

Environmental Services Strategic Plan 2018 - 2025

Stakeholder Interview Questions

Background

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Inter-departmental Questions - CED

1. What does your vision for Tacoma's environment look like in 20 years and how it may impact the goals of your department?

My vision is to continue to promote a vibrant Tacoma by growing the community through new investments and restoration of older antiquated properties which result in establishing a positive image of the city both within and beyond our borders.

Challenge creating livable jobs. Livable wages.

Diverse product and employment – land and infrastructure is needed

Goal of people working and living here. People are no longer moving to work at a job. They will move to an area they want to live and then find a job. We need to create neighborhoods that people want to live in.

ES NEEDS TO PROVIDE PREDICTABILITY

- *ES infrastructure and environmental contamination will no longer be a hurdle for development. Developers will know upfront what they are facing. ES needs to be more proactive and upfront about infrastructure needs. Avoid “oh by the ways!” CED can provide a map of priority areas to be investigated.*
- *Sub Area plans are good, but ES needs to go further and analyze the pipes too. ES needs to know what pipes have capacity and which ones need to be upsized when development first approaches the city, not further in the review process.*
- *Cal Taylor is a hero to CED. But it's hard to get him at the table, he is too busy. ES needs to provide a fact sheet for contaminated sites. So that developers don't just run away from the contaminated sites, when the remediation might be simple. Can ES provide assistance in translating State Requirements to developers? Indemnifications. The County's Public Health Department has limited resources to help in this area.*
- *Can we develop a map of contamination? Especially in downtown.*
 - *TPCHD and DOE already have maps!*
- *In the past utilities have in part been the economic engine in our cleanup. Pad ready?*

A RESILIENT CITY IS A MARKETABLE CITY!

- *We need a Resiliency Plan - Look at Denver and ULI*
- *Be forward thinking*
- *Tacoma is built on Solid Ground – we will survive earthquakes*
- *ES can help to change the perception of Tacoma to be a green City.*
 - *Keep leading the Country*

- Recruit Green Businesses to Tacoma and the Port
- Develop a Green Tacoma brochure like the UWT one – Partner with CED

2. What do you view as the biggest strengths and weaknesses of ES?

Our biggest strength is “physical location” in the heart of the Puget Sound region with breathtaking views of Commencement Bay, Mount Rainier and the Olympic Mountain Range. Additionally, with a natural deep seaport, rail access and proximity to Interstate 5, commerce is drawn to Tacoma’s tide-flats and Nalley Valley resulting in a strong economic base. However, Tacoma’s history of being home to some not so attractive industrial users such as a silver mine/copper smelter at Pt. Ruston and other activities along the Foss, have adversely impacted the City’s image from past practices. But today, Pt. Ruston and the Foss Waterfront are shining examples of what can and will be the future of this city when a collaborative approach between the City, County, Port, State, Federal Government and private developers are put to use. We still need to find resources to address our antiquated infrastructure along Dock Street and the waterfront in general as well as throughout the Dome, Brewery, Hilltop and Downtown in general. Infrastructure improvements remains a challenge and the need to upgrade our stormwater systems in a comprehensive way now so properties are primed for redevelopment are key.

CED has strength in Public Outreach. They could help ES.

Phase 1 and 2 assessments end up being “oh by the ways” along with some other permitting requirements. Development of a fact sheet would be helpful that emphasizes a “don’t be scared to develop” it can be done even with some of the issues the site may have. Work on indemnifications/predictability.

Rates are a weakness

3. How could communications and cooperation be improved between our departments?

Communications between departments can always improve. But what CEDD has done so well over the past few years is to invite representatives from other departments and divisions to attend our weekly meetings and share their goals and challenges while learning more about what is at the forefront of CEDD. So, it would be nice for ES to invite project managers, Housing Manager and the Director to their manager meetings to be briefed on challenges facing CEDD and how we can work collaboratively to address such issues. For example, the 6.4 acre site requires a major storm drain system which is just in the design stage below Pacific Avenue. It may take 2-3 years before the system reaches the town center site. Meanwhile, the developer is gearing up to break ground this year. This will require the developer to set a critical portion of the site aside to serve as a ponding basin until the storm drainage line is in place. If this could be expedited or another site can serve as the ponding basin during the interim such as UW Tacoma property which is sitting idle then that could be a good short term fix but it requires communication between departments.

Invite CED to our regular meetings so that ES can learn what’s going on.

Can ES do Phase 2’s in house?

ES partners on cross-functional teams.

4. How could ES better serve its customers?

ES does a good job of informing the public through newsletters and various electronic news. Pro-actively reaching out to major employers and business groups such as the Economic Development Board of Tacoma-Pierce County, the Chamber, NBDs, etc. to share news happening at ES and take in concerns and challenges from the real estate community would be ideal.

Work with CEDD to correlate Land Use Codes to Environmental goals. E.g. – car washes in residential areas to minimize storm runoff.

Tree Canopy goal has NO maintenance or resources to support it.

5. Is there anything your department has planned in the next 20 years which could impact Environmental Services, such as major initiatives, policies, or codes?

CEDD is facilitating several public, private and non-profit developments around town where public infrastructure including storm drainage is an issue. Such projects include: Town Center, Convention Center Hotel, Transit-Oriented developments in the Hilltop (11th/MLK) and Dome, infill mixed-use developments in mixed-use centers, redevelopment in the tideflats and Nalley Valley, etc. If we can share our 2-3 year project horizons with ES, PW and TPU and have them install necessary infrastructure in advance of the developments and get reimbursed as projects submit for plans then that would be ideal. We would be “setting the table” for future private redevelopment.

Brownsfield education and infill will be items of interest as “buildable” land is not available.

Education of citizens and businesses about water use.

6. What growth projections should ES be anticipating? How is this communicated to ES?

As shared above, there are several infill commercial, mixed-use and industrial projects either planned or under construction throughout the City. The Director can provide quarterly updates on planned, committed and projects under construction and meet with ES managers to strategize on front loading infrastructure improvements. Time is money for many investors and if we can install the infrastructure ahead of new and/or rehabilitation that would be ideal.

7. What are your departments focus areas for growth and redevelopment within the City?

CEDD is focused on redevelopment and infill development throughout Tacoma. Working in tandem with other public agencies such as Pierce County, State Department of Commerce and Department of Enterprise Services, Pierce Transit, Tacoma Public School District, Metro Parks, etc. to dispose of their surplus or underutilized properties to the private sector is ideal. Additionally, looking at redevelopment of city assets and returning them to the tax rolls is ideal. We are also focused on infill development on the Dome Parking lots as well as the parking in front of Cheney Stadium. Downtown, Neighborhood Business Districts and the Industrial Districts will continue to remain key areas for redevelopment in the future.