

Environmental Services

Strategic Plan 2013-2018



Message from the Director

I am pleased to present and share the Environmental Services Strategic Plan with you. By identifying where we want to go and how we are going to get there, this plan serves as the guidance document for the Environmental Services Department. The intent of the Strategic Plan is to:

- Establish direction
- Enhance customer service
- Increase accountability
- Aid decision-making
- Document levels of service
- Recognize improvements

The Strategic Plan emphasizes our vision, mission, and values, as well as our goals and objectives while addressing the increasingly complex environmental issues that our City encounters. Moreover, the plan is designed for alignment with the strategic direction of the City Council and the goals of the City Manager.



Environmental Services incorporates four divisions represented by a diverse work force which manages the City's waste streams through three utilities: surface water, wastewater, and solid waste. Divisions will create implementation plans that are strategically aligned and support the goals and objectives of the Department's Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan will guide our thoughts, decisions, and actions as we move forward with our commitment to meet the needs of our customers with efficiency and effectiveness in a sustainable manner.

Michael P. Slevin III, P.E.
City of Tacoma
Environmental Services

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Vision, Mission, and Values

The vision, mission, and values of the Environmental Services Department outline our commitment to service and to enhancing the quality of life of our ratepayers. The vision is where the leadership wants our department to be, the mission is the fundamental purpose of the department, and the values establish what we believe as a department and what our customers should expect from us.

VISION

We are national leaders that operate fiscally sound utilities, reducing our environmental footprint for the benefit of our community and future generations.

MISSION

We provide sustainable and cost-effective management services to protect the environment, recover value from Tacoma's waste streams, and enhance the quality of life for the citizens and ratepayers.

VALUES

Safety · Integrity · Service · Excellence · Sustainability · Innovation



Goals & Objectives

Goals and objectives clarify long-range strategic priorities and focus on the managerial and organizational needs of the department to perform its mission in the future.

The Environment

Goal: Improve environmental stewardship and sustainability

Objective: Meet or exceed environmental regulations to protect the well-being of our community

Objective: Reduce CO₂ emissions to preserve environmental quality for future generations

Objective: Optimize the environmental benefit recovered from Tacoma's waste streams ensuring long-term health for our community



Customer Service

Goal: Deliver superior customer service

Objective: Grow customer satisfaction through friendly, timely responses, and easy access to pertinent information

Objective: Enhance transparency through productive communication with the City Council, Environmental Services Commission, Sustainable Tacoma Commission, Neighborhood Councils, City Departments, the Infrastructure, Planning, & Sustainability Committee, and employees

Financial Management

Goal: Effectively manage the financial investment of the ratepayer

Objective: Plan for revenue and rate stability while ensuring fairness and affordability to ratepayers

Objective: Meet our annual budget targets, debt coverage ratios, and fund balance requirements

Objective: Communicate the value of this financial investment to the ratepayer

Effective Operations

Goal: Enhance the effectiveness of our operations

Objective: Achieve and maintain International Standards Organization (ISO) 14001 Environmental & Sustainability Management System Certification, and American Public Works Association (APWA) Accreditation

Objective: Set clear expectations for employees on how their jobs fit into the larger strategic plan

Objective: Continuously evaluate and improve business processes and operational efficiencies

Objective: Promote the development of sound, stable, and equitable employee-management relations

Our Employees

Goal: Develop and invest in our most valuable asset, our employees

Objective: Create a safe environment for our employees to excel

Objective: Foster an organization of open and direct communication

Objective: Offer pertinent opportunities for participation in trainings and associations that enable employees to be nationally recognized leaders

Capital Projects

Goal: Provide state-of-the-art capital project planning and delivery

Objective: Employ comprehensive asset management system principles to drive the capital program

Objective: Ensure capital project delivery is managed in a cost-effective manner

Objective: Promote minimum life cycle costs in capital project planning and financing



Our Organization Today

The Environmental Services Departments aims to fulfill its goals and objectives to carry out the mission of the organization. Though there are three distinct utilities, we believe that a synergy is created through cross-functional approaches which maximize our ability to be a high performing organization.



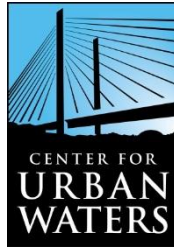
Examples of cross-functional efforts include using new technology to turn roofing shingles into recycled asphalt products which can be used in Tacoma roads, and integrating practices and procedures throughout the department that result in an environmental management system based on ISO 14001 standards.

The Department combines this integrated approach with consideration of external factors and collaboration with other departments in the City and stakeholders, such as the City Council, the Environmental Services Commission, citizens, and ratepayers to leverage the greatest improvements in quality of life for our community.

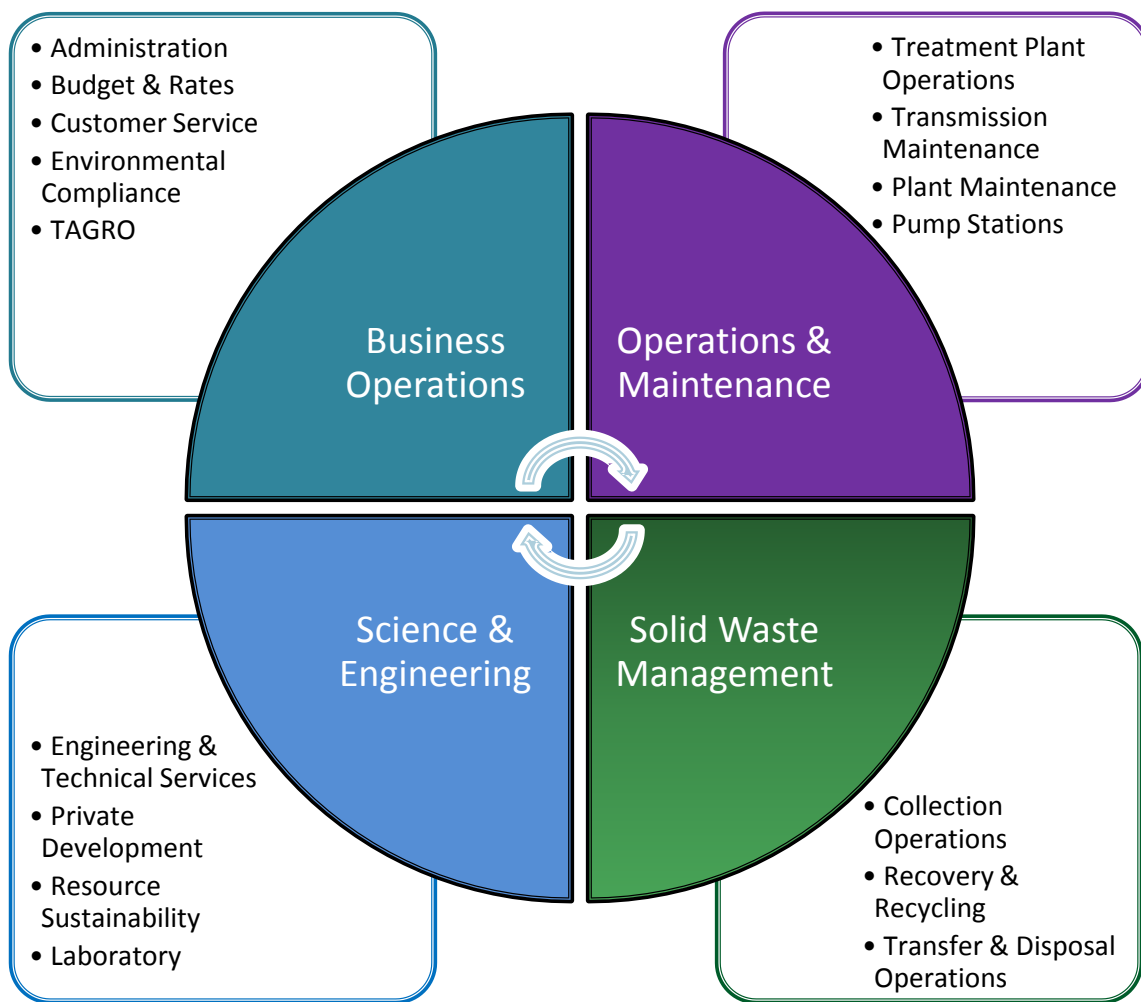


These cooperative efforts have led to numerous award-winning programs and projects, such as TAGRO gardening and landscaping products, the EnviroChallenger education

program, the Make a Splash stormwater grant program, the Recovery & Transfer Center to increase waste diversion, and the Center for Urban Waters to restore and protect urban waterways.



The Department is structured to facilitate cross-functional approaches and create synergies with four divisions: Business Operations, Operations & Maintenance, Solid Waste Management, and Science & Engineering. This matrix system of three utilities and four divisions is intended to encourage coordination, communication, and teamwork to allow for increased efficiencies in achieving organizational goals and objectives.



Our Organization Tomorrow

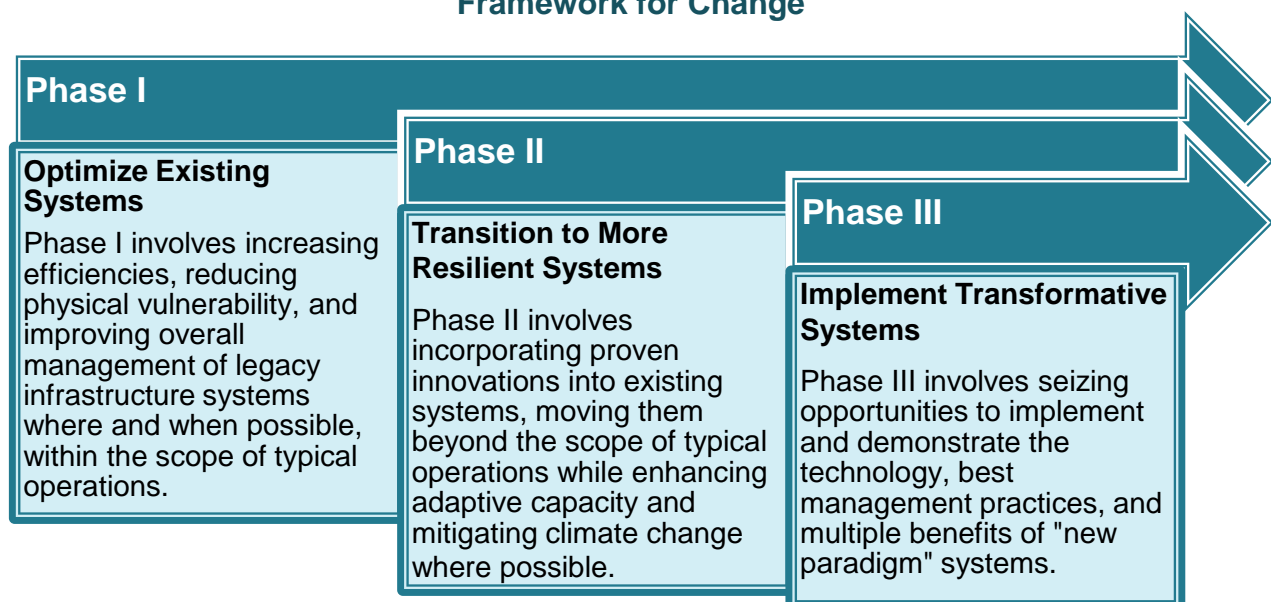
The current cross-functional approach and matrix structure of the Environmental Services Department is part of the groundwork for change to create a utility of the future. As conditions change, utilities must navigate a transition to a new paradigm in which sustainability and innovation become core values through the integration of resources. The utility of the future would be designed according to key principles – principles which are inherently connected to our goals and objectives – focused on achieving unprecedented levels of sustainability and innovation.

Principles of the Utility of the Future: The utility of the future will provide wastewater treatment, surface water management, and solid waste management services in an integrated way that optimizes the use of all resources and eliminates waste. Key principles include the following:

- Apply systems thinking and financial, social, and environmental analysis to all management decisions, including design, construction, operations, and maintenance.
- Do no harm, and go beyond compliance.
- Include success measures based on environmental, climate, and other nonfinancial performance criteria.
- Right-size facilities and operations for the customer base, and allow for future flexibility.
- Leverage diverse sources of financing.
- Engage customers as resource management partners.

The Environmental Services Department will continue to evolve into a utility of the future through a framework of change that reflects our values, aligns with our goals and objectives, and supports our mission and vision.

Framework for Change



The phases in the framework reflect that change occurs incrementally but not always linearly. There are opportunities in each phase, from optimizing existing systems to implementing new, transformative systems, to cumulatively build synergy in striving for a mission and vision that is shared by each utility in the department. These steps will prepare for a new paradigm where the department maximizes integration between wastewater, surface water, and solid waste management services.

Examples of Opportunities in the Framework for Change

PHASE 3

Fully Transform Systems

Example: Transition organizational culture, functions, and strategies from garbage collection to material handling to repurpose resources in a sustainable system; implement Low Impact Development as a sustainable surface water management strategy for resource protection through holistic design approaches.



PHASE 2

Transition to More Resilient Systems

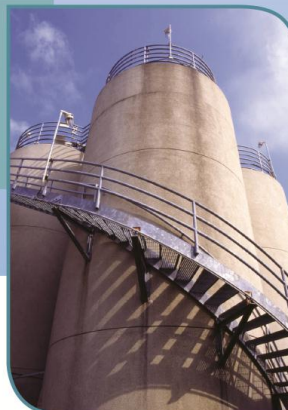
Example: Harvest methane-rich biogas from anaerobic digesters at the wastewater treatment plant to displace the higher costs and carbon footprint of diesel fuels used in Solid Waste fleet.



PHASE 1

Optimize Legacy Systems

Example: Utilize energy audits of the wastewater treatment plant to identify and implement operational opportunities to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption through High Performance Energy Management.



Alignment with the City

The vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives of the Environmental Services Department are aligned with the strategic direction of the City of Tacoma via process and structure. As the department fulfills its mission and implements its vision, it supports and furthers the mission, vision, and policy priorities of the City of Tacoma.

2013-14 City Council Strategic Direction

Mission

We provide high-quality, innovative, and cost-effective municipal services that enhance the lives of our citizens and the quality of our neighborhoods and business districts

Vision

Tacoma is an attractive and progressive international city, regarded for the richness of its diverse population and its natural setting

Guiding Principles

Service · Integrity · Accountability · Respect · Stewardship · Innovation · Teamwork

Strategic Goals

- A safe, clean, and attractive community
- A diverse, productive, and sustainable economy
- A high-performing, open, and engaged government

Strategic Policy Priorities

1. Strengthen and maintain a **Strong Fiscal Management** position.
2. Strengthen and support **Human Services, Public Education, and Diverse Higher Learning** opportunities in Tacoma.
3. Foster **Neighborhood, Community, and Economic Development Vitality and Sustainability**.
4. Plan for and improve **Public Infrastructure** that meets the **Transportation** needs of all Tacoma residents and visitors.
5. Encourage and promote an **Open, Effective, Results-oriented Organization**.



Where We Go From Here

The Environmental Services Strategic Plan will be the basis and foundation for the development of implementation plans by the divisions. While the goals and objectives listed in this plan are high-level and broad in nature, the implementation plans will provide specific and measurable objectives for the department to meet its goals.

Based on the Strategic Plan and the implementation plans, the department’s leadership will conduct regular performance monitoring to track progress toward goals. These performance measures will be used in compiling an Environmental Services Annual Report to provide updates on where we are and our progress on where we are going. Specific elements of these endeavors will tie into the City’s overall performance reporting in coordination with the Office of Management & Budget to increase citizen access to information about the effectiveness of City programs.

The Environmental Services Strategic Plan will be updated with a formal review every two years, in conjunction with the rate planning timeline, to reinforce our strategic direction and ensure alignment with the priorities of the City of Tacoma.

