



# MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Chelsea Talbert, Strategic Initiatives Program Coordinator

Date: June 15, 2023

**Subject: City of Tacoma Equity Index**

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## **Overview of Program**

The Equity Index is a data-driven tool to see where projects, policies, programs or services can have the largest impact on addressing inequity and where investment can provide the biggest improvement in factors that impact life outcomes.

The City of Tacoma uses the Equity Index to identify, track, and close disparities, and prioritize investments based on where and who has access to opportunity, for example opportunity to safely walk to school, opportunity to earn a living wage job, opportunity to access healthy food and opportunity to have safe and health environmental interactions. There are 32 indicators, which are used to assess community strengths and disparities and help identify how we can make investments to increase resources and interrupt inequity.

Tacoma's Strategic Plan, Tacoma 2025, is about creating the opportunity for Tacoma residents to enjoy a high quality of life, earn a living wage, have access to education, and help shape their neighborhoods and city. In Tacoma, equity and empowerment are top priorities, meaning that all Tacoma residents must have equitable opportunities to reach their full potential and share in the benefits of community progress. In other words, equity is when everyone has access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential.

**Very High Opportunity** represents locations that have better outcomes because of access to better opportunities to succeed and excel in life. These better outcomes include things like high performing schools, access to adequate transportation, safe neighborhoods, livable wage employment, good health outcomes such as higher life expectancies, and safe and healthy environmental conditions.

In contrast, **Low Opportunity** areas have worse outcomes because they have more obstacles and barriers to opportunity within the area. These communities have limited access to institutional and societal investments that limit their quality of life.

Achieving equity requires intentionally building equity into what we do, how we do it, and how we approach our collective vision. This means recognizing that historical policies and practices have made vastly different investments in different communities. It means centering the voices most impacted by the issues we face as a community. It means reflecting the community we serve. In addition, it means that we should develop our policies, programs, and services with equity as an intentional, central component of everything that we do.

### **Questions and Discussion**

Staff invites input from the Transportation Commission on three key questions:

- 1. Does this align with your definition of equity? If not, how is it different?**
- 2. Do you have any concerns or wonderings when it comes to using the Equity Index for transportation projects and investments?**
- 3. Do you think the Equity Index should be incorporated into the update of the Transportation Master Plan? If so, how?**

### **More Information**

[City of Tacoma Equity Index](#)



# MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Cailin Henley, Safe Routes to School Coordinator / Transportation Planner

Date: June 15, 2023

**Subject: Safe Routes to School Action Plan Update**

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## Overview of Program

The City of Tacoma Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program works to make it safer, more convenient, and fun for K-12 students and families to walk, bike, and actively roll to school through:

- targeted infrastructure improvements,
- walking and biking safety education, and
- encouragement programs.

The SRTS program operates through partnerships with Tacoma Public Schools, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, and local community organizations to support a students and families to safely walk, bike, and actively roll to school. The 2017 Tacoma SRTS Action Plan created the program and established the results-based framework that directs the work of the SRTS Coordinator and partners and prioritizes schools for SRTS resources.

After five years, the 2023 SRTS Action Plan will update the program's actions and prioritization analysis using new safety and equity data and feedback from program partners and priority areas.

## Questions and Discussion

Staff invites input from the Transportation Commission for the 2023 SRTS Action Plan update through two key questions:

- 1. How do you want to see this program grow in the next 5 years? What would be realistic, tangible outcomes from this growth?**
- 2. What do you see as the Transportation Commission's role in helping the program grow?**

## More Information

[City of Tacoma Safe Routes to School](#)



# MEMO

To: Tacoma Transportation Commission

From: Matt Stevens, Co-Chair and Carrie Wilhelme, Senior Transportation Planner

Date: Originally provided May 11, 2023; updated June 14, 2023

**Subject: Climate Action Plan and Transportation Goals – Letter of Recommendation**

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## Overview

During the April 19, 2023, the Transportation Commission received a presentation on the progress of Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation. Data collection performed for the development of the CAP found that 44% of Tacoma's 2019 emissions came from transportation making.

After receiving the presentation from Environmental Services staff and learning that the Sustainable Tacoma Commission would be drafting a letter to Council outlining their CAP priorities, the Transportation Commission agreed that Commission should write a letter that supports the Sustainable Tacoma Commission but also highlights CAP transportation priorities. The Sustainable Tacoma Commission began the conversation at their April meeting and continued their discussions at the May meeting. When addressing active transportation needs, the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be saying the following:

*"Departments are unable to apply for grants due to lack of grant match, especially for facilities and active transportation projects. We are thankful that funding was committed to undertake a facilities decarbonization study, but the City cannot complete the CAP actions without leveraging outside dollars and currently funds are not available for the needs. We would like to request grant match dollars for these areas be committed in the mid-biennium budget modification process for capital grant match. We should be looking to "Lead by Example" in our facilities, fleet and sustainable transportation right-of-way projects and retrofits, and striving for more than the minimum requirements, but rather considering true life cycle costs and health benefits. "*

## Questions and Discussion

- What are the top 1-2 priorities you would like highlighted in the letter of recommendation from the Transportation Commission to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Council Subcommittee regarding CAP implementation?
- What specific points would you like mentioned in the letter relative to addressing climate action through transportation choices?

#	STRATEGY FOR A BETTER TACOMA	ACTION	2024 OUTPUT	LEAD DEPT	COUNCIL PRIORITY	CITY COST ESTIMATE	JOB \$ ADAPTATION
				SUPPORTING DEPTS / KEY PARTNERS	TIES TO OTHER PLANS, POLICIES	ONE-TIME OR ONGOING ANNUAL COST	EQUITY

**MOBILITY AND LAND USE**

**44% of Tacoma’s 2019 emissions came from transportation.** An equitable and sustainable transportation system must prioritize active transportation and transit. Increasing active travel and transit modes and infrastructure can ensure safe and equitable access to jobs, schools, and services city-wide, reduce collisions that injure or kill our residents, and create healthier, more connected communities. Vehicle electrification is also a critical element to meet our climate change goals and offers significant GHG emissions, which would both help put the city on track to meeting its net zero target and significantly improve the quality of air that Tacomans breathe.

9	Living	Develop and implement a plan to fund, prioritize, and complete the City’s network of sidewalks, curb ramps, Safe Routes to School improvements, and bike connections by 2050, new funding sources could include voter approved initiatives (Streets Initiative), impact fees, General Fund, REET, parking in lieu fees, federal and state grants/allocations surface parking tax, among others.	Funding Plan complete and new funding sources secured	Public Works	Access, Community Safety	\$500,000 one-time for plan (annual implementation approx. \$60 million/year to reach 2050 goal)	\$
					Transportation Master Plan		



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				SUPPORTING DEPTS / KEY PARTNERS	TIES TO OTHER PLANS, POLICIES	ONE-TIME OR ONGOING ANNUAL COST	EQUITY
10	Living	Increase staff capacity to coordinate on transit projects and implement the green transportation hierarchy, which prioritizes the movement of people over the movement of cars with pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders as the top priorities. Coordinate land use changes with high-capacity transit investments to support transit-oriented development.	a) Internal review of processes and barriers to transit projects being completed	Public Works, Planning & Development Services	Access	\$100,000 - \$500,000	
			b) Staff members hired to manage transit coordination activities and land use changes	Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, other community partners	Transportation Master Plan		
11	Living	Increase staffing and funding for community programming that provides easy entry opportunities for community members to access active transportation and transit (i.e. open streets events, InMotion residential outreach programs, e-bikes for essential workers, micromobility access, play streets, parklets, etc). Prioritize equity when developing and supporting projects and initiatives.	a) Community engagement has been undertaken to identify desired programs	Public Works	Access	\$100,000 - \$500,000	
			b) Staff member hired to manage active transportation programs, events, and partnerships	Pierce Transit, other community partners	Transportation Master Plan		\$
			c) Five programs / initiatives supported and user surveys positive				

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				SUPPORTING DEPTS / KEY PARTNERS	TIES TO OTHER PLANS, POLICIES	ONE-TIME OR ONGOING ANNUAL COST	ADAPTATION EQUITY 🌱
12	Living	Update City policies and practices to design and implement streets that are safe, equitable, and accessible. Update the Design Manual to reflect best practices in active transportation and transit design and safety for all road users. Strengthen internal policies to require Complete Streets implementation on all projects that impact the street, including repaving, chipsealing, and re-striping projects.	a) Design Manual updated	Public Works	Access, Community Safety	<\$100,000	\$
			b) Internal policies updated and implemented	Pierce Transit, Sound Transit	Transportation Master Plan		
17	Living	Improve land use density bonuses and tax credits to require efficient zero carbon energy and green building certification.	Land use zoning codes and multifamily tax credits updated	Planning & Development Services	Housing	<\$100,000	
				Community and Economic Development-Housing	Affordable Housing Action Strategy		
19	Breathing	Provide support to Pierce Transit to develop a zero emission transit plan and help Pierce Transit compete effectively for state and federal funding opportunities.	Plan developed and being implemented	Tacoma Power	Access	<\$100,000	
				Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, Public Works	Tacoma Power Transportation Electrification Plan		

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20	Breathing	Continue to update zoning and development standards to ensure that new development supports active transportation, transit ridership, and integrated public and private urban design that minimizes parking requirements and parking management strategies to meet City affordability and sustainability goals.	Best practices in active mobility and people-centered design are clearly outlined in the code or Design Manual	Planning & Development Services	Access	<\$100,000	
				Public Works, Tacoma Power	Community and Economic Development Strategy		
21	Breathing	Seek federal and state grant funding to support electric vehicle and e-bike use in low and very low opportunity neighborhoods.	Two-thirds of EV and e-bike grant-funded programs and projects in Tacoma adopted in low and very low opportunity areas	Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability, Public Works, Tacoma Power	Access	\$1 million - \$10 million	
					Tacoma Power Transportation Electrification Plan		



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22	Breathing	Support zero emission technology innovation in the marine, trucking and rail sector.	Tacoma Power Tacoma Rail	Access	>\$10 million	
		a) Five projects initiated in the Tideflats  b) Strategy developed	Northwest Seaport Alliance, Port of Tacoma, WSDOT, Tacoma Manufacturing Industrial Council, and WA Truckers' Association	Tacoma Power Transportation Electrification Plan, Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy		\$
41	Prepared	a) Actively partner with NW Seaport Alliance and Port of Tacoma on projects.				
		b) Tacoma Rail demonstrates leadership by prioritizing air pollution reductions in new Strategic Plan and piloting innovative clean technology as available.				
		Coordinate with partner agencies to expand public access to cooling and air quality relief centers within every neighborhood. Ensure adequate distribution of water and N95 masks for unhoused community members.	Emergency Management, Neighborhood and Community Services  Tacoma Public Library, Metro Parks, Tacoma Public Schools, Tacoma-Pierce Co. Health Department, other community partners	Community Safety, Health  Emergency Management Plan	\$100,000 - \$1 million	

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45	Prepared	Conduct a study focusing on flooding impacts to critical roads, other infrastructure, and steep slopes due to increasing intense rainfall events. Integrate findings into City development codes, emergency management, and capital planning.	Flooding vulnerability study completed	Environmental Services, Public Works	Community Safety	\$100,000	
				Emergency Management, Planning & Development Services, Pierce County, FEMA, the Port of Tacoma, US Army Corps of Engineers	Transportation Master Plan, Pierce County Flood Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, Planning & Development Services Strategic Plan	One-time	

## BUILDINGS AND ENERGY

In 2019 buildings accounted for 20% of Tacoma’s GHG emissions. Key actions to reduce Tacoma’s emissions from buildings include switching natural gas heating systems to electric heat pumps, retrofitting existing buildings, and ensuring that new buildings meet net zero standards.

6	Together	Work with existing networks and organizations to create and support Sustainable Industrial and Manufacturing Collaborative/Roundtable. Assist in development of low-carbon transition opportunities for existing businesses including funding, incentives, technical assistance, and education on electrification, new fuels and technology.	Collaborative Roundtable developed and active	Community and Economic Development	Livable Wage Jobs	<\$100,000	
				Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability, Tacoma Power, Port of Tacoma, Manufacturing Industrial Council, Dome District, Puget Sound Energy	Tideflats Subarea Planning Process, Community and Economic Development Strategy	Ongoing	\$