

WASTEWATER
BETTER
TACOMA
PUBLIC
WORLD
HELP
PEOPLE
LIVABLE
CLEAN
PROTECT
CITY
FISH
SUSTAINABLE
PROUD
ENVIRONMENT
MAINTAIN
IMPROVE
SAFETY
POLLUTION
PRESERVE
REGULATE
FUN
CARE
ECOSYSTEM
BEAUTIFUL
DISEASE
CITIZENS
HEALTH

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2025



SURFACE WATER SOLID WASTE WASTEWATER
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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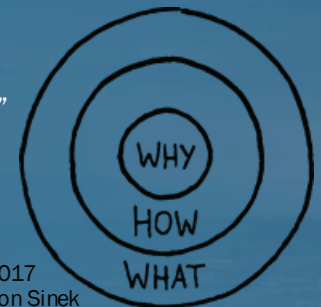
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Introduction from your Strategic Planning Team

This Environmental Services Strategic Plan will serve as our agenda and guide decisions for our department through 2025. We believe that every employee, working together each day on the common direction established in this plan, can help further our efforts to support healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound in our great Tacoma community.

Throughout the development of the strategic plan, we strived to be transparent through open communication and involving hundreds of employees and many stakeholders. Due to the extensive cross-divisional participation, this is truly a department-wide plan that belongs to all of us. It also aligns us with the goals of Tacoma's strategic plan – Tacoma 2025 – as well as the Equity & Empowerment Framework of the City.

During the planning process we utilized concepts from Simon Sinek's *The Golden Circle* – the idea that truly inspiring organizations first define “WHY” they exist before describing “WHAT” services they provide. In this plan you will find a WHY statement which describes our purpose, HOW statements that demonstrate how we will uniquely fulfill our WHY statement, and WHAT statements that outline what we plan to accomplish.



Moving forward we are dedicated to continuing our efforts toward transparency and open communication with meaningful contributions from all levels of the organization. We are excited to work together as a department to implement this plan as we support healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound, leaving a better Tacoma for all.

Think Big!

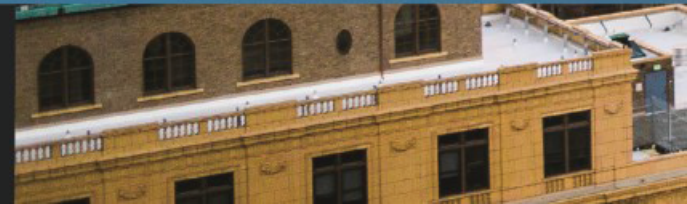


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Environmental Services Department

We believe everything we do supports
healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound,
leaving a better Tacoma for all

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS
+
THRIVING PUGET SOUND
=
A BETTER TACOMA

Start with WHY

*This WHY statement defines our contribution:
“healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound”, and
the impact we want to have: “a better Tacoma for all”*

How we achieve our WHY

These three HOW statements represent the core values of the Environmental Services Department and our clear focus on: Customers, Employees and Operations



Customers

Partner with our community on customer-valued services to meet the diverse needs of our neighborhoods



Employees

Foster a safe culture built on trust, conversation and equity



Operations

Operate using best practices and innovation to meet changing environmental and community needs

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

WHY

This is a promise of our commitment to the City of Tacoma. It captures our purpose, and defines why we exist as a department.

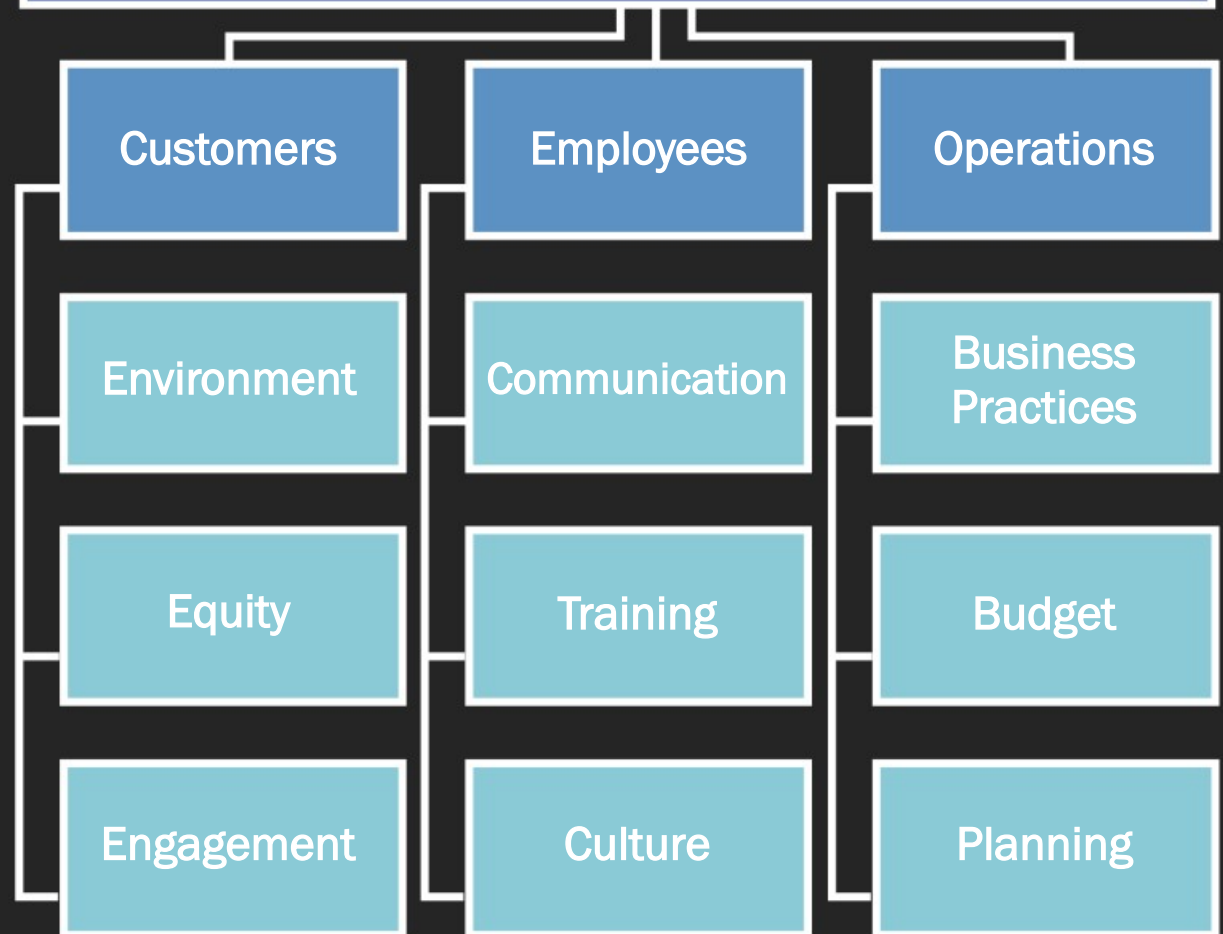
HOW

Three statements focused on our Customers, Employees, and Operations that demonstrate how we will uniquely fulfill our WHY statement.

WHAT

Each of the WHAT statements is a strategic focus area that supports the HOW statements and outlines what we plan to accomplish.

Healthy Neighborhoods + Thriving Puget Sound = A Better Tacoma



HOW

CUSTOMERS

Partner with our community on customer-valued services to meet the diverse needs of our neighborhoods

WHAT

Environment

Define our role in planning for a greener Tacoma with attractive neighborhoods and clean waterways

WHAT

Equity

Evaluate and improve services to ensure they are equitable

WHAT

Engagement

Increase environmental stewardship through community engagement

HOW EMPLOYEES

Foster a safe culture built on trust, conversation and equity



WHAT

Communication

Increase accessibility and ensure accuracy of information sharing throughout the department

WHAT

Training

Develop skilled employees and industry leaders

WHAT

Culture

Grow a culture of compassion and respect that embraces teamwork and continuous improvement

HOW OPERATIONS

Operate using best practices and innovation to meet changing environmental and community needs



WHAT Business Practices

Optimize business and operational practices through continuous improvement

WHAT Budget

Provide a broader understanding of the budget and how staff at all levels impact our financial well-being

WHAT Planning

Coordinate Environmental Services planning to align with stakeholder efforts

In 2013, Environmental Services became a new department and implemented its first strategic plan. The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan was developed in the Director's office with the goal of communicating the Director's vision for Environmental Services staff. In 2017, the Director identified twelve representatives representing each division to develop the 2018-2025 Strategic Plan. This team completed extensive research, listened to feedback from stakeholders and employees, and worked collaboratively to develop the plan and set the direction for our department.

The team started by researching industry trends that other cities and utilities are anticipating across the country. From this, the team prioritized major influences that the department will face in the future, such as advancements in technology, environmental challenges, changing customer expectations, and changes in our workforce.

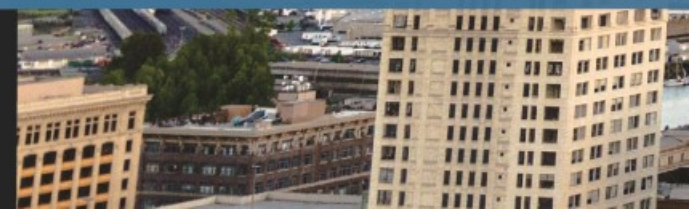
The City's 2025 Strategic Plan, the Environmental Action Plan, and the Equity & Empowerment Framework were also evaluated to ensure Environmental Services is in alignment with and supports these efforts.

Lastly, the team reviewed customer surveys, employee surveys, the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, and supporting division implementation plans.



Department Outreach began at the Public Works Week barbeque where the team started with WHY. Over 250 people were asked “Why does Environmental Services exist?” This information was put into a word cloud that clearly demonstrates our department’s commitment to serving Tacoma and protecting our environment.

The next step was to dig deeper through conversation with employees about our purpose, our future, and our priorities. To accomplish this, the team hosted employee workshops with over 200 participants and conducted an employee survey that gathered contributions from over 300 of our co-workers.



Stakeholder Outreach was completed to provide a clearer understanding of the future vision for Tacoma's environment, discuss our department strengths and weaknesses, and identify opportunities to collaborate and better serve our customers. The team interviewed other City department directors and leadership teams, as well as key stakeholders such as Tacoma Public Schools, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Sustainable Tacoma Commission, Neighborhood Councils, and the City Council.

The Environmental Services Commission was a valuable resource to the Strategic Planning efforts. Through two workshops they provided guidance and were an important connection to our external customers. Their insight was captured in this SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

One of the biggest takeaways from the stakeholder outreach was the overwhelming belief that the Environmental Services Department is all things environmental, not just the Solid Waste, Surface Water, and Wastewater Utilities. This belief and many other insights or concerns voiced by stakeholders are incorporated throughout the plan.

Development

During the development of this plan, approximately 120 priorities were identified through the research and outreach efforts. These priorities were then distilled down into nine focus areas. An invitation was extended to the entire department to participate in Focus Groups and over 100 employees and stakeholders stepped forward to help shape the future of the department. These Focus Groups helped to further develop the WHAT statements and the initiatives that will support them.

Strengths

- Recover value from waste streams
- Future is greener & better
- Facilities (WWTP, Transfer Center)
- National leaders
- Strong neighborhood identity

Weaknesses

- Communication
- Citizens don't know where their waste goes
- Lack of open space, trees & green areas
- Internal coordination
- Service to minorities, low income, and multi-family

Opportunities

- Educate about impact on Environment
- Air quality
- Partnerships (Public, NGO)
- Next generation:
 - Educate our children
 - Internships
- Solid Waste has eyes on every parcel weekly

Threats

- Climate change
- Density
- Change in regulations
- Communication
- Lack of trust in government
- Costs
- Citizens don't understand our purpose

WHAT IS NEXT?

The WHY, HOW, and WHAT statements in the Environmental Services Strategic Plan will serve as our agenda and guide decisions for our department through 2025. The first step in getting to a better Tacoma is to identify an Implementation Team.

A cross-divisional, staff-led team with broad representation shall be appointed by the Director to ensure implementation of this Strategic Plan. Based on manager and employee feedback, it is essential that the implementation is developed as an entire department. This approach will allow for a clear and unified focus of our efforts while enhancing communication across the department.

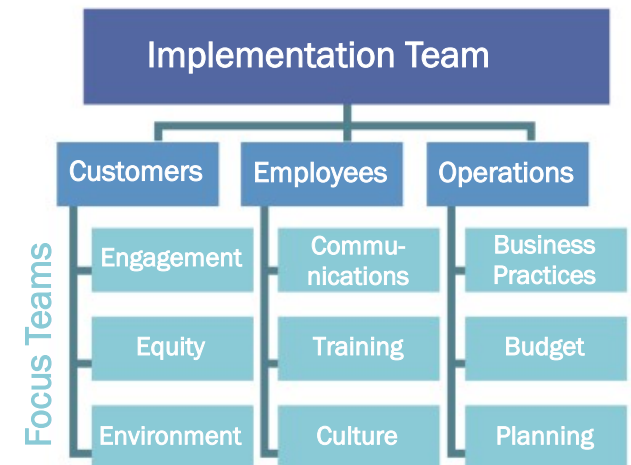


Implementation Team

This team will be responsible for the WHY and HOW of the plan. The team will prioritize and coordinate initiatives. Additionally, this team will be sponsored by the Director, and will provide quarterly updates to the department. The team will have a lead or co-leads, and have nine members that represent the WHAT focus areas. The team should have representation from all of the divisions.

Focus Teams

The Implementation Team will be supported by nine Focus Teams that represent the nine WHAT statements in the Strategic Plan. Each Focus Team includes a lead that also sits on the Implementation Team, staff from different sections and varying levels of the department, and a management sponsor. These Focus Teams will be responsible for the development of initiatives, identifying and tracking the performance measures and ensuring employee feedback is utilized. As an example, a Focus Team might meet monthly during implementation to develop and enact tactics within an initiative, review progress, and initiate changes. This team reports to the Implementation Team. The membership of the Focus Team is anticipated to change as one initiative is completed and a new one is started. The following pages identify the initiatives that were selected to be started during the first year of this Strategic Plan for each WHAT statement.



PRIORITIZED INITIATIVES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Nine WHAT statements and supporting initiatives were developed during the strategic planning process from the contributions of employees, management, and stakeholders. Nine Focus Groups reviewed and made recommendations to prioritize these initiatives. These prioritized initiatives are the starting point and a key reference for the Implementation Team to begin its work. Over 40 initiatives of varying scope were crafted to be completed throughout the duration of the plan. It is anticipated that the Implementation Team will begin by focusing on these nine initiatives — one initiative for each WHAT statement — to intentionally drive progress towards our strategic direction.

HOW: CUSTOMERS

WHAT: Environment – Define our role in planning for a greener Tacoma with attractive neighborhoods and clean waterways

Initiative: Conduct an assessment for all of Tacoma’s neighborhoods to establish environmental baseline conditions and identify priority locations for “green” projects that will prepare Tacoma to respond to upcoming community needs, environmental regulations, and climate change impacts

WHAT: Equity – Evaluate and improve services to ensure they are equitable

Initiative: Improve the use of data to provide equitable service delivery

- Identify how customers of varied demographics best obtain information on government services; utilize this research in Environmental Services’ marketing campaign
- Reach out with accessible customer feedback opportunities to identify customer needs and barriers
- Analyze customer feedback in addition to complaint records and field investigations to understand where there are gaps of participation in services
- Develop and implement strategies to address identified gaps, incentivize positive behaviors and achieve more equitable outcomes, one service area at a time



WHAT: Engagement – Increase environmental stewardship through community engagement

Initiative: Promote services and programs through an Environmental Services marketing campaign

- Create an Environmental Services “brand” and implementation plan
- Develop an “elevator speech” to tell our story
- Engage with new customers (e.g., create new customer welcome packet including more information on services and incentives)
- Increase Environmental Services awareness through media outlets (TV Tacoma, 311, apps, social media and webpages)
- Educate students about Environmental Services careers at local K-12 schools, technical schools, community colleges and universities
- Provide field staff with contact information for various City services (phone book)
- Provide high-level budget and spending information to our customers through a dashboard on the website

HOW: EMPLOYEES

WHAT: Communication – Increase accessibility and ensure accuracy of information sharing throughout the department

Initiative: Team of Teams – Develop the framework and mechanism to establish cross-divisional staff-led teams, with management sponsors, to achieve department-wide goals and overcome challenges (e.g., resources and reuse, tree canopy goal, waste reduction goal, research and development, etc.)

WHAT: Training – Develop skilled employees and industry leaders

Initiative: Foster a culture of lifelong learning

- Establish minimum training requirements for each position and identify when refresher courses are necessary (e.g., reoccurring leadership courses to stay current; technical, team building, safety, and customer service)
- Identify areas where divisions and/or department needs training; follow up and discuss the approach with staff at quarterly meetings (e.g., priority to Continuous Improvement Advocates training required to support Operations, Business Practices)

WHAT: Culture – Grow a culture of compassion and respect that embraces teamwork and continuous improvement

Initiative: Empower people closest to the work to make informed decisions

- Provide training that empowers and motivates all employees that also includes a feedback opportunity for employees
- Provide tools to help grow autonomy
- Utilize continuous improvement when something goes wrong. First turn to inquiry, why did it go wrong? Then evaluate if there are process improvements that can be made
- Foster a culture of accountability to our peers, supervisors, employees, and citizens

The Team of Teams Initiative is to be completed first. It is required to complete several other initiatives.



HOW: OPERATIONS

WHAT: Business Practices – Optimize business and operational practices through continuous improvement

Initiative: Identify opportunities for improvements in business processes using the principles of asset management and the Environmental and Sustainability Management System (ESMS)

- Identify key/significant business processes
- Map, flow chart, confirm/define business processes
- Confirm, and where necessary, define Standard Operating Procedures and Work Instructions
- Follow International Organization for Standardization (ISO) framework, when appropriate
- Use Lean principles to identify gaps and inefficiencies in business processes and modify processes accordingly
- Confirm and/or reallocate resources for existing and newly defined business processes
- Identify roles and responsibilities, confirm expectations, develop and implement training

WHAT: Budget – Provide a broader understanding of the budget and how staff at all levels impact our financial well-being

Initiative: Use transparent budgeting and operations dashboards to share information and provide relevant training

- Develop a communication structure to maintain regular dialogue across divisions with appropriate staff regarding budget monitoring
 - Incorporate an emphasis on both revenues and expenditures in all tools, communications, and trainings
 - Utilize an inclusive approach that appropriately includes more staff in the budget development process
- Configure dashboards to show staff information relevant to their position and start to build understanding of each employee's

impact on the budget; also use this information to generate a high-level report that could be provided to customers

- Teach employees (various levels of information/detail depending on position) how the budget works, what the terms mean, how to set up a budget, how the rate model works, how to evaluate budget to actual variances
 - Ensure understanding of funded/not funded, capital vs. operations and maintenance, labor credit, fleet charges
 - Include an understanding of customer demographics
 - Consider succession planning in training so that we broaden our bench strength with regard to budget

WHAT: Planning – Coordinate Environmental Services planning to align with stakeholder efforts

Initiative: Elevate safety through targeted training on identified improvement areas

- Set up cross-functional safety teams
- Create a department-wide coordinated and integrated safety plan
- Ensure everyone knows their role, and conduct dedicated/targeted review of safety practices and policies
- Utilize a continuous improvement process to learn from the review of safety practices and policies by targeting training based on identified improvement areas

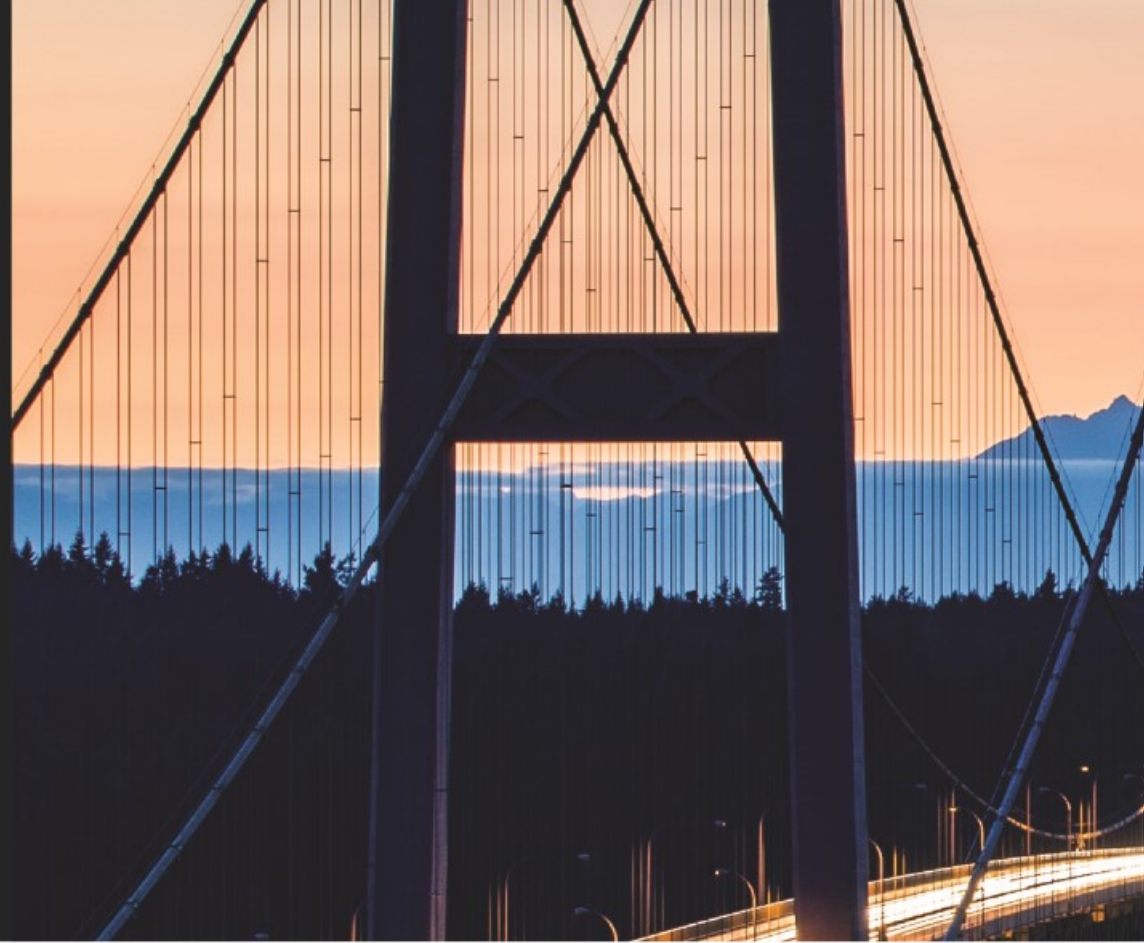


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Strategic Planning Team is grateful for the outpouring of ideas received from the dedicated employees and stakeholders that volunteered their time to help move the department forward.

Thank you for your valuable contributions and expertise.

Think Big!



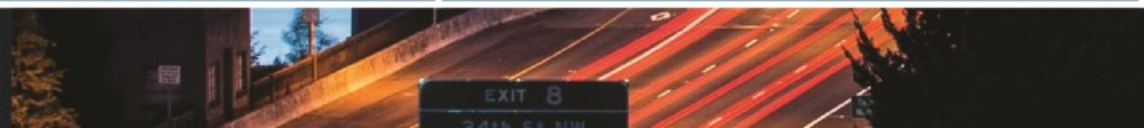
Survey: 300 employees



Public Works Week BBQ: 250 employees



Workshops: 200 employees





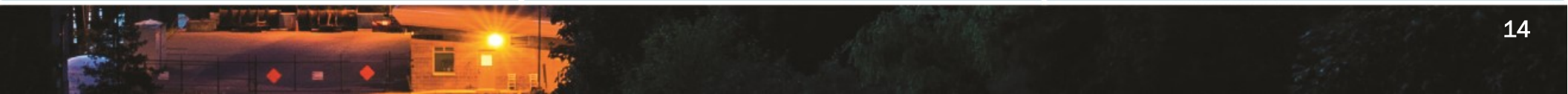
Focus Groups: 100 employees



Stakeholders: 20 meetings
& 200 participants



Thank you to management for your
support of this employee-driven effort!





SERVE WATER TACOMA
WASTEWATER BETTER
EDUCATE NATURAL
SAVE HUMAN IMPACT POOP PUBLIC
DENTS CUSTOMERS WORLD
AIR ENSURE HELP RESOURCES
BAY STEWARDS PEOPLE SOLID WASTE
COMMUNITY PREVENT LIVABLE
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