



CITY OF TACOMA

SUSTAINABLE TACOMA COMMISSION

VIRTUAL MEETING

DRAFT AGENDA

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 2021

5:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

To comply with Governor Jay Inslee's [Proclamation 20-28.15](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will not be conducted in-person. The meeting can be attended remotely using the following information:

Meeting phone line: (253) 215-8782

Meeting hyperlink: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84328083947?pwd=YXo2N1dURXJhRkxpSHNMMnZhRTIGQT09>

Meeting ID: 843-2808-3947

Meeting password: 253253

Microphones will be muted and cameras turned off for all meeting participants, except for the Commissioners and staff presenters. Public comments will be accepted in meeting during the time set aside by the agenda. In addition, the Commission encourages community members to submit written comments prior to the meeting by 4:00 p.m. on August 19th. Please e-mail your comments to PBabbitt@cityoftacoma.org, put in the subject line "STC Meeting 8/19/21", and clearly indicate which agenda item(s), if any, you are addressing.

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVE AUGUST 19 AGENDA AND JULY 15 MINUTES
- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- IV. STAFF UPDATES
- V. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES
- VI. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN DRAFT – PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION
- VII. HEAT AND SMOKE PREPAREDNESS – RECOMMENDATION LETTER
- VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- IX. OBJECTIVES FOR NEXT MEETING
- X. ADJOURNMENT

Sustainable Tacoma Commission (STC)

8/19/2021 Virtual Public Meeting

Welcome

Commissioners

Members of the public

Presenters and staff support:

LaTasha Wortham

Tacoma Public Utilities, Public Affairs and Communication

Patrick Babbitt, Kristin Lynett, Mike Carey

City of Tacoma, Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability

Beth Jarot

City of Tacoma, Planning & Development Services



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Call to Order



Land Acknowledgment

ʔuk'wədiid čət ʔuhigwəd txwəl tiit ʔa čət ʔal tə swatxwixwtxwəd ʔə tiit puyaləpabš. ʔa ti dxwʔa ti swatxwixwtxwəd ʔə tiit puyaləpabš ʔəstətətłil tul'al tudiʔ tuhaʔkw. didiʔt ʔa həlgwəʔ ʔal ti sləxłil. dxwəstətłils həlgwəʔ gwəl λ'uyayus həlgwəʔ gwəl λ'uλ'axwəd həlgwəʔ tiit bədədəʔs gwəl tixdxw həlgwəʔ tiit ʔiisəds həlgwəʔ gwəl λ'uʔalalus həlgwəʔ gwəl λ'utxwəlšucidəb. xwəla ···b ʔə tiit tuyəl'yələbs.

We gratefully honor and acknowledge that we rest on the traditional lands of the Puyallup People. The Puyallup people have lived on this land since the beginning of time. They are still here today. They live, work, raise their children, take care of their community, practice their traditional ways and speak the Twulshootseed language – just as their ancestors did.



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Agenda – 8/19/2021

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
- II. **APPROVE AUGUST 19 AGENDA & JULY 15 MINUTES**
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- IV. **STAFF UPDATES**
- V. **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**
- VI. **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN DRAFT – PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION**
- VII. **HEAT AND SMOKE PREPAREDNESS – RECOMMENDATION LETTER**
- VIII. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- IX. **OBJECTIVES FOR NEXT MEETING**
- X. **ADJOURNMENT**

(Motion)



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

7/15/2021 Commission Minutes Approval

(Motion)



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Public Comments



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Staff Updates

Last Meeting: 7/15

1. Tacoma-Pierce County Solid & Hazardous Waste Management Plan
2. Sustainability Small Grants Applications
3. Home in Tacoma Project
4. Top 5 Climate Actions List



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Staff Updates

Commission Notices:

- Let Commission know if you can't attend 9/16
- Seeking applicants: cityoftacoma.org/servetacoma
 - Planning Commission (9/10)
 - Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group
 - Sustainability Small Grants (9/30)



Office of
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and Sustainability

Staff Updates

Around the City:

- COVID cases and hospitalizations are spiking again
- Sunrise Tacoma's Green New Deal proposal



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Staff Updates – Proposed Tree Codes

Summary of Proposed Updates to TMC Title 9 (8/17/2021)

Title 9 “Public Ways” of Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC): concerns management of trees in the right-of-way (ROW), but numerous outdated and unclear requirements and many inconsistencies with industry standards and City-adopted policies.

9.18: Trees and Shrubs – Trimming and Removal

9.19: Trees and Shrubs – Planting

9.20: Trees and Shrubs – View Blockage

Proposed Title 9 changes are categorized in the following sections:

1. Remove prohibitions on food producing trees in the ROW.
2. Clarify protections and update language to industry standards for ROW trees to reduce illegal removal and damage, leading to poor tree health and potential public hazard.
3. Update the antiquated penalty/fine structure to recover costs of enforcement and replacement of illegally removed or damaged trees in an adaptive way to keep pace with industry

Subcommittee Updates

- Welcoming Commissioners to report on subcommittee activities, possibly including:
 - Climate Action Planning
 - Planning Commission
 - Transportation Commission
 - Tideflats Subarea Plan
 - Other?
- Upcoming subcommittee activities:
 - Waste prevention & recycling: rescheduling



Other Business Items

1. Climate Action Plan Draft
 - Presentation & Discussion
2. Heat & Smoke Preparedness
 - Recommendation Letter



Climate Action Plan Draft – Presentation

Staff: Pat Babbitt (he/him), **Kristi Lynett** (she/her)

City of Tacoma, Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability

(Change now to those files)



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Heat & Smoke Preparedness – Recommendation Letter

Staff: Pat Babbitt (he/him), **Beth Jarot** (she/her)

City of Tacoma, Office of Environmental Policy & Sustainability,
Planning & Development Services

(Change now to that file)



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Public Comments



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability

Objectives for Next Meeting (Sept. 16)

Meeting items:

- Climate Action Plan – recommendation letter
- Hemp Industrial Uses – presentation
- Urban Forestry update

Non-meeting items:

- Reschedule waste prevention/recycle reset subcommittee meeting
- Schedule outreach and/or green economy subcommittee meetings



Adjournment

(Motion)



Office of
Environmental Policy
and Sustainability



City of Tacoma
Office of Sustainability

August 19, 2021

TO: Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee

RE: Extreme Heat and Smoke Planning and Response

Dear Chair McCarthy and Members of the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee,

As you know, the Sustainable Tacoma Commission was created by Tacoma City Council to advise council members and staff on sustainability initiatives, as well as bring community accountability, transparency, and vigilance to the long-term implementation of Tacoma's Environmental Action Plan and other sustainability policies.

We write now because we are alarmed that nearly 450 people may have died from heat-related stresses in Washington State, including 8 in Tacoma, in the late June 2021 heat wave.^{1 2} Tacomans are not used to or prepared for these temperatures,^{3 4} which reached a high of 108 degrees Fahrenheit across three days that broke 100 degrees and shattered climate records.^{5 6} Local reporting shows that 23 deaths in our county were victims aged 53-96.⁷ Extreme heat can disproportionately hurt isolated and low-income community members who lack the technology or social support to stay cool or get help. In particular, we are concerned about seniors, kids, pregnant women, low-income and BIPOC community members, outdoor workers, people with breathing or heart issues, and our unhoused neighbors. Their safety requires more than a few community spaces opened in some areas of our city and county for parts of days during extreme weather events.

Heat waves are among the deadliest natural disasters but can seem invisible, because their costs and death tolls can be difficult to track immediately.⁸ This June's heat wave was a harsh lesson for our region. We have known for years that we would be seeing more frequent and intense extreme heat events in the northwest due to the impacts of climate change, and had ample notice of this approaching heat event, yet we seem to have not been prepared to respond to the level of need. Webpages and social media for the City and other public agencies lacked consistent information about local resources, including cooling centers. Cooling centers were not open in every neighborhood on every day for every hour of the heatwave. Important information about public resources and safety were hidden behind newspaper paywalls. Transit or other forms of assisted transportation for unhoused community members do not necessarily offer to carry their supplies to places of refuge that we offer - essentially asking them to leave behind their possessions or home. Other community members, like isolated seniors, needed more outreach, wellness checks, as well as transportation assistance. We feel unsure that information was consistently available in multiple languages. Public leaders were not vocal enough about the threat and response. The City did not exert enough leadership to coordinate and improve services for our community. This was a cross-institutional and system-wide failure. Overall, it is clear that a more intense or prolonged heatwave, or other natural disaster, could have been devastating.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/08/11/climate/deaths-pacific-northwest-heat-wave.html>

² <https://www.thenewtribune.com/news/weather-news/article252767443.html>

³ <https://www.npr.org/2021/06/28/1010923130/the-pacific-northwest-has-limited-a-c-making-the-heat-wave-more-dangerous>

⁴ <https://slate.com/technology/2021/07/oregon-washington-heat-conditioner.html>

⁵ <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/quickdata>

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/jun/28/pacific-north-west-breaks-heat-records>

⁷ <https://www.thenewtribune.com/news/weather-news/article252767443.html>

⁸ https://www.who.int/health-topics/heatwaves#tab=tab_1

We must prepare more or else face more consequences of a changed climate with worsening weather extremes. And, we need to learn and act fast to better protect our most vulnerable community members – as we write, more extreme heat and wildfire smoke has reached Tacoma.⁹ We are including recommendations for smoke days, as many of the same preparedness and outreach strategies are relevant for both extreme heat and smoke days.

We recommend:

1. Convening City departments that can collaborate on extreme heat and smoke preparedness, including Tacoma Fire Department, Neighborhood and Community Services, and Environmental Services
2. Developing a countywide partnership to combine and coordinate efforts with other public organizations, including Pierce County, Metro Parks Tacoma, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Tacoma School District, and Tacoma Public Libraries
3. Making extreme heat and smoke response a major part of our emergency preparedness strategy
4. Preparing City and other public buildings, such as community centers, for emergencies and natural disasters, including extreme heat and smoke
5. Expanding staffing and resources, such as food, water, bedding, personal care items, and first aid, for these service centers
6. Opening cooling and clean air centers 24 hours a day until extreme heat or smoke events pass
7. Increasing access to energy-efficient air conditioning, KN-95 masks, and filter fans for residences - building upon Council Member Beale's request for 600 filter fans and providing multi-year support
8. Conducting wellness checks, particularly for seniors, isolated, and unhoused community members
9. Using media and communications tools to amplify local health advisories and emergency services, in multiple languages
10. Expanding access to street trees and trees for yards to ensure everyone can find shade in the long-run, and reducing Urban Heat Islands in the city.
11. Encouraging Pierce Transit to make public transit free to anyone who needs it during emergencies
12. Investing in public health infrastructure and supporting burdened partners like the Health Department
13. Investing in housing quantity and quality, and supporting partners to serve our unhoused neighbors' unique needs
14. Improving development codes to be climate change adapted and to meet national healthy housing standards

Extreme heat and smoke hurts our fellow community members, shuts businesses, warps and crumbles infrastructure, and overloads our healthcare system.^{10 11 12 13} We must prepare for extreme weather and climate change, and we must also aggressively implement Tacoma's next Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Strategy, which are still in development at this time. We need to make resources available now to respond to this and future emergencies.

Sincerely,



Lexi Brewer
Chair, Sustainable Tacoma Commission

⁹ <https://www.thenewtribune.com/opinion/editorials/article253425779.html>

¹⁰ https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-07-2010/heat_wave_threatens_older_americans.html

¹¹ <https://www.sfgate.com/weather/article/Portland-streetcar-power-cables-melt-heat-wave-16281482.php>

¹² <https://www.thenewtribune.com/news/weather-news/article253446194.html>

¹³ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7029e1.htm?s_cid=mm7029e1_w&utm_campaign=Hot%20News&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=141769208&_hse_nc=p2ANqtz--W5hrfaGsPG7DBBAuWjgBXdaYrBQmfDhMLKsoBgJobzxiKSzA5J07jfPlyYueHzRiQMMBwmsZ5xIW3Jh15ubpre5uKQwFPnoCE9u03RLOmfopom1I&utm_content=141769208&utm_source=hs_email

CC: City of Tacoma Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability
Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
Tadd Wille, Deputy City Manager
Michael P. Slevin III, Environmental Services Department Director
Toryono Green, Tacoma Fire Department Chief
Linda Stewart, Neighborhood and Community Services Department Director
Jennifer Kammerzell, Public Works
Lihuang Wung, Planning and Development Services
Anita Gallagher, City Manager's Office



City of Tacoma Sustainable Tacoma Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: August 19, 2021

Commission Members Present:

Matthew Benedict (Vice-Chair), Lexi Brewer (Chair), Margaret Schwertner, Katin Kendrena, Evlondo Cooper, Emily Pinckney, Gabe Moaalii, Nikie Walters, Tony Ivey (joins 5:07pm), Adam Reichenberger (joins 5:08pm)

Commission Members Excused:

Elly Claus-McGahan

Commission Members Absent:

Ashley Sloan

Others Present:

Commission Support Staff: Patrick Babbitt (Commission staff liaison),

Guest Presenters: Mike Carey from City of Tacoma Environmental Services Department, Beth Jarot from City of Tacoma Planning and Development Services Department

Members of the Public: Ben Fowlkes, Steve Nicholas, Elizabeth, Barb Church

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Commission Chairperson Lexi Brewer at 5:05pm, including an acknowledgement of the occupied indigenous lands this Commission conducts its business on. The Chair welcomed Commissioners, staff, and members of the public and shared virtual meeting practices and requirements.

Approval of August 19, 2021 Meeting Agenda

Motion: To adopt the agenda as written. Motion made by Matthew Benedict.

Seconded by: Katin Kendrena

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Tony Ivey, Adam Reichenberger, Elly Claus-McGahan, Ashley Sloan

Approval of July 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To adopt meeting minutes as written. Motion made by Matthew Benedict.

Seconded by: Evlondo Cooper

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Elly Claus-McGahan, Ashley Sloan

Public Comment

No public comment was delivered in writing or given in meeting at this time.

Staff Updates

Patrick Babbitt, the Commission's staff liaison, recounted the Sustainable Tacoma Commission's (STC) July meeting activities and then delivered new notices to the Commission. New notices included an update that the City's Planning Commission and Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group are seeking applicants and that the Sustainability Small Grants program is seeking applicants. Discussing other important news related to the Tacoma community, staff shared recent Health Department reporting that COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are high and increasing locally in Pierce County and then pointed meeting attendees to informational resources; also, staff shared that Sunrise Tacoma's Green New Deal proposal reached Tacoma City Council and staff, and that the Office of Sustainability is considering proposal contents as it reviews the draft Climate Action Plan.

Mike Carey introduced potential draft updates to Municipal Code related to trees. Proposed Code updates will relate to tree and shrub trimming and removal, planting, and view blockage. Updates will seek to remove prohibitions on food producing trees in the right-of-way; clarify and improve protections and related public safety for right-of-way trees; and modernize the penalty/fine structure related to removed or damaged trees.

Staff thanked Commissioners for their work outside meetings, including subcommittees.

Subcommittee Updates

Patrick updated the Commission that its Waste Prevention and Recycling Subcommittee initially scheduled to meet on Wednesday, June 23 is still in the process of being rescheduled based on staff and Commission availability following changes in Commissioner availability. Lexi reported that her position on Tacoma's Tideflats Advisory Committee, which she participates on as a local environmental leader, will be filled with Elly Claus-McGahan while Lexi takes temporary leave. Lexi asked that staff follow-up to support Commissioners, including Evlondo, Katin, and Emily, in coordinating a Climate Action Plan-focused outreach subcommittee. The Commission may activate a green economy-focused subcommittee soon, too.

No further updates were provided by Commissioners regarding other subcommittee activities.

Commission Business Items

Climate Action Planning – Climate Action Plan Draft Review, Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Patrick shared a working draft of Tacoma's community Climate Action Plan. He walked through Plan contents and climate actions. He pointed to elements that the Commission might be most interested in, including portions of the content that they contributed to. He updated Commissioners about the Plan development timeline, including a staff presentation on the draft

to Tacoma City Council's Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee on September 22 and potential adoption by Tacoma City Council at their meeting in early November (with the date still to be determined). Public comment on the final draft will be taken in October.

Heat and Smoke Preparedness Recommendation Letter – Lexi Brewer, Sustainable Tacoma Commission; Patrick Babbitt, Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability (OEPS), City of Tacoma

Lexi and Patrick introduced and provided context for a draft recommendation letter regarding Commission recommendations to improve Tacoma's preparedness for extreme heat and smoke. The letter communicates the Commission's concern with the large number of regional heat-related deaths during the late June 2021 heat wave; highlights Tacoma's vulnerabilities to extreme heat and smoke preparedness; and emphasizes the unique vulnerability of seniors, kids, pregnant women, low-income and BIPOC community members, outdoor workers, people with breathing or heart issues, and unhoused community members. Generally, the Commission recommends that the City improve internal and cross-organizational coordination to prepare for and respond to extreme weather, like heat and wildfire smoke; increase services available, particularly to vulnerable community members; and invest in long-term solutions to vulnerabilities, such as increasing housing for those who are unhoused and generally unable to avoid extreme weather. The Commission connects worsening and more frequent extreme weather to climate change and the need to implement Tacoma's next Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Strategy.

Lexi will work with staff to finalize the letter and deliver it to Tacoma City Council's Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee.

Heat and Smoke Preparedness Recommendation Letter

Motion: To approve the letter as written with final general edits and formatting to be completed before delivery. Motion made by Tony Ivey.

Seconded by: Margaret Schwertner

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Elly Claus-McGahan, Ashley Sloan

Public Comment

Community member Barb Church gave public comments, reading a letter she will deliver to the Commission regarding the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations being considered by Tacoma City Council's Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee.

Objectives for or before the Next Meeting

- Staff Updates
- Subcommittee Updates
- Hemp Industrial Uses – Presentation
- Tacoma Tree Codes – Presentation
- Climate Action Plan – Letter of Support

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Commission adjourned at 6:49pm.

Adjournment of August 19, 2021 Meeting

Motion: To adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Evlondo Cooper.

Seconded by: Tony Ivey

Action: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion we declared adopted.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Elly Claus-McGahan, Ashley Sloan

The next meeting of the Sustainable Tacoma Commission will be held virtually on Thursday, September 16, 2021, from 5:00 to 7:00pm.

Lexi Brewer, Chair

Patrick Babbitt, Staff / Note Taker