



City of Tacoma  
Transportation Commission

August 7, 2023

City of Tacoma  
747 Market Street, Room 1200  
Tacoma, WA 98402

Subject: Climate Action Plan and Transportation

Dear Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Council Committee:

The City of Tacoma Transportation Commission would like to voice its support of the 2022 Climate Action Plan and the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's response following the release of the annual 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP) Progress Report. We would furthermore like to share our concerns about the linked risks and opportunities of transportation and climate policy.

We agree with the Sustainable Tacoma Commission that in light of the 2022 Report that progress has been made towards meeting the City's climate goals. However, we are equally concerned that there are gaps remaining and extensive further effort required if the City is serious about meeting its climate goals and protecting and preparing our community members and businesses. Our position is that implementation of Tacoma's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will further these climate goals because the TMP and the CAP are aligned in intent and outcomes related to climate.

We therefore make the following observations jointly related to transportation and climate.

1. The Transportation Commission strongly believes that we need to consider positive and negative linked impacts of climate and transportation to our community, considering health, income and quality-of-life impacts for our most vulnerable and historically disadvantaged residents. For example, citizens using transit in the city of Tacoma are unavoidably exposed to heat and smoke during climate events. When riders do not have alternatives to transit, they are uniquely unable to shelter from these events. Furthermore, children walking or rolling to school have few options to shelter from extreme climate events which may affect attendance and, in turn, impact their education. How can safe routes to school be safe under these conditions? We encourage consideration of these impacts and their mitigation as an urgent matter.
2. We agree with the Sustainable Tacoma Commission that city departments are not fully able to implement actions or apply for grants due to lack of capacity and grant match. We strongly support additional positions to further the City's aligned transportation and climate goals, including voicing our support for the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's ask of a Landscape Architect. The Landscape Architect position could be tasked with improving tree canopy and other landscape features around existing transit infrastructure and along common pedestrian and bicycle pathways to protect users and support safe routes to school.
3. In alignment with the Sustainable Tacoma Commission, we have concerns about land use decisions and policies; specifically the potential of types of land uses such as warehouses to generate additional traffic, leading the City further away from its committed environmental and transportation goals. We should, instead, be focused on the interrelationship between land use density, non-motorized accessibility and transit use. This is one reason why the Transportation Commission strongly supports Home in Tacoma and efforts to increase housing density near transit routes.

In light of the important links between climate and transportation, this year the Transportation Commission will focus on a stronger connection between the CAP and the TMP in the upcoming TMP update. Thank you for your attention to these most important actions to protect our home and build a better Tacoma for all.



Bruce Morris  
Transportation Commission Co-Chair



Matt Stevens  
Transportation Commission Co-Chair

Cc: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
Josh Diekmann, Interim Director, Public Works Department  
Michael P. Slevin III, Director, Environmental Services Department  
Kristin Lynett, Sustainability Manager, Environmental Services Department  
Steven Atkinson, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Services Department