



Kristin Lynett
City of Tacoma
747 Market Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
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RE: The opportunity: Building a sustainable, equitable and prosperous Tacoma: Tacoma Community Climate Action Plan

Pierce Transit appreciates the opportunity to participate in the 2021 Tacoma Community Climate Action Planning process and wishes the City and its residents' success in achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Pierce Transit is committed to play a significant role in this process by providing meaningful transit solutions by expanding our base facilities to deploy a zero-emission infrastructure and fleet. National studies are revealing that transit patrons enjoy zero-emission buses and their outcomes on carbon reduction. We respectfully submit the following comments for your consideration:

Please note in your plan that national averages reveal that public transit produces significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions per passenger mile than private vehicles. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 41% of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions were caused by single occupancy vehicles in 2018. With this being said, we feel you should change the graphic on page 16 (2019 emissions) of your plan to reflect a single occupancy vehicle, not a bus icon.

Under the "What You Can Do For Tacoma Climate Action" we suggest a sentence or two on live, work, play communities. Many individual choices should highlight first and foremost the need to locate near neighborhoods and communities to reduce commute times and to advocate to the City of Tacoma for meaningful walk, bike and transit infrastructure that reduces reliance on single occupancy vehicle trips while providing more options for residents. Research shows that roughly half of all car trips in US cities are under three miles and can be replaced with zero-emission micromobility options such as scooters and bikes. Miles of meaningful and connected bike and pedestrian infrastructure can do more to get people out of cars regardless of their emission technologies.

We also acknowledge that disjointed parking standards contribute to car culture communities and work against public transit as a legitimate option to reduce carbon emissions. Your plan speaks to urban heat islands in Tacoma and their effect on climate. We recommend that the plan speaks more to parking standards in areas of environmental degradation. We recommend future studies be conducted by the City to see how much buildings, roads, parking lots, and other urban features heat up neighborhoods and then create policies and standards to mitigate these impacts. Just as the EPA regulates runoff pollution through the Clean Water Act, and air pollution through the Clean Air Act, a cooling study might demonstrate regulated heat pollution scenarios supported with meaningful public participation.

Raw materials in zero-emission vehicles have been linked to grave environmental and human rights concerns. Equity concerns should not just be locally based but consider broad human rights that mitigate water intensive processes, child labor, and smelting which create additional ethical quandaries. Destination (end point) environmental benefits



and tradeoffs should not be at the expense of indigenous farmers and herders in the international community using source point materials.

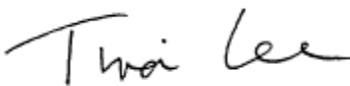
With these comments to your plan, please note current Pierce Transit initiatives:

- Stream Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System Expansion Study is underway to prioritize the expansion of BRT routes in Pierce County. The 15-month study is analyzing and assumes future routes will operate with Zero-Emission and Battery technology.
- Maintenance and Operations Base Improvements (MOBI) are being implemented in a phased approach. The agency's base is currently operating beyond its intended capacity. The improvements address capacity issues as well as allowing Pierce Transit the flexibility to work on a diverse and growing fleet of vehicles. Pierce Transit's base can accommodate 12 electric buses, with 9 buses operating in service today. With a future expansion of three more electric buses, Pierce Transit will not be able to expand the fleet further without significant financial investment and infrastructure to implement future phases of the MOBI project at our headquarters.
- In 2022, Pierce Transit will be working on a zero-emissions implementation plan to prioritize a multi-propulsion fleet that is resilient to climate change, is equitable in its roll out, and can meet the demands of its patrons.

We recognize that the rate at which we can convert our fleet to towards zero-emissions relies heavily on whether the agency can increase its sales tax funding levels from .06% to .09% and fully fund the implementation of the Maintenance and Operations Base Improvements Project. With this being said, we hope the City of Tacoma's Community Climate Action Plan can speak to this need and support Pierce Transit when the agency pursues grant funding and a vote from the public.

It is also well-documented that desegregated communities increase positive environmental impacts for all. A well-integrated city compliments the mission of public transit, increasing access, opportunity and connection for both rider and non-riders like. As the city works to implement complimentary initiatives and policies, please work to ensure equitable outcomes for everyone remain a top priority and measurable outcome.

We support your initiatives and realize the need for meaningful change in climate actions and strategies to make a better and more just Tacoma.



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Planning Manger

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