



**2023 ANNUAL AMENDMENT  
TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE**

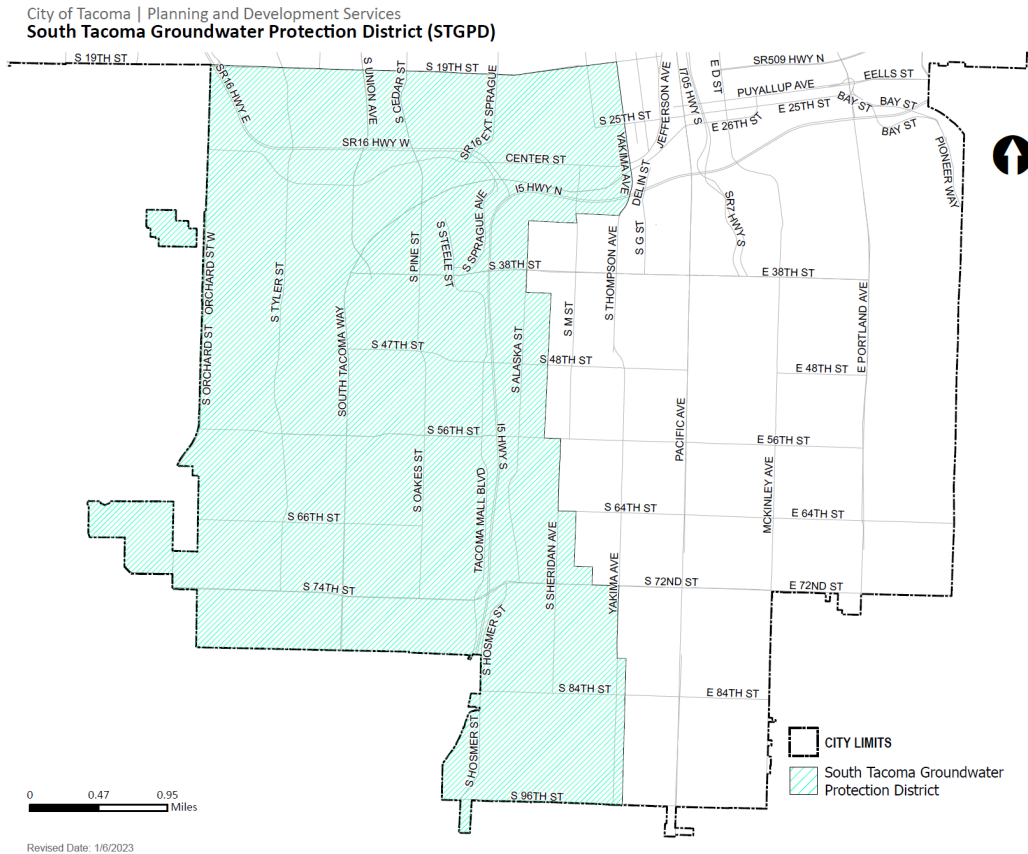
## South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Proposed Work Plan Update

December 20, 2023

Project Summary	
<b>Staff Contact:</b>	Stephen Atkinson, Principal Planner: <a href="mailto:satkinson@cityoftacoma.org">satkinson@cityoftacoma.org</a>
<b>Location and Size of Area:</b>	The South Tacoma Groundwater Protect District is approximately 7,658 acres of land area between S. 19 <sup>th</sup> Street to the North and City Limits to the South, and Orchard Street to the West and an Eastern boundary that generally follows S. Yakima and S. Alaska Streets, encompassing the South Tacoma Aquifer.
<b>Current Land Use and Zoning:</b>	The area includes a mix of land uses and zoning, including a Regional Growth Center, a Manufacturing and Industrial Center, Major Institutional Campuses, two Mixed-Use Centers and other residential and commercial districts.
<b>Neighborhood Council Area:</b>	While the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District is primarily located within the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council Area, it also includes portions of the Central and South End Neighborhood Council Areas as well.
<b>Project Proposal:</b>	<p>The project will evaluate review the South Tacoma Groundwater District Zoning and Development Standards and consider amendments to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enforcement and monitoring</li><li>• Frequency and timing of future code review and updates</li><li>• Consideration of additional incompatible land uses</li><li>• Development standards for underground storage tanks and metal recycling/auto wrecking facilities</li><li>• Code implementation and code location (including potential relocation)</li><li>• Infiltration Policy Review and Stormwater Treatment BMPs</li><li>• Development permit application submittal requirements</li><li>• Impervious surface standards</li><li>• Inter-departmental coordination on permits and land use amendments</li></ul>

## Section A. Purpose and Area of Applicability

The South Tacoma groundwater aquifer system serves as a significant source of drinking water for the City of Tacoma. It may supply as much as 40 percent of the City's total water demand during periods of peak summer usage. For future growth, supplemental supply, and emergency response, this resource will continue to be extremely important to the City of Tacoma.



It has been found and determined that a major cause of historical groundwater contamination in the South Tacoma aquifer system is from accidental or improper release of hazardous substances from spillage, leaks, or discharges from local industry. Due to the large number of potential sources of toxic and hazardous substances within the area which recharges the aquifer system and the possibility of further contamination, the City of Tacoma found that it was necessary and in the public interest to establish the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District in 1988.

The South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District is an overlay zoning and land use control district specifically designed to prevent the degradation of groundwater in the South Tacoma aquifer system by controlling the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous substances by businesses. The overlay zoning district imposes additional restrictions on high impact land use development to protect public health and safety by preserving and maintaining the existing groundwater supply for current and potential users and to protect the City of Tacoma from costs which might be incurred if unsuitable high impact land uses were to reduce either the quality or quantity of this important public water supply source. It is the intent of

chapter 13.06.070 of Tacoma Municipal Code, to establish orderly procedures that reduce the risks to public health and safety and to the existing groundwater supply. These procedures shall ensure that within the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District, properties that have stormwater infiltration facilities and properties that store hazardous substances meet appropriate performance standards, and those properties are properly maintained, inspected, and tested when necessary. The following map illustrates the current boundaries of the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District.

## **Section B. Policy Framework and Planning Requirements**

In accordance with Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13.02.070 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedures and TMC 13.05.030 Zoning and Land Use Regulatory Code Amendment Procedures, the Planning Commission must make a determination as to whether proposed policy and regulatory amendments are consistent with the following criteria:

- Whether the proposed amendment will benefit the City as a whole, will not adversely affect the City's public facilities and services, and bears a reasonable relationship to the public health, safety, and welfare; and
- Whether the proposed amendment conforms to applicable provisions of State statutes, case law, regional policies, and the Comprehensive Plan.

To support the Commission's review and determination, staff have identified the following regional and local goals and policies for the Commission's consideration:

### **Growth Management Act - Planning Goals**

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is a set of state statutes that were initially enacted in 1990 and require rapidly growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan for managing their population growth. Under [RCW 36.70A.020](#), the GMA establishes a series of 15 goals that should act as the basis of all comprehensive plans. These goals are adopted to guide the development and implementation of comprehensive plans and development regulations. The following four goals, out of the fifteen stated above, pertain to this code change:

(10) Environment. Protect and enhance the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

(11) Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens.

(12) Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

(14) Climate change and resiliency. Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies under [RCW 36.70A.210](#) and chapter [47.80 RCW](#) adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts

and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.

### **Growth Management Act - Critical Areas Preservation**

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the designation and protection of "Critical Areas" to prevent harm to the community from natural hazards and to protect the natural environment, wildlife habitats, and sources of fresh drinking water. [RCW 36.70A.030\(11\)](#) defines five types of critical areas:

- 1) Wetlands.
- 2) Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water.
- 3) Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.
- 4) Frequently flooded areas.
- 5) Geologically hazardous areas.

The functions and values of the Critical Areas must be protected using the best available scientific information, also known as **best available science (BAS)**. The best available science (BAS) or valid science can be defined as research conducted by qualified individuals utilizing documented methodologies that results in verifiable outcomes and conclusions. In the context of critical areas protection, a valid scientific process is one that produces reliable information useful in understanding the consequences of a local government's regulatory decisions. When possible, counties and cities should engage with a certified scientific expert or team of experts to assist in identifying and determining the best available scientific information, as well as assessing its applicability to the relevant critical areas.

### **Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARA)**

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARA) are defined under the GMA as "areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, including areas where an aquifer that is a source of drinking water is vulnerable to contamination that would affect the potability of the water or is susceptible to reduced recharge."

The goal of establishing Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas is to protect the functions and values of a community's drinking water by preventing pollution and maintaining supply. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter [WAC 165-190-100](#) outlines additional requirements for local governments to determine Critical Aquifer Recharge Area classification and designation.

[WAC 165-190-100](#) Critical Aquifer Recharge Area:

- 1) Potable water is an essential life sustaining element for people and many other species. Much of Washington's drinking water comes from groundwater. Once groundwater is contaminated it is difficult, costly, and sometimes impossible to clean up. Preventing contamination is necessary to avoid exorbitant costs, hardships, and potential physical harm to people and ecosystems.
- 2) The quality and quantity of groundwater in an aquifer is inextricably linked to its recharge area. Where aquifers and their recharge areas have been studied, affected counties and cities should use this information as the basis for classifying and designating these areas. Where no specific studies

have been done, counties and cities may use existing soil and surficial geologic information to determine where recharge areas exist. To determine the threat to groundwater quality, existing land use activities and their potential to lead to contamination should be evaluated.

- 3) Counties and cities must classify recharge areas for aquifers according to the aquifer vulnerability. Vulnerability is the combined effect of hydrogeological susceptibility to contamination and the contamination loading potential. High vulnerability may be indicated by hydrogeological conditions that facilitate degradation, particularly where combined with land uses that contribute, or may potentially contribute, directly or indirectly to contamination that may degrade groundwater. Low vulnerability may be indicated by the combination of hydrogeological conditions that do not facilitate degradation and land uses that do not contribute, or are not likely to contribute, contaminants that will degrade groundwater. Hydrological conditions may include those induced by limited recharge of an aquifer. Reduced aquifer recharge from effective impervious surfaces may result in higher concentrations of contaminants than would otherwise occur.

The Critical Areas Ordinances must be evaluated and revised as needed every eight years.

**Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) - Vision 2050 Growth Strategy**

PSRC is a regional planning agency consisting of Pierce, King, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties that assists in the coordination of regional and local planning initiatives. The region's population is anticipated to reach 5.8 million people by 2050. PSRC has collaborated with the region's cities, counties, Tribes, ports, agencies, businesses, and communities to develop VISION 2050, the region's growth strategy, to prepare for this growth and serve as a guide for sustaining a healthy environment, thriving communities, and a strong economy.

VISION 2050's multicounty planning policies are adopted under the state's Growth Management Act. Multicounty planning policies address regionwide issues within a collaborative planning framework. Counties and cities look to multicounty planning policies to inform updates to countywide planning policies and local comprehensive plan updates.

<b>PSRC Vision 2050 Chapter</b>	<b>Table 1: PSRC VISION 2050 Relevant Policies</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<p><b>Goal: The region cares for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, and reducing air pollutants. The health of all residents and the economy is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels considers the impacts of land use, development, and transportation on the ecosystem.</b></p> <p>MPP-En-2 Use integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at regional, countywide, and local levels.</p> <p>MPP-En-3 Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality and climate change.</p>

	MPP-En-4 Ensure that all residents of the region, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment.
	MPP-En-6 Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by any level of government.
	MPP-En-8 Reduce impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been disproportionately affected by noise, air pollution, or other environmental impacts.
	MPP-En-9 Enhance urban tree canopy to support community resilience, mitigate urban heat, manage stormwater, conserve energy, improve mental and physical health, and strengthen economic prosperity.
	MPP-En-10 Support and incentivize environmental stewardship on private and public lands to protect and enhance habitat, water quality, and other ecosystem services, including protection of watersheds and wellhead areas that are sources of the region’s drinking water supplies.
	MPP-En-11 Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, such as the review and comment of countywide planning policies and local plans and provisions.
	MPP-En-17 Maintain and restore natural hydrological functions and water quality within the region’s ecosystems and watersheds to recover the health of Puget Sound.
	MPP-En-18 Reduce stormwater impacts from transportation and development through watershed planning, redevelopment and retrofit projects, and low-impact development.
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	<b>Goal: The region substantially reduces emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change in accordance with the goals of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (50% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050) and prepares for climate change impacts.</b>
	MPP-CC-7 Advance state, regional, and local actions that support resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts.
	MPP-CC-8 Increase resilience by identifying and addressing the impacts of climate change and natural hazards on water, land, infrastructure, health, and the economy. Prioritize actions to protect the most vulnerable populations.
	MPP-CC-9 Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region’s hydrological systems.
<b>PUBLIC SERVICES</b>	<b>Goal: The region supports development with adequate public facilities and services in a timely, coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective manner that supports local and regional growth planning objectives.</b>
	MPP-PS-22 Provide residents of the region with access to high quality drinking water that meets or is better than federal and state requirements.

	MPP-PS-23 Promote coordination among local and tribal governments and water providers and suppliers to meet long-term water needs in the region in a manner that supports the region’s growth strategy.
	MPP-PS-25 Protect the source of the water supply to meet the needs for both human consumption and for environmental balance.

**One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan**

One Tacoma is the City's Comprehensive Plan which guides our community's development over the long term and describes how our community's vision for the future is to be achieved. In short, it is a blueprint for the future character of our city. The Plan guides decisions on land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, parks and the environment. It also sets standards for roads and other infrastructure, identifies how they will be paid for, and establishes the basis for zoning and development regulations. The *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan contains eleven chapters, or elements, with goals and policies identified for each element.

As part of the Planning Commission’s review and recommendations, the Commission must determine if a proposed amendment is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

<b>One Tacoma Plan Chapter</b>	<b>TABLE 2: One Tacoma Plan Relevant Goals and Policies</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT and WATERSHED HEALTH</b>	Policy EN–3.23 Encourage infiltration of stormwater to promote aquifer recharge and assure continuous and adequate groundwater supply.
	Policy EN–3.26 Prevent groundwater contamination through performance criteria and guidelines for siting, design, construction and operation of commercial and industrial structures and activities.
	Policy EN–3.27 Support an ongoing effort to monitor groundwater quality in order to determine the effectiveness of the groundwater program over time.
	Policy EN–3.28 Protect the quality of groundwater used for public water supplies to ensure adequate sources of potable water for Tacoma and the region.
	Policy EN–3.6 Limit impervious surfaces within open Space Corridors, shorelines and designated critical areas to reduce impacts on hydrologic function, air and water quality, habitat connectivity and tree canopy.
	Policy EN–3.8 Manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff entering Tacoma waterbodies, so as to protect public health and safety, surface and groundwater quality and the ecological functions of natural drainage systems.

	<p>Policy EN-1.17 Assess and periodically review the best available science for managing critical areas and natural resources and utilize the development of plans and regulations while also taking into consideration Tacoma’s obligation to meet urban-level densities under the Growth Management Act.</p>
	<p>Policy EN-1.18 Evaluate climate data and consider climate risks in the development of regulations, plans and programs.</p>
	<p>Policy EN-1.19 Evaluate trends in watershed and environmental health using current and historical data and information to guide improvements in the effectiveness of City plans, regulations and infrastructure investments</p>
	<p>Policy EN-1.12 Coordinate plans and investments with other jurisdictions, air and water quality regulators, watershed councils, soil conservation organizations and community organizations and groups to maximize the benefits and cost-effectiveness of watershed environmental efforts and investments.</p>
<p><b>DESIGN and DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	<p>Policy DD-4.7 Emphasize the natural physical qualities of the neighborhood (for example, trees, marine view, and natural features) and the site in locating and developing residential areas, provided such development can be built without adversely impacting the natural areas. Where possible, development should be configured to utilize existing natural features as an amenity to the development.</p>
	<p>Policy DD-5.9 Integrate natural and green infrastructure, such as street trees, native landscaping, green spaces, green roofs, gardens, and vegetated stormwater management systems, into centers and corridors.</p>
	<p>Policy DD-7.5 Encourage site and building designs that make efficient use of water and manage stormwater as a resource.</p>
	<p>Policy DD-12.1 Ensure that new building and site development practices promote environmental health and ecosystem services, such as pollutant reduction, carbon sequestration, air cooling, water filtration, or reduction of stormwater runoff.</p>
<p><b>ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION IMPLEMENTATION Element</b></p>	<p>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.</p>
	<p>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.</p>
	<p>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.</p>



	<p>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.</p>
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### The Critical Areas Ordinance in Relation to the Comprehensive Plan

Per [RCW 36.70.330](#), the Comprehensive Plan must provide for protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies and shall review drainage, flooding, and stormwater runoff in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound.

Under WAC [365-196-485](#):

- Jurisdictions are required to include the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas.
- Counties and cities are required to identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas for multiple purposes, including those areas needed as critical habitat by wildlife.
- Because the critical areas regulations must be consistent with the comprehensive plan, each comprehensive plan should set forth the underlying policies for the jurisdiction's critical areas program.

## Section C. Recent Legislative Background

### 2022 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

The South Tacoma Neighborhood Council (STNC) submitted an application to the Planning Commission in March 2021 for consideration during the 2022 Annual Amendment process. The application sought to (a) update the One Tacoma Plan and the TMC applicable to the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD) and the aquifer recharge areas to address environmental and health risks and further prioritize protection of the STGPD; and (b) transform the South Tacoma Manufacturing/Industrial Center into an Economic Green Zone that fosters environmentally sustainable industry specifically within South Tacoma, above and near this water source.

The Planning Commission conducted an assessment of the STNC's application, pursuant to TMC 13.02.070.E, and considered public comments received through a public scoping hearing in June 2021, and made a determination in July 2021 to move the application forward for technical analysis following a two-phased approach:

- **Phase 1: STGPD Code Amendments** – Update TMC 13.06.070.D pertaining to STGPD, to be done in the future 2023 Amendment Cycle, with creation of a work plan to occur during the 2022 Amendment cycle, developed in collaboration with the City of Tacoma Environmental Services Department, Tacoma Public Utilities – Tacoma Water, and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. The work plan may include review of allowed land uses, review of the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, refinement of allowed uses and boundaries, and periodic update of the STGPD to ensure the regulations fulfill the intent of protecting the district.

- **Phase 2: Creation of an Economic Green Zone** – Evaluate the establishment of an Economic Green Zone (EGZ) to attract green industry to the City’s manufacturing/industrial centers, taking into account the recently adopted 2030 Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Strategy (Resolution No. 40878, November 30, 2021). At this time, this phase has not been budgeted or resourced by the City Council.

Upon completing technical analyses and factoring in public comments, the Planning Commission forwarded its recommendations on the 2022 Amendment Package to the City Council in May 2022. With respect to the STNC’s application, the Commission recommended that the City Council:

- a) Approve the Work Plan for STGPD Code Amendments.
- b) Consider the merits of a moratorium on future development projects, given that significant permit activity and development during the phased process could pre-empt the broader planning efforts.

The City Council and its Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee conducted reviews of the 2022 Amendment Package in May-June 2022, including holding a public hearing on June 7, 2022, and adopted the package on June 28, 2022. The Work Plan for STGPD Code Amendments was approved with Amended Substitute Resolution No. 40985, which also initiated the consideration of a moratorium for the STGPD.

### **Establishment of a South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Moratorium**

The City Council’s initiation of the STGPD moratorium was in response to public comments received by the Planning Commission and the City Council during the review and adoption processes for the 2022 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission conducted four meetings, on July 6, July 20, August 3, and August 17, 2022, in response to public comments regarding the moratorium. Planning and Development Services staff also conducted a community informational meeting on July 27, 2022. The Planning Commission completed its review and deliberations of the matter through a public process, and forwarded its Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report, along with a letter of recommendations, to the City Council for consideration on August 17, 2022.

On March 7, 2023 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 28872 enacting a moratorium within the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District as recommended by the IPS Committee. The moratorium in Ord. 28872 became effective March 20, 2023 and were enacted for an initial period of up to one year, to expire on March 20, 2024.

The City Council ordinance amending Chapter 13.06 of the Tacoma Municipal Code enacted interim land use regulations temporarily prohibiting the establishment of new, or expansion of, existing underground storage tanks, metal recycling, and auto wrecking facilities within the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District, for an initial period of up to one year, to maintain the current level of those activities and uses until the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District periodic code review and amendment process initiated by Amended Substitute Resolution No. 40985 is completed.

Per State law and Tacoma Municipal Code, the South Tacoma Work Plan must address any issues or uses affected by the moratorium.

## Section D. Related Planning Efforts

The City of Tacoma and Tacoma Public Utilities are currently engaged in multiple planning efforts to address long-term water quality and supply consistent with the goals of the GMA and One Tacoma Plan. The South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District is a key aspect of the City's approach to protection of this resource but is also one piece of a broader programmatic and regulatory framework. Coordinating the South Tacoma Protection District update as a companion to these efforts allows the City to both leverage the resources of these efforts and to ensure greater consistency and compatibility of these efforts. The following is a brief description of these related plans and programs.

### 1. South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Moratorium

- **Lead Department/staff:** Planning and Development Services, Tacoma Water, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Environmental Services
- **Purpose:** A moratorium was established in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District to prevent the vesting of new underground storage tanks and metal recycling/auto wrecking facilities until such time as the STGPD code amendment is complete. A moratorium may only be enacted for up to 1-year initially. 6-month extensions may be considered through a City Council process.
- **Key tasks/elements:** City Council public hearing; First Reading of Ordinance to extend the moratorium for 6-months and to consider modifications; Final Reading of Ordinance.
- **Current Status:** Moratorium is currently in effect. The City Council is expected to consider an extension in the first quarter of 2024.
- **Timeline:** The current moratorium expires on March 20, 2024.
- **Engagement:** Public comments will be considered through a public hearing as part of the consideration of an extension.

### 2. Tacoma Water Integrated Resource Plan, 2023-2024

- **Lead Department/staff:** Tacoma Water, Glen George (Civil Engineer PE, Principal)
- **Purpose:** An Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is comprised of an assessment of the future water needs and a plan to meet those future needs. It is "integrated" in that it looks at both demand side (conservation, water efficiency, etc.) resources as well as the more traditional supply side (new sources, maximizing existing sources, etc.) resources in making its recommendations on how best to meet future water energy needs for the Utility.
- **Key tasks/elements:** Update climate change information, Update demand forecast, Groundwater questions and concerns including PFAS in sources, Groundwater Protection District Code Review
- **Status/Timeline:**
  - Under contract with consultant and finalizing workplan in December 2023.
  - Complete work plan actions in Quarter 1 and 2 of 2024
  - Final report by August 2024.
- **Engagement:** Convening a Public Advisory Committee that will hold 4 meetings

### 3. Health Impact Assessment

- **Lead Department/staff:** Tacoma Pierce County Health Department; Planning and Development Services
- **Purpose:** Health Impact Assessments (HIA) serve as a tool to inform decision-makers, and the public, of the potentially significant impacts – both beneficial and harmful – of a proposed project, policy, or program.
- **Key tasks/elements:** There are generally six iterative phases of an HIA:
  - Screening
  - Scoping
  - Assessment
  - Recommendations
  - Reporting and dissemination
  - Monitoring and evaluation
- **Current Status:** The City of Tacoma has currently funded a Health Impact Assessment associated with the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District code update and is in discussions with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a partnership program to conduct HIAs as part of long-range planning initiatives.
- **Timeline:** Anticipated to begin 1st quarter of 2024 for completion in 3rd quarter. However, the specific timeline will depend on the results of the screening and scoping phases.
- **Engagement:** Specific engagement approaches have not yet been determined but an HIA typically includes extensive community participation throughout the six phases.

### 4. Tacoma Water Wellhead Protection Program

- **Lead Department/Staff:** Tacoma Water, Scott Hallenberg (Operations Manager) is Program Manager and Alex White (Water Quality Specialist) is staff lead.
- **Purpose:** The purpose of the wellhead protection program is to prevent contamination of groundwater used for drinking water, thus protecting the health of people using groundwater for drinking water.
- **Key tasks/elements:** Comprehensive review of current approved plan. This includes: updating contaminant inventories, and regulatory and impacted customer contact lists; correcting Dept. of Health Source Water Assessment Program (DOH SWAP) information; and review time of travel data (TOT) and begin comparison of existing flow information with new USGS data (when available).
- **Status/Timeline:** Review in progress, contaminant inventories to be completed by end of 2024 and future work scoped for 2025.
- **Engagement:** Process involves direct engagement with customers in the affected areas and coordination with/assistance from TPCHD, Environmental Services, and Planning and Development Services.
- **Project link:** <https://www.mytpu.org/about-tpu/services/water/water-source/water-system-plan/>

## 5. Tacoma Urban Waters Protection Plan (Watershed Plan)

- **Lead Department/staff:** Environmental Services, Environmental Programs Group. Laura Nokes (Engineering Project Manager) and Shauna Hansen (Civil Engineer PE)
- **Purpose:** The purpose of Tacoma’s Urban Waters Protection Plan is to implement strategic stormwater management actions to protect our streams, lakes, wetlands, bays and Puget Sound from polluted runoff. The plan uses a data-based approach to prioritize the most effective stormwater actions and projects, at the most important locations, to build a more healthy and resilient Tacoma and a thriving Puget Sound while taking into account city planning priorities, partnership opportunities, neighborhood needs, critical habitat protection, and anticipated climate change impacts. The locations of these actions will be selected to provide more equitable stormwater services throughout Tacoma.
- **Key tasks/elements:**
  - Phase 1: Research (January 2020 to June 2021). Gathered information needed to feed into the watershed prioritization model to make meaningful recommendations and decisions on stormwater management actions throughout the City. Included review of regulatory drivers and city and regional policies and plan, receiving water conditions assessment, and stakeholder engagement.
  - Phase 2: Watershed Prioritization Model (July 2021 to May 2023). Identify Solutions based on watershed characterization assessment and community needs. Develop, build and test Prioritization Modeling Tool
  - Phase 3: Stormwater Priority Action List (June 2023 to December 2024). Develop Action Plan with prioritized stormwater management actions and projects with tasks, goals, and partners based on tool outputs. List includes regional stormwater capital projects and system retrofits as well as program activities such as source control, education and outreach, stormwater inspections, and enhanced system maintenance. Review draft list with partners and stakeholder to finalize list of recommended actions. Coordinate with Stormwater Comprehensive Plan development and budget planning for 2025-26 biennial budget.
  - Phase 4: Plan Implementation (Begins January 2025). Work on implementation of funded actions including timing, resources, partnerships, and collaboration opportunities. Identify and pursue future funding opportunities for unfunded actions.
- **Current Status:** Scoping, adoption - This plan is independent of the Comprehensive Planning process but will be referenced as a functional plan supporting the One Tacoma Plan Ch. 4 Environment and Watershed Health. No Council Adoption process is currently being proposed.
- **Timeline:** The Urban Waters Protection Plan draft list of actions is scheduled to be released in Q1 2024, with review by partner organization and community members in Q2 2024 and finalized in Q3 2024. Implementation of funded actions will begin in 2025.
- **Engagement:** Cross-departmental engagement with other City departments, Watershed Councils, Neighborhood Councils and Safe Streets groups, follow up with individuals who provided feedback at initial community workshops, City Commissions and Council IPS Sub-committee.

## 6. Stormwater Comprehensive Plan

- **Lead Department/staff:** Environmental Services, Environmental Programs Group. Dana de Leon (Assistant Division Manager)
- **Purpose:** The City of Tacoma is developing its first ever Stormwater Comprehensive Plan (SWCP) that will describe how the City will manage, operate, and finance stormwater-related activities within Tacoma City Limits. The purpose of the SWCP is to guide how the City will address surface water and stormwater management needs and requirements, including program management, operation and maintenance (O&M), climate change, capital facilities, and financial elements, while also balancing rates and the financial resources available to the City.
- **Key tasks/elements:**
  - Review of previous studies, plans, and other information associated with current and proposed stormwater systems;
  - Develop a prioritized list of projects from the current capital facilities implementation plan (CIP) with Conceptual design and cost estimate (5%) for up to 5 CIP projects;
  - Develop a Stormwater Management Plan template consistent with anticipated NPDES permit requirements;
  - Evaluate City resources relating to current and future needs for NPDES compliance, including staffing, equipment, and funding; and
  - Develop actions for anticipated sea level rise, increased storm intensities and other issues related to climate change.
- **Current Status:** Scoping, adoption - This plan will be developed in 2024 and will be referenced as a functional plan supporting the One Tacoma Plan Chapter 4 - Environment and Watershed Health. No Council Adoption process is currently being proposed.
- **Timeline:** The SWCP will be developed in 2024, with input by partner organization and community members in 2024, and review by partner organization and community members in 2025. SWCP will be finalized in 2025.
- **Engagement:** Cross-departmental engagement with other City departments, Neighborhood Councils, City Commissions and Council IPS Sub-committee.

## 7. One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan

- **Lead Department/staff:** Planning and Development Services and Public Works
- **Purpose:** Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan is an important tool that establishes the City's future vision and policy direction, as well as guiding growth and development over the next 25 years. Concurrently, the City's Transportation Master Plan is being updated, which will respond to transformations that are occurring through zoning changes, such as Home in Tacoma and Sub-Area Planning efforts. The update will also seek to better align the TMP with Vision Zero and the Safe Systems approach, Tacoma's anti-racist transformation and equity focus, as well as address emerging policy and technology trends.
- **Key tasks/elements:** The updated plan will help maintain collaborative relationships within the community and surrounding jurisdictions and establish or confirm existing policies and priorities for coordinated development/redevelopment and necessary infrastructure consistent with the State

Growth Management Act, Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 and Transportation 2050, and the City of Tacoma's ongoing Strategic Plan process.

- **Current Status** - Scoping, adoption. The initial review, gap analysis and scoping started in the third quarter of 2023. This process is expected to last about two years and will be completed by mid-2025.
- **Timeline:**
  - Engagement and Communications: Q4 2023 – Q3 2025
  - Plan Development: Q3 2023 – Q1 2025
  - Legislative Process: Q4 2023 – Q3 2025
- **Engagement:** A community involvement plan is being drafted by the Planning and Development Services department as of the fourth quarter of 2023. The public engagement will be conducted in three phases.
  - Phase 1: Priority Setting (Winter/Spring 2024) The intent is to meet with our residents and establish priorities for the Comprehensive Plan update.
  - Phase 2: Community Check in (Summer 2024) Connect with communities engaged in the winter and spring to update on progress and initial policy ideas based on their priorities.
  - Phase 3: Draft Plan (Spring 2025) Gather broad input on draft policies.
- **Project and document links:**  
[https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/planning\\_and\\_development\\_services/planning\\_services/one\\_tacoma\\_comprehensive\\_plan](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/planning_and_development_services/planning_services/one_tacoma_comprehensive_plan)

### Coordinated Project Schedules

The following is a tentative outlook for the schedule for each of the related projects and overall timing. The work that will be completed through each of these efforts may result in further recommendations for amendments to the One Tacoma Plan or Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance. The general schedules currently align to support a broad integration of findings and recommendations into the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan update. The schedule below for the STGPD Code Development anticipates deliverables completed from the IRP, HIA, and Urban Waters Protection Plan in mid-2024 to support code development. Further, the proposed schedule would incorporate the STGPD code into the adoption process for the Comprehensive Plan in 2025.

	2023	2024				2025	
Project	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
<b>Moratorium</b>							
<b>Integrated Resource Plan</b>							
<b>Health Impact Assessment</b>							
<b>Wellhead Protection Plan</b>							
<b>Urban Waters Protection Plan</b>							
<b>Stormwater Comprehensive Plan</b>							
<b>STGPD Code Development</b>							
<b>Comprehensive Plan Update</b>							

## Section E. Available or Upcoming Data and Best Available Science

The following data and information will be used to support the development of code amendment recommendations. Additional code review will include benchmarking analysis to consider best management practices adopted by peer jurisdictions.

- Department of Ecology Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Guidance  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/0510028.pdf>
- Pierce County Best Available Science Review  
<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/121377/CAO-BAS-and-Gap-Analysis-report-23?bidId=>
- City of Tacoma Best Available Science Review (Part of 2024 Comprehensive Plan update – to be posted online)
- Tacoma Water Groundwater Modeling Assessment (Tacoma Water – IRP)
  - Objective: Assess how the newly-produced USGS Southeast Sound groundwater model may be utilized by Tacoma Water in the future to analyze it groundwater supplies.
- Climate Change Assessment (Tacoma Water – IRP)
  - Review and Assess Climate Change Models/Assumptions used by Others
  - Develop Approach for Integration into Water Yield Supply/Demand Model (WYSDM)
  - Water Quality Effects: Assessment of impacts related to fires, algae, milfoil, curly pond leaf, pine beetles, and other climate change related challenges to water supply and quality, based on a literature review.



- Climate Migration: Assessment of the possibility of impacts of population shifts due to climate change and regional trends in post-pandemic work arrangements on the water demand forecast, based on a literature review.

## F. South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District - Scope of Work

### Initial Work Plan - Resolution 40985 (Adopted June 2022)

The Work Plan adopted by the City Council in Resolution 40985 identified the following major issues to be addressed:

- a) General program awareness
- b) Enforcement and monitoring
- c) Define "periodic update"
- d) Review proposal for prohibited uses from [application](#)
  - Metal Recycling/auto wrecking facilities\*
  - Above ground storage tanks
  - Below ground storage tanks\*

\*These uses were subject to the adopted moratorium and must be addressed as part of the Work Plan
- e) Code implementation and code location (including potential relocation)
- f) Infiltration Policy
- g) Program Funding

**Assumed Resources:** Work to be performed with existing and available staff.

### Proposed Additions to Scope of Work

Based on community input, Planning Commission direction, and assessment of related projects, staff proposes to expand the scope of work to include these additional elements. The scope of the amendments may also change in response to the findings and recommendations associated with the review of the best available science and related projects:

- Landscaping and Tree Canopy Standards for Industrial Zones, Commercial Zones, and Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District
- Impervious surface standards (geographic and land use scope still to be determined)
- Broader consideration of High Impact Uses and potential contaminant sources
- Health Impact Assessment: The specific scope and policy/regulatory focus has not yet been determined. However, the HIA could potentially expand the scope of policy and regulatory amendments that are considered as part of this review.
- Improve integration of STGPD Overlay Zone with Critical Areas Ordinance (TMC 13.11) and address applicability of TMC 13.11 to the STGPD.
- Map refinements for the South Tacoma Aquifer and Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas
- Recommendations or issues identified from related projects
- Recommended policy amendments, project lists, proposed investments, and prioritization recommendations for the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan relating.

### **Updated Resource Assumptions**

- Tacoma Water has allocated funding to support the retention of external consultant services to support the development of the IRP.
- Planning and Development Services has been allocated funding from the City Council to support the retention of external consultant services for the Health Impact Assessment as well as additional funding for general consultant services to support the STGPD Code Amendments.

### **Community Engagement**

The adopted Work Plan included a general identification of stakeholder groups and engagement strategies, including the following:

- Staff Team (representing TPCHD, Tacoma Water, ES and PDS)
- Permitted and Non-permitted Businesses o Homeowners and Taxpayers
- Neighborhood Councils (South Tacoma, Central, and South End)
- Planning Commission and City Council
- Additional local, regional, state and federal agencies and organizations, as may be identified
- Methods: Community Meetings; Surveys; Targeted Ads.
- Dissemination of information, data, maps and publicity materials that are user-friendly
- Focus on Equity

### **Engagement Next Steps**

1. Coordinate an engagement strategy for the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District as part of the broader Comprehensive Plan Update and to support engagement coordination among the related projects to leverage planned engagement.
  - a. Including establishment of a Critical Areas Review Team with both internal and external SMEs and community-based participants.
2. Initial outreach efforts for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2024:
  - a. Late January: South Tacoma Community Kick-off Meeting
  - b. Late February: South Tacoma Plan-a-Thon
  - c. Mid-March: South Tacoma Report Out