making processes are clear and transparent, with good understanding from the community about who is responsible for making decisions and how community input is taken into account.

Policy AD-3.1 Establish and communicate clear roles, rights, responsibilities and timeframes for participants and decision-makers.

Nearly 400 residents attended a 2012 Korean Women’s Association meeting on the City’s budget process—the association arranged for on-the-spot Cambodian, Vietnamese, Korean and English translation of the presentation and audience comments

A **PLAT** is the subdivision of land into individual lots.

ZONING regulates where and what kind of uses can be developed, as well as standards for building development.

SHORELINE regulations protect the shoreline area and describe what can be developed within designated shoreline areas.

CRITICAL AREAS regulations protect fish and wildlife habitat areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, wetlands, streams, and areas that drain to aquifers used for drinking water.

Policy AD–3.2 At each stage of the planning process, identify what topics can be influenced or changed through community input, and what ones are being guided by established regulations or policies.

Policy AD–3.3 Following decisions, communicate to participants in a timely fashion about the issues raised in the community involvement process, how public input affected outcomes, and the rationale used in making decisions.

Policy AD–3.4 Communicate to participants how decisions can be challenged and, if a decision is outside of City control, explain how citizens can engage with the jurisdiction or agency that makes the final decision.

IMPLEMENTATION

How is the Plan Implemented?

City officials, staff and citizens are responsible for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Tacoma’s blueprint for the future. It helps to focus, coordinate and direct City actions by providing a comprehensive and common vision. It guides decisions concerning land use regulations, programs, capital improvements and functional plans.

Land Use Regulations

Land use regulations are laws that establish what can or can’t be built in a given location. The key regulatory mechanism that implements the Comprehensive Plan is Tacoma’s Land Use Regulatory Code. This code contains the development regulations that govern the manner by which land is used, developed, or redeveloped in the City. This code is found in Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code and includes regulations for platting, zoning, shorelines and critical areas.

Programs

City programs must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In fact, most City programs are tools for implementing the Plan. Examples include City programs for community services, economic development, health and human services and environmental stewardship.

Capital Improvements

All capital improvements undertaken by the City must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including those for public facilities and services. This ensures that the City provides adequate public services and that the City's infrastructure supports the land use pattern envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.

Functional Plans

Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services in the City. Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan provides overarching guidance for the City's many other plans, including the *Economic Development Strategic Framework*, *Human Services Strategic Plan*, *Environmental Action Plan*, *Artfull Tacoma Plan*, *Urban Forest Manual*, *Surface Water Manual*, *Public Works Design Manual*, and Tacoma Public Utilities system plans. These plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. As such, implementation of functional plans supports implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Some functional plans, such as the *Shoreline Master Program* and *Capital Facilities Program* are also formal elements of the Comprehensive Plan and subject to the rules and procedures governing that Plan.

The plans of non-City entities that provide services in the City should also be coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan. Such plans include the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) *Healthy Community Strategy*, *Tacoma School District's Strategic Plan*, *Metro Parks' Green Vision 2030*, TPCHD's *Community Health Improvement Plan* and *Pierce Transit's Destination 2040*.

Subarea Plans

The Comprehensive Plan provides citywide guidance future land use, transportation and other infrastructure needs. For smaller geographic areas, subarea planning allows for a more detailed consideration of specific goals, needs and interests within a specified area. The adoption and incorporation of subarea plans into the Comprehensive Plan adds greater detail, guidance and predictability to future development. Recent examples of subarea planning in Tacoma includes the South Downtown, Hilltop, and North Downtown subarea plans. Future subarea planning in the City's mixed-use centers would help focus priorities and actions needed to achieve the future vision for each of these areas.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS are the built facilities that help the city function, such as roads, bridges, parks, schools and other similar facilities. Public facilities and services include: electricity, fire, libraries, parks, police, solid waste, stormwater, telecommunications, transportation, wastewater and water.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN is an example of a functional plan that implements the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The EAP provides a list of high-priority actions that the City of Tacoma will take between 2016 and 2020. It provides a reporting system for tracking progress towards environmental goals and serves as a management tool for the City administration but also as a communication tool for the broader Tacoma community.

ARTFULL TACOMA is a 5-year strategic plan to sustain and grow a thriving, vibrant arts and cultural scene in Tacoma.



*Tacoma LINK
light rail*

City + Partner Relationships

The City Council plays a key role in Plan implementation by adopting the City's budget, levying taxes, and making appropriations for programs and services. The City Council considers amendments to land use regulations and planning policies recommended by the Planning Commission and also considers actions to support the Comprehensive Plan that are recommended by other citizen advisory groups and the community at large.

The City's Planning and Development Services Department is responsible for many actions that help to implement the Comprehensive Plan, such as enforcing land use regulations and developing and maintaining functional plans such as subarea plans and the Shoreline Master Program. Other City Departments that maintain functional plans that support the Comprehensive Plan include Community and Economic Development, Environmental Services, Neighborhood and Community Services, Office of Management and Budget, and Public Works. Effective coordination between departments is needed to ensure that these different functional plans are consistent with each other.



Tacoma Planning Commission hearing on digital billboards

The Planning Commission is a group of nine volunteer citizens who are appointed by the City Council to advise them on a range of issues related to land use and development. Five of the Planning Commission members represent the City Council districts and the other four represent the development, environmental, public transportation and urban design communities.

All Planning Commission meetings are open to the public. Meeting times, agendas and minutes are available on the City's website.

Coordination between the City and partners such as other local governments, regional organizations, the business community and community organizations is also key to successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is the responsibility of the City and partners to share information and work to ensure that planning efforts are mutually supportive. For example, the City's plans should feed into Sound Transit's plans for expanding light rail in Tacoma, and vice versa. The same is true for Metro Park's Tacoma's plans for maintaining and expanding the parks and recreation system, for the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's plans for improving health outcomes in the community, and the Tacoma School District's long term plans for school service. Citizens can participate in partner planning efforts to help ensure that they are supportive of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Implementation

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GOAL AD-4 Implement Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in accordance with state law and in the best interests of City residents.

Policy AD-4.1 Develop and document a strategy for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, including a proposed schedule and priorities on a 6-year basis and in consultation with the public, the Planning Commission and the City Council. High priority project to be considered include:

TABLE 26. Relationship Between Elements + Implementation Priorities

ELEMENT	CORRESPONDING IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES
Urban Form	Zoning and Development Regulation Updates Explore financial incentives and tools that could be effectively utilized to stimulate private investment in the mixed-use centers
Design + Development	Develop a design manual and an approach to conducting design review for public projects and development citywide, but with an emphasis on designated mixed-use centers
Environment + Watershed Health	Develop an Environmental Action Plan Conduct a Climate Risk Assessment Conduct a watershed assessment to prioritize wastewater and stormwater projects/programs Update development regulations for steep slopes and geologically hazardous areas, and site development standards for Open Space Corridors
Housing	Evaluate the City’s bonus programs, prioritize incentives, and focus objectives
Economic Development	Complete the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan Conduct a subarea planning effort for the Port of Tacoma Manufacturing and Industrial Center Periodically review and update the City’s Economic Development Framework and Strategy
Transportation Master Plan	Explore development of a transportation impact fee Conduct modal conflict and corridor design studies Identify and evaluate street system missing links
Parks + Recreation	Develop a strategy for addressing any current deficiencies in levels of service and identify opportunities to provide new park and recreation opportunities within designated Mixed-Use Centers
Public Facilities + Services	Update the Capital Facilities Program and level of service standards Explore funding for joint planning for the City’s Urban Growth Areas with Pierce County and adjacent jurisdictions Evaluate and implement appropriate recommendations from the JLUS for airport compatibility
Engagement, Administration + Implementation	Perform an opportunity and equity analysis

Policy AD–4.2 Ensure that City development regulations, programs, budgets and functional plans are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy AD–4.3 Ensure that proposed regulatory or administrative actions do not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property.

Coordination

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GOAL AD–5 Implement Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in a coordinated and efficient manner by City officials, staff and partners.

Policy AD–5.1 Engage in regular interdepartmental communications to share information about City functional plans and to ensure that they are consistent with one another.

Policy AD–5.2 Collaborate with City partners to address local and regional policy issues and to ensure that planning efforts are mutually supportive. City partners include city, county, state, federal and tribal governments; regional entities; the private sector; non-profit organizations; research institutions and community groups.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

The Comprehensive Plan is a dynamic document. It provides predictability for citizens, developers and policy makers about the City’s long-term strategy for the future. At the same time, the goals and policies in the Plan are designed to be flexible enough to respond to changing conditions. Also, the Plan is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that it addresses changing conditions in the City, new information and current state and regional policy guidance. The Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing the plan and recommending amendments as necessary.

Amendments can include modifications to policies, the addition of new policies, or the deletion of policies. They can also involve the addition of new Plan elements. As required by the Washington State Growth Management Act, a municipality’s Comprehensive Plan generally can be modified only once annually; however there are a few exceptions as outlined in Tacoma Municipal Code 13.02.045. Proposed amendments are reviewed simultaneously so that the cumulative effect of all amendments

can be considered. Both the Planning Commission and the City Council hold public hearings on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing is an opportunity for the public to speak in support, opposition or for amendments; they are often held on the same day as the City Council or Planning Commission meetings.

Annual Amendments

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan can be initiated by individual citizens, neighborhood groups, Neighborhood Councils, the Planning Commission, the City Council or City staff. If an individual or neighborhood group wants to initiative a change to the Comprehensive Plan, they would submit an application to the Planning and Development Services Department. Application materials are typically available mid-summer for the upcoming amendment cycle. Information and application materials can be found on the City's Planning Services webpage and by calling the Planning Services Division and talking with a planner.

Staff initiated amendments usually involve responding to State or federal laws, including changes to these laws, addressing deficiencies and inconsistencies, updating information, responding to a change in existing conditions or community desires, or addressing a combination of these factors.

8-Year Plan Revision Cycle

In addition to yearly amendments, RCW 36.70.A.130 requires that the City revise its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations every eight years. The revision process includes updating the plan to reflect current growth targets, policy requirements, information and conditions in the community. The revision process provides the opportunity to conduct a more extensive update to the Plan than happens during the yearly amendment process. As with yearly Plan amendments, citizen involvement is an important aspect of the revision process. The next scheduled Comprehensive Plan revision is in 2023.

Amendments

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GOAL AD-6 Maintain Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan in order to ensure that it remains relevant and is consistent with current regulatory and policy frameworks.

Policy AD-6.1 Maintain the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that current community conditions, information, and regional, state and federal policies and regulation are reflected in the Plan.

Policy AD-6.2 Consider proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments concurrently so that the cumulative effect of the proposals can be determined. Similarly, where the City is evaluating an area-wide rezone to implement the Future Land Use Map land use designations, site specific rezones within the study area should primarily be evaluated as part of the area-wide proposal.

Policy AD-6.3 All proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments should include adequate information upon which to base a decision, such as a description of the proposed amendment, statement of need, description of how the proposed amendment enhances the community, demonstration of consistency with the current Comprehensive Plan, community outreach conducted, and response to public review and comment on the proposed change.

Policy AD-6.4 Ensure proposed Comprehensive Plan policy amendments are accompanied by any related and required implementation actions.

