COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PHASE I: CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING

City of Tacoma, Office of Environmental
Policy and Sustainability
&
Citizens for a Healthy Bay

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Executive Summary

In response to City Council Resolution No. 40509 declaring a climate emergency in Tacoma and Resolution No. 40622 calling for anti-racist systems transformation, the climate action planning process aims to center historically underrepresented and underserved community voices towards a comprehensive climate action plan update to the 2016 Environmental Action Plan.

In partnership with Citizens for a Healthy Bay (CHB), we have developed a phased approach to community engagement for the climate action planning process. As a local environmental justice non-profit organization, CHB brings expertise in the natural sciences, environmental policy, and community collaboration and advocacy

Phase I Engagement Purpose

The first phase of community engagement focused on:

- Building and deepening local relationships and partnerships
- Empowering community excitement, expertise, and creativity
- Activating community members and partner networks
- Training and educating community members to increase community resilience and leadership
- Understanding and prioritizing the voices of communities that are underrepresented, underserved, and made vulnerable to climate change

Phase I Engagement Activities

Phase I engagement activities included:

- Establishing a community Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup (EJ Leaders) to help steer climate action planning, engagement, and Plan content development
- Collecting community input using interviews, surveys, and visioning activities
- Facilitating community Climate Ambassadors (Ambassadors) to help collect input, build relationships, and provide climate change education

Phase I Engagement Methods & Audiences

With help from community Climate Ambassadors, we collected community input using interviews, surveys, and visioning activities. All activities were modified to comply with Covid-19 safety concerns and were flexible to meet the needs of Ambassadors. Some of this input was gathered as part of staff presentations on Tacoma's climate impacts and Ambassador facilitated discussions on climate change. Some was collected without broader education on climate change via emails and social media posts. Demographic data was collected through voluntary reporting to track how successfully we reached different Tacoma communities.

All community responses were read thoroughly. Key ideas were identified in the responses and then grouped into themes to find the number of times each broad theme was mentioned. We chose to look at the responses by demographic groups of interest to ensure historically underrepresented community voices were heard. This resulted in top themes for the overall group of respondents, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) respondents, low income (less than $50,000/year) respondents, and youth (under 25 years of age) respondents.

Phase I Community Input Themes

Looking at the community input collected, several top themes emerged. Most top themes received a similar percent of total responses across all demographic groups. However, specific demographic groups mentioned certain themes noticeably more or less. For example, the Barrier, *Lack of access to essential services that fulfill basic needs and provide the resources to thrive*, was mentioned 4% and 3% more by BIPOC and Low Income respondents respectively relative to the All respondents group.

Sustainability Priorities	Barriers to Sustainability	Community Concerns
- Tacomans need access to urban green spaces and forests to recreate, recharge and mitigate climate impacts - We need a healthy ecosystem free of pollution to protect human and nature welfare - We need low carbon and active transportation systems to meet our climate action goals and connect our city - All Tacoma residents need the security of housing	- Lack of support for government leadership and influence from special interest groups - Current social norms and values that do not prioritize sustainability and care - Lack of access to essential services that fulfill basic needs and provide the resources to thrive - Lack of incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices and take responsibility for their environmental impact	- I am concerned about inequity and injustice in the community - I am concerned about homelessness and access to housing - I am concerned about pollution in the community and the health of our ecosystem - I am concerned about climate change impacts and the impact of fossil fuel industries on our community

Data Analysis Considerations

Phase I community input collection emphasized relationship-building and the depth and quality of input over quantity. This initial engagement serves as a building block for stronger partnerships and participation from our EJ Leaders, Ambassadors, and other community members during Phase II.

We leveraged the social networks of Ambassadors, EJ Leaders, and partners to reach community members we usually do not hear from. We also heard more broadly from the Tacoma community through social media posts, newsletters, and emails to community members. Though we heard from a diverse group of respondents and attempted to prioritize hearing from our historically underserved and underrepresented groups in Tacoma, the input we collected was not accurately representative of Tacoma citywide demographics nor was it analyzed for statistical significance.

Lessons as We Approach Phase II

Phase II (February – June 2021) will focus on developing strategies and actions to meet our climate goals and serve anti-racism. We will need to continue building new relationships and deepening existing relationships with community leaders, community groups, and partner organizations. With demographic data from Phase I in mind, we plan to focus our efforts to hear from more diverse communities. Among other strategies, we plan to lead more workshops hosted by partners and Ambassadors, leveraging our engagement and subject matter expertise and their social networks. We are also considering casual staff hours-style mini-events and more one-on-one interviews. The depth and quality of input from our EJ Leaders will continue to be valuable.

Conclusions

We successfully engaged a diverse group of Tacoma community members and partners during Phase I, built new connections, and fostered community climate literacy. What we heard reinforces past community calls for an intersectional climate action plan that serves social justice and improves access to basic needs, community health, and ecosystem function for the benefit of both current and future generations. Developing strategies and actions in a robust and equitable Plan to meet this vision will require flexibility and adaptation to meet community needs and engage authentically, particularly with underrepresented and underserved communities.

Background

The City of Tacoma defines sustainability as "The City and its citizens meet current needs without compromising the needs of future generations, such that environmental, social, cultural, and economic considerations are balanced and integrated in a day-to-day, decision-making manner."[1] In line with this definition and envisioning an equitable, healthy, and vibrant community for all, the City has taken action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for a sustainable future.

In 2008, the City of Tacoma (City) developed its first Climate Action Plan. This Plan committed Tacoma to reducing its community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050, in line with the reduction goals stated in the international Kyoto Protocol.[2] In 2016, the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) replaced the Climate Action Plan. The EAP outlined nearly 70 actions to implement across six sectors of sustainability through 2020.[3] Sustainability sectors included buildings and energy, transportation, materials management, natural systems, air and local food, and climate resiliency. Beside their climate and environmental impacts, actions were vetted for a mix of co-benefits, their additional benefits to community needs like social equity, health, affordability, and the local economy. The City of Tacoma and Tacoma Public Utilities were responsible for leading implementation in collaboration with partner organizations and community members. Annual reports tracked progress across actions.[4] On December 31, 2020, the EAP expired. Expert analysis concludes that, accounting for action taken through 2020 and projecting out to 2050, a business-as-usual approach would lead to only a 14% reduction in Tacoma's GHG emissions based on 1990 levels.[5]

To replace the EAP and determine a path for climate action that achieves a climate-safe and socially just future for Tacoma, the City has collaborated with local partners and community members. Across a three-phase, year-long planning process from September 2020 – September 2021, the City will coordinate development of a new climate action plan and community engagement:

PHASE	ACTIONS	TIMELINE
1	**Understanding Community Priorities** • Collect baseline data • Model carbon pollution emissions	September 2020 - January 2021
2	**Strategy and Action Planning** • Identify technical opportunities, community benefits	February - June 2021
3	**Plan Release and Adoption** • Center equity in Plan • Deliver ambitious and achievable draft plan	July - September 2021

Table 1. Outline of climate action planning timeline and main objectives.

Phase I Community Engagement Overview

The purpose of Phase I engagement was to build and deepen community relationships and partnerships, activate and train community climate leaders, and understand community sustainability priorities,

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[1] City of Tacoma Council Resolution No.38247
[2] https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/enviro/sustain/ClimateActionPlanJuly2008.pdf
[3] https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/Sustainability/Tacoma_EAP.pdf
[4] https://www.cityoftacoma.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=102718
[5] SSG source

barriers, and concerns. We also wanted to prioritize and uplift the voices of communities that are historically underrepresented, underserved, and made vulnerable to climate impacts.

For Phase I of community engagement, the City pursued an approach that:

- **Adapted engagement safely to the COVID-19 pandemic**, moving engagement online
- **Leveraged the energy, creativity, and connections of community participants**
- **Emphasized quality** by focusing participation from **frontline communities**, building relationships, and seeking greater depth in community input
- **Promoted equity** by compensating frontline community members who participated and connected their social networks to this process
- **Deployed a mix of engagement methods**, including new partnerships, presentations, visioning activities, interviews, surveys, social media, and one-to-one outreach

> **Frontline communities** are those historically underrepresented, underserved, made vulnerable, or expected to experience the first and worse consequences of climate damage.

In support of this engagement approach, the City contracted with Citizens for a Healthy Bay (CHB) to recruit and support community member participation.[6] Citizens for a Healthy Bay is a local environmental justice non-profit organization with expertise in the natural sciences, environmental policy, and community collaboration and advocacy. Community participants served in two compensated roles: Climate Ambassadors and the Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup.

During Phase I, we endeavored to use linguistically- and culturally-accessible communications and engagement methods, including translation and interpretation services to recruit and support participants. Community participants, called Climate Ambassadors, helped gather input on community priorities and concerns from members of their social network, also educating community members about local climate impacts and planning efforts. We also recruited a group of community members to serve as an Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup to learn about and make recommendations for Tacoma's climate action planning process. They began meeting monthly in October 2020 and are working towards writing a chapter of the final Plan.

Both community participant roles serve to center frontline communities' needs and interests. We describe frontline communities as those that tend to experience inequity in multiple ways, whether being historically underrepresented, underserved, or made vulnerable; experiencing lower quality of life outcomes before COVID-19; or now experiencing worse impacts from the COVID-19 economic and health crisis. Frontline communities also include those expected to experience the first and worst consequences of climate damage. Frontline community members include individuals from one or more of the following backgrounds:

- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Speak English as a second language
- Living with a low household income
- Ages 16-26

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[6] https://www.healthybay.org/who-we-are/our-organization/

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexed, Asexual, including those questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation (LGBTQIA+)
- Living with three or more generations in one home
- Living with more than one family in one home
- Living with a disability
- Immigrant
- Experiencing homelessness
- Completed formal education up to a high school/GED level

COVID-19 Considerations

It is important to recognize that the climate action planning process was delayed several months due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Phase I engagement took place during a time of great stress for our community. We adapted all community engagement to adhere with Covid-19 safety regulations, moving all training and Workgroup meetings online and developing flexible engagement tools that could be used online or, much less frequently, safely in-person. It was challenging to build relationships virtually and to engage frontline communities most affected by the pandemic, the resulting recession, and with varying levels of internet access. To support our community participants, we offered additional training times, opportunities to catch-up on training and meeting content one-on-one, and were flexible with participants' contributions to make sure they were able to engage at the level that worked best for them. We also sought to address cost-barriers to people's participation. Though it is not equivalent to a stable income, we are grateful to have been able to provide frontline community participants with a stipend for their contributions to the planning process. Non-frontline community members and those connected to Tacoma but living and working outside Pierce County were also welcome to participate but were not eligible for stipends.

Phase 1 Community Engagement Methods & Participants

Recruitment Methods

Staff used a variety of methods to recruit EJ Leaders and Ambassadors from established and new social networks with the help of other City staff and partner organizations. Social networks were activated or established with the goal to engage frontline communities. Messaging emphasized a focus on environmental justice and highlighted compensation for frontline community members. Methods were virtual in compliance with Covid-19 safety requirements. Online engagement methods included emails, phone calls, e-newsletters, social media posts and direct messaging, City webpages, and application tools like Survey Monkey. Physical applications were offered and used in some cases. Language access relied on the City website's translation application and more generally a user's computer or mobile device translation application. Translation and interpretation services were also offered by request for application or other materials.

Engagement Tools

Staff and community participants gathered community input through visioning activities, surveys, and interviews. These engagement tools asked community members to imagine Tacoma in the future, identify individual and community priorities, and barriers to progress. In their simplest formats, these tools included the following content:

Visioning Activity Format

The year is 2030. The place I live has _____.

To get home from my job, I _____.

In 2020, _____ was an issue in Tacoma.

Now that has changed because _____.

In 2030, I finally get to _____, because _____.

Survey Questions

1. When you imagine a sustainable Tacoma, what comes to mind?
2. What could keep us from getting there?
3. What are some concerns you have living in this community?
4. Thinking about Tacoma and our region, what climate change impacts are you most concerned about?
5. What would make it easier for you and others in the community to participate in the climate justice action planning update process?
6. Any other thoughts/questions/comments?

Selected Interview Questions

- What do you think is going well in Tacoma right now?
- What do you hope will be better in the future?
- What are you most concerned about when you think about the future of the City or your neighborhood?
- How does ___ issue impact you?
- How do you think ___ issue can be overcome?
- In the next 5 – 10 years, what do you think we can accomplish in Tacoma?

Each engagement tool included demographic questions for staff to broadly track whether we are reaching a diverse group of participants and adjust methods if necessary.

Staff and community participants involved in engagement were trained in the use of these tools.

Generally, staff sought to develop new processes, visit new venues, and empower new relationships to reach a more diverse audience than typically engaged through City planning efforts. These community participants and venues are detailed below:

Climate Ambassadors

Climate Ambassadors serve to connect their social networks to our planning process. We received 39 Ambassador applications during recruitment and accepted all eligible applicants as well as EJ Leader applicants who were not selected for the EJ Leader role. This resulted in an initial group of 46 community members accepting an Ambassador role. Of this group, 33 Ambassadors completed all training and 19 Ambassadors were able complete Phase I engagement by gathering community input and educating community members about local climate impacts, planning efforts, and implemented actions.

Ambassadors used a mix of engagement approaches that reflected their strengths and relationships. While each could use City-developed engagement tools, they were encouraged to engage with family, friends, or neighbors safely and creatively. Some participants called old college friends, others talked to family across town, and still others organized COVID-safe community events or aid deliveries to share information and gather input.

Climate Ambassador Demographics
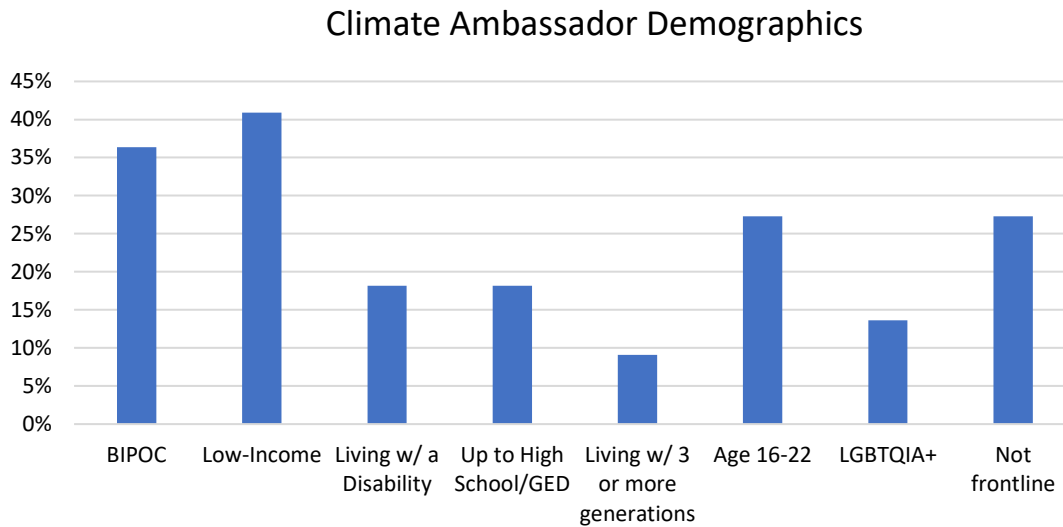
Graph 1. Demographic summary of Ambassadors who participated in collecting community input from their social networks and outreach.

Lessons from Phase I training and implementation activities will be leveraged in Phase II of Ambassador engagement as community priorities are turned into strategies and actions to achieve them. Phase I Ambassadors will be invited to participate in Phase II, building from their success and relationships.

Beyond the input that Ambassadors facilitate through Phases I and II of the planning process, staff hope that their participation fosters appreciation, awareness, and involvement in future local environmental justice work.

Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup

Ten local environmental justice leaders from frontline communities serve on our advisory workgroup throughout the planning process to make recommendations for both engagement activities as well as strategies and actions that will go into the Plan. They will contribute content to the final Plan, including writing a unique chapter, equitable GHG reduction actions, and any other recommendations as they see fit. Their overall purpose is to advise the City on bold climate actions that meets the needs and interests of frontline communities.

Our 10 EJ Leaders were selected from an applicant pool of 41 and all identity as frontline community members. While Phase I work with the EJ Leaders focused on group development, training, and context-building, Phase II will involve regular recommendations from the Workgroup to staff about content to put into the draft Plan. For example, content includes guiding principles, strategies, and actions.

Beyond the adoption of a new Plan, staff hope that this process promotes two-way learning, new relationships, and empowers a cohort of local environmental justice leaders.

To ensure all EJ Leaders are able to participate equally in meetings and engage with meeting materials, we have been translating documents and have contracted with a local interpreter to assist one member who primarily speaks Spanish.

Presentations to City Committees, Boards, and Commissions

We visited 13 City of Tacoma committees, boards, and commissions during Phase I to gather member input on community needs and interests. These community advisory bodies seek to reflect a breadth of stakeholders and make recommendations to staff and City Council about various topics. Often, members are well-connected through various organizational or community relationships, and beyond providing their individual input also served as a means to reach other social networks.

Social Media Outreach

We leveraged various City and partner organization social media accounts to reach more community members. These included accounts on Facebook and Instagram administered by Tacoma Environmental Services, Tacoma Sustainability, and Citizens for a Healthy Bay, among others. Seven Facebook posts and five Instagram posts were created and shared from Tacoma Sustainability accounts and then subsequently re-shared by partner accounts. Engaging through paid social media posts was hindered substantially by budget constraints and social media policies active at the time of our engagement campaign.

Our highest preforming post is featured below and was the only one shared to the Tacoma Government Facebook page. It featured language about social justice, climate justice, and community voice. The post reached 3,145 Facebook users, generated 69 link clicks (to the Story visioning activity), and was shared by 17 accounts. The other six Facebook posts averaged a reach of 350 users, 4 link clicks, and 3 shares per post. Our five Instagram posts reached an average of 252 users, 11 interactions, and 5 shares per post.
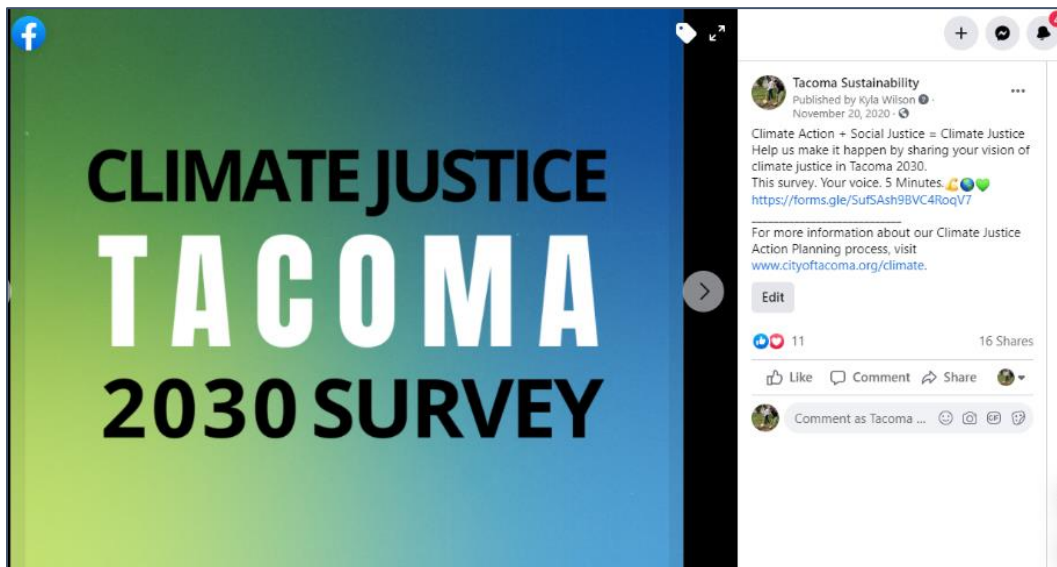

Figure 1. The social media post most shared and most successful at generating link clicks to the Story Activity

Community Input & Analysis Process

Community engagement methods resulted in over 450 responses about community sustainability priorities, barriers to progress on sustainability issues, and general community concerns.

Community input will be used to:

- Prioritize actions and strategies for emission reductions based on community support and concern
- Identify actions and strategies that are important to all aspects of an equitable plan and our planning process but are not captured in the sector-based technical scope of climate actions
- Inform the EJ Leaders Workgroup's Guiding Principles for when they write a section of the Climate Action Plan
- Inform other City plans and policies that fall outside the scope of the Climate Action Plan

Phase I Engagement Overview

Leveraging the connections and knowledge of our community Climate Ambassadors, Environmental Justice Workgroup, and community members serving the City on committees, boards, and commissions, we collected input from 458 participants. While the format of each engagement tool varied, the majority of responses collected fell within three categories of response: Sustainability Priorities, Barriers to Sustainability, and Community Concerns.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS	
Climate Ambassadors	33
Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup	10
TOTAL	**43**

RESPONSES BY ENGAGEMENT TOOL	
"Story" Community Member Visions	321
Survey Responses	128
Interview Responses	9
TOTAL	**458**

Table 1. Summary of community participants involved in collecting input and the total number of responses collected using each engagement tool.

Collecting and Processing Input

Staff collected input with the help of community participants through visioning activities, surveys, and interviews. Each response was read thoroughly by a Staff person. While reading, staff developed a list of keywords to tag each response with, adapting the list of keywords to capture the meaning of each response in detail. This resulted in a total count of how many times each keyword was brought up by respondents. Related keywords were then grouped into broader themes. Total mentions of each theme were then compared across different demographic breakdowns.

Individual responses looked like:

- **Story Response 277:** In 2030 I finally get "to ride the light rail to Seattle" because "we funded transit."

- **Survey Response 28:** "The air quality is concerning to me given there is so many fossil fuel companies down at the Port that have been given unlimited expansion for the past 5 years"
- **Story Response 100:** In 2030 I finally get to "Not worry about my health and safety as the water and air is clean."
- **Survey Response 29:** "This community doesn't have a robust way to care for houseless or anyone who is on the verge of poverty or mental health care for anyone living on the margins/vulnerable."

Here is an example of tagging individual responses with keywords and identifying themes:

Question	Response	Keywords	Themes
When you imagine a sustainable Tacoma, what comes to mind?	"More reuse/recycle. Adequate housing. Public transportation accessible"	• Access to recycling • Resource reuse • Affordable housing • Transit access	• All Tacoma residents need access to affordable, high functioning public transportation • Tacoma needs responsible resource management, recycling and waste prevention systems • All Tacoma residents need the security of housing

In this example, the question "When you imagine a sustainable Tacoma, what comes to mind?" asks the respondent about their sustainability priorities. Their response mentions access to recycling and resource reuse which fall into the broader theme: *Tacoma needs responsible resource management, recycling and waste prevention systems*.

The themes emerging from responses to Survey question 1 (*When you imagine a sustainable Tacoma, what comes to mind?*), Story answer 1 (*The year is 2030. The place I live has _____.*), and Story answer 4 (*Now that has changed because _____.*) as well as relevant Interview responses were grouped together into the Sustainability Priorities category. Themes from Survey question 2 (*What could keep us from getting there?*) and Interview responses make up the Barriers to Sustainability category. The final category, Community Concerns, includes the themes from Survey question 3 (*What are some concerns you have living in this community?*), Story answer 3 (*In 2020, _____ was an issue in Tacoma.*), and Interview responses.

Results from Story answer 2 (*To get home from my job, I _____.*) and Survey question 4 (*Thinking about Tacoma and our region, what climate change impacts are you most concerned about?*) were analyzed separate to avoid over emphasizing transportation related themes in Sustainability Priorities and climate change impacts in Community Concerns.

Results from Story answers 5 & 6 were often highly personalized responses about actions respondents would like to take in 2030. Though these responses do help frame the community's vision for what life is like in 2030, they have been excluded from analysis of priorities, barriers, and concerns.

3 Theme Categories

Sustainability Priorities	Barriers to Sustainability	Community Concerns	Future Engagement
•*When you imagine a sustainable Tacoma, what comes to mind?* •*The year is 2030. The place I live has ____.* •*Now that has changed because _____.* •Interviews	•*What could keep us from getting there?* •Interviews	•*What are some concerns you have living in this community?* •*In 2020, _____ was an issue in Tacoma.* •Interviews	•*What would make it easier for you and others in the community to participate in the climate justice action planning update process?*

How we commute in 2030
To get home from my job I _____.

Climate Impact Concerns
Thinking about Tacoma and our region, what climate change impacts are you most concerned about?

Figure 1. Flowchart of grouping community input results from Survey questions, Story answers, and Interviews into themes.

Who We Heard From

In order to track how well we reached historically underserved, underrepresented and overburdened communities, we asked respondents several demographic questions including race/ethnicity, age, gender, household income (2019), homeownership, zip-code, and primary language spoken at home. Not all respondents chose to answer each of these demographic questions or preferred to self-describe.

The following information about respondents reflect the 83% who chose to answer demographic questions.

For our analysis, we focused on our success at reaching three main groups:

- Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities
  - Respondents who identified as Black/African, Native American/Alaska Native, Latinx/Non-white Hispanics, Asian, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, Middle Eastern/North African, and/or more than one of these races/ethnicities.
- Low Income respondents
  - Respondents whose household income was less than $50,000/year.
- Youth respondents
  - Respondents less than 25 years old.

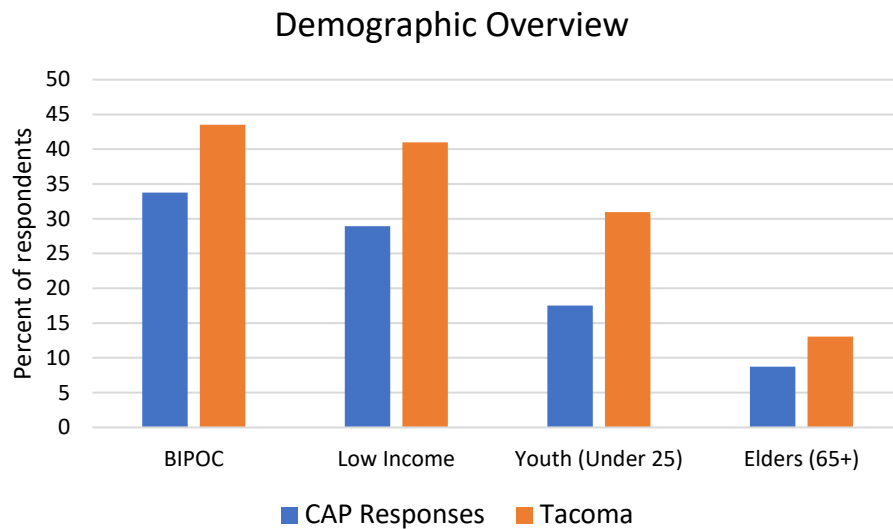*Graph 2. A summary of Climate Action Planning Respondent demographics in comparison to Tacoma Census Projections.[7]*

It is important to note that we fell short of reaching a representative sample of Tacoma residents, particularly for the historically underserved groups BIPOC and Low Income. We know that the Covid-19 pandemic and recession is particularly challenging for these communities, and it tends to be exacerbated by unequal internet access. However, the percentage of Youth we reached is skewed because the Tacoma census data Youth percent includes residents aged 0-14 who were not a focus in our input gathering. For more details on age demographics, see Graph 5.

We heard from a diverse group of Tacoma community members; however, there is room to improve our outreach to key communities of color, low income community members, and some age groups to ensure equitable climate actions and strategies for the Plan. Effective engagement of diverse, frontline communities will depend on mitigating barriers and being flexible with peoples' capacity to

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[7] U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey 2019 5-Year estimates. Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=0400000US53_1600000US5370000&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05

participate. On the other hand, it will also be important to value qualitatively rich input from fewer, well-connected individuals and service organizations rather than high levels of participation from communities that may be experiencing extraordinary day-to-day burdens.

BIPOC Communities

Race/Ethnicity Demographics

Percent of all race/ethnicity responses

Category	CAP Responses	City of Tacoma
Asian	8.18	8.8
Black/African	7.39	10.5
LatinX/Non-white Hispanic	3.69	12
Middle Eastern/North African	0.79	0
Native American/Alaska Native	2.64	1.6
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.00	1.1
White/Caucasian	66.23	58.5
Two or More Races	11.08	9.5
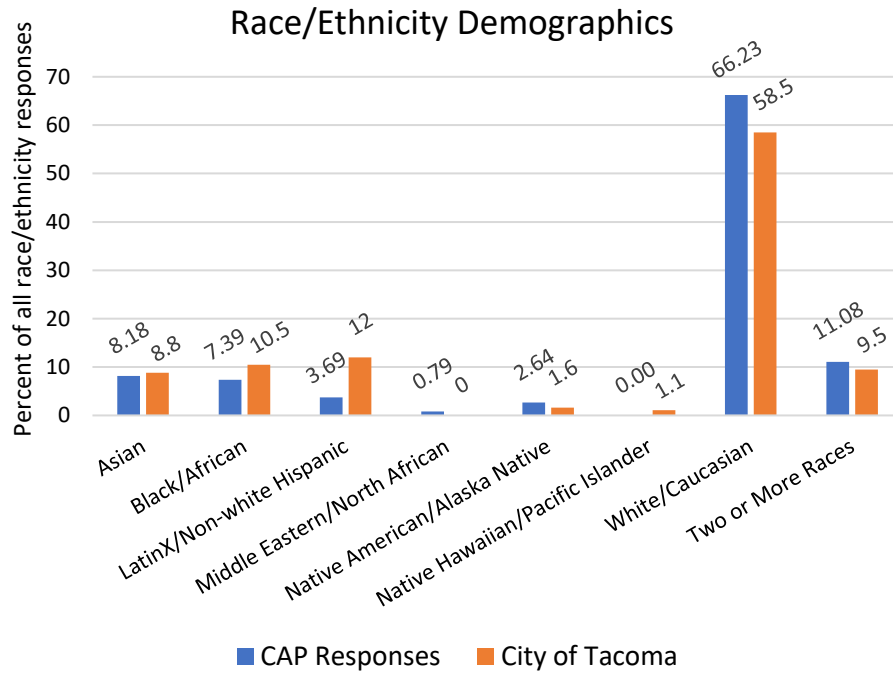
Graph 3. A complete breakdown of the 379 responses to the race/ethnicity demographic question. 17% of respondents chose not to answer or chose to self-describe. 11.1 % of respondents selected more than one race/ethnicity option. These responses are broken out in detail in Table 2.

Two or More Race/Ethnicity	# of responses
Asian and White	7
LatinX/Non-white Hispanic and White	6
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian and White	5
Native American/Alaska Native and White	4
Native American/Alaska Native, LatinX/Non-white Hispanic, and White	3
Black/African, Asian, and White	3
Native American/Alaska Native and LatinX/Non-white Hispanic	2
Black/African, Middle Eastern/North African, and White	2
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian and Black/African	1
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian and Asian	1
Native American/Alaska Native, LatinX/Non-white Hispanic, and Black/African	1
Native American/Alaska Native and Asian	1

LatinX/Non-white Hispanic, Asian and White	1
LatinX/Non-white Hispanic and Black/African	1
Asian and Middle Eastern/North African	1
Black/African and White	1
Middle Eastern/North African and White	1
Asian, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, Native American/Alaska Native, LatinX/Non-white Hispanic, Black/African, and White	1

Table 2. The total number of responses for each multi-racial/ethnic identity selected in response to the race/ethnicity demographic question.

Based on the race/ethnicity demographic results from Phase I, we know moving forward that we need to make more of an effort to reach BIPOC community members. Particularly, we need new strategies for reaching Tacoma's Latinx/Non-white Hispanic community. This was the race/ethnicity with the greatest gap between our results and Tacoma census data.

Low Income Respondents

2019 Household Income Demographics
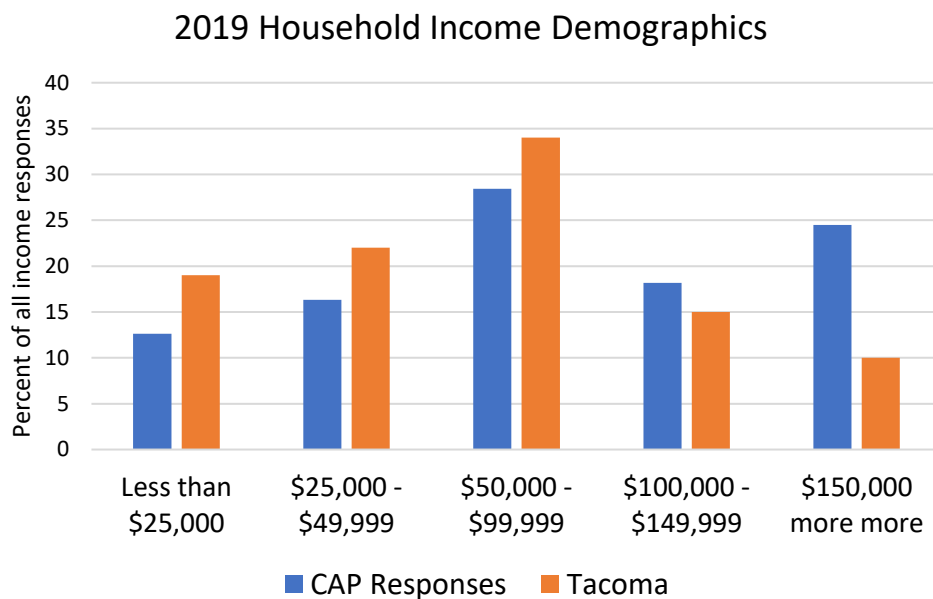
Graph 4. Responses to household income demographic question by income bracket. 17% of total respondents chose not to answer this question. The above percentages reflect only the 380 responses to this question.

Our community input results over-represent high income households. 41% of Tacoma households earn less than $50,000 per year.[8] Median household income is around $62,000/year.[9] Only 29% of Phase I climate action planning respondents had a household income less than $50,000/year. During Phase II, we hope to reach more low income residents.

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[8] U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey 2019 5-Year estimates. Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=0400000US53_1600000US5370000&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05
[9] U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey 2019 5-Year estimates. Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=0400000US53_1600000US5370000&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05

Age Demographics

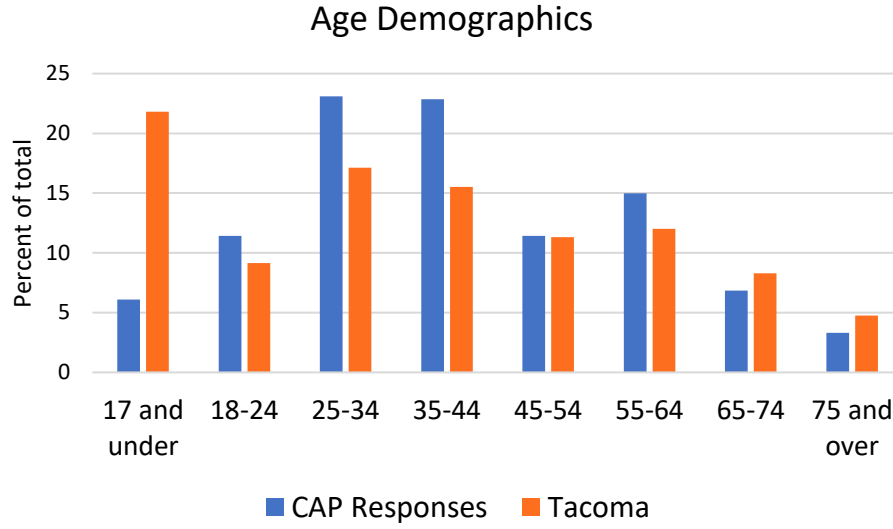*Graph 5. Responses to age demographic question by age bracket. 14% of total respondents chose not to answer this question. The above percentages reflect only the 394 respondents who answered this question.*

The median age in Tacoma is 36.[10] The majority of our respondents were under 45 years old and most of our younger age brackets are over-represented in comparison to the Tacoma census data, except for those under 17. However, a more accurate comparison for our respondents who answered "under 17" may be to Tacoma's 15-17 year old population, roughly 4% of the City's total population. While a few of our Climate Ambassadors were high school age and maybe have collected input from their peers, we did not target younger children in our data collection which are included in the Tacoma 17 and under group.

We did not hear from as many community members 65 years old and over. Elders do face more health risk as the number of extreme heat days in Tacoma rises due to climate change. Our over-representation of younger age groups may be a result of the online nature and social media focus for much of our outreach and input collection due to Covid-19 safety concerns. 92.5% of those who did respond as 65 and over are also white. Therefore, we need to reach more BIPOC elders during Phase II to better represent Tacoma.

What We Heard

Sustainability Priorities

In this category of responses, there were 94 unique response tags grouped into 22 themes and an additional 'other' category for response tags that were very general (ex. improved, sustainable) or either did not relate to other response tags to be grouped or have enough responses to be featured individually. For the complete list of themes and percent of responses for each by demographic group, see Appendix Table 1.

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[10] U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American Community Survey 2019 5-Year estimates. Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?g=0400000US53_1600000US5370000&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05

Generally, there was agreement between the demographic groups on priorities for achieving a sustainable Tacoma. However, there were some variations in how often priorities were mentioned by each demographic group.

Tacomans need access to urban green spaces and forests to recreate, recharge and mitigate climate impacts

Youth	(bar ≈5)
Low Income	(bar ≈5.6)
BIPOC	(bar ≈9.5)
All	(bar ≈8.6)

Percent of all sustainability priority responses

We need low carbon and active transportation systems to meet our climate action goals and connect our city

Youth	(bar ≈6.5)
Low Income	(bar ≈6)
BIPOC	(bar ≈7.7)
All	(bar ≈7)

Percent of all sustainability priority responses

All Tacoma residents need the security of housing

Youth	(bar ≈6.8)
Low Income	(bar ≈8.3)
BIPOC	(bar ≈5.8)
All	(bar ≈7)

Percent of all sustainability priority responses

We need a healthy ecosytem free of pollution to protect human and nature welfare

Youth	(bar ≈8.5)
Low Income	(bar ≈6.4)
BIPOC	(bar ≈7)
All	(bar ≈6.2)

Percent of all sustainability priority responses

Graph 6. The top 4 sustainability priority themes with the percent of total responses for each theme by demographic group.

Some differences in top sustainability priorities are demonstrated in Graph 6. The theme *Tacomans need access to urban green spaces and forests to recreate, recharge and mitigate climate impacts* was mentioned more frequently by BIPOC community members in comparison to the other demographic groups. Youth respondents mentioned topics and ideas in the *We need a healthy ecosystem free of pollution to protect human and nature welfare* theme to a greater extent than other groups. Low income respondents mentioned housing access within the *All Tacoma residents need the security of housing* theme more than other groups.

Ideal Future Transportation Options

One of the Story answers asked respondents specifically about how they envision commuting to and from work in a sustain 2030 Tacoma scenario. The results of these results complement the high interest

in low carbon and active transportation options as well as access to affordable and reliable public transportation – another theme in the top 6 group of sustainability priorities.

How we commute in 2030
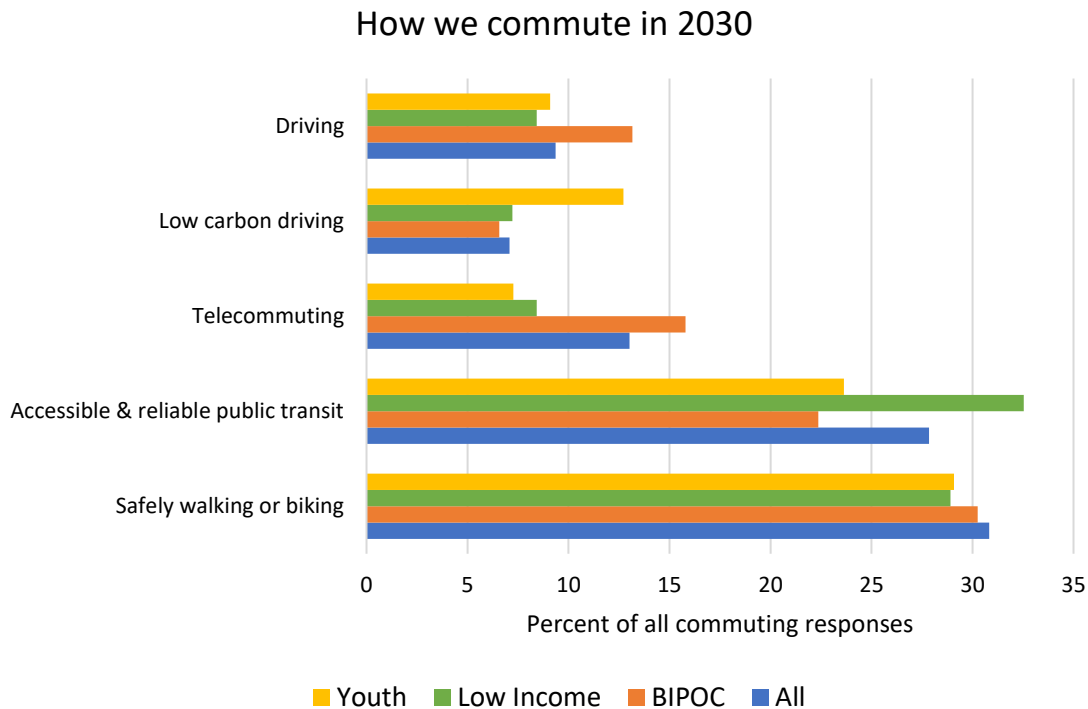
Graph 7. The top 5 themes on how we commute in 2030 with the percent of total responses for each theme by demographic group.

While close to 10% of respondents imagined they would still be driving (single occupancy vehicle) to get home from their job in 2030, close to 30% of respondents across all demographic groups mentioned walking or biking and safe pedestrian routes. Accessible and high function public transportation was of particular interest to low income community members.
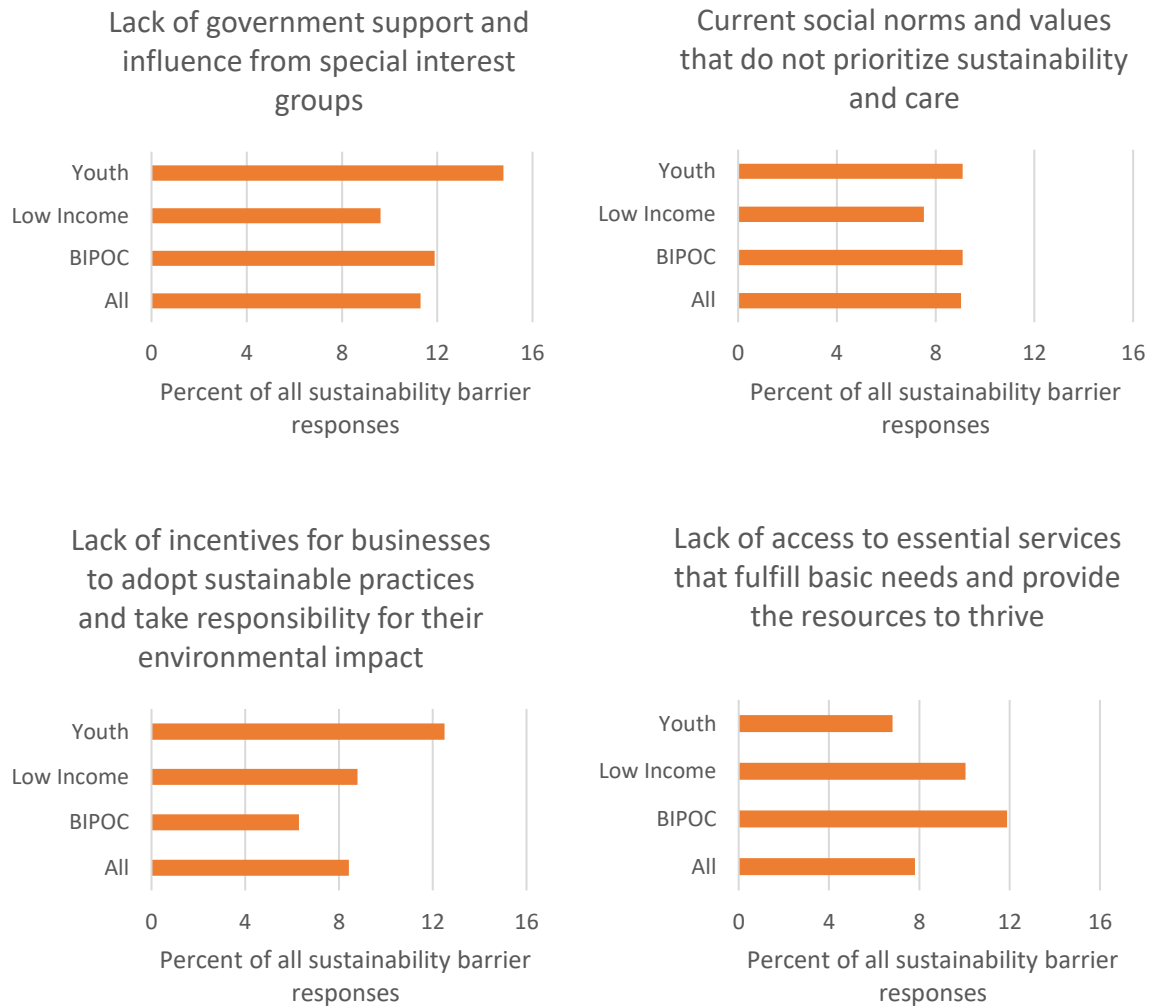
Key takeaways

- Community members think of sustainability across social, economic, and environmental spheres in line with the City's definition of sustainability (see page 7).
- Access to nature/urban greenery, the health of our ecosystems, low carbon transportation options, and access to housing are all necessary components of a sustainable Tacoma.
- City walkability and bike-ability, both in terms of infrastructure and design for safe connections and opportunities to live and work in the same neighborhood, are important to the community.

Barriers to Sustainability

In this category there were 54 unique response tags grouped into 17 themes to capture responses from Survey question 2 and the Interviews. For the complete list of themes and percent of responses for each by demographic group, see Appendix Table 2.

The top four Barriers to Sustainability were the same for all demographic groups, but there are some differences in prioritization between groups. The most frequently mentioned barrier by all demographic

groups, and of particular concern to Youth respondents, was *a lack of support and leadership from the government and the influence of special interest groups. A lack of cultural values and social norms that promote sustainability* and a *lack of i*n*centives for businesses to take responsibility for their impact and adopt sustainable practices* were also top mentioned barriers. Low Income and BIPOC respondents were particularly concerned about the community's *lack of essential services and basic needs* as a barrier to action.

Lack of government support and influence from special interest groups

Youth	
Low Income	
BIPOC	
All	

0   4   8   12   16

Percent of all sustainability barrier responses

Current social norms and values that do not prioritize sustainability and care

Youth	
Low Income	
BIPOC	
All	

0   4   8   12   16

Percent of all sustainability barrier responses

Lack of incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices and take responsibility for their environmental impact

Youth	
Low Income	
BIPOC	
All	

0   4   8   12   16

Percent of all sustainability barrier responses

Lack of access to essential services that fulfill basic needs and provide the resources to thrive

Youth	
Low Income	
BIPOC	
All	

0   4   8   12   16

Percent of all sustainability barrier responses

Graph 8. The top 4 barriers to sustainability themes with the percent of total responses for each theme by demographic group.

Key Takeaways

- We need to improve government accountability and transparency and demonstrate our leadership in climate actions.
- A lack of community resources and basic needs prohibits participation and achieving equitable sustainability and climate goals.
- We need to promote ethics of care at a personal and business level.

Community Concerns

The design of all engagement tools was intentionally open-ended to allow for a diversity of responses. The climate action plan will influence many facets of life in Tacoma. In order to design equitable actions and strategies, we felt it was important to be aware of broader issues in the community to avoid perpetuating inequitable systems and find co-benefits where possible. The questions about community concerns was not specifically about climate action; however, sustainability concerns are reflected in the responses more so than in other City surveys of community concerns. This may be due to the climate action planning framing of all engagement.

96 unique response tags were grouped into 17 community concern themes. For the complete list of themes see Appendix Table 3. Social issues like inequity and injustice and homelessness and housing access were of high concern. Pollution and ecosystem health as well as impacts of climate change were also of top concern.
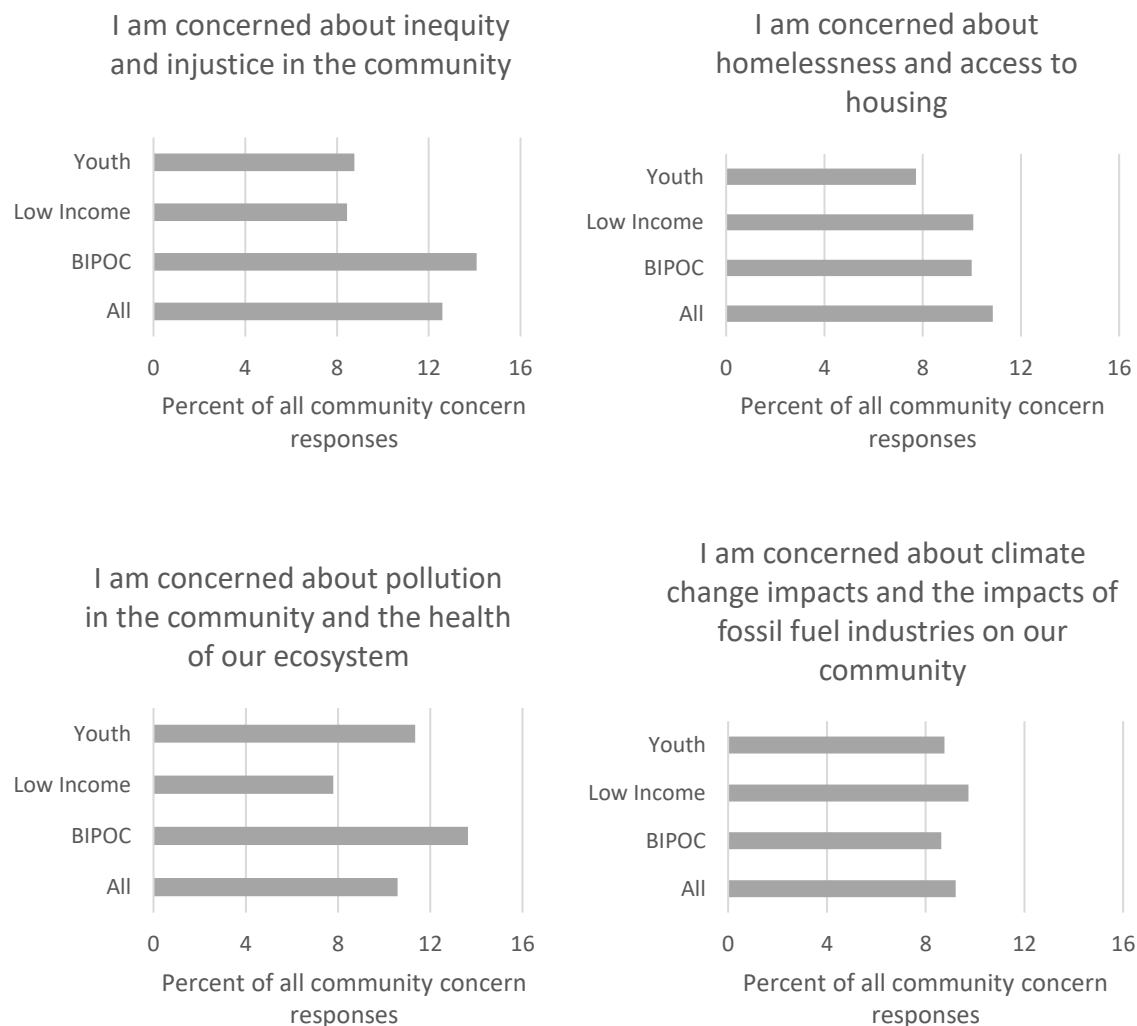
Graph 9. The top 4 community concern themes with the percent of total responses for each theme by demographic group.

Climate Impacts of Concern

Survey question 4 shared a list of climate change impacts we are experiencing and expect to experience more of in Tacoma and asked respondents about which climate impacts they were most concerned about. Concern about climate impacts and impacts from the fossil fuel industries in Tacoma was a top general community concern and the results below expand on respondent's specific climate change concerns. The related impacts of air quality and forest susceptibility to wildfires were both top climate impact concerns. Recent wildfire events may have increased concern about air quality and human health. In 2018 and 2020, Tacoma experienced unhealthy air quality due to wildfires in California, Oregon, and both Eastern and Western Washington. Concern about impacts to wildlife and natural systems as well as freshwater availability were also frequently mentioned by all demographic groups. Youth and BIPOC respondents mentioned ecosystem impacts more than other demographic groups. Youth respondents were also particularly concerned about impacts to forest and the threat of wildfire.
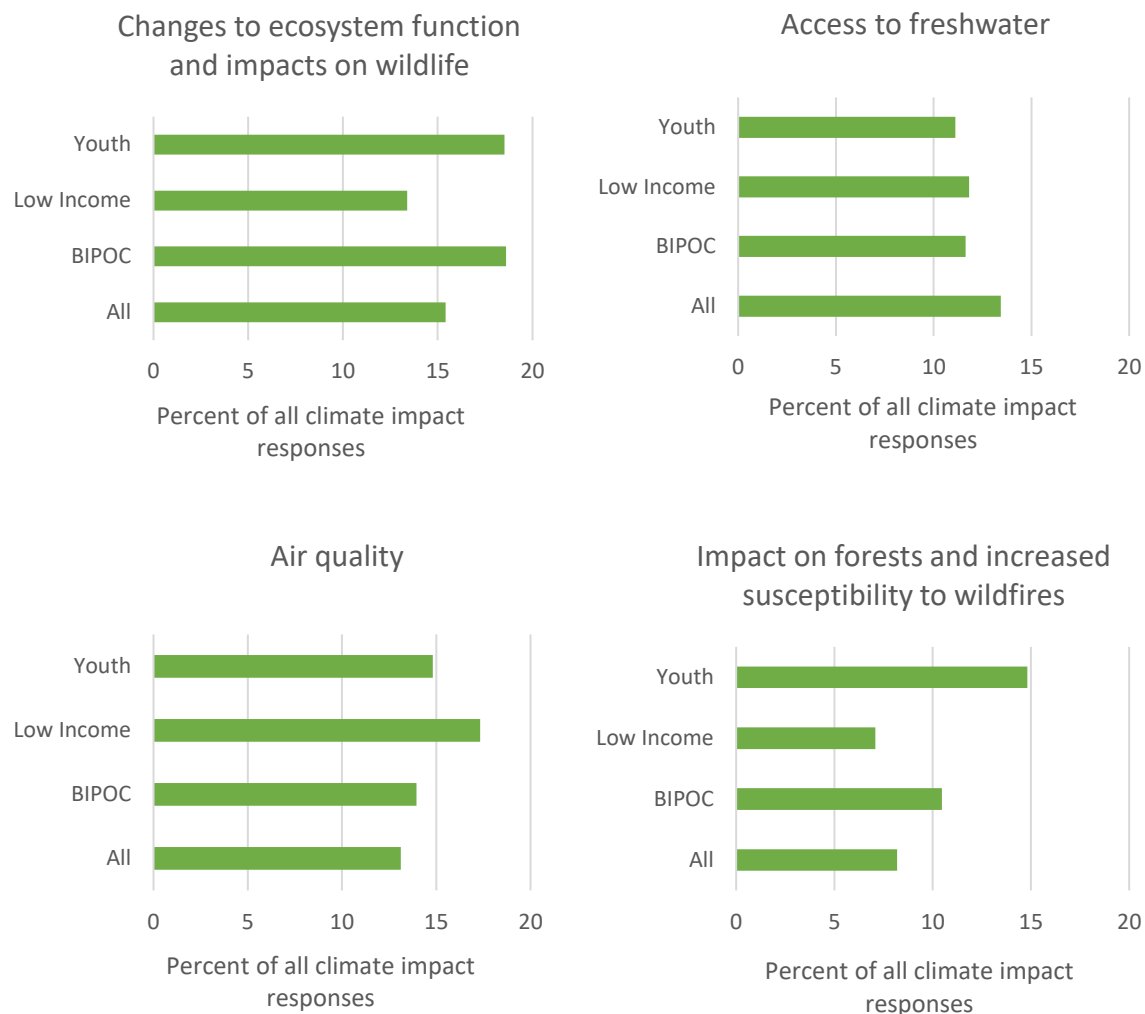
Graph 10. Top 4 regional climate impacts of concern with the percent of total responses for each demographic group.

Key Takeaways
- We need to continue addressing environmental and social justice issues related to the climate action plan.
- We need to focus on co-benefits to climate action and design strategies that address pollutants and housing affordability and availability.
- It may be beneficial to focus climate impact and benefits of climate action communication on protecting ecosystem function and forests, improving air quality, and ensuring freshwater availability.

Community Input on Future Engagement

We had 148 responses to Survey question 5 about how we can improve our community engagement. The most common response was feedback for general improvements to communication and publicity. Several tools such as surveys, events, social media, and emails were also mentioned. Additionally, a few values for community engagement were raised by respondents. These included centering community voice and community actions, improving government transparency and building trust.

What would make it easier for you and others in the community to participate in the climate justice action planning update process?	All %	BIPOC %	Low Income %	Youth %
General communication and publicity	16.89	16.28	16.67	24.00
Focus on community voice	6.76	2.33	5.00	4.00
Surveys	4.73	0.00	1.67	4.00
Social Media	4.73	6.98	3.33	0.00
Host online events	4.05	0.00	5.00	4.00
Emails	3.38	2.33	1.67	0.00
Host Events	3.38	4.65	3.33	0.00
Improve government transparency	3.38	2.33	3.33	4.00
Focus on community actions	2.03	4.65	0.00	12.00
Focus on building trust	1.35	4.65	3.33	0.00

Table 2. Top suggestions for facilitating future community input and participation in climate action planning by demographic group. Most mentioned responses are highlighted in green for each demographic group.

Key Takeaways
- We need to be communicating more and more widely about climate action planning.
- Focusing on community actions and voice may help increase participation.
- Hosting online events and using social media can be useful tools for reaching the community, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic when in-person events cannot be organized.

Selected Feedback from EJ Leaders Workgroup

The EJ Leaders Workgroup is providing feedback during all three phases of climate action planning. An early draft of Phase I community input results were shared with the EJ Leaders. Selected feedback from EJ Leaders on the community input results as well as broader feedback on Phase I processes is included below.

- Socio-ecological work we do in Tacoma affects the traditional lands of the Puyallup Tribe. City planning needs to be in collaboration and consultation with Tribal leadership.
- Plan actions and strategies should focus on the inequitable impact of co-pollutants, on human health and future generations. Reducing GHG emissions by, for example, electrifying transportation, also reduces pollutants like particulate matter and ozone which disproportionately affect the health of low income residents and BIPOC communities who often live closer to major roads.
- The majority of Phase I results are related to impacts on human systems. This may be due to the anthropocentric framing of Interview, Survey, and Story questions. Our Plan should highlight the interdependency of natural and human systems and illustrate climate change's ecological impacts on other animals and plants.
- Our Plan should have transparent monitoring and reporting methods with greater opportunity for community leadership and participation.

Data Analysis Considerations

Though the respondents we reached during Phase I engagement and the input we gathered is not a representative sample of Tacoma citywide demographics and was not evaluated for statistical significance, it is important to keep in mind the purpose of Phase I. Our engagement process and community input collection had the additional goals of building community relationships and knowledge for future climate action. We intentionally emphasized depth and quality of input over quantity. This initial engagement serves as a building block for stronger partnerships and participation from our EJ Leaders, Ambassadors, and other community members during Phase II.

We would have liked to gather more BIPOC and low income community member responses in the Phase I community input. However, we hope the additional input and feedback we continue to receive from the EJ Leaders Workgroup will supplement what we missed in community input.

We are continuously learning through this new engagement and planning process. We have made progress through working with the social networks of Ambassadors, EJ Leaders, and partners to reach community members we usually do not hear from.

The responses we gathered through social media posts and email lists may have primarily come from respondents already aware of sustainability and climate change issues in Tacoma since they most likely connected with us through the Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability or CHB resources. This may have influenced the results we found for top priorities, barriers, and concerns.

Lessons Learned

Staff have identified various lessons from this new approach to engagement.

Strengths

- Building from existing relationships
- Establishing new relationships
- Compensating frontline community member participation
- Empowering community excitement, expertise, creativity, and leadership

- Learning from path-breaking communities, including Fort Collins, CO, King County, WA, and Providence, RI, among others
- Building on linguistically and culturally accessible communications and engagement

Room for Improvement

- Activating community member networks
- Training community participants for creative and insightful engagement
- Balancing community input processes with relationship-building and leadership development
- Hearing from and uplifting the voices of communities that are underrepresented, underserved, and made vulnerable

Conclusion

Towards building a robust and equitable climate action plan, Phase I engaged a diverse group of Tacoma community members and partners to better understand current sustainability priorities, barriers to sustainability, and general community concerns. We successfully established an EJ Leaders Workgroup of 10 frontline community members and trained over 30 community Climate Ambassadors. In collaboration with Ambassadors and partners, we gathered input from 458 community members. These responses reinforce the necessity for a socially just and intersectional climate action plan that can improve community health, access to basic needs, and ecosystem function for the benefit of future and current generations.

From what we have learned during Phase I of climate action planning, we will need to continue building relationships with community leaders, community groups, and partners and adapting our engagement techniques to reach historically underrepresented and underserved community members. The Covid-19 pandemic and recession will continue to burden some communities and community members worse than others, and internet access remains an issue. Staff will seek to emphasize quality over quantity to limit engagement burdens as well as continue to center equity.

Appendix

Table 1. Complete list of Sustainability Priorities Themes and the percent of total responses included in each theme for All respondents and our demographic groups of interest. Percentages greater than or equal to 6% are highlighted in green to show top themes for each demographic group.

Sustainability Priorities	All %	BIPOC %	Low Income %	Youth %
Tacomans need access to urban green spaces and forests to recreate, recharge and mitigate climate impacts	8.69	9.51	5.60	5.10
We need low carbon and active transportation systems to meet our climate action goals and connect our city	6.95	7.66	6.02	6.46
All Tacoma residents need the security of housing	6.95	5.80	8.30	6.80
We need a healthy ecosystem free of pollution to protect human and nature welfare	6.22	6.96	6.43	8.50
All Tacoma residents need access to affordable, high functioning public transportation	5.95	6.96	6.85	6.46
Tacoma needs to end dependence on fossil fuels, prevent new fossil fuel infrastructure and investments, and to invest in renewable, clean energy sources	5.37	4.64	5.60	6.46
We need equitable and just transformation that centers those most vulnerable in our community.	4.90	6.03	5.19	4.42
For a thriving Tacoma, We need more community resources, spaces, voices and partnerships.	4.48	6.03	5.60	6.12
A thriving Tacoma is a place where people feel a sense of belonging and support from their community, where the community is diverse, and local arts and culture flourish	4.00	3.48	2.90	4.76
Tacoma's built environment needs to be thoughtfully planned to support emission reduction, sustainable resource use, and protect land.	3.95	3.71	2.49	2.38
We need to support local urban farming and ensure access to healthy food for all	3.69	2.78	3.73	2.38
We need support for local decent paying job opportunities in Tacoma, including sustainable green jobs	3.64	3.02	3.73	5.44
Tacoma needs responsible resource management, recycling and waste prevention systems	3.53	4.64	5.39	5.78
We need to restore and protect our vital ecosystems, with special attention to Commencement Bay and the Tideflats	3.27	3.94	4.98	2.04
Tacomans need easy access to quality healthcare, including mental heath and substance abuse support for healthy individuals and community.	3.11	2.55	3.11	2.38
We need to act now to mitigate climate change impacts and adapt to a changing environment	2.32	2.09	2.07	4.42

Everyone needs access to high quality and affordable education, which should include environmental and climate science	2.00	2.55	2.07	2.04
We need a representative government that is transparent and accountable to the community	1.79	0.70	2.49	2.04
Police reform	1.37	0.70	1.24	1.02
In order to meet Tacoma's sustainability and climate goals we need real financial investment.	1.16	0.70	0.83	1.02
We need to invest in city infrastructure to prevent water pollution and ensure access to clean water.	0.95	1.16	1.45	0
Tacoma needs to be a safe place to live, work, and recreate	0.90	0.46	0.41	1.02
Other	14.81	13.92	13.49	12.93
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Table 2. Complete list of Barriers to Sustainability Themes and the percent of total responses included in each theme for All respondents and our demographic groups of interest. Percentages greater than or equal to 6% are highlighted in green to show top themes for each demographic group.

Barriers to Sustainability	All %	BIPOC %	Low Income %	Youth %
Lack of support for government leadership and influence from special interest groups	11.29	11.89	9.62	14.77
Current social norms and values that do not prioritize sustainability and care	9.03	9.09	7.53	9.09
Lack of incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices and take responsibility for their environmental impact	8.42	6.29	8.79	12.50
Lack of sufficient funding	8.21	7.69	5.86	9.09
Lack of access to essential services that fulfill basic needs and provide the resources to thrive	7.80	11.89	10.04	6.82
Historical representation and inequity that persist today, particularly a lack of acknowledgement of Indigenous rights and knowledge	7.19	5.59	8.79	6.82
Lack of community leadership and opportunities for collaboration between community groups, businesses, and government agencies	6.37	6.29	7.53	4.55
Our current economic system that perpetuates inequity and natural resource extraction	5.75	4.20	4.60	4.55
Lack of strategic urban growth management and planning to reach our long term goals	5.13	3.50	3.77	3.41
Lack of access to affordable, efficient, and low carbon public transportation and active transportation options that prevent us from reducing single-occupancy vehicle use	4.31	4.20	4.18	3.41

Lack of action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, divest from fossil fuel industries, and act on climate change	4.31	3.50	5.02	7.95
Lack of environmental awareness and curriculum in schools	3.70	6.29	3.77	2.27
Inequitable prioritization and allocation of resources to areas of need in Tacoma	2.87	2.10	2.51	5.68
Lack of regulations and systems to prevent pollution and protect our vital ecosystems for future generations	2.87	1.40	2.93	0.00
Lack of local employment opportunities with fair wages	2.46	4.20	2.93	2.27
Police Reform	1.64	2.80	2.51	1.14
Lack of available recycling and waste prevention systems	1.44	2.10	1.67	1.14
Other	7.19	6.99	7.95	4.55
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Table 3. Complete list of Community Concern Themes and the percent of total responses included in each theme for All respondents and our demographic groups of interest. Percentages greater than or equal to 6% are highlighted in green to show top themes for each demographic group.

Community Concerns	All %	BIPOC %	Low Income %	Youth %
I am concerned about inequity and injustice in the community.	12.59	14.09	8.44	8.76
I am concerned about homelessness and access to housing.	10.86	10.00	10.06	7.73
I am concerned about pollution in the community and the health of our ecosystem	10.58	13.64	7.79	11.34
I am concerned about climate change impacts on our community and fossil fuel industries.	9.22	8.64	9.74	8.76
I am concerned about access to essential services and basic needs.	8.30	7.73	9.74	5.67
I am concerned about government leadership, willingness to take action, planning, and accountability.	6.84	9.55	9.09	8.25
I am concerned about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.	6.39	4.55	4.22	9.79
I am concerned about economic stability, poverty, and the distribution of wealth in the community.	5.20	6.36	6.82	5.67
I am concerned about access to public transportation, active transportation, and low carbon transportation options in the community	4.38	3.18	2.27	4.12
I am concerned about safety in my community.	3.56	0.45	3.25	3.09
I am concerned about policing in the community.	3.56	4.09	4.55	5.67
I am concerned about inequitable new urban development in Tacoma.	3.01	2.27	4.87	5.67

I am concerned about the influence of the private sector on our regulations and a lack of corporate responsibility for environmental impacts.	2.10	0.91	2.60	2.58
I am concerned about City infrastructure, such as freeway construction and sidewalks.	2.10	1.36	2.27	1.03
I am concerned about access waste prevention programs in the community	1.92	2.27	1.95	5.15
I am concerned about our community values and culture.	1.28	1.82	2.60	2.06
I am concerned about urban greenery and access to green space.	1.00	1.36	0.32	0.52
Other	7.12	7.73	9.42	4.12
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00