ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

Growth Strategy Baseline Conditions | November 2024

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GROWTH STRATEGY BASELINE CONDITIONS

1.1 Introduction

The information in this report and related information in the Growth Strategy element, is intended to comply with the requirements of the state Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW Chapter 36.70A.080, by showing the general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of land, population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth.

1.2 Baseline Conditions

Exhibit 1: Existing Land Area Occupied by Specific Uses by Center, 2024.

Location	Gross Acres	Rights of Way	Net Acres	Single Family	Multifamily	Commercial/Mixed -Use	Institutional	Industrial	Open Space	Vacant	Other
6th Avenue	86	30	55	20	14	11	8	0	-	2	0
Downtown	1,385	581	803	52	112	166	162	60	43	157	52
James Center	248	8	240	-	55	27	152	6	-	1	-
Lincoln	100	27	73	12	8	11	28	3	10	2	0
Lower Pacific	84	26	57	7	6	20	14	0	-	10	-
Lower Portland Avenue	105	41	64	26	2	13	5	0	-	18	-

Location	Gross Acres	Rights of Way	Net Acres	Single Family	Multifamily	Commercial/Mixed-Use	Institutional	Industrial	Open Space	Vacant	Other
McKinley	57	25	31	13	7	3	8	1	0	0	-
Narrows	62	21	40	5	17	4	12	-	1	1	-
Point Ruston	36	1	35	-	11	12	0	-	7	1	5
Proctor	42	16	26	0	2	9	14	0	-	0	-
South Tacoma Way	94	34	60	4	2	35	3	14	-	3	-
Tacoma Central	200	27	173	-	19	79	73	1	-	1	-
Tacoma Mall	573	62	511	27	81	220	70	33	5	15	59
Upper Pacific	74	15	60	9	20	29	-	1	-	1	-
Upper Portland Avenue	76	8	68	8	9	30	17	-	-	4	-
Westgate	92	16	77	-	15	46	11	-	-	5	-
South Tacoma MIC	826	218	608	2	2	73	52	267	-	207	4
Port of Tacoma MIC	5,070	1,092	3,978	0	-	217	1,405	1,565	70	509	210

*Net acres = Total acreage of center **Some acreage may be also counted in rights-of-way as City-owned open space including boulevards. ***Vacant includes parking. ****Other includes easements, water, unspecified uses.
Source: Pierce County Department of Assessments, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 2: Population and Housing Units by Acre by Center, 2023.

Location	Gross Acres	Total population	Population per acre	Housing units	Units per acre	Population per housing unit
6th Avenue	86	1,880	22.0	906	10.6	2.1
Downtown	1,385	17,872	12.9	10,379	7.5	1.7
James Center	248	958	3.9	480	1.9	2.0
Lincoln	100	883	8.8	396	4.0	2.2
Lower Pacific	84	484	5.8	236	2.8	2.1
Lower Portland Avenue	105	666	6.3	226	2.1	2.9
McKinley	57	898	15.9	397	7.0	2.3
Narrows	62	647	10.5	461	7.5	1.4
Point Ruston	36	1,270	35.3	693	19.3	1.8
Proctor	42	688	16.2	334	7.9	2.1
South Tacoma Way	94	351	3.7	169	1.8	2.1
Tacoma Central	200	848	4.2	474	2.4	1.8
Tacoma Mall	573	6,308	11.0	3,255	5.7	1.9
Upper Pacific	74	1,120	15.1	483	6.5	2.3

Location	Gross Acres	Total population	Population per acre	Housing units	Units per acre	Population per housing unit
Upper Portland Avenue	76	383	5.0	97	1.3	4.0
Westgate	92	185	2.0	87	0.9	2.1
South Tacoma MIC	826	441	0.5	190	0.2	2.3
Port of Tacoma MIC	5,070	1,099	0.2	36	0.0	30.1

Source: Office of Financial Management, 2024; Pierce County Department of Assessments, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 3: Employment by Industry Sector by Center, 2022.

Mixed Use Center	Const/Res	FIRE	Manufacturing	Retail	Services	WTU	Government	Public Education	Total
6th Avenue	*	*	-	190	840	10	-	80	1,140
Downtown	660	3,080	1,200	610	27,200	520	3,180	1,600	38,060
James Center	-	30	*	*	720	10	-	760	1,670
Lincoln	-	-	*	160	310	*	10	170	670
Lower Pacific	-	*	-	90	350	*	680	30	1,230
Lower Portland Avenue	40	-	-	*	30	*	610	-	710
McKinley	-	10	*	*	360	*	30	-	400

Mixed Use Center	Const/Res	FIRE	Manufacturing	Retail	Services	WTU	Government	Public Education	Total
Narrows	*	*	-	20	100	-	30	80	290
Point Ruston	-	30	-	10	120	-	-	-	160
Proctor	*	60	-	360	500	*	60	130	1,120
South Tacoma Way	80	70	40	140	480	10	20	-	850
Tacoma Central	-	170	*	790	4,100	*	60	-	5,230
Tacoma Mall	320	580	80	3,050	4,440	440	1,520	20	10,450
Upper Pacific	20	50	-	340	360	-	-	-	780
Upper Portland Avenue	*	*	-	80	580	-	120	-	820
Westgate	-	110	-	280	820	10	-	-	1,220
South Tacoma MIC	1,260	90	1,020	270	2,400	960	1,360	-	7,360
Port of Tacoma MIC	600	110	2,540	420	1,740	4,230	700	-	10,340
City of Tacoma	**4,416**	**5,182**	**5,269**	**11,146**	**59,387**	**7,287**	**12,249**	**5,650**	**110,587**

A dash (-) denotes zero covered employment. An asterisk (*) denotes data suppression. Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 4: Jobs by Acre by Center, 2022.

Location	Gross Acres	Jobs	Jobs / Acre
6th Avenue	86	1,140	13.3

Location	Gross Acres	Jobs	Jobs / Acre
Downtown	1,385	38,060	27.5
James Center	248	1,670	6.7
Lincoln	100	670	6.7
Lower Pacific	84	1,230	14.7
Lower Portland Avenue	105	710	6.7
McKinley	57	400	7.1
Narrows	62	290	4.7
Point Ruston	36	160	4.4
Proctor	42	1,120	26.4
South Tacoma Way	94	850	9.0
Tacoma Central	200	5,230	26.1
Tacoma Mall	573	10,450	18.2
Upper Pacific	74	780	10.5
Upper Portland Avenue	76	820	10.8
Westgate	92	1,220	13.2
South Tacoma MIC	826	7,360	8.9

Location	Gross Acres	Jobs	Jobs / Acre
Port of Tacoma MIC	5,070	10,340	2.0

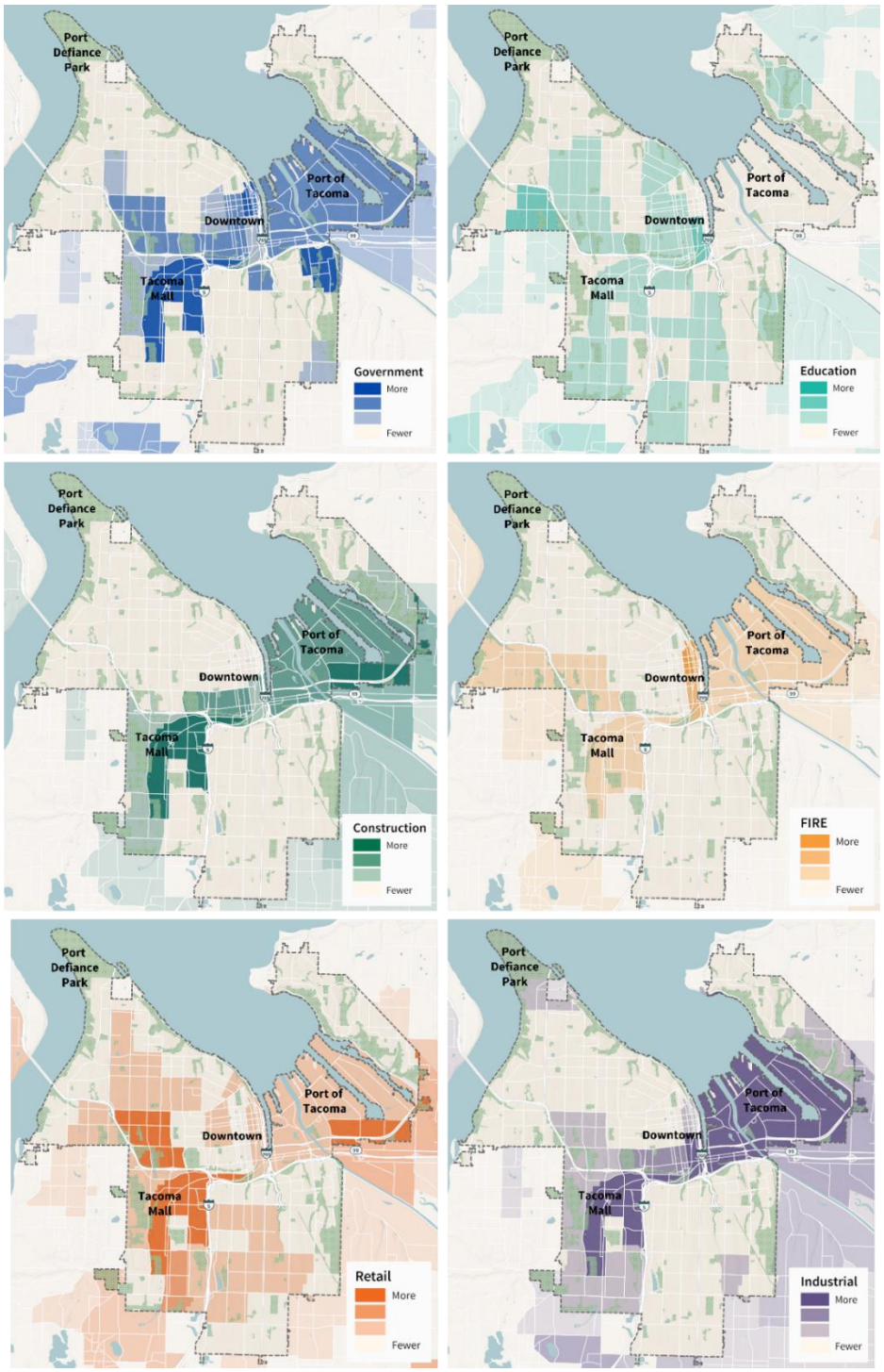
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 5: Employment by Industry Sector for Downtown Mixed-Use Center, 2015-2022.

Industry	2015 jobs	% share	2022 jobs	% share	sector %	change 2015-2022
Const/Res	540	2%	660	2%	15%	120
FIRE	4,010	11%	3,080	8%	59%	(930)
Manufacturing	830	2%	1,200	3%	23%	370
Retail	550	2%	610	2%	5%	60
Services	24,250	67%	27,200	71%	46%	2,950
WTU	740	2%	520	1%	7%	(220)
Government	3,310	9%	3,180	8%	26%	(130)
Public Education	1,760	5%	1,600	4%	28%	(160)
Total	35,980	100%	38,060	100%	34%	2,080

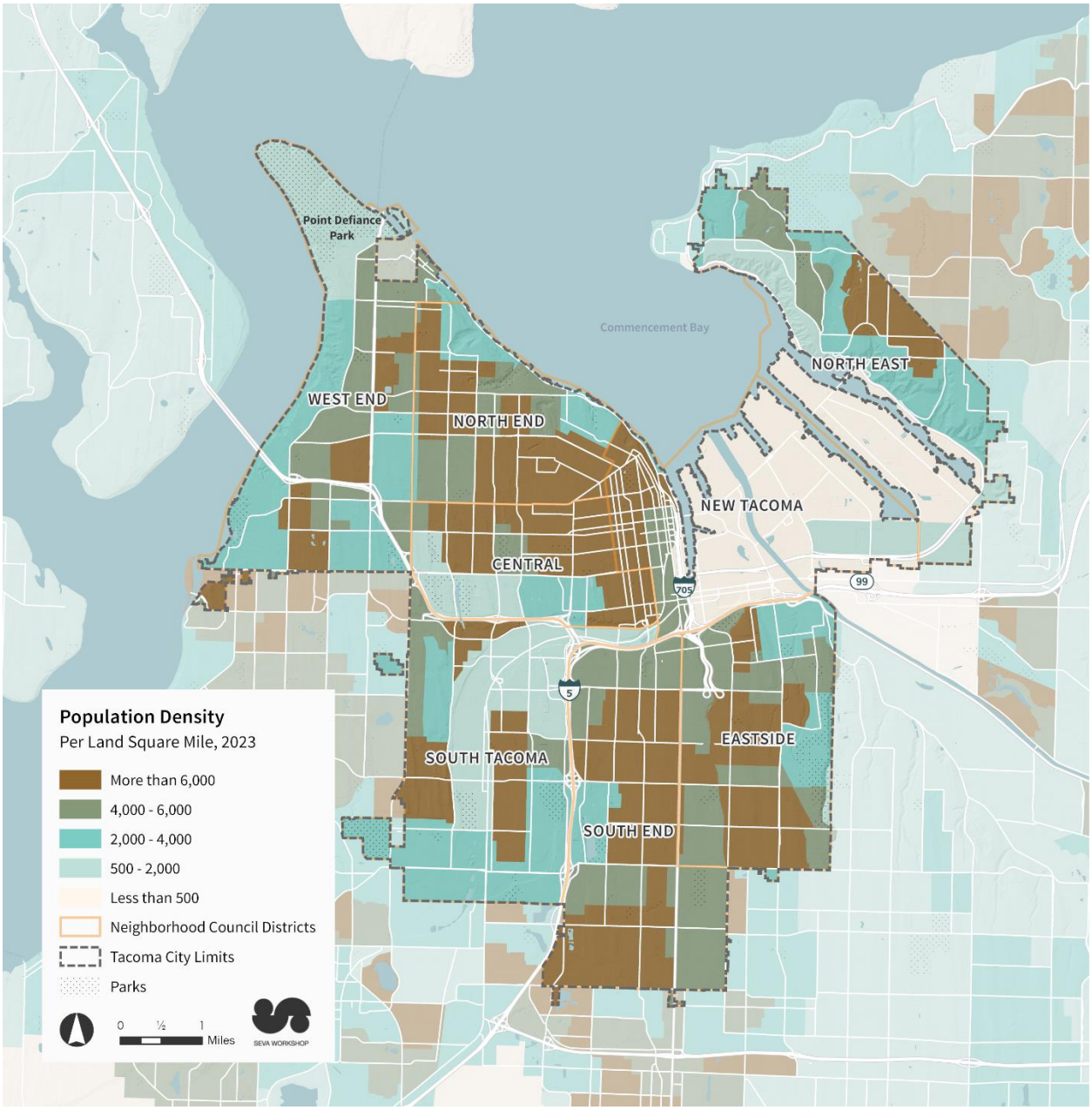
**Jobs are a report of “covered employment,” which refers to positions covered by the Washington Unemployment Insurance Act. The act exempts the self-employed, proprietors and corporate officers, military personnel, and railroad workers, so those categories are not included in the dataset. Covered employment accounts for approximately 90 percent of all employment. Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 6: Proportions of Employment by Sector, 2022



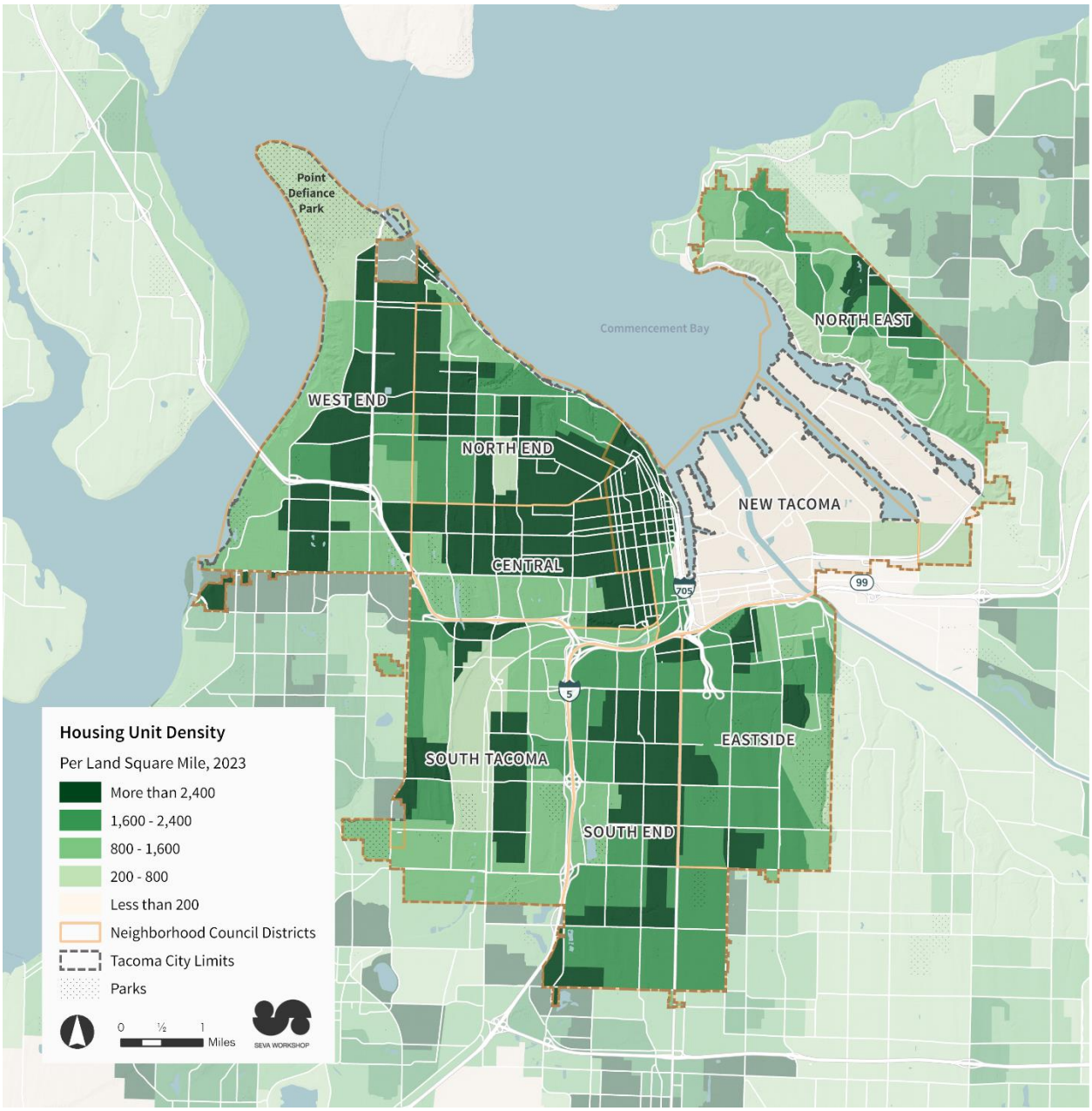
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 7: Population Density, 2023.



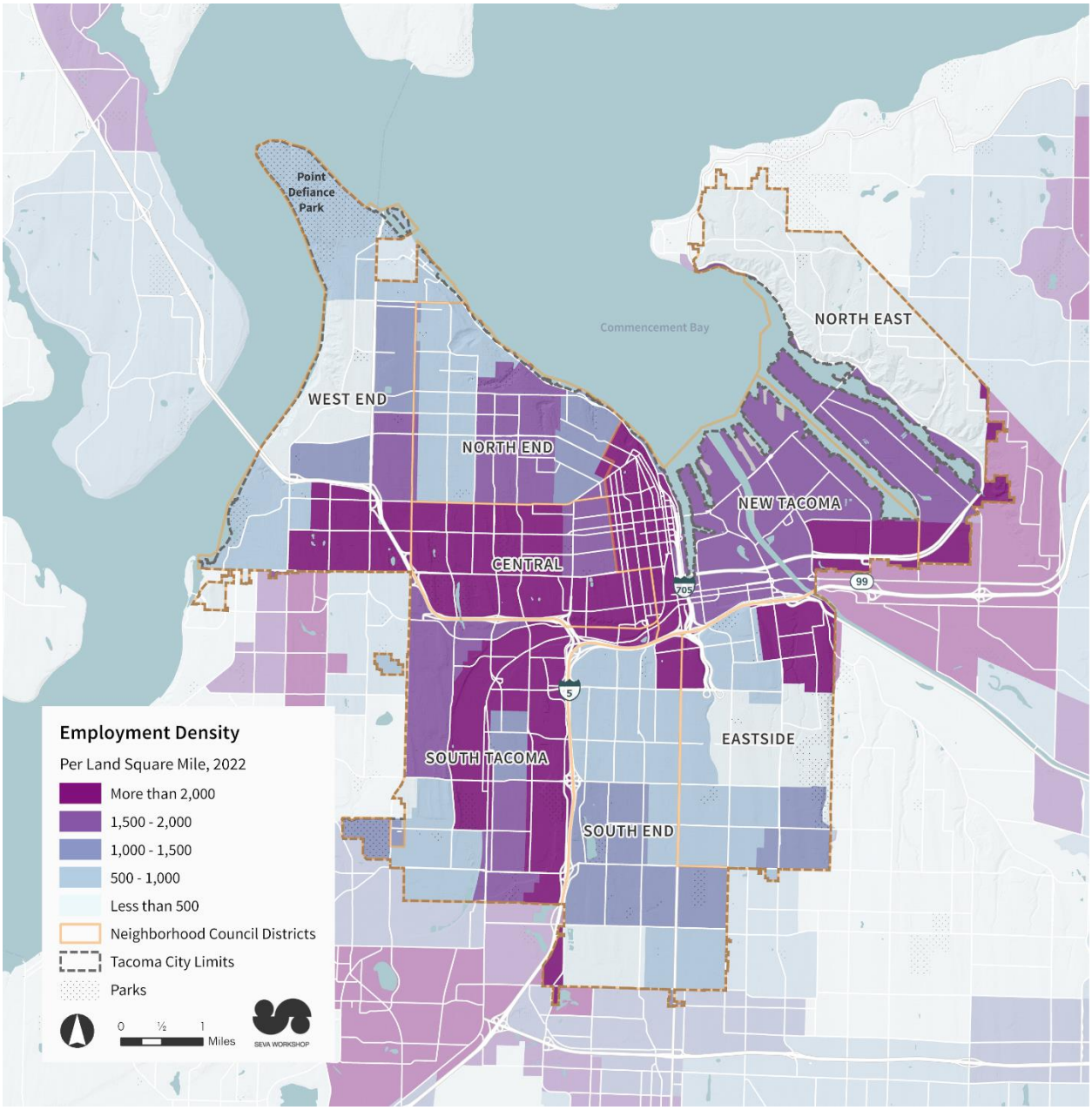
Source: Office of Financial Management, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 8: Housing Unit Density, 2023.



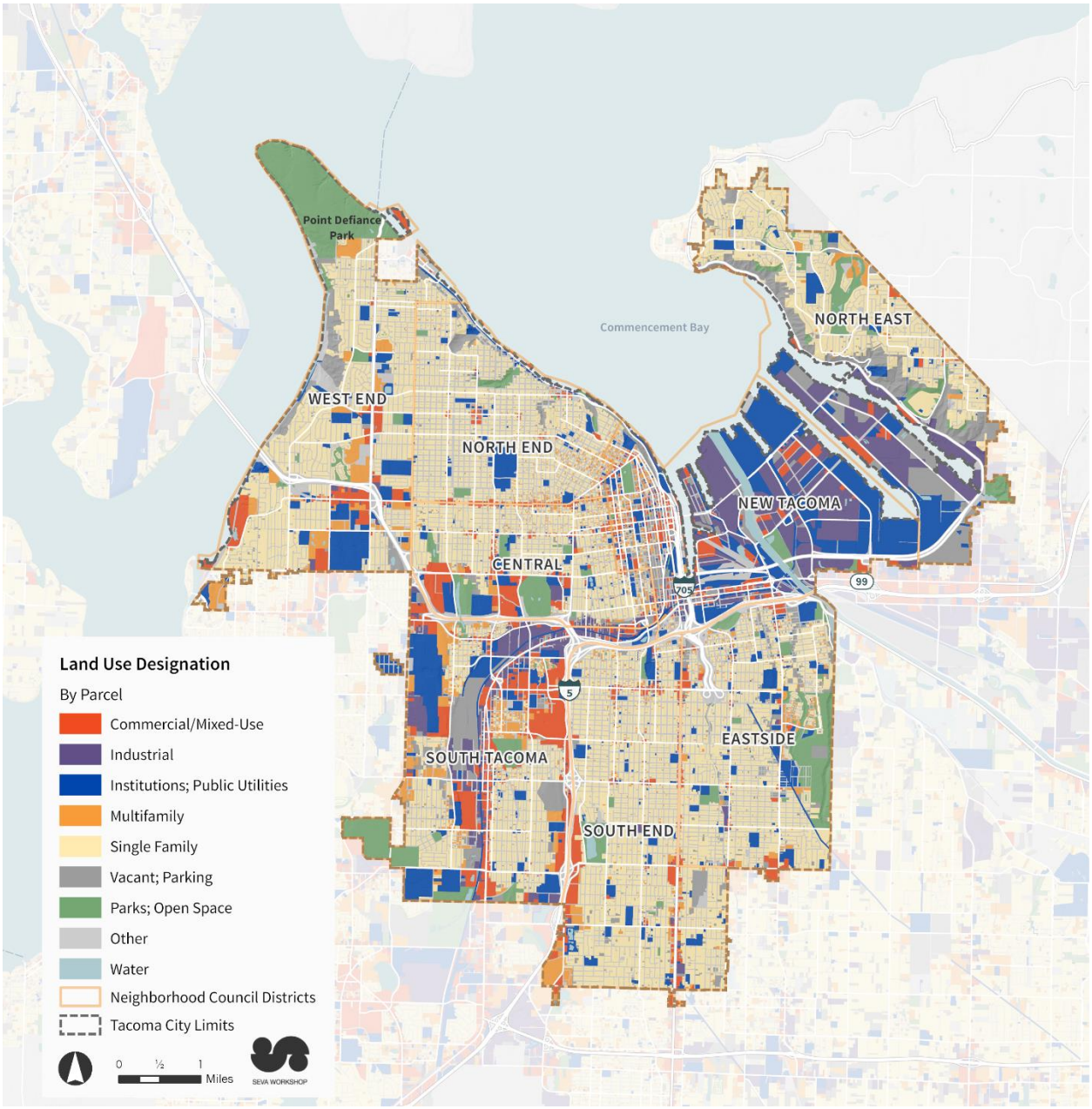
Source: Office of Financial Management, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 9: Employment Density, 2022.



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 10: Existing Land Use, 2024.



Source: Pierce County Assessor, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

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A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

Environment and Watershed Health Baseline Conditions DRAFT | November 2024

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1 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Before Western contact and settlement, the Puyallup people lived in villages from the foothills of təqʷuʔməʔ (Mount Tahoma), residing along the rivers that lead to Commencement Bay and into the South Puget Sound. The Puyallup Tribe, an independent sovereign nation, is the original steward of the land where Tacoma sits today, tending to the land where plants and animals were abundant and nurturing the waters where salmon, shellfish, and other marine resources were cultivated and harvested. Over time, however, the colonization, development, and industrialization of Tacoma have significantly worsened day-to-day life support systems, marginalized indigenous peoples, and resulted in extreme short-term gains for some at great cost to others, including plants and animals.

Tacoma's history of logging and a lack of environmentally conscious City policies have contributed to an underdeveloped tree canopy. Some industries and transportation have polluted and continue to pollute air, soils, and waters, affecting culturally and economically important species and public health. Wood smoke pollution in the winter months impacted not only Tacoma but the greater Pierce County area. While the City has made some progress in addressing pollution, like the facilitated widespread wood stove change-outs that occurred almost a decade ago, other forms of pollution have worsened.

Tacoma’s natural resources provide an array of ecologically, economically, and culturally valuable ecosystem services. The river, streams, aquifers, and floodplains convey and store water and provide critical habitat for native fish and aquatic species. The deep waters of Thea Foss waterway support international trade and commerce. Many of these resources also trap carbon and reduce the effects of urban heat islands. Today, greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution threatens the well-being of Tacoma’s interdependent web of life for generations. Climate-warming gases are causing and worsening natural disasters. However, the City acknowledges these facts and is pursuing action to address climate issues through meaningful and intentional action and stewardship. Indigenous communities and other Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) groups are valued role models and collaborators in this process to improve stewardship and overall community wellbeing. In December 2019, the Tacoma City Council, in coordination with the Puyallup Tribal Council, declared a climate emergency as a means to commit to protecting environmental assets and local communities. The resolution emphasized goals related to reducing GHG emissions, preparing for and mitigating climate impacts, and initiating a departure from fossil fuel reliance.

Exhibit 1: Tacoma Environmental Assets and Hazards Map.

Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

The City has committed to restoring and maintaining a high-quality environment. However, many of Tacoma's natural resources have been lost over time or are currently at risk. Development increases stormwater runoff, eroding stream channels and polluting waterways, making them unable to support healthy habitats. There is concern that anticipated growth and

development will result in substantial tree removal, continued habitat loss, and negative impacts on at-risk plant and animal species.

The City's land use plans and investments have been and will continue to be instrumental in helping guide and understand effective approaches to preserving natural resources. In addition, the City has invested time and money to restore Tacoma's watersheds. With thoughtful guidance, the community can work together to face new challenges and achieve and sustain healthy watersheds and a healthful environment for all Tacomans as the city grows.

1.1 Climate Change

Climate change is significantly impacting the Puget Sound region, resulting in extreme heat waves, increased year-round temperatures, diminished snowpack, rising sea levels, wildfire and smoke, and flooding from extreme precipitation and storm surges. Potential climate impacts to Tacoma's community include:

Social & Health impacts:

- Displacement of communities due to sea level rise flooding (as seen in Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 3)
  - Communities and businesses located in the West End, North End, and Tideflats are at higher risk of displacement due to flooding than inland communities.[1]
- Public health risks from wildfire smoke and heat
- Water-borne illnesses
  - Diseases such as salmonella and other bacterial and parasitic pathogens can have increased survival and growth due to increased air and water temperatures. E. coli and fecal pathogens can experience increased mobilization and dispersion due to flooding, drought, or storm surge and sea level rise.[2]

Natural System impacts:

- Stream pollutants
- Less shade and carbon storage from vegetation loss
- Marine habitat degradation

[1] Tacoma Climate Change Resilience Study, Executive Summary, May 2016

[2] Waterborne Diseases That Are Sensitive to Climate Variability and Climate Change, The New England Journal of Medicine, https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMra2300794

Infrastructure impacts:

- Transportation shutdowns due to the flooding and inundation of roadways, rail lines, and ports[3]
- Strained energy supply
- Flooding of low-lying infrastructure, such as buildings, roads, and other essential structures

Economic impacts:

- Mobility (people and goods) impacted by flooding
- Damage to critical infrastructure due to sea level rise
- Property value losses
- Risks to resource losses in agriculture, forestry, food
- Business operations affected by flooding

The effects of these impacts can be far-reaching and often disproportionately impact vulnerable communities. Impacts could potentially be intense for our unhoused neighbors, outdoor workers, kids, seniors, pregnant people, low-income households, BIPOC community members, people with breathing or heart issues, as well as other species, like salmon and orcas.

The cost of climate impacts, which includes the loss of human life, reduction in quality of life, disruption of critical services, and loss of economic assets from natural hazards and extreme events under future climate change conditions, is projected to reach $3 billion by 2050 and over $250 million by 2080.[4] Although reducing emissions may appear costly, the resulting economic growth and benefits for Tacoma's ecosystems and human well-being will enable the community to prosper in the future.

While Tacoma is actively working to reduce GHG emissions, some climate effects are already irreversible, and the city will face these challenges for years to come. The City of Tacoma is dedicated to fostering a climate-resilient future, building on its established history of climate action. Key initiatives include the Tacoma Community Climate Action Plan (2008) the Tacoma Environmental Action Plan (2016), the Tacoma Climate Adaptation Strategy (2021) and the 2030 Tacoma Climate Plan (2021).

During the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) from 2016 to 2020, many actions were taken to help address climate concerns and future impacts. For example, the City and Pierce County have added 20 percent more community gardens in low-income, at-risk communities, developed and shared educational resources related to waste prevention and electric vehicles, and planted 4,500 trees in Tacoma's hottest neighborhoods.[5] However, the EAP goals and investments were not aggressive enough to feasibly attain a net-zero emissions future. Thus, in 2021, the City formed a more aggressive approach in the Tacoma Climate Action Plan, which committed

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[3] United Nations Environment Programme (2024). Climate Risks in the Transportation Sector. Geneva, https://www.unepfi.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Climate-Risks-in-the-Transportation-Sector.pdf

[4] Source: 2030 Tacoma Climate Action Plan, 2021; Tacoma Climate Adaptation Strategy, 2021

[5] City of Tacoma, 2030 Tacoma Climate Action Plan, 2021

Tacoma to a 2050 net-zero emissions goal. This goal aligns with targets set by many other communities across the U.S. and the global target needed to increase the chances of avoiding catastrophic climate change. The Tacoma Climate Action Plan describes the steps that the City will take to reach its net-zero emissions goal, including strategies, actions, and targets to measure progress toward this goal.[6] According to Tacoma's 2019 GHG emissions inventory, the city's GHG pollution amounted to approximately 1.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (MtCO2e) or 7.8 MtCO2e per person. To reach net zero, the city would need to reduce its emissions by 33 percent by 2030.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the City of Tacoma develops an annual progress report that tracks 2030 Indicator Targets. These indicators are often easier to relate to than measurements of tons of GHG pollution, are trackable, and usually show more immediate community impact. The metrics include things like the number of trees planted in neighborhoods, public electric vehicle charging stations installed, and miles of sidewalks built or repaired. Actions are categorized by the following strategy categories:

- Better Together (community welfare and collaboration)
- Better Living (improving the general quality of life)
- Better Breathing (air quality)
- Better Resource Use (related to consumption, waste prevention, and reuse)
- Better Opportunities (economic health)
- Better Prepared (resiliency)

The actions found in the above categories were determined to be high impact as they would either contribute to a significant reduction in GHG emissions, center historically underserved communities in development and implementation, or deliver substantial co-benefits that contribute to an enhanced quality of life.

The 2023 progress report indicated that the City has made strides towards achieving 2030 goals. According to the report, since 2022, the City:

- Increased community-led climate equity projects and programs by almost 72 percent
- Added 19 additional community food projects (including gardens, food forests, orchards, farms, food rescue efforts, and farmers markets)
- Increased miles of sidewalks (14 percent) and bicycle infrastructure (80 percent)
- Increased the number of green certified commercial buildings (2 percent) and housing units (10 percent), preserved housing units (7 percent), and new affordable units (13 percent)

[6] Ibid., page 2

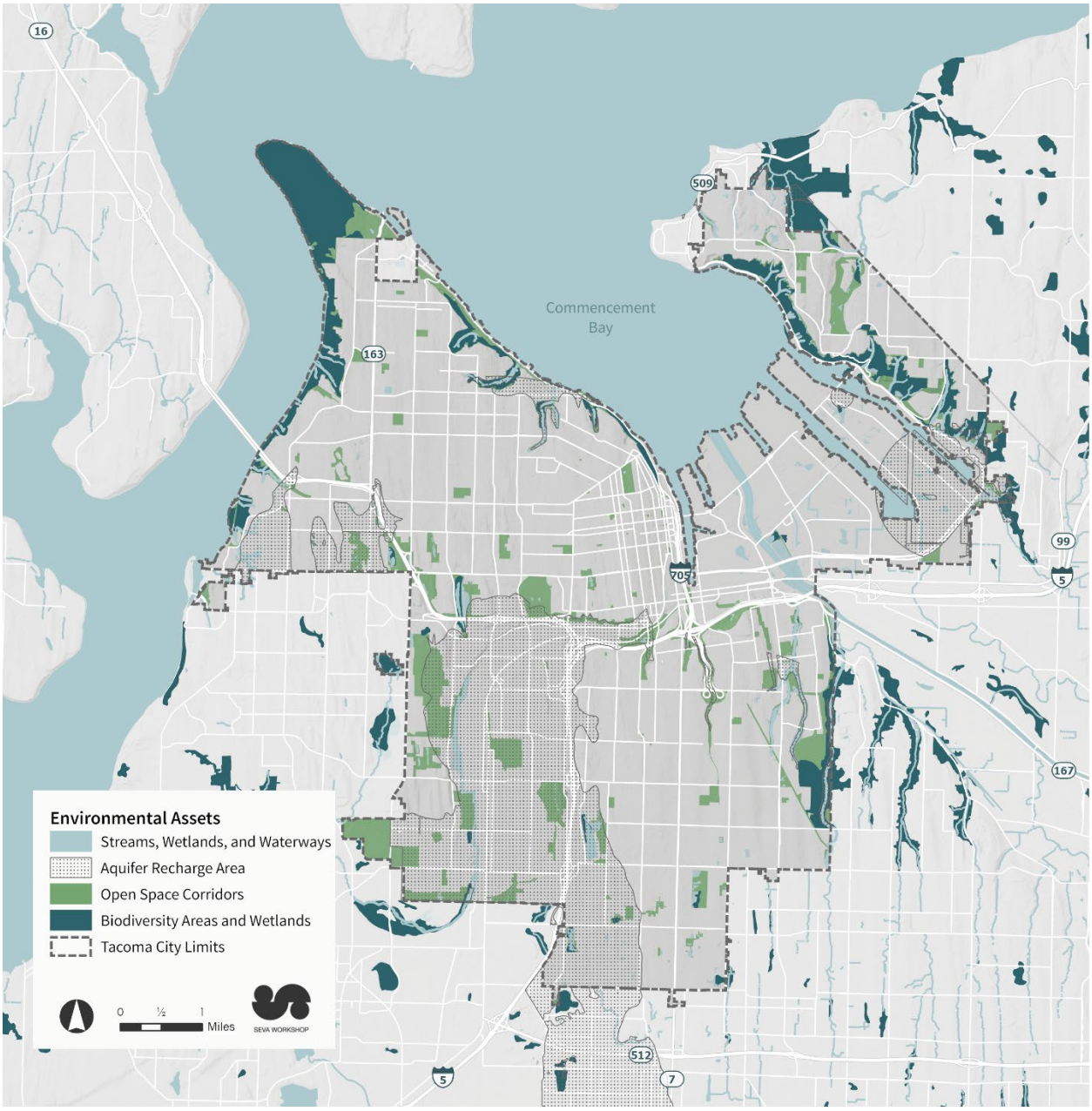
- Increased acres of actively managed open space habitats (21 percent) and protected open space ecosystem habitats (53 percent)
- Increased natural heat island intervention projects (68 percent)
- Reduced GHG from municipal fleet by 36 percent

1.2 Environmental Assets and Hazards

Tacoma's natural resources include the marine ecosystems of the Puget Sound, the Puyallup River and its tributaries, urban wetlands, open spaces, parks, and urban forests. Together, these resources play an important role in stormwater management, air and water purification, habitat for diverse fish and wildlife species, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Tacoma also faces a variety of environmental hazards that pose risks to both its natural and built environment. Across the city, there are areas at risk of landslides, erosion, flooding, and liquefaction. Development and increasing extreme weather events due to climate change can place stressors on the environment that can create vulnerabilities. Areas at risk of landslides, erosion, flooding, and liquefaction are vulnerable to potential property damage and disruption in services. As Tacoma continues to grow and face environmental challenges, thoughtful and proactive management of the city's environmental assets and hazards will be important to ensure communities are thriving and resilient.

Exhibit 2: Tacoma Environmental Assets Map.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 3: Tacoma Environmental Hazards Map.

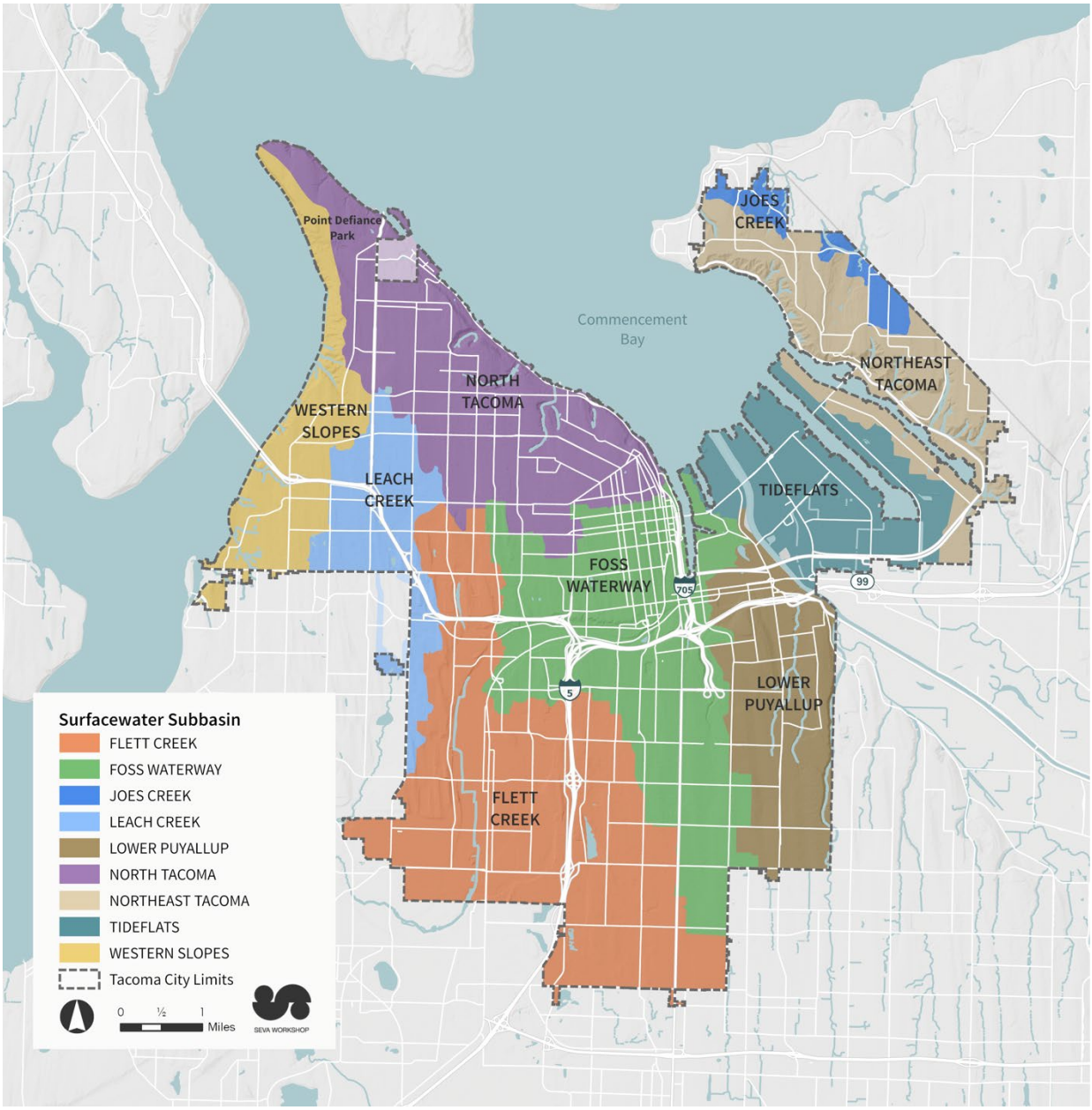
Sources: City of Tacoma (*Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility*) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

1.3 Watersheds[7]

The nine watersheds located in Tacoma are described below and mapped in Exhibit 4: Flett Creek, Foss Waterway, Joe's Creek, Leach Creek, Lower Puyallup, North Tacoma, Northeast Tacoma, Tideflats, and Western Slopes. The watersheds in Tacoma are also a part of Washington State's Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA). Roughly half of the watersheds are either part of WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed or WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed.

[7] Section 1.3 Watershed is informed by the City of Tacoma's Urban Watershed Protection Plan. Description of waterbodies and facilities as well as any charts or tables included in this section originates from the Urban Watershed Protection Plan.

Exhibit 4: Tacoma Watersheds Map.



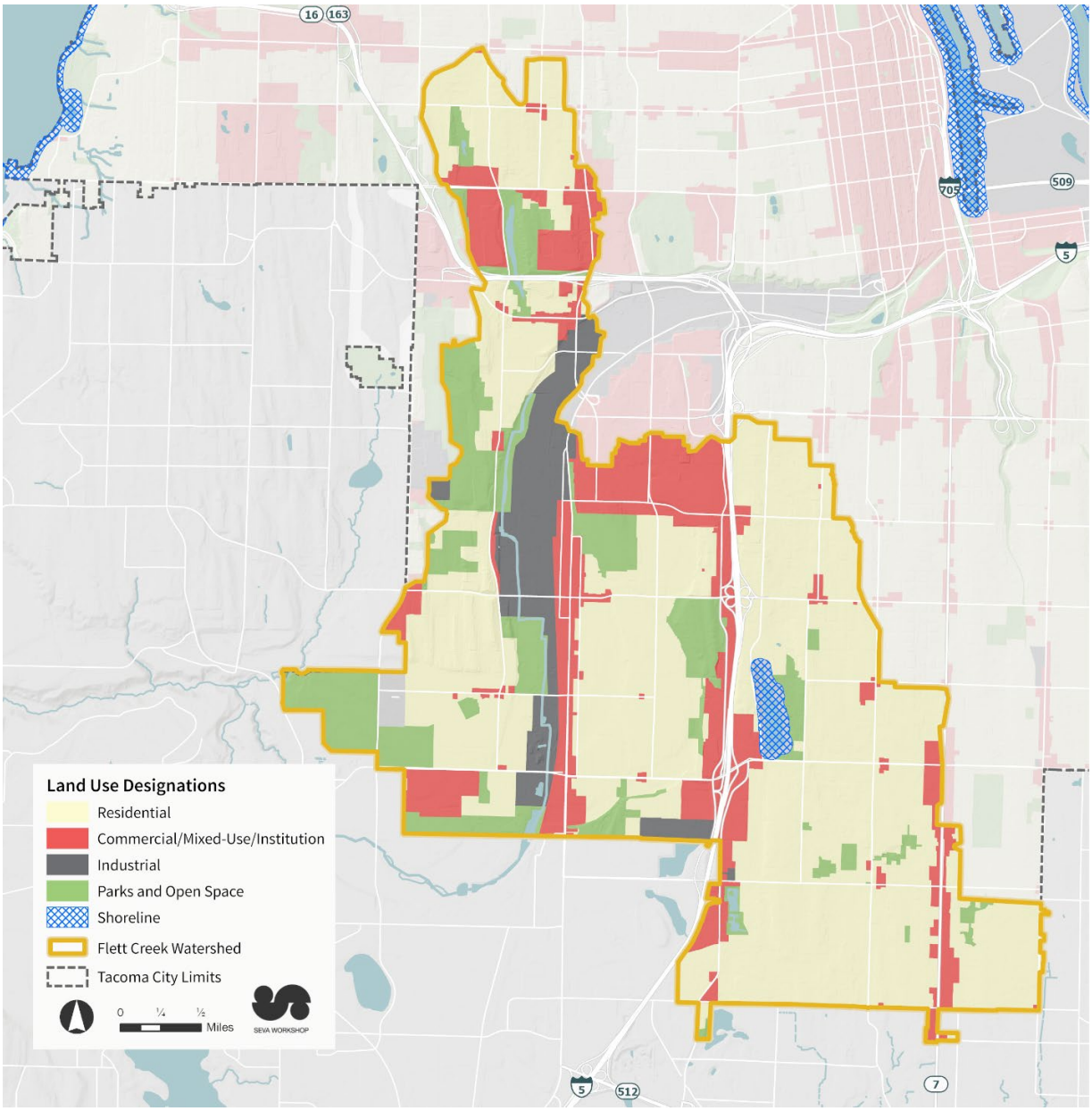
Sources: City of Tacoma, 2024, Seva Workshop, 2024.

The maps in Exhibit 5 through Exhibit 32 zoom into each of Tacoma's nine watersheds and identify land use designations; known environmental assets including wetlands, streams, open space corridors, aquifer recharge areas, shorelines, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, and potential restoration sites; and environmental hazards including geologically hazardous areas, and flood hazard areas.

Flett Creek

The Flett Creek Watershed is approximately 7,930 acres with 7,130 acres within the City of Tacoma limits and is the largest watershed in the city. The Flett Creek watershed is one of two watersheds in Tacoma that do not contain saltwater shorelines. The watershed is predominately residential with commercial and light industrial uses in localized areas as illustrated in Exhibit 5. The watershed is 43 percent impervious.

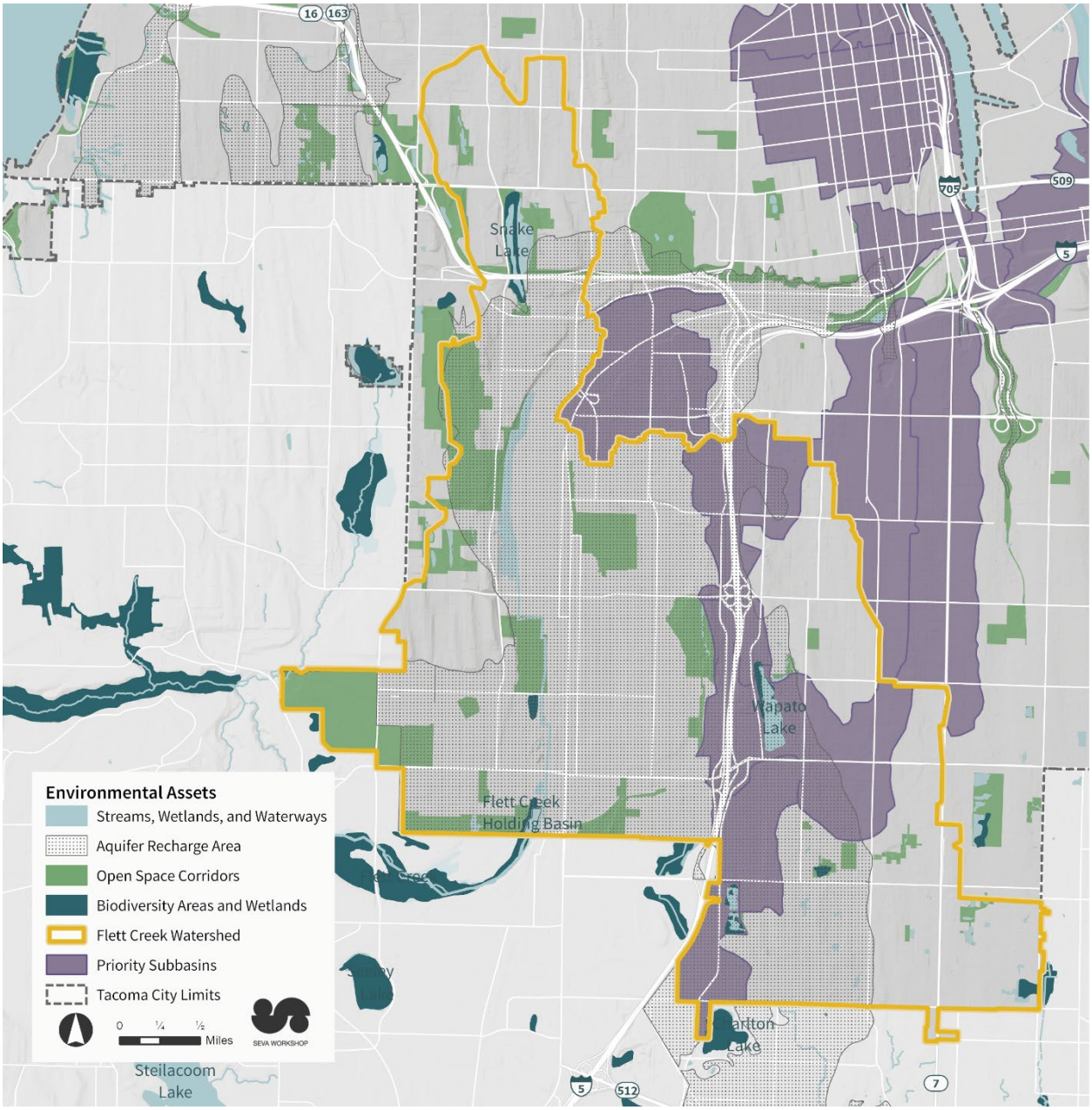
Exhibit 5: Land Use Designations within Flett Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Future Land Use Designation*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Flett Creek itself occurs within the City of Lakewood and flows into Chambers Creek, but the historic headwaters of the creek are located in Tacoma. Flett Creek Watershed is bordered by the Thea Foss Watershed to the east, Leach Creek Watershed on the west, and Pierce County to the south. Flett Creek Watershed is also part of WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed.

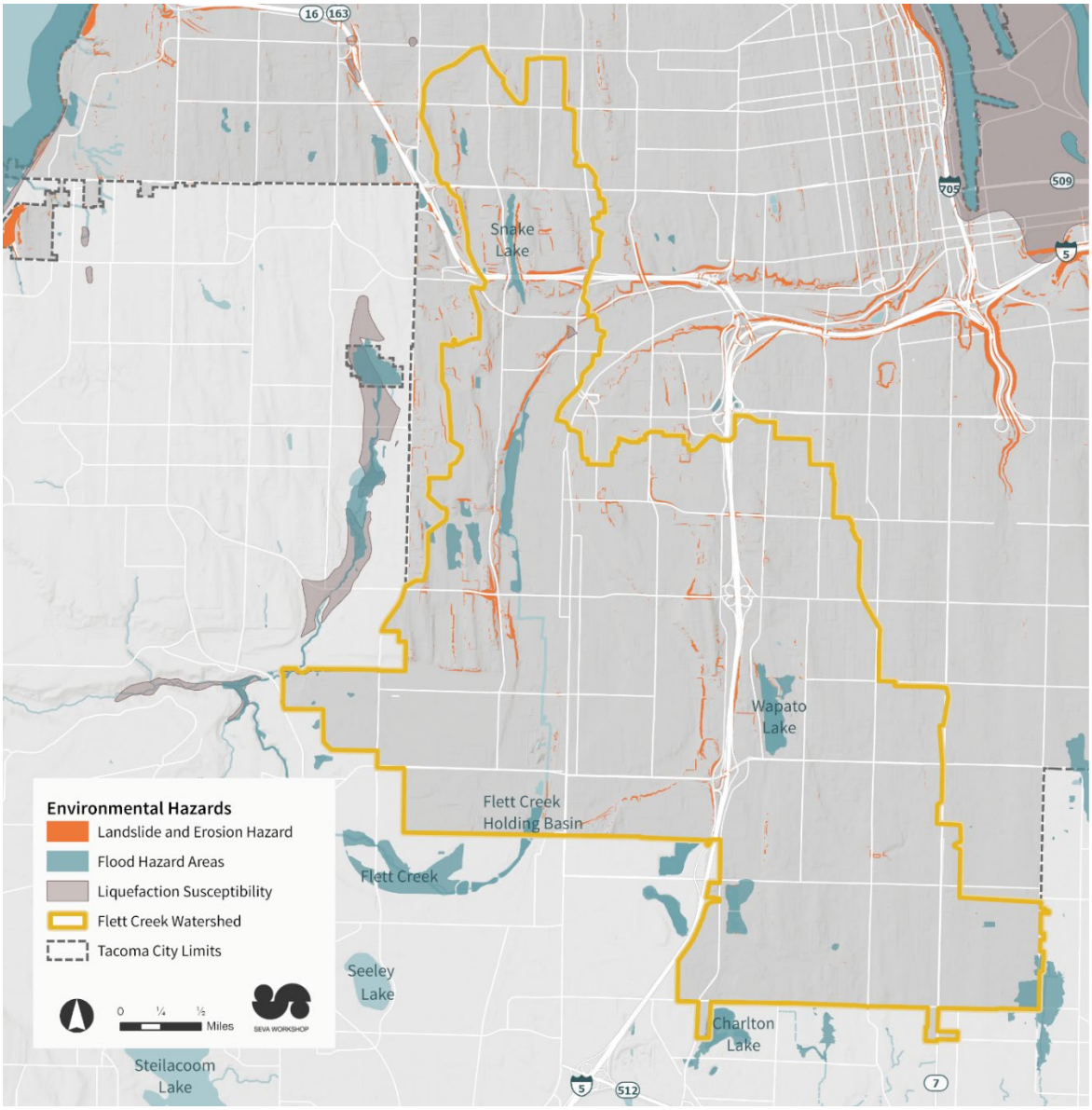
Exhibit 6: Environmental Assets, Flett Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors*; *Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

The watershed includes Snake, Wapato and Wards Lakes, Hosmer and 84th Street Holding Basins, the Flett Creek Holding Ponds, portions of Interstate 5 and State Route 16, the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District, and the South Tacoma Channel Superfund Site. The Delong Pond wetland, an isolated waterbody, is also located in this drainage basin. The Pierce County Conservations Futures Program purchased part of the Delong Pond wetland to be preserved as wildlife habitat and open space. All 7,930 acres of the watershed drain into the Flett Creek Holding Basins, which are pumped from a single pump station into the Flett Dairy Wetlands and Flett Creek.

Exhibit 7: Environmental Hazards, Flett Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility*) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Snake Lake

Snake Lake is a 17-acre urban lake and wetland. The water from Snake Lake discharges to the South Tacoma Channel and, during high flow events, to the Flett Creek Holding Basins.

The lake is the central feature of the Tacoma Nature Center, a 54-acre facility dedicated to nature education and research. The facility is operated by Metro Parks Tacoma. The lake does not support fishing or swimming, but the surrounding area around Snake Lake does offer other recreational opportunities such as walking trails and wildlife viewings.

The nearby urban residential watershed (approximately 584 acres) drains into the lake. Eighty percent of the water that flows into the lake over a year comes from stormwater runoff. Large impervious areas in this drainage basin include the eastern portion of Cheney Stadium, Foss High School, and a Fred Meyer shopping center. Cheney Stadium was recently retrofitted with a pervious pavement parking lot and bioretention facilities; as a result of the retrofit, most of the stormwater now infiltrates and no longer directly discharges to the lake.

Wapato Lake

Wapato Lake is a small, shallow 23-acre urban lake that drains 900 residential and commercial acres from the north. The lake is the central feature of Wapato Park, an 80-acre facility owned by Metro Parks Tacoma. As the only recreational lake in the City, Wapato Lake is the target of intense watershed and in-lake maintenance and management. The goal of these activities is to reach and maintain a clear-water state to support fishing and boating.

Water quality in Wapato Lake is a challenge, due to its shallow nature and urban setting. While stormwater pollutants largely bypass the lake, Wapato Lake still experiences pollutants from other sources like birds and the release of phosphorus from lake sediments. The lake is listed by Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) as a Category 5 “impaired waters” for fecal coliform bacteria. A water quality improvement plan, technically known as a total maximum daily load (TMDL) and is required by the Clean Water Act, to address the fecal coliform bacteria has not been scheduled. Wapato does have a TMDL for phosphorus and an Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Category 4a TMDL.

Flett Wetland and Creek

Flett Creek is approximately 3.0 miles long and is located in the City of Lakewood. The historic headwaters of the creek were located at least partially in Tacoma but were ditched and/or piped long ago. The Flett Pump Station transfers water from the Flett Ponds to the effective headwaters of Flett Wetland and Creek. Flett creek flows to Chambers-Clover Creek which ultimately discharges to the Tacoma Narrows.

The Flett Wetlands are extremely flat and the creek channel slope is 0.06 percent for the first mile downstream of the pump station. The Flett Dairy dug and maintained this channel yearly until 1979. Post-maintenance, farm road culverts collapsed, and the creek channel filled in with

swamp smartweed, reed canary grass, and cattails. The collapsed culverts and the presence of beaver and vegetative dams caused water to backup and cross the emergency spillway leading water to re-enter the Flett Ponds in 2009 and 2011, respectively; this event caused adjacent and upstream properties to become flooded.

Invasive species dominance and blockages reduce the water quality and habitat complexity within the Flett Wetland. Summertime water temperatures can reach 80°F and the few fish present (bullhead and stickleback) become stranded and die during low water periods. Multiple projects are executed yearly in an effort to increase flow rate while enhancing fisheries habitat. Projects include removal of two roads/collapsed culverts, beaver dams, barbwire tangles and clearing of invasive reed canary grass from the creek channel. The creek is very weakly confined, the banks are planted yearly with willow in an effort to start hummock formation, eventually providing a substrate for shade producing woody plant species. While water levels remain high in the wetland, water has not passed back over the dike separating the ponds from the wetland since 2011 and cutthroat trout were observed the last two years in the channel (after lack of observed presence from 2009-2017).

Hosmer Holding Basin

The Hosmer Holding Basin was constructed in 1965 and drains approximately 2100 acres. The basin consists of two cells. The southern cell receives the majority of discharge and drains residential areas to the north, south and east of the basin. The north basin receives local discharges and largely acts as an equalization basin – or balancing reservoir.

Flett Holding Ponds

Stormwater runoff from the entire watershed ultimately flows into the Flett Creek Holding Basins, located in the City of Lakewood. In 1957, before widespread development, the Flett Creek Holding Ponds were originally called the “South Tacoma Swamp,” a natural depressed area that was the headwaters of Flett Creek. The South Tacoma Swamp spanned from South 48th Street to South 74th Street. A threaded channel within the wetland buffer ran from the South Tacoma Swamp location to Bridgeport Way. From 1903-1979, Flett Creek above Bridgeport Way was maintained as a distinct channel to support hay production and pasture for the Flett Dairy. After maintenance by Flett Dairy ended in 1979, channel flow became blocked due to overrun vegetation and beaver dams.

The current Flett Creek Holdings Ponds and pump station were constructed in 1981 to alleviate localized flooding. The Flett Creek Holding Basin system consists of four consecutive connected cells, approximately 4,500 feet in length, with associated piping, and a pump station. Water entering the Flett Creek Holding Basin is pumped to the Flett Dairy Wetlands and Flett Creek. Flett Creek converges with Chambers Creek which ultimately discharges to the Puget Sound.

The Flett Ponds have an extensive monoculture of swamp smartweed (Polygonum hydropiperoides), which impedes the ponds’ performance as active storage. The plants cover over 90 percent of two of the ponds, and approximately 50 percent of the other two pond. In addition to loss of active storage, the plants break off during fall/winter storms blocking

transmission pipes between the ponds and intake screens of the pump station. Herbicide applications are scheduled to assist with managing the growth of the monoculture.

Wards Lake

Wards Lake is a single cell basin which receives water from the Hosmer Holding Basin, WSDOT right-of-way, and Wapato Lake. Water entering Wards Lake from the Wapato and Hosmer outfalls is impacted by an expanding sediment delta, which is 60 percent of the outfall pipe(s) height. The delta forms the eastern edge of Owens Marsh, which deepens to become Wards Lake at the far western end of the property. The marsh will continue to fill in as a result of natural succession. The City of Tacoma is looking at multiple flood control options to address this impediment within the Hosmer-Wards-80th Street Holding Basin system. Water exits Wards Lake to the north through a pair of gates, one designed for normal flow conditions and one designed as an emergency overflow.

80th Street Holding Basin (Gravel Pit)

The 80th Street Holding Basin (formerly known as the Gravel Pit Holding Basin) was originally an open pit gravel extraction facility during the 1950s. When gravel mining ceased in 1959, the City began using the gravel pit as a regional stormwater detention facility. The Gravel Pit is a single cell holding basin, which receives water from the Wards Lake Holding Basin and a small portion of water from the City of Lakewood. The City expanded the holding capacity of the existing Gravel Pit Holding Basin in 2016. The expansion was enrolled in the Payment In-Lieu-of Construction Program, which allows the City to accelerate environmental improvements in the Flett Creek Watershed and to Flett Creek. New development and redevelopment projects within the Flett Creek Watershed have the option of participating in the Payment In-Lieu-Of Construction Program by paying a system development charge instead of constructing individual site-specific flow control facilities.

South Tacoma Channel Superfund Site

The South Tacoma Channel Superfund site is located between South Tacoma Way and Tyler Street and extends between South 56th and South 38th Streets. The western edge of the site contains a long, linear channel extending from South 38th Street to South 50th Street. The channel is not entirely under City management, but it serves an critical role in detaining and infiltrating flood flows, without damaging nearby structures. The South Tacoma Channel Superfund site has recently been delisted but continues to be subject to deed restrictions.

ESA-Listed Fish Species Critical Habit

The Flett Creek and Chambers Creek are the only waterbodies connected to the Flett Creek Watershed that have confirmed fish populations. Neither Flett Creek nor Chambers Creek are considered Critical Habitat for Puget Sound Chinook or Puget Sound Steelhead. However, based on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) WRIA, South Sound

Tributaries Winter Steelhead, which can be found in the WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed, are considered threatened species.

Salmonid spawning habitat can be found from Chambers Creek up to Bridgeport Way and there is one fish hatchery located on Chambers Creek. The following table lists the populations of fish present in both Flett Creek and Chambers Creek.

Exhibit 8: Fish Populations in Flett Creek Watershed.

Location	Fish Population
Flett Creek	Coho, documented spawning
	Summer/Fall/Winter Chum, presence
	Winter Steelhead, presumed presence
	Fall Chinook, presumed presence
Chambers Creek	Coho, documented spawning
	Summer/Fall/Winter Chum, presence
	Fall Chinook, potential presence
	Winter Steelhead, presence
	Kokanee, presence

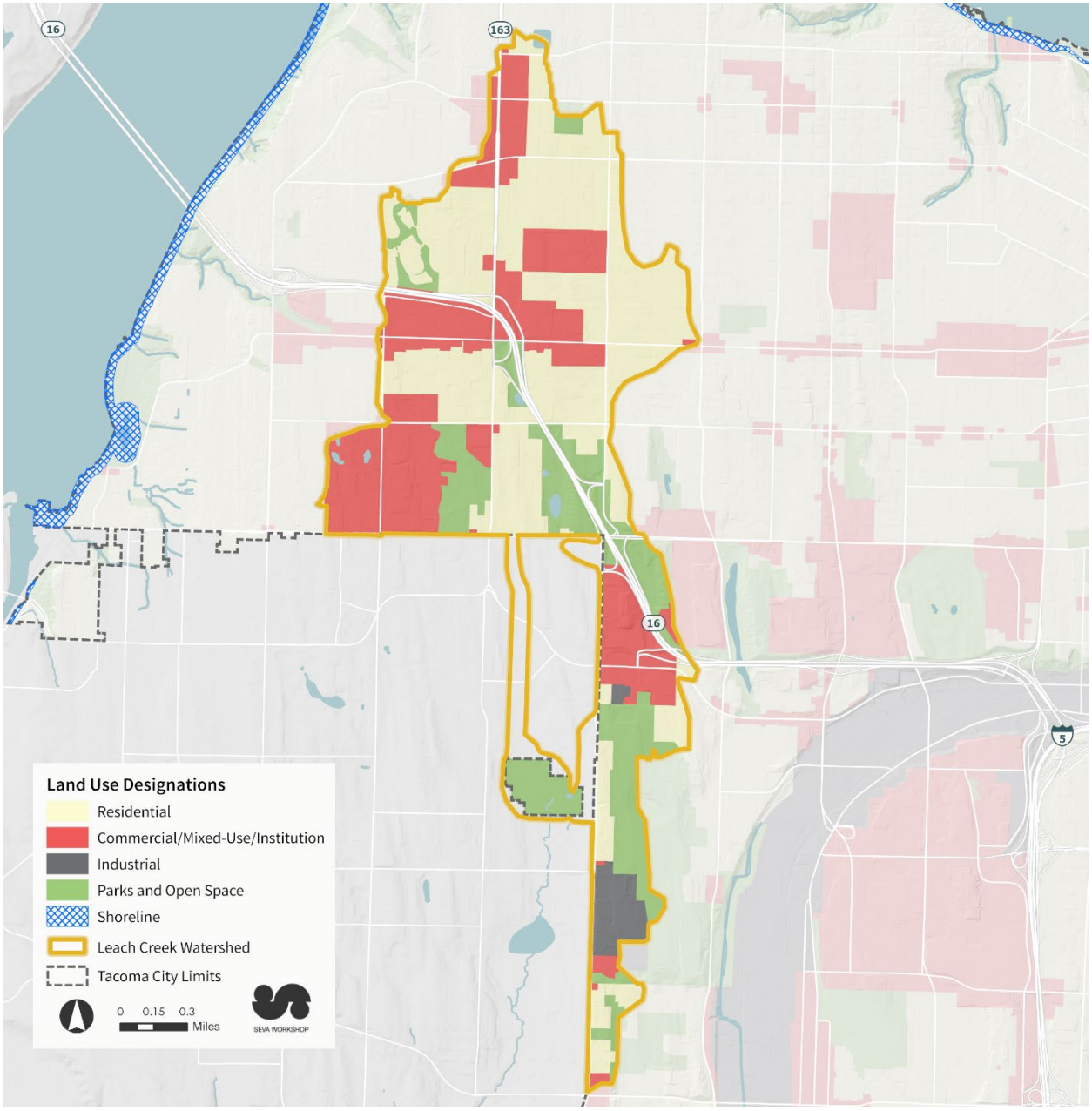
Source: City of Tacoma, 2024

Leach Creek

The Leach Creek Watershed within the City boundaries cover 1,728 acres. It is located in the west-central section of Tacoma and is bordered by the Western Slopes and North Tacoma Watersheds to the north, the Flett Creek Watershed to the east, and the Cities of Fircrest and University Place to the southwest. Like the Flett Creek Watershed, this watershed does not contain any saltwater shorelines. Leach Creek Watershed is also part of the WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed.

Leach Creek has a drainage area of approximately 1,867 acres or 6.5 square miles. Exhibit 9 shows that much of the land use within Leach Creek Watershed is residential and commercial. A portion of the Tacoma Landfill Superfund site is also included in this watershed. China Lake and a system of 16 wetlands on the Tacoma Community College campus are the significant waterbodies in this watershed within City limits.

Exhibit 9: Land Use Designation within Leach Creek Watershed.



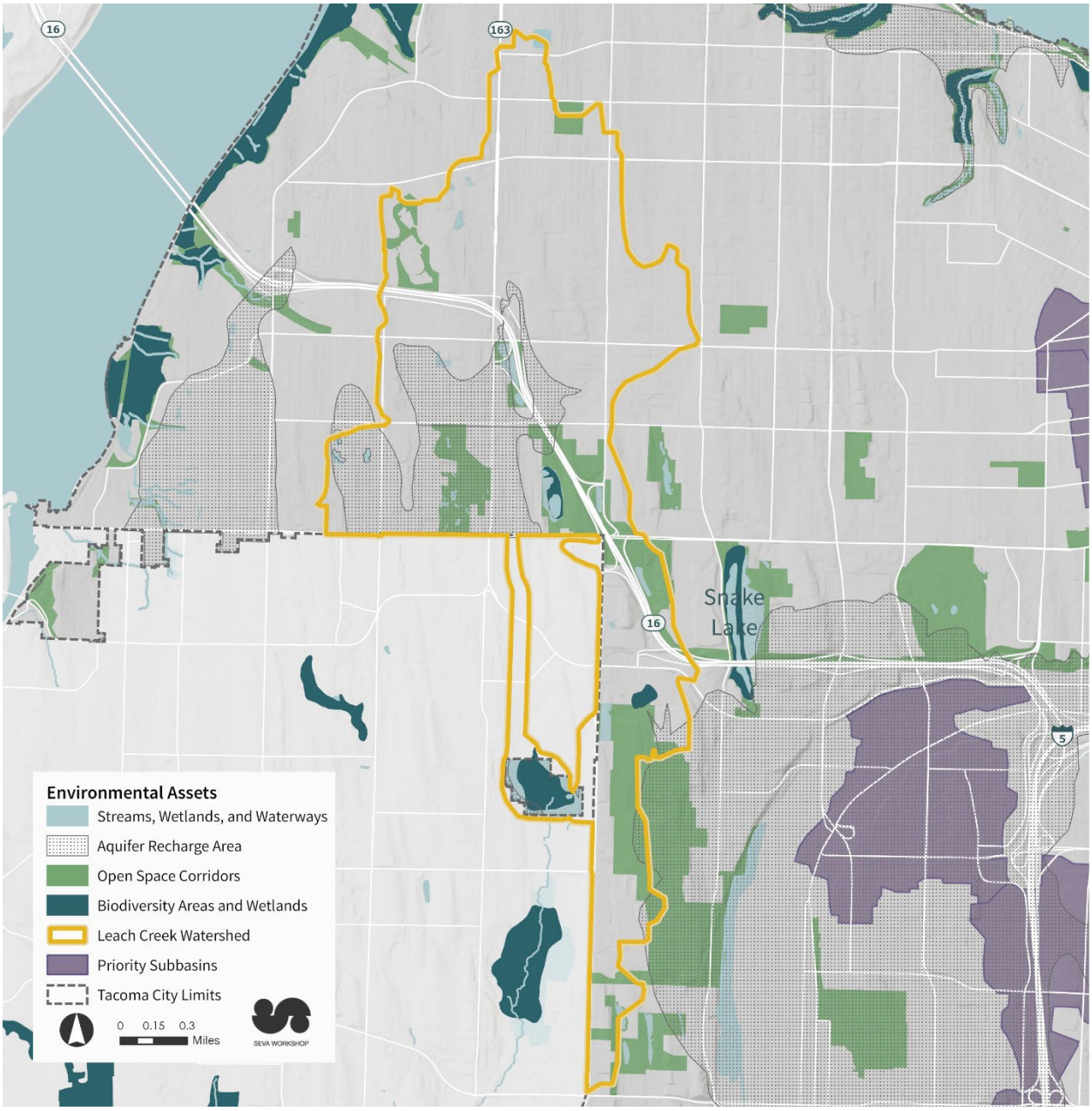
Sources: City of Tacoma (*Future Land Use Designation*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Ecology detected several instances of elevated bacteria and mercury concentrations at the mouth of Leach Creek during routine water quality monitoring in 2007-2008. Total mercury levels exceeded (did not meet) the Washington State chronic water quality criterion during four sampling events. Dissolved copper levels also exceeded the chronic criterion during two sampling events. Sources appear to lie towards the upstream end of the Leach Creek watershed. In March 2015, Ecology proposed that Leach Creek, from the holding basin to the

confluence with Chambers Creek, be placed in Category 5 on the 303(d) list of the State Water Quality Assessment as being water quality limited for mercury, copper, and bacteria based on the 2007-2008 and the 2009-2010 sampling data.

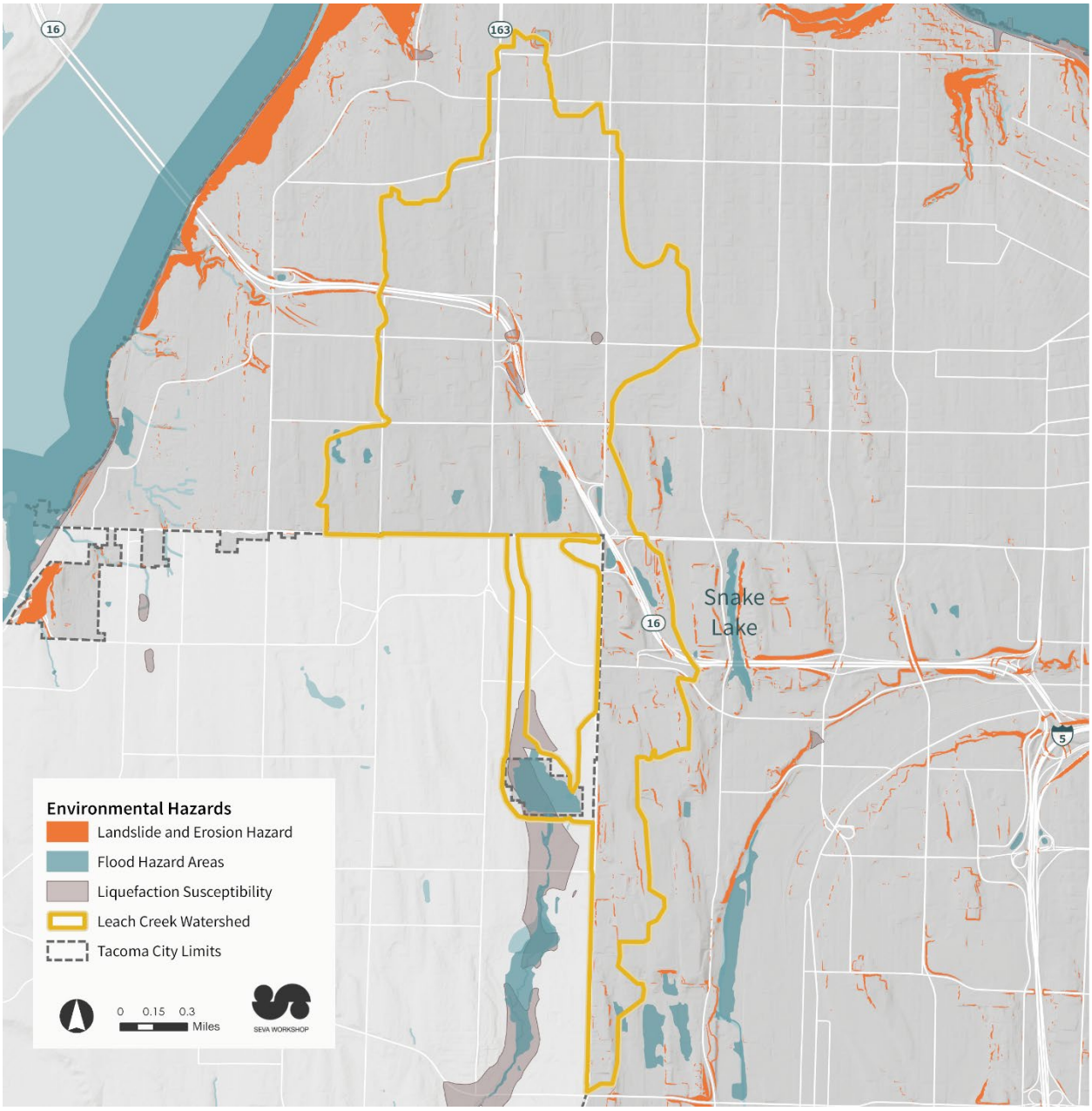
Offsite groundwater extraction wells were installed along Leach Creek to intercept and monitor any contaminants that may be traveling through the groundwater from the unlined portions of the Tacoma Transfer and Recovery Center, a Superfund site. Currently, groundwater at this location is no longer being re-directed to the wastewater treatment plant. The monitoring well data indicated that groundwater elevations have returned to pre-remediation elevations, and groundwater contaminants monitoring analytical results were meeting Consent Decree groundwater performance standards. Consequently, EPA approved decommissioning selected offsite groundwater extraction wells in 2010, with the last offsite extraction well decommissioned in March 2018.

Exhibit 10: Environmental Assets, Leach Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 11: Environmental Hazards, Leach Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility*) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Leach Creek Holding Basin

The Leach Creek Holding Basin covers approximately 42 acres and contains 32 acres of wetlands. The holding basin collects 2,500 acres of the WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed. In 1961, the holding basin was built by the City of Tacoma to control stormwater runoff into Leach Creek and help prevent downstream property flooding and stream scouring. A 1,100-foot earthen dam was constructed across a naturally depressed swampy area below Fircrest where natural springs made up the headwaters of Leach Creek. A lawsuit in the mid-1980's resulted in the construction of a pump station that would relieve downstream flooding by pumping water from the holding basin to the Thea Foss Waterway during high flow events. An open channel emergency spillway was also added to prevent dam breaching.

The holding basin has a normal operating storage capacity of approximately 80 acre-feet. During extreme storms (3.5 inches or more in 24 hours), the pond level will continue to increase and may discharge over the emergency spillway to Leach Creek. Depth over the emergency spillway may range from 6 to 12 inches, which leaves one foot of freeboard on the dam. The total emergency storage is approximately 120 acre-feet to top of dam.

Over the years, the capacity of the holding basin has decreased due to sedimentation and vegetation growth. However, the need for stormwater storage capacity within the Leach Creek Watershed has increased as the area has continued to develop. A holding basin maintenance project to increase capacity and hydraulic connectivity from the pump station to the outlet is planned for construction in 2024.

Chambers Creek System

Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed is designated as Water Resource Inventory Area 12 (WRIA 12) by the State of Washington and includes the following major water bodies: Steilacoom Lake, Leach Creek, Flett Creek, Clover Creek and Chambers Creek. Clover Creek discharges into Steilacoom Lake while Chambers Creek flows from Steilacoom Lake northward to the confluences with Flett and Leach Creeks. Turning westward, Chambers Creek then flows rapidly through steep wooded ravines to a short estuary and out to Puget Sound. Chambers Creek is a fish-bearing creek, and there are two fish hatcheries located on Chambers Creek.

Leach Creek

Leach Creek is a little over 2 miles long. Before construction of the Leach Creek Holding Basin, Leach Creek flowed through a flat marshy valley land. Presently, Leach Creek proper begins south of the holding basin dam. After passing through residential areas, Leach Creek passes through a wetland, to steep-sided and heavily wooded ravines, and finally joins Chambers Creek, just downstream of the confluence of Flett and Chambers Creek.

The upper portions of Leach Creek also have pockets of spawning grounds; however, the elimination of vegetation, channelization by streamside homeowners, and erosion during storm events has impacted these areas.

China Lake

China Lake was formed by a natural depression and receives surface runoff from the surrounding area. Stormwater from a large portion of the upper Leach Creek watershed (about 840 acres) is piped to China Lake, which has an overflow piped to Leach Creek Holding Basin. However, overflows from China Lake have not been observed in recent years because water in the lake infiltrates into the underlying soils.

ESA Listed Fish Species Critical Habitat

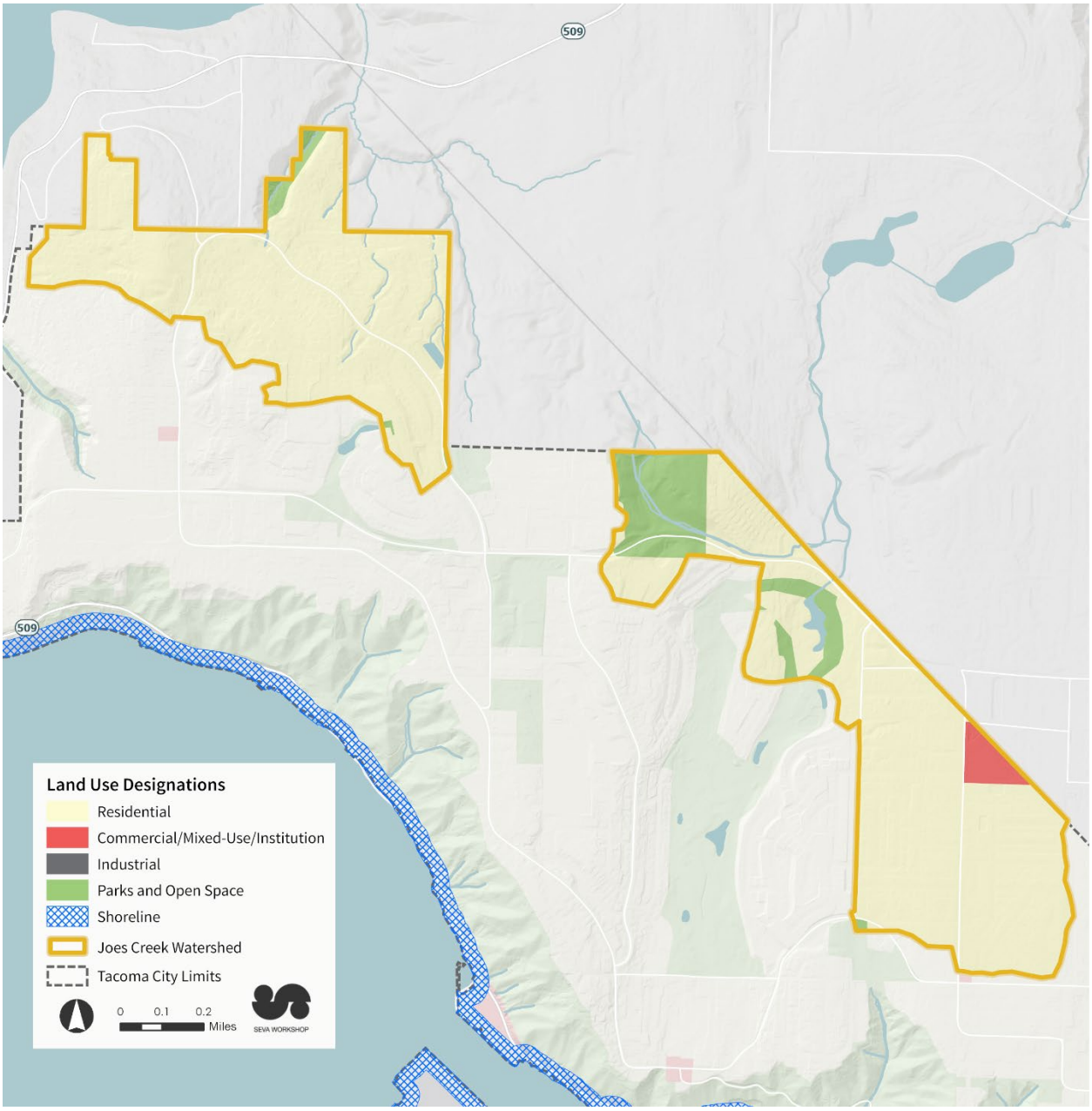
Leach Creek nor Chambers Creek are considered Critical Habitat for Puget Sound Chinook and Puget Sound steelhead. Salmonid spawning habitat can be found along the lower portion of Leach Creek from Chambers Creek up to Bridgeport Way. The upper end of Leach Creek also has pockets of spawning grounds; however, habitat quality is impacted by the elimination of vegetation, channelization by streamside homeowners, and erosion from high storm flows. WDFW's Fish Passage Program has identified the Leach Holding Basin dam as a partial blockage to fish passage. No ESA-listed fish species utilize Leach Creek within the holding basin. However, WDFW has determined presumed presence or documented presence of the following salmonids in Leach Creek:

- Coho, documented spawning
- Summer/Fall/Winter Chum, presence
- Winter Steelhead, presumed presence
- Fall Chinook, presumed presence

Joe's Creek

The Joe's Creek Watershed covers 434 acres making it the smallest watershed in Tacoma. It contains primarily single and multiple-family residential land uses with some open space and undeveloped land. Only two percent of this Tacoma watershed is commercial. The watershed borders unincorporated Pierce County and the City of Federal Way to the north and the Northeast Tacoma Watershed to the south. The Joe's Creek Watershed is part of WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed.

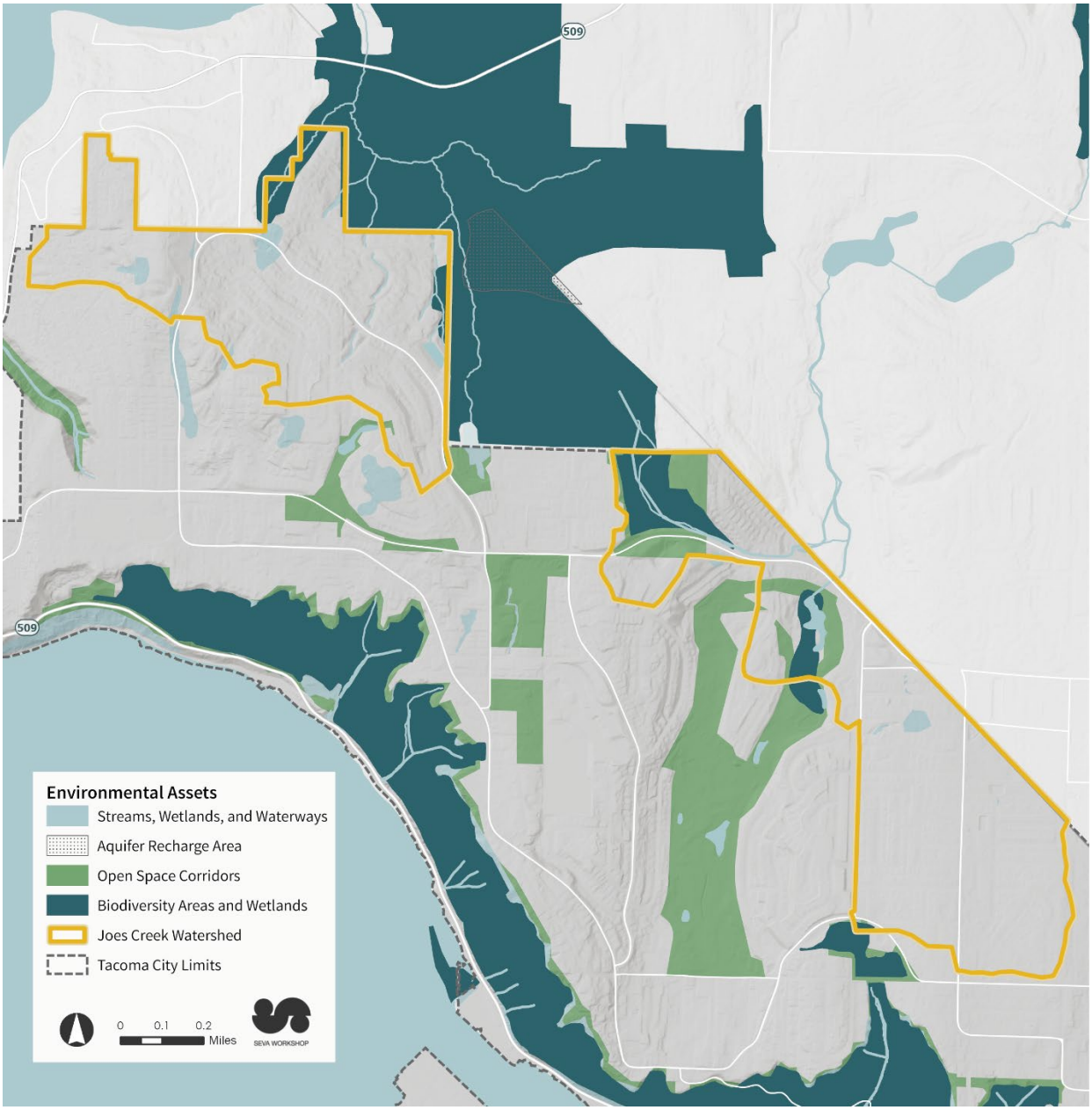
Exhibit 12: Land Use Designation within Joe's Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Future Land Use Designation*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

While named the Joe's Creek Watershed, only the eastern portion of the watershed drains to Joe's Creek while the western portion drains just south of Dumas Bay from Dash Point State Park. Joe's Creek is the main freshwater creek in this area. Joe's Creek itself is located in Federal Way, though it receives stormwater discharges from the City of Tacoma. The City is working closely with Federal Way to address nutrient concerns in this watershed.

Exhibit 13: Environmental Assets, Joe's Creek Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 14: Environmental Hazards, Joe's Creek Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Joe's Creek Sub-basins

Joe's Creek Watershed in Tacoma is divided into three distinct sub-basins. Sub-basin JC01 is the northern most sub-basin draining an area of approximately 243 acres. The land use in this

basin is residential with small pockets of open space steep sloped areas bordering Dash Point State Park. Stormwater from this basin discharges to several gulches leading to freshwater creeks in Dash Point State Park prior to discharging into the Puget Sound just south of Dumas Bay.

The JC02 Sub-basin covers 97 acres and is the only sub-basin that discharges directly to Joe's Creek. Single-family residence is the predominant land-use in this sub-basin. While not showing on the City's watershed boundary maps, the northern pond from the North Shore Golf Course in Northeast Tacoma discharges to headwaters of Joe's Creek. The additional drainage area includes residential areas discharging to this pond.

The JC03 sub-basin covers 93 acres and while the predominant land-use is residential, this sub-basin contains the only pocket of commercial land use in the Joe's Creek Watershed. The City is in the process of requesting GIS information from the City of Federal Way to determine how the water flows through this stormwater conveyance system. It appears that the discharge from the area combines with flows from Joe's Creek and ultimately discharges to Dumas Bay.

Joe's Creek

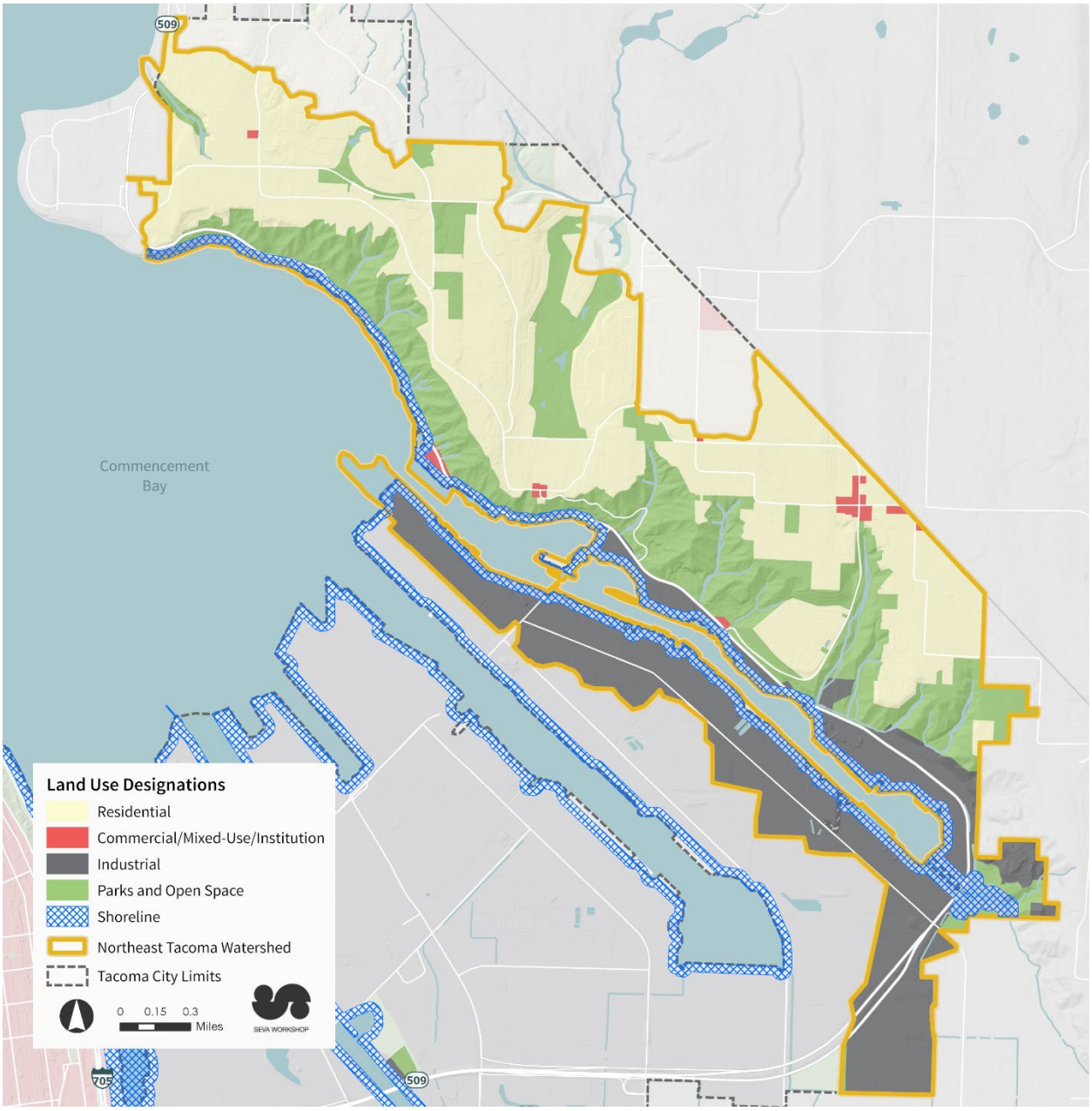
Joe's Creek is a highly modified urban stream that flows north from its origins in the City of Tacoma and through Federal Way for approximately 0.75 miles to Lake Lorene. Lake Lorene discharges over a distance of approximately 700 feet into Lake Jean. These lakes are located in Federal Way and known as the Twin Lakes. Lake Jean discharges into Lower Joe's Creek, which flows north for approximately 1.1 miles to Dumas Bay in the Puget Sound.

The lower part of the creek is used by salmonid species. While this use is moderate, the lowermost portion of the creek provides the largest and best quality reach of salmonids spawning and rearing habitat in the southwest portion of King County. This habitat is threatened by loss and degradation of riparian conditions, excessive sedimentation, and trash deposits where it discharges into the Puget Sound in Dumas Bay. Three streams drain into the urban 40-acre Dumas Bay, including Joe's Creek.

Northeast Tacoma

The Northeast Tacoma Watershed covers 2,641 acres. Pierce County and the City of Federal Way border the area to the north and east, the City of Fife borders the south, and the industrial Tideflats Watershed borders the west of this watershed. Much of the watershed contains steep slopes and bluffs with several intermittent streams that flow into Commencement Bay. Marine View Drive (Highway 509) separates the steep sloped areas of the NE Tacoma Watershed from the Hylebos Waterway. The upper watershed consists primarily of residential land uses with open spaces and undeveloped land while the lower watershed supports industrial uses along the Hylebos Waterway, which connects Hylebos Creek with Commencement Bay. The Northeast Tacoma Watershed is part of WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed.

Exhibit 15: Land Use Designation within Northeast Tacoma Watershed.

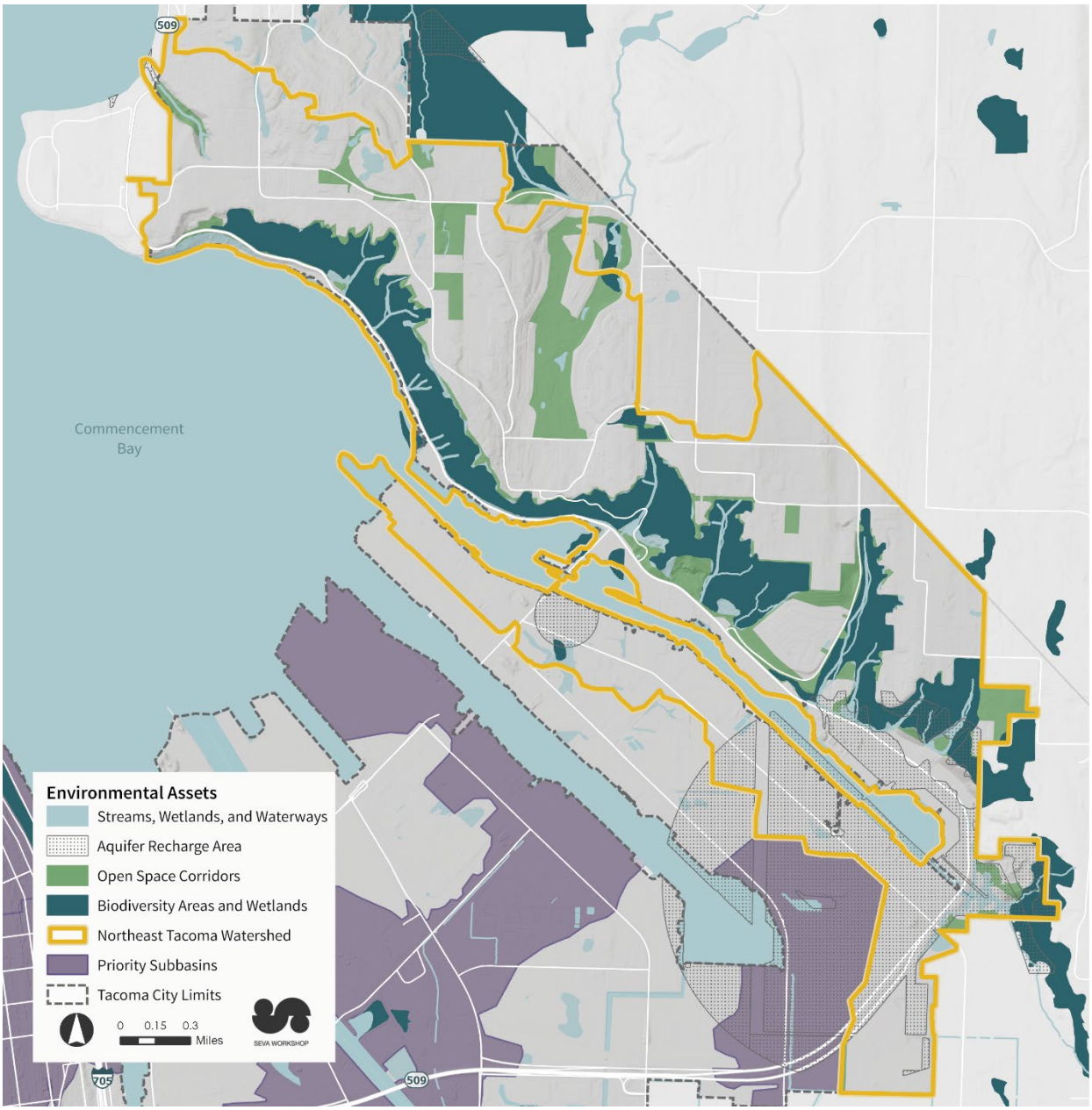


Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

The gulches and wetlands in this area generally have intermittent water flow due to seasonally fluctuating groundwater. Groundwater seepage combined with sandy soils and steep slopes creates a large potential for erosion and results in frequent landslides occurring during winter months along Marine View Drive. In order to reduce water flow and prevent flooding of nearby businesses, detention systems were built in the gulches. Although some of the gulches have adequate flow to support fish, culverts and other obstructions block fish passage.

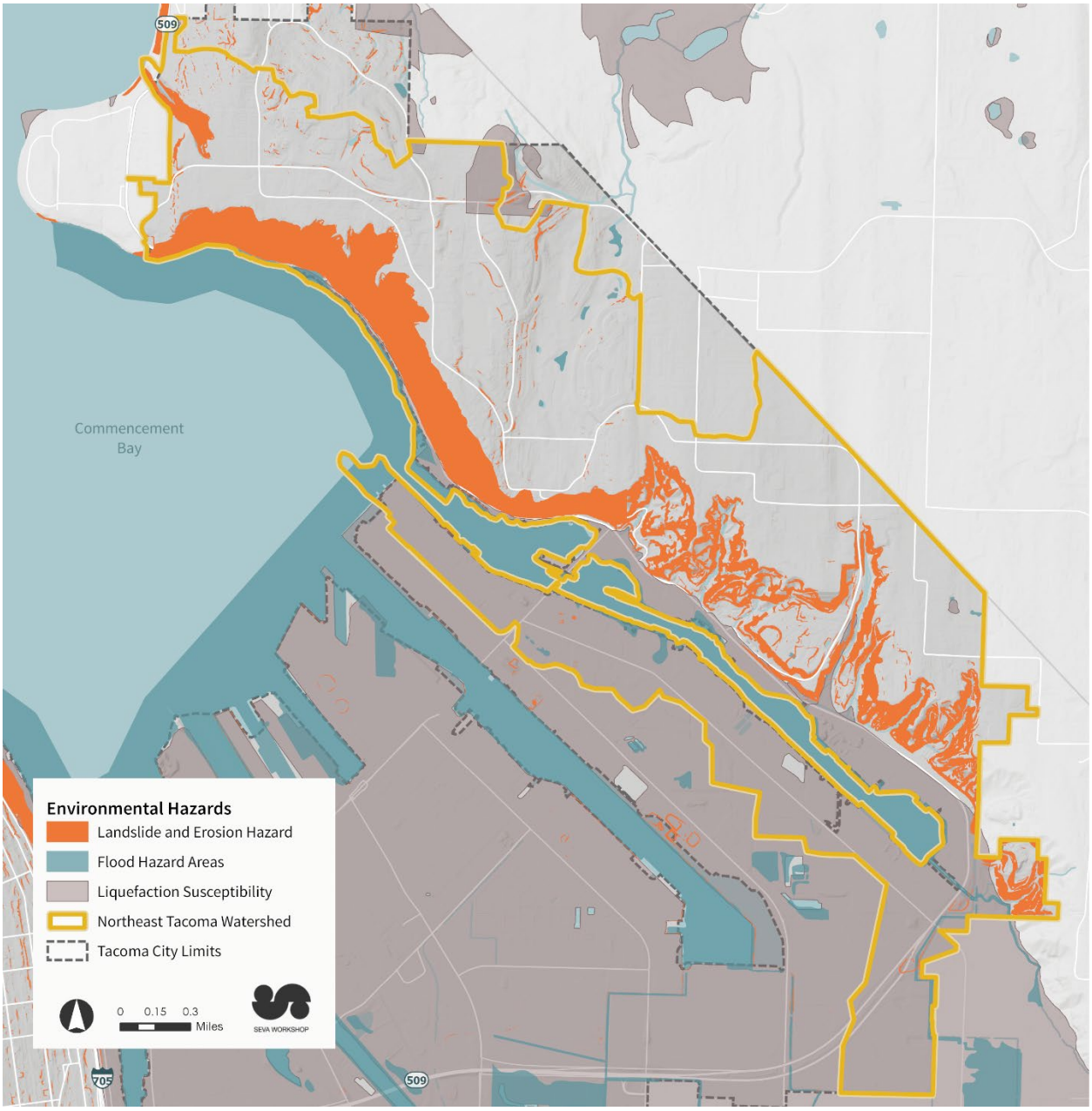
The City actively manages the vegetation in a few Open Space properties in this watershed including Julia's Gulch. The vegetation in these areas is dominated by invasive and noxious weeds including poison ivy and poison oak.

Exhibit 16: Environmental Assets, Northeast Tacoma Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 17: Environmental Hazards, Northeast Tacoma Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Northeast Tacoma Sub-basins

The Northeast Tacoma Watershed is divided into six drainage sub-basins. Five of these sub-basins discharge to the south of Brown's Point into the Hylebos Waterway and Commencement Bay, while sub-basin NE01 discharges directly into the Puget Sound north of Brown's Point.

The NE01 sub-basin receives discharges from a small residential area in the northern portion of this watershed bordering Joe's Creek and the Pierce County-side of Brown's Point. Stormwater runoff from this basin discharges to Dry Gulch. The gulch begins at the end of 52nd Street Northeast and crosses into Pierce County prior to discharging north of Brown's Point into the Puget Sound. The gulch primarily receives stormwater discharges from three locations: a 54-inch pipe discharging at the top of the gulch behind 1509 51st Street, a 12-inch pipe discharging to the gulch at 53rd Street, and an 18-inch pipe discharging near Overlook Avenue. Fish passage is not possible in this gulch since baseflow is intermittent and due to steep slopes and fish passage barriers.

The NE02 sub-basin receives runoff from a completely residential area of Northeast Tacoma and borders the Pierce County-side of Brown's Point to the west. Almost half of this sub-basin consists of steep slopes with some wetlands, but no significant stream systems.

The NE03 sub-basin drains to the northern side of Hylebos Waterway. This is a primarily residential basin with steep slopes and wetlands on the southern border along the shoreline. There are two large stormwater-fed gulches that discharge at 5002 and 4606 Marine View Drive. Both sites have erosion, flooding, excessive sedimentation, and invasive species. The three smaller gulches to the southeast drain residential areas in this sub-basin and discharge into the Hylebos Waterway: Charlie's Gulch, Ole's Gulch, and Loma Court Gulch. All three gulches have issues with erosion along the steep slopes. These gulches do not receive discharges from the City's stormwater systems with the exception of a 10-inch pipe discharging into Loma Court Gulch from Loma CT NE. As the gulches receive very little piped stormwater flow, the majority of stormwater in this basin discharges into the Hylebos Waterway at an outfall near 3622 Marine View Drive.

The NE04 sub-basin drains directly to the Hylebos Waterway. The area bordering Federal Way is primarily residential and either discharges directly into the Hylebos or drains into one of the six gulches in this sub-basin. The area at the bottom of the gulches along the Hylebos Waterway is occupied by industrial uses. The majority of the industries along the northern side of the Hylebos Waterway are privately-owned and discharge stormwater runoff directly to the Hylebos Waterway. McMurray Gulch is located at the head of the Hylebos Waterway. This large gulch receives stormwater runoff from a 10-inch pipe off 45th Avenue Northeast and there is extreme erosion associated with this outfall. Coski Gulch, Morning Side Ditch, and Manke Gulch also receive discharges from the City's stormwater collection system. Julia's Gulch, Metal Gulch, and McBride Gulch do not receive piped stormwater. All of the gulches in this sub-basin have varying severity of erosion and invasive species issues. None of the gulches are

accessible to fish due to low baseflows, steep slopes, and physical barriers such as culverts, roadways, and pipes; therefore, the area is not considered viable fish habitat.

The NE05 sub-basin contains mainly industrial properties at the head of the Hylebos Waterway. This sub-basin includes the lower reach of Hylebos Creek, the only fish-bearing stream in the Northeast Tacoma Watershed.

The NE06 sub-basin makes up the portion of land discharging into the Hylebos Waterway on the southern side of the waterway. Land use in this area is industrial with all properties discharging directly into the Hylebos Waterway. The Port of Tacoma owns the majority of properties in this sub-basin. This sub-basin also includes the federally-listed contaminated Superfund site of Occidental Chemical.

Commencement Bay

Information on Commencement Bay is found in the Lower Puyallup Watershed Section and Thea Foss Waterway Watershed Section.

Hylebos Creek

Hylebos Creek is the major tributary to the Hylebos Waterway and drains approximately 12,000 acres from tributaries in Federal, Milton, Edgewood, King County, Pierce County, and Fife to the mouth of the creek at the Hylebos Waterway in Commencement Bay. The lower portion of the Hylebos moves through Puyallup Tribal lands. The Muckleshoot Tribe also maintains fishing rights on Hylebos Creek.

The Hylebos Creek Watershed consists of approximately 350 miles of streams and 250 acres of wetlands and is believed to have been one of the most productive small stream systems in the southern Puget Sound. Historical accounts indicate the system supported several thousands of Coho and Chum plus hundreds of chinook, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. Overtime this fish habitat was severely altered from its historical natural state due to development and urbanization. Residential development, erosion, channelization, and frequent flooding threaten the creek and associated riparian habitat.

The Hylebos Creek Mitigation Site is located in the intertidal reach of Hylebos Creek on the right bank of the lower Hylebos Creek and is part of the Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways Remediation Project. Non-native invasive species were removed from this site and replaced with native plants. Where possible with the least disturbance to native vegetation, small off-channel “fingers” were excavated into the existing bank to allow water inundation during periods of high freshwater flows or tidal surges. This site provides habitat for out-migrating juvenile salmonids that pause here while acclimatizing to saltwater.

The Place of Circling Waters is a National Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) mitigation site located along Hylebos Creek at the foot of Northeast Tacoma. Together, this off-channel habitat and the preserved upland areas support local Coho, Chinook, and Chum salmonid species. Amphibians and bird species will also benefit from the wetland enhancement.

The Hylebos Creek Estuarine Restoration Project is a 6.7-acre site located adjacent to Hylebos Creek near Commencement Bay. Historically, the site supported tidal wetlands; however, by 1996 the site had been isolated from Hylebos Creek by a fabricated berm, was dominated by non-native species, contained several structures, and a significant amount of debris. The Restoration Project converted the property into a functioning estuarine marsh featuring intertidal channels and forested upland. The re-established estuarine habitats have replaced a limited resource within the Hylebos Creek Watershed and have restored natural habitat-forming processes for the benefit of Chinook salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and other native fish and wildlife species.

Hylebos Waterway

The Hylebos Waterway is one of seven waterways situated within the Commencement Bay Tideflats, an estuary that receives fresh surface water from Hylebos Creek. Aquifers within the Puyallup Valley and the adjacent uplands also contribute fresh water to the waterway.

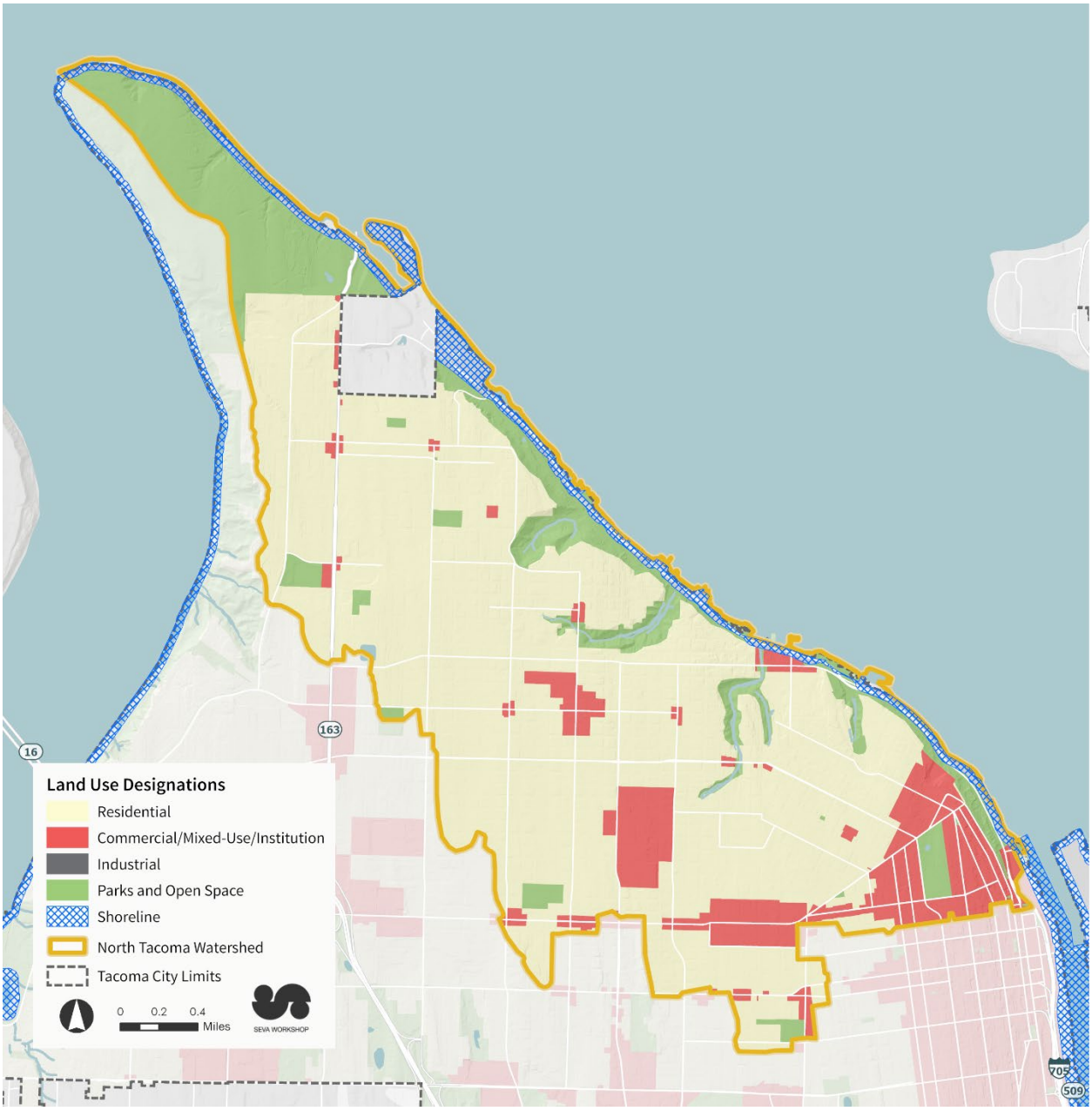
The Port of Tacoma extended the Hylebos Waterway in the 1960s to a 200-foot wide, 3-mile long waterway. Only 25 percent of that surface water remains due to filling, channeling, and underground piping of surface waters. Hylebos Waterway also receives the direct runoff from the surrounding Tideflats. The industrial development of the area and the straightening and channeling of Hylebos Creek to form the current Hylebos Waterway destroyed much of the historic juvenile salmon and wildlife habitat.

The Hylebos Waterway is currently listed as a Category 5 on the State's 303d list for dieldrin, PCBs, chlorinated pesticides, DDT, and HPAH. The Hylebos Waterway is also listed as a Superfund site as part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore Tideflats Superfund site. EPA placed Commencement Bay on the Superfund National Priorities List in 1983 after discovering widespread contamination. Fifty-eight percent of the area (167 of the 285-acre area listed) requires cleanup. In addition to the cleanup of the waterway, environmental cleanup occurred at several contaminated upland sites along the Hylebos at the Wasser Winters site and Occidental Chemical Corp site.

North Tacoma

The North Tacoma Watershed drains approximately 4,766 acres and encompasses the northern portion of Tacoma and the City of Ruston. The watershed is part of WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed. The area is predominately residential with some commercial areas as seen in Exhibit 18. Notable places within this watershed include Point Defiance Park, the North End Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the former ASARCO smelting site, which is part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site.

Exhibit 18: Land Use Designation within North Tacoma Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

In 2015, the City collaborated with Metro Parks Tacoma to install a Regional Stormwater Treatment Facility at Point Defiance Park. This stormwater facility is designed to improve the quality of stormwater discharging to Commencement Bay, treating up to 8 million gallons per day from the watershed's 754 acres. The treatment facility uses bioretention soil mix to filter stormwater and reduce the load of fine sediment, metals, oils and grease from cars, and nutrients and bacteria from pet waste, and landscape maintenance.

There are several water bodies within this watershed including Ruston Creek, Asarco Creek, Puget Creek, Mason Creek. and the stream associated with Garfield Gulch. Puget and Mason Creeks are perennial and have steep slopes associated with them.

Critical issues in the North Tacoma watershed include impaired nearshore habitats along the shoreline of Commencement Bay, erosion and sediment problems on steep slopes in the northern portion of the watershed, historic contamination, and fish access.

Exhibit 19: Environmental Assets, North Tacoma Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 20: Environmental Hazards, North Tacoma Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Schuster Parkway and Garfield Gulch

There are four sub-basins discharging to Commencement Bay from the Schuster Parkway area. The southernmost sub-basins encompass the residential and commercial areas of downtown Tacoma to the Stadium District and include discharges from Tacoma General Hospital and Wright Park. There is extensive re-development planned for this area, including underground utility replacement and the extension of the downtown Sound Transit Link light rail system. There has also been significant restoration work along the open space area of Schuster Parkway to assist with slope stabilization.

Garfield Gulch has a low flow intermittent stream. Fish passage is not feasible in this area due to the physical barriers of the culvert and limited flow. Stormwater from the sub-basins is conveyed through stormwater pipes that ultimately connect to the stormwater mainline located under Garfield Gulch, which continues through a culvert under Ruston Way, and discharges to an outfall into Commencement Bay near the head of the Foss Waterway.

Buckley Gulch Drainage Area and Buckley Creek

Historically, the mouth of Buckley Creek was located where Old Town Park sits today. As sawmills moved into the area, the creek was altered to create a fresh water pond for the Dickman Mill operation at the creek's mouth. In 1925, Ruston Way was built, and the creek was directed into a culvert pipe discharging into the Puget Sound near Hamilton Park.

There is another small side-channel stream that extends to the east between Carr Street and Orchard Road and crosses over privately owned parcels. This stream combines with the main channel of Buckley Creek near Ursich Park where it enters the City's stormwater system. The stormwater pipes collect runoff from the residential and commercial areas of this sub-basin and discharges to a marine outfall near Hamilton Park after crossing under Ruston Way. Unlike other gulches in North Tacoma, there is no designated trail or public use access through Buckley Gulch. The open space area of Buckley Gulch (sometimes known as "Old Town Gulch") originates near N 16th and Junett.

Puget Gulch Drainage Area and Puget Creek

Puget Creek is approximately 1,600 feet long with perennial flows averaging about 2.9 cubic feet per second (cfs). Most of the historical flow is collected and conveyed through City's stormwater system, which runs under the length of the Puget Gulch and discharges into Commencement Bay near Dickman Park under Ruston Way.

In March 2002, a wetland delineation was conducted; the delination identified and classified the wetlands located in the lower section of Puget Gulch where the Puget Creek originates and downstream of the area. There are multiple wetlands ranging in scale from Category II to Category III wetlands.

Over the past decade, Puget Creek has been the subject of interest by several groups concerned with restoring this open space, including the Puget Creek Restoration Society. This group worked with the City to reintroduce salmon to Puget Creek by improving fish access and vegetative cover in Puget Gulch and worked to restore the trail connecting the Proctor Area with Ruston Way. A fish ladder was installed in 1997 to provide fish access to the creek, which is designed to provide access to the creek by salmonids during high tide. Members of the Puget Creek Restoration Society stated that spawning Coho was observed in Puget Creek in 2001 and 2003. WDFW has documented the presence of both Coho Salmon and Residential Coastal Cutthroat Trout in Puget Creek.

Puget Gulch provides beneficial habitat for a variety of wildlife including muskrats, Cooper's hawks, red foxes, great horned owls, raccoons, possums, deer, eagles, red tail owls, bard owls, mountain beavers, and numerous birds, as referenced in the Puget Creek Watershed Management Plan. Eelgrass beds exist in Commencement Bay near the mouth of the creek and are important habitat for salmon fry.

Mason Gulch Drainage Area and Mason Creek

Mason Creek drains Mason Gulch, a 36-acre undeveloped ravine located in the North Tacoma Watershed. This drainage sub-basin is mostly residential, and stormwater runoff is collected and conveyed through several outfalls located along Ruston Way. Both the stormwater and wastewater collection systems are located around the upland edges of the gulch and do not follow the alignment of Mason Creek, which flows down the center of the gulch. The creek is collected in the stormwater inlet structure at the lower end of the gulch just above the North End Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The main stem of Mason Creek flows perennially, primarily fed by groundwater seeps and water discharging from a pipe on the northeastern hillslope near the upper end of the gulch. The creek channel is approximately 8 feet wide. There are also small tributary streams in the gulch approximately 2 to 5 feet in channel width. The tributaries are generally steep, fast-moving riffles, but in some areas contain step-pool channels formed by large woody debris. Approximately 1,170 feet downstream of its headwaters, Mason Creek enters a 980-foot-long culvert at the western edge of the North End Wastewater Treatment Plant. Stream flows at culvert inlet have been measured at rates between 2 to 16 cfs.

In 2014, management of the properties in Mason Gulch were transferred to the City's Environmental Services Department Open Space Management Program with the intent of improving both water quality and quantity through restoration of this site. As of December 2019, the City has restored close to one acre of steep slopes at the top of the gulch. This work included removing invasive weeds, installing natural erosion control materials across the entire area, and installing 4,352 plants. An additional 1.5 acres of invasive plant species were treated in the lower reaches of the gulch, and 30 native evergreen trees were planted in this area.

The creek's steep gradient, shallow water depths, and non-fish-passable culvert make it inaccessible to anadromous fish and is therefore of limited habitat value for many species of

salmon. Nonetheless, the creek and Mason Gulch do provide habitat for a variety of other species, including songbirds, mammals, insects, and amphibians.

Point Defiance and Ruston Drainage Area

The Point Defiance and Ruston drainage areas contain the northern most sub-basins in this watershed, which have various current land uses and a diverse history. This drainage area contains the historic Asarco Smelter Site, which is part of the Commencement Bay Near Shore/TideFlats Superfund site. Point Ruston LLC is in the process of cleaning up the former smelter property as part of a large mixed use residential and commercial Built Green community, under EPA's continued oversight.

Commencement Bay and Dalco Passage

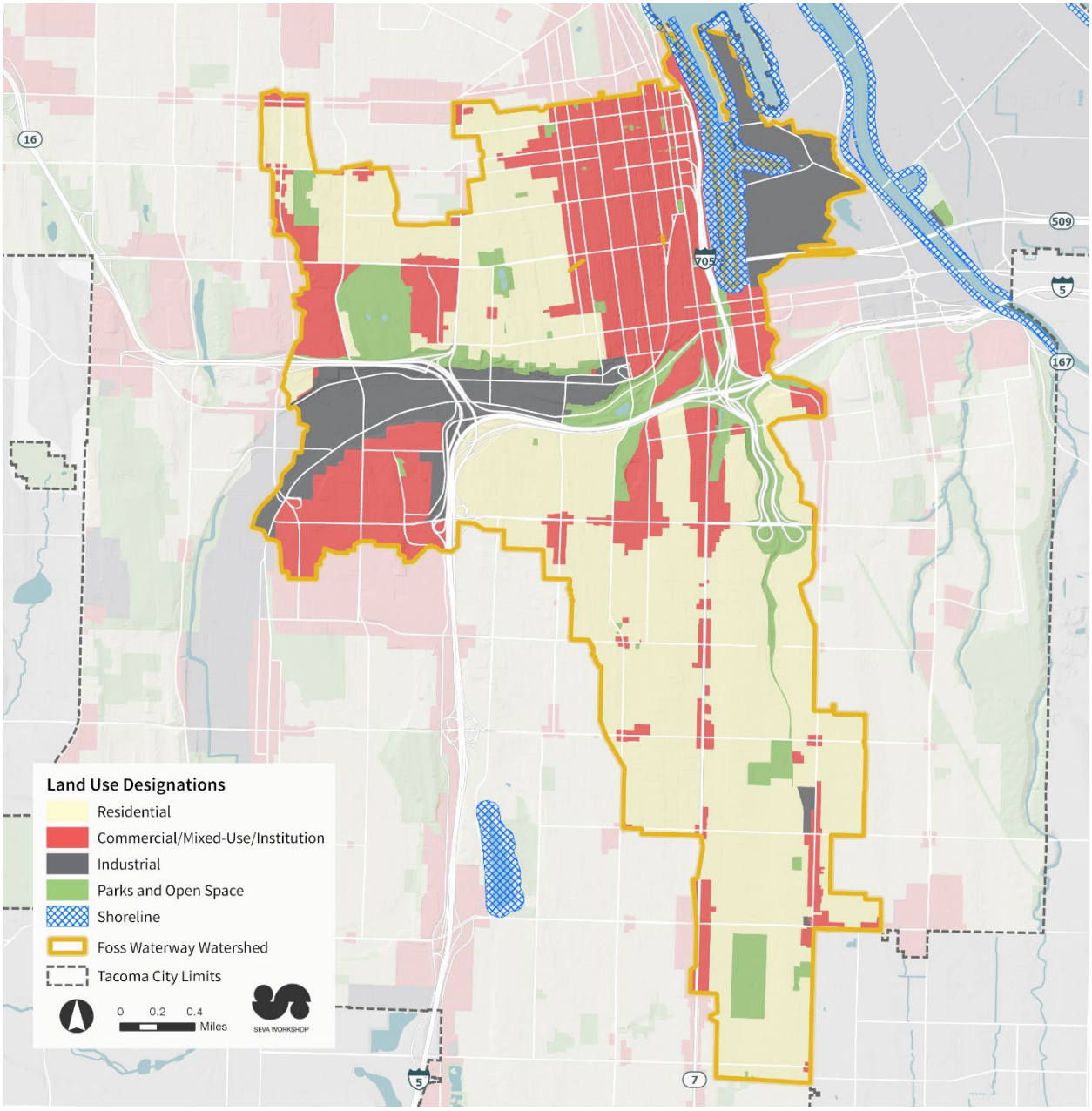
Commencement Bay is surrounded by the Port of Tacoma at the southern end, Point Defiance on the west, and Browns Point on the east separating Commencement Bay from the open Puget Sound. Commencement Bay is one of the most active ports in the region.

The Asarco Smelter Area in Commencement Bay was identified by the EPA as a priority area requiring remediation by EPA through Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly referred to as the Superfund Program, as part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats site. The North Tacoma stormwater asset sub-basin NT-02 currently outfalls near the old Asarco Smelter site at the Dalco Passage and East Passage. This nearshore area is listed as an impaired waterbody for arsenic, copper, lead and zinc.

Thea Foss Waterway

The Thea Foss Waterway Watershed, also known as the "Foss Watershed," covers approximately 5,864 acres and drains most of south-central Tacoma. There are currently no streams or creeks remaining in the watershed. Foss Waterway Watershed is part of the WRIA 10 Puyallup-White Watershed and is located in the South-Central Puget Sound action area for Puget Sound Recovery. The two major receiving waterbodies, Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways, were transformed from the original Puyallup River Delta into waterways with a variety of marine industrial uses, and more recently into today's Downtown Tacoma. The watershed is bordered by the North Tacoma Watershed on the north, Lawrence Street on the west, and East F to East K Streets on the east side of the Thea Foss Waterway. The area extends to the southeast corner of the City limits at 86th Street. The land use in this watershed is residential and commerical as seen in Exhibit 21. Currently, the Foss Watershed is approximately 53 percent impervious.

Exhibit 21: Land Use Designation within Thea Foss Waterway Watershed.

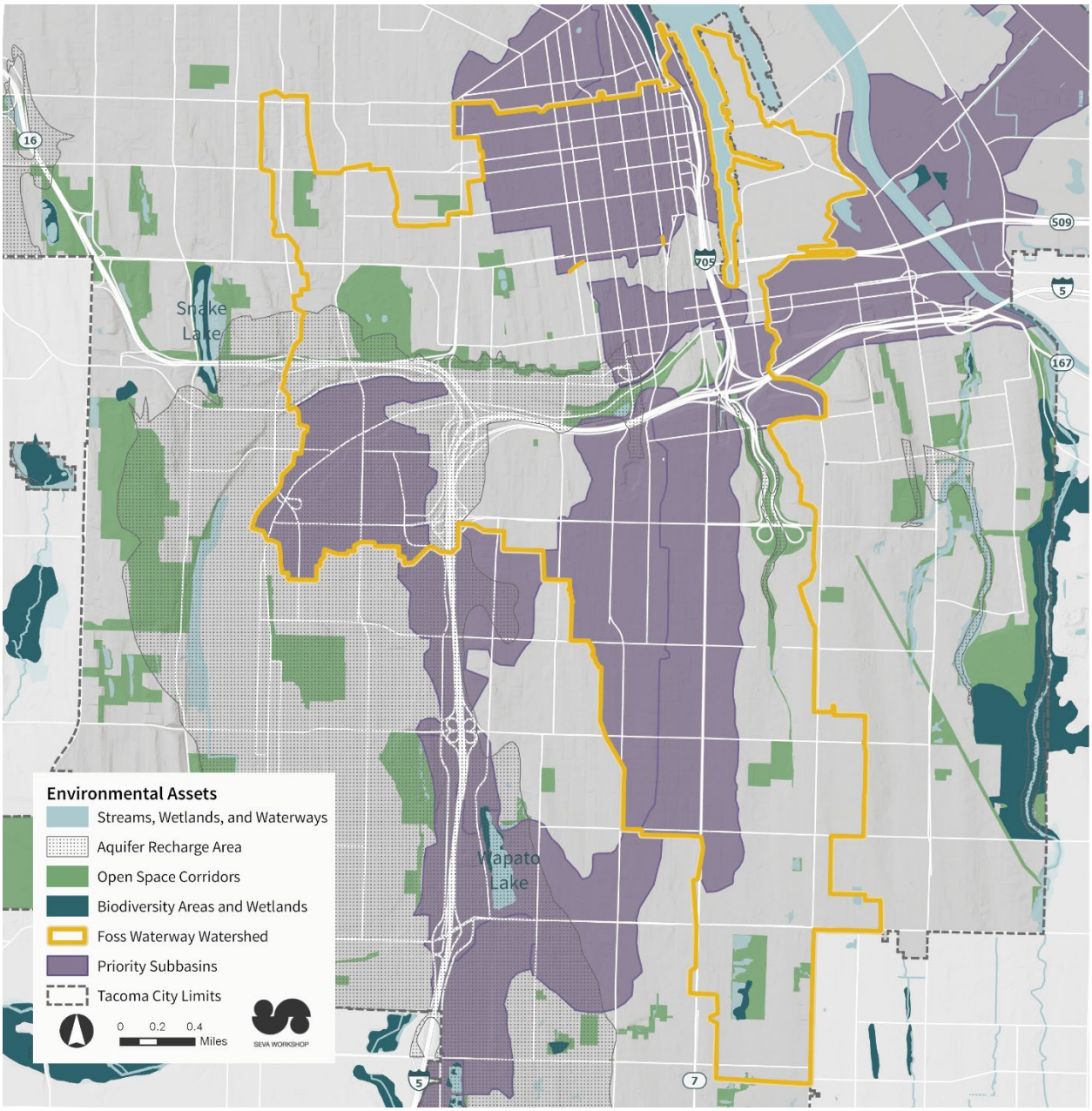


Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Until 1995, there were approximately 65 public and private stormwater outfalls that discharged to the Foss Waterway. Stormwater discharges from the Foss Watershed ultimately reach the waterways and the southeastern margin of Commencement Bay. With redevelopment of the area, the number of known outfalls has decreased to 35, which includes 15 municipal outfalls and 20 private outfalls. Ninety-eight percent of the watershed drains through 8 outfalls. Natural drainages containing creeks and groundwater flows, were sewered in the 1960s and currently

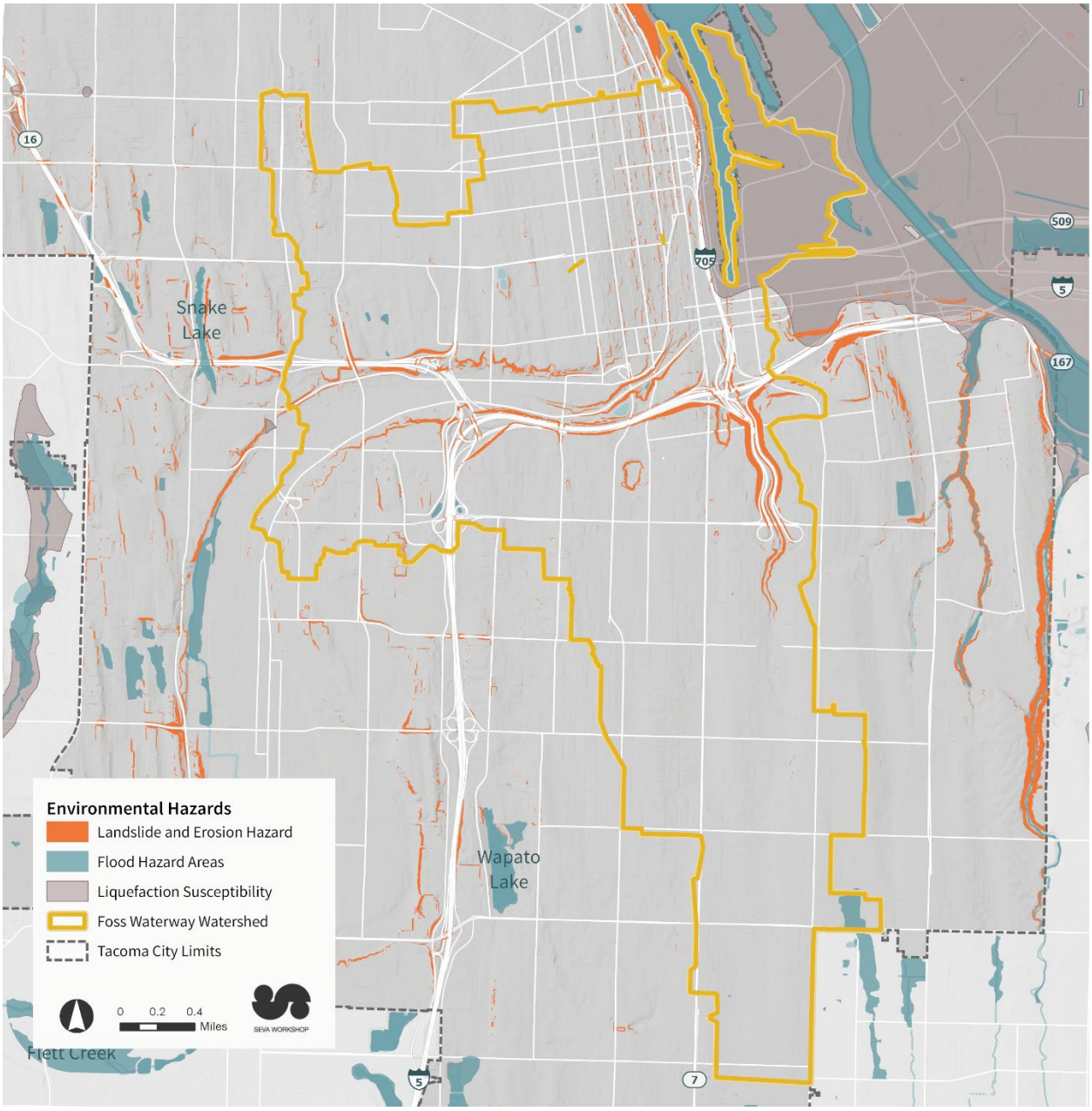
exist as baseflow in several of the stormwater pipes that discharge into the waterway. In addition, several of the outfalls discharging to Foss Waterway are tidally-influenced and portions of the pipe are inundated with marine water twice a day depending on the pipe elevations and the high tide elevation.

Exhibit 22: Environmental Assets, Thea Foss Waterway Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 23: Environmental Hazards, Thea Foss Waterway Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways

Prior to the late 1800s, what is now Thea Foss Waterway (formerly the City Waterway) was the old west channel branch of the Puyallup River delta. In 1891, the Tacoma Land Company

dredged portions of the waterway to construct a navigation channel. The flood of 1981 caused the Tacoma Land Company to further divert the Puyallup River, resulting in the upper portion of the remnant mouth of this branch of the Puyallup River to become what is now known as the Wheeler-Osgood Waterway.

The Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways are estuarine waterways on the southeastern margin of Commencement Bay. The Thea Foss Waterway lies generally north-south along the City's downtown corridor. The Wheeler-Osgood Waterway lies west-east and connects to the east side of the Thea Foss Waterway just south of the Murray Morgan (11th Street) Bridge.

The Thea Foss and Wheeler Osgood Waterways were identified by EPA as Problem Areas requiring remediation under the CERCLA as part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats site. The City of Tacoma took the lead in remediating sediments in a large portion of the Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways under the oversight of EPA with work completed in 2006. Sediments were actively remediated with a combination of dredging and capping at various locations within the waterways, and are monitored routinely under a Long Term Monitoring Plan to ensure that the remedy remains protective.

The waterways are the discharge point for a highly urbanized drainage basin with residential, commercial, and industrial land uses and transportation corridors. Sources of Contaminants of Concern (COCs) continue to exist in the drainage basins and are conveyed to the waterway via stormwater runoff from municipal right-of-ways and private properties, aerial deposition, marinas, and groundwater discharges. The contaminants identified as having the greatest potential to affect sediment quality following the cleanup action include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and phthalates. Since stormwater is one of the potential sources of contamination, the City has been implementing a comprehensive monitoring and source control strategy in the Foss Waterway Watershed since 2001. Stormwater monitoring is required under the Thea Foss Waterway Consent Decree (CD) with EPA. It also meets the monitoring requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Permit.

As part of the Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways Remediation Project, habitat mitigation sites were constructed along the Foss Waterway, in the Lower Puyallup and Tideflats Watersheds, and along Hylebos Creek in the City of Fife. In the Foss Waterway Watershed, habitat enhancement sites were constructed at four locations along the shoreline of the waterway as part of the remediation project that was completed in 2006. These sites are the Johnny's Dock Habitat Enhancement, Head of Thea Foss Shoreline Habitat, SR 509 Esplanade Riparian Habitat, and Log Step Habitat Enhancement. Additionally, slope rehabilitation along the shoreline of the Thea Foss Waterway was also performed by the City to provide more suitable habitat in these intertidal areas. Habitat improvement areas are routinely maintained (garbage and invasive removal) and periodically qualitatively monitored to ensure that they continue to provide the intended habitat function.

ESA Listed Fish Species Critical Habitat

Foss Waterway, Commencement Bay, and the South-Central Puget Sound are rearing and migratory areas for several fish populations including several species of salmon. A complete list

of ESA listed species for WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed is included in the Lower Puyallup ESA Section.

Tideflats

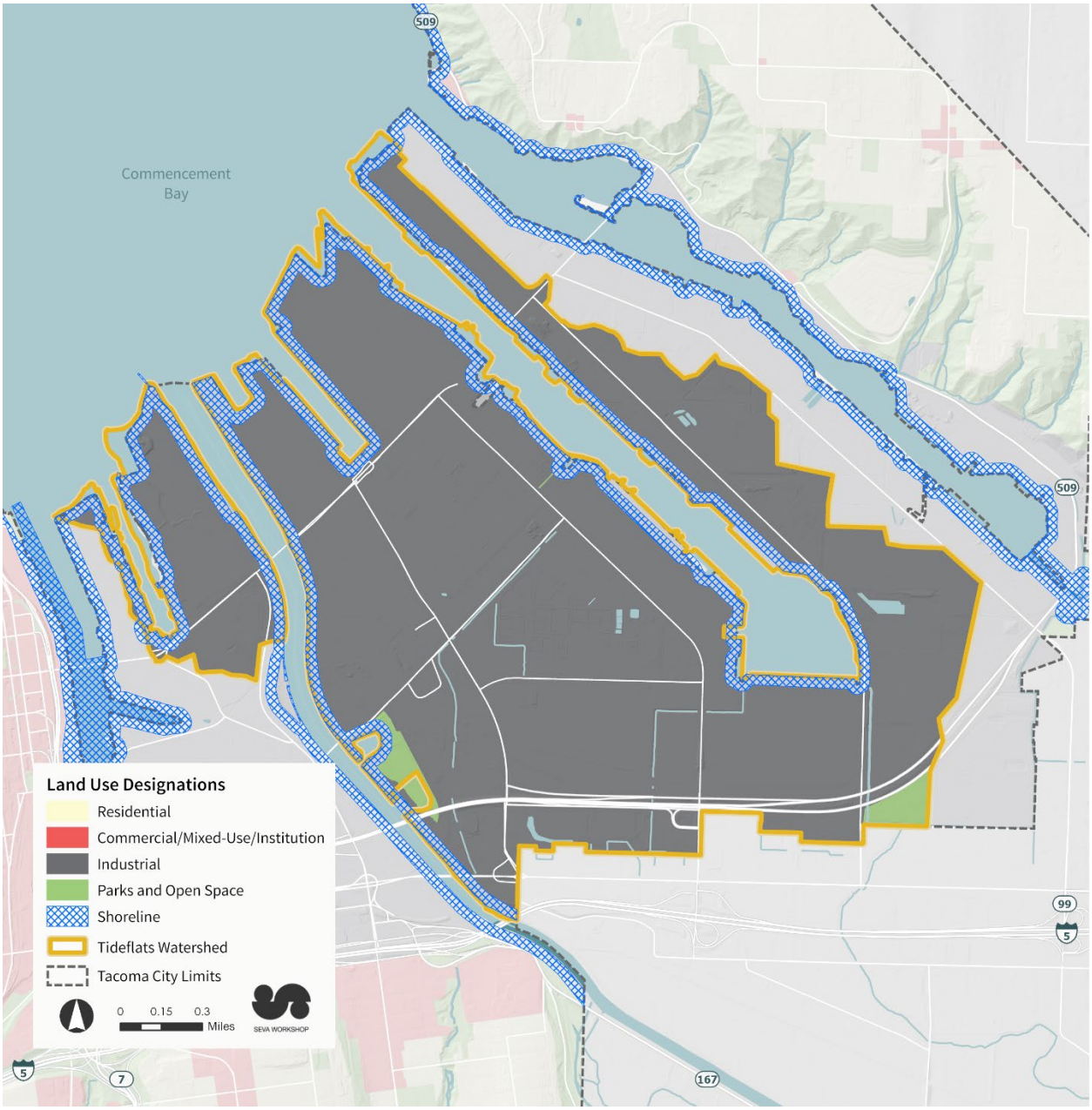
The Tideflats Watershed covers 2,112 acres and is the most highly industrialized and commercialized portion of Tacoma. The watershed is also part of WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed. Historically, the area was a salt marsh, mudflat, and wetlands; however, over the centuries of industry led to the straightening of the Puyallup River as well as dredging and infill of the estuary.

Most of the city's heavy industrial facilities are located here along the Sitcum, Blair, and Hylebos Waterways. The Tideflats Watershed is bordered by the Lower Puyallup Watershed on the south and west, Foss Waterway Watershed to the west, Northeast Tacoma Watershed to the northeast, and the City of Fife to south. Significant navigable waterways in this watershed include the Middle Waterway, Sitcum Waterway, and Blair Waterway, which allow deep-water berthing by shipping vessels, and the Puyallup River. Wapato Creek discharges into the head of the Blair Waterway. Although the Thea Foss and Hylebos Waterways are proximal to the Tideflats waterways, they are connected to neighboring watershed drainage basins and are discussed in other sections.

The Tideflats is zoned for Port Maritime and Industrial uses, which are principally dominated by Port of Tacoma operations, but also include other businesses. The Port of Tacoma supports 24-hour operations to accommodate regional and international shipping and distribution schedules, raw materials processing and manufacturing, transport of raw materials, transport of finished products, and freight mobility infrastructure. The entire area is served by road and rail corridors designed for large, heavy truck, and rail loads.

As a result of the industrial uses, the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats site was identified by EPA as a Superfund site requiring remediation CERCLA. Within the Tideflats Watershed area, the Middle and Sitcum Waterways were identified as cleanup sites. Sediments in these waterways have undergone remediation under the oversight of EPA with work completed in the Middle Waterway in 2004 and in the Sitcum Waterway in 1994.

Exhibit 24: Land Use Designation within Tideflats Watershed.

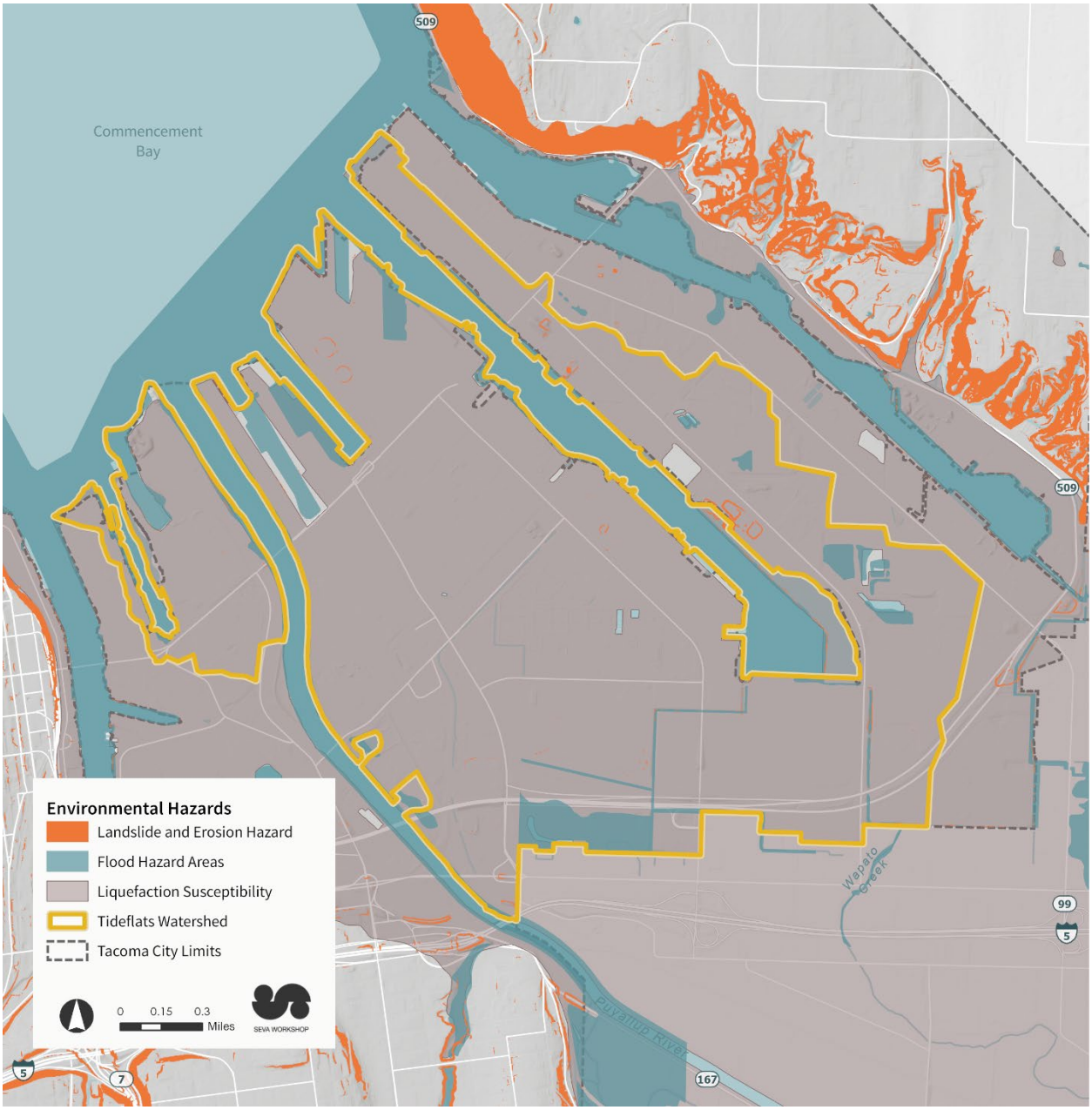


Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Exhibit 25: Environmental Assets, Tideflats Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 26: Environmental Hazards, Tideflats Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Tideflats Watershed Sub-basin

The watershed is divided into six sub-basins, with some sub-basins having more than one marine outfall. Stormwater from this watershed discharges into the Middle, Sitcum, and Blair Waterways, and the Puyallup River. In addition, there are some private discharge points in Wapato Creek.

TF-01 is the western-most of the Tideflat sub-basins and includes a municipal discharge point to the head of the Middle Waterway. A small area of this sub-basin discharges directly to the Puyallup River at East 11th Street. There are several small public ditches and inlets east of East Portland Avenue and north of East 11th Street. that tie to a private system.

TF-02 is located north of Lincoln Avenue with two public outfalls to the Sitcum Waterway located on the east and west sides of the head of that waterway. The western outfall discharges water from Milwaukee Way while the eastern outfall discharges stormwater from the Thorne Road. area, East 11th Street from the Sitcum Waterway to Port of Tacoma Road. and a small portion of Port of Tacoma Road.

TF-03 is the largest of the Tideflats sub-basins and is located south and east of TF-02. The Lincoln Avenue ditch is located in this sub-basin. This combinated piped and ditched system discharges near Port of Tacoma Road into a private conveyance, which then discharges to the Blair Waterway.

TF-04 is located at the south end of the sub-basin. City of Tacoma storm pipes in this area discharge along Port of Tacoma Road into a private system, which then discharges into the head of the Blair Waterway.

TF-05 is also located at the south end of the sub-basin. Wapato Creek is within TF-05.

TF-06 is located on the peninsula between the Blair and Hylebos Waterways. There are four public discharge points to the east side of the Blair Waterway in addition to several private discharge points.

Puyallup River

Information on the Puyallup River can be found in the Lower Puyallup Watershed Section.

Blair Waterway

The Blair Waterway is an industrial and commercial shipping channel and is dredged periodically to maintain depths for shipping. During pre-dredging testing in 2013, a hazardous substance, tributyltin (TBT), was found in the sediments, which led the Port of Tacoma to enter into a settlement agreement with the EPA to remove these contaminated sediments.

There are four City-owned outfalls and at least 19 private and Port-owned outfalls discharging to the Blair Waterway.

Sitcum Waterway

The Sitcum Waterway, an industrial and commercial shipping channel, was identified as one of the areas of contamination as part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site. The waterway was remediated in 1994. There are two City-owned outfalls and several Port of Tacoma outfalls that discharge to the Sitcum Waterway.

Middle Waterway

The Middle Waterway contains one of the last remnant mudflats in the tideflats area. The waterway is an industrial and commercial shipping channel and was identified as a remediation site as part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site. The waterway remediation was completed in 2004.

Significant habitat restoration has occurred in this waterway along the entire eastern shoreline of the waterway, around the head of the waterway, and along the southern half of the western shoreline. In the outer portion of the western shoreline, industrial uses remain. There is one City-owned outfall to the head of the Middle Waterway, as well as several small private outfalls.

Wapato Creek

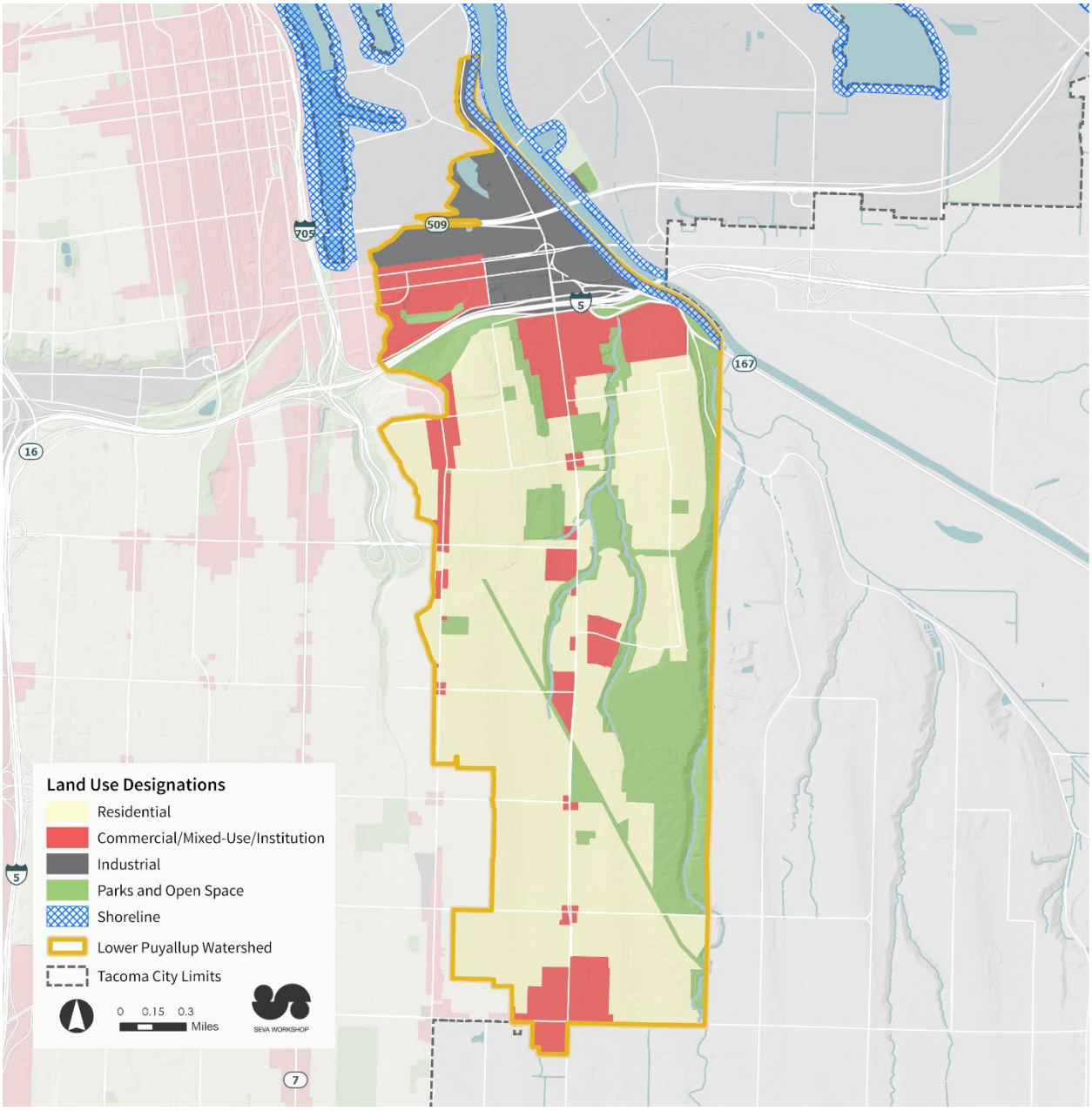
The habitat in Wapato Creek, and specifically the instream flow is listed in Category 4C (impaired by a non-pollutant) for inadequate instream flow. In addition, the water in the creek is listed as Category 5 for bacteria and dissolved oxygen based on data received from the Puyallup Tribe of Indians indicating that a TMDL or other approved water quality improvement project is required for the water bodies. Wapato Creek was also listed as Category 2 for benzene.

Lower Puyallup

The Lower Puyallup Watershed in Tacoma drains the lower reaches of the Puyallup River Watershed, discharging to what was historically the Puyallup River Estuary. The Lower Puyallup Watershed is located in the southeast portion of Tacoma and borders the Thea Foss Waterway Watershed, the Tideflats Watershed, Pierce County, and the Puyallup River. Significant water bodies within the Lower Puyallup Watershed include the Puyallup River, Swan Creek, and First Creek, which are part of the larger WRIA-10 Puyallup-White Watershed.

The Lower Puyallup watershed covers 2,982 acres, with 939 acres of impervious surface. At present, portions of the watershed are predominately residential with some undeveloped open space and a few small commercial areas while industrial activity dominates the former estuary now identified as the Tideflats.

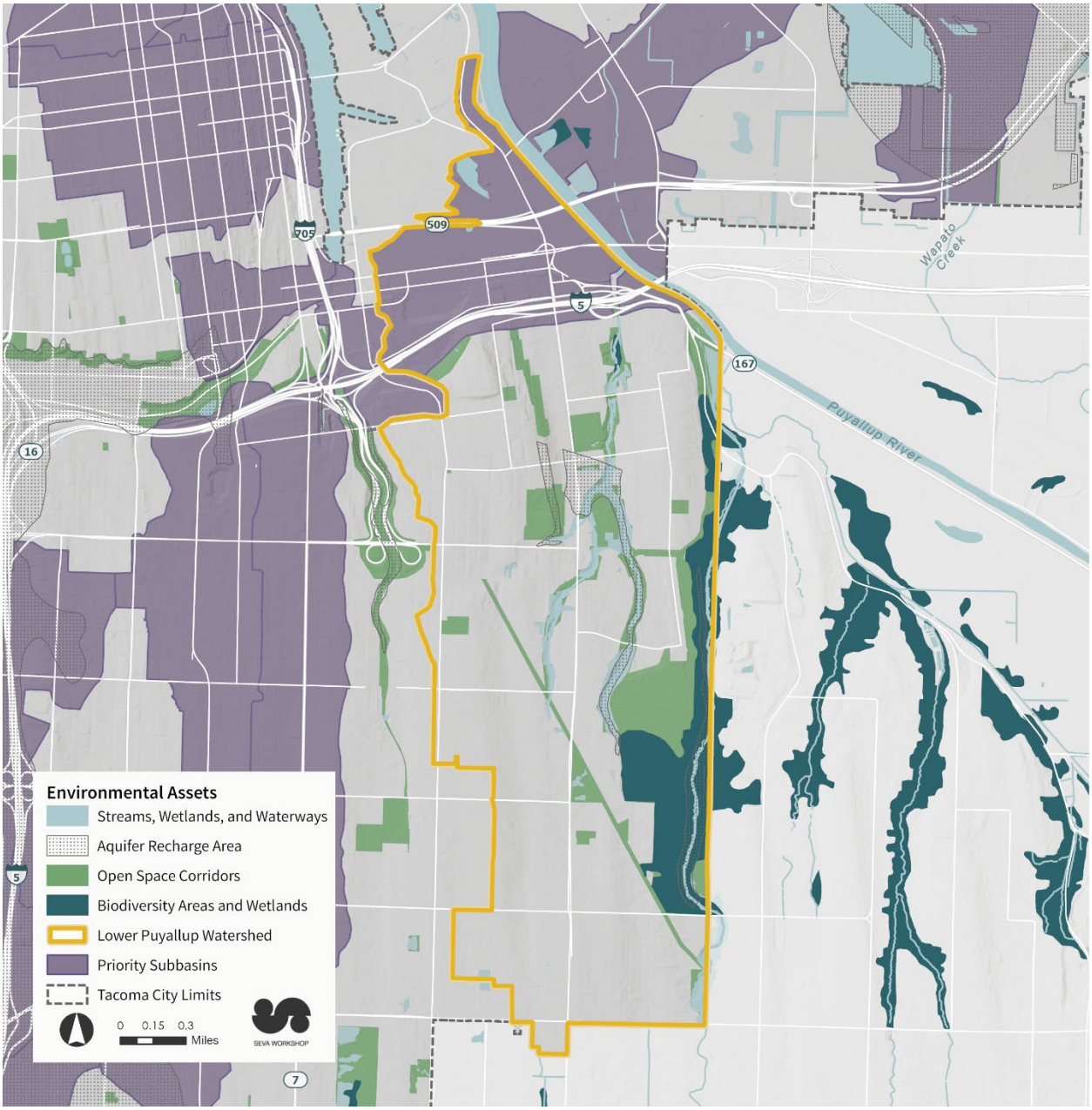
Exhibit 27: Land Use Designation within Lower Puyallup Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

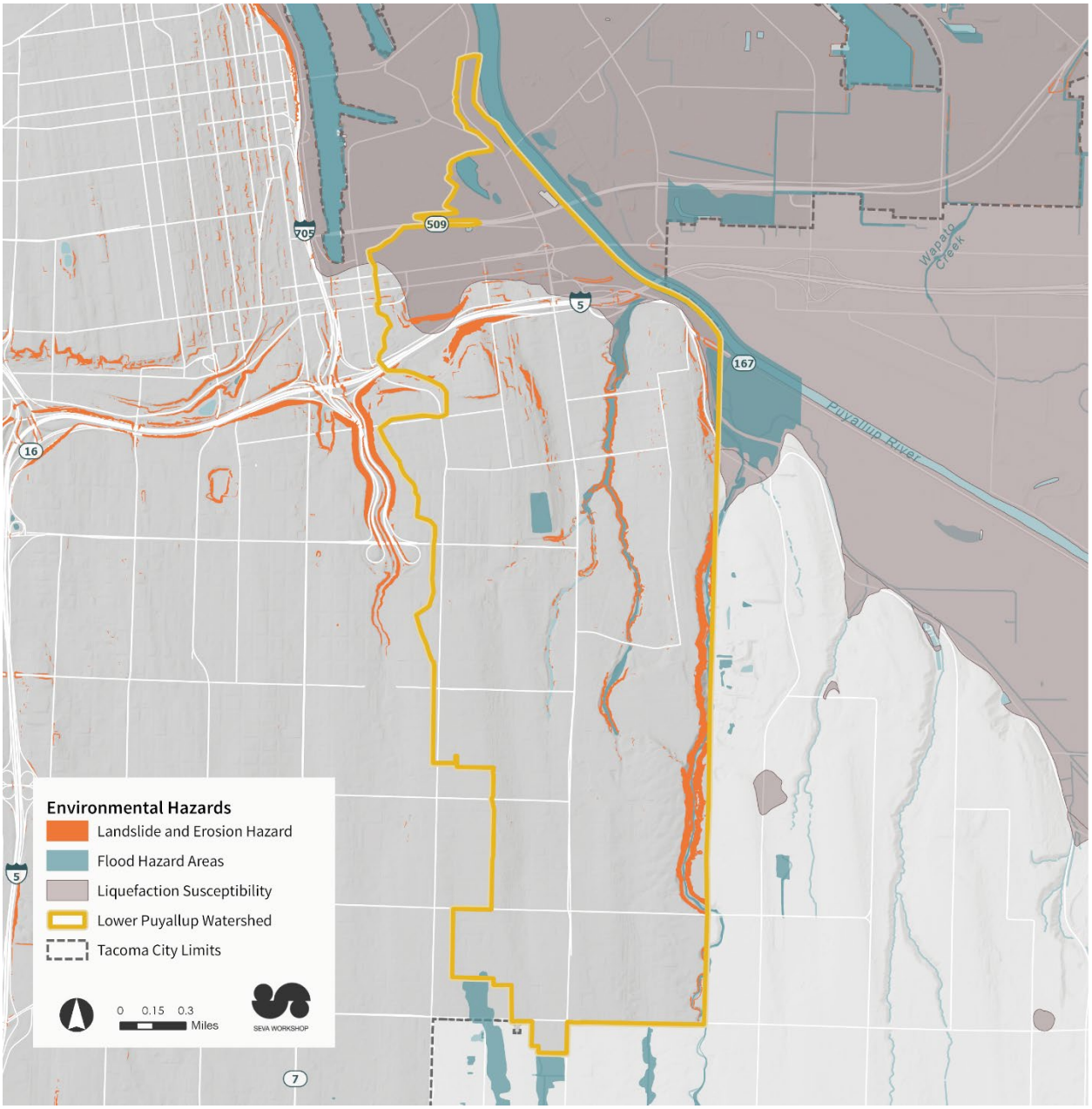
The lower reaches of the Puyallup River were historically straightened with levees due to extensive flooding. The estuary was filled and dredged to create property for industrial activities and navigable waterways for use by the Port of Tacoma. In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in dumping debris and human waste associated with homeless encampments in the First Creek area, which creates a human health risk, degrades water quality, and interferes with needed utility maintenance activities.

Exhibit 28: Environmental Assets, Lower Puyallup Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors; Priority Subbasins*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 29: Environmental Hazards, Lower Puyallup Watershed.



Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

First Creek

First Creek is a perennial stream flowing north towards the Puyallup River. First Creek is a non-fish bearing stream and has areas with perennial flow and seasonal flow. First Creek consists of the main channel, located west of East T Street, and two tributaries: the West Tributary and the "West-West" Tributary. All three channels of First Creek are largely located in 20- to 30-foot-deep ravines. The creek system includes several associated wetlands as well as a number of wildlife species and habitats. Historically, First Creek likely contained a hydrological connection to the Puyallup River and was accessible to fish. However, during the development of the City, a large portion of First Creek was piped, which eliminated any potential fish access. Although threatened, endangered, sensitive and candidate species have not been observed in the First Creek system in recent years, the creek system is regulated by the City of Tacoma Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance (CAPO) and other state and federal agencies.

The First Creek drainage basin encompasses approximately 2,500 acres of residential and commercial area. The majority of the basin is within the City of Tacoma and approximately 600 acres lie within unincorporated Pierce County. The First Creek corridor is bordered by residential development, two schools, Portland Avenue Park and The Puyallup Tribe of Indians Emerald Queen Casino. A significant portion of the corridor is within the Puyallup Reservation lands. Several City roads cross the creek, including Fairbanks Street, E 34th Street, and other key arterial roadways.

First Creek and its tributaries contain stormwater and sanitary conveyance pipes, manholes, stormwater outfalls, and several utility access roads managed by the Environmental Services Department (ESD). In the 1990s, ESD completed channel modifications to control erosion, which included rock armoring and piping to prevent channel erosion in the lower gulch. It has been estimated that 70 percent of the stream channel has been armored to reduce erosion. Approximately 60 percent of the stormwater system in the gulch is open channel, and roughly 40 percent is piped. While these stormwater system modifications within the gulch were necessary to address erosion concerns, these changes may have affected habitat conditions in First Creek. The First Creek outfall receives stormwater runoff from the east side of the Lower Puyallup Watershed, which is primarily residential with some commercial land use. This includes stormwater discharging from the Tacoma Dome, Portland Avenue, First Creek neighborhood, and the Salishan affordable and sustainable housing development.

Cleveland Way Pump Station

The Cleveland Way Pump Station is located west of the Cleveland Way right-of-way, immediately south of the Puyallup Avenue Bridge and receives stormwater discharges from the northern industrial/commercial area of the watershed, including stormwater draining from the City's Central Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Cleveland Way Pump Station was designed and constructed in the early 1960s to pump the stormwater to a high enough grade to discharge to the Puyallup River. Flow from the overflow structure (manhole 6777476) is conveyed north to

the First Creek Outfall except during high flow conditions when it is diverted west to the ditch on E 29th and then the Cleveland Way Pump Station.

Due to outdated mechanical equipment and flooding concerns, the City upgraded the pump station in 2015. While the system was not designed to reduce sediment loading to the Puyallup River, the system acts like a sediment trap and needs to be periodically cleaned of sediment and debris. Since the installation and upgrade of the higher capacity pumps, flooding has not been a concern in this area.

Puyallup River

The Puyallup River is the largest river in Tacoma and a regionally significant waterway in South Puget Sound. The river along with its tributaries serve as major migration routes for a variety of salmonids, including Spring Chinook and bull trout, which have both been listed as endangered species. There are four fish hatcheries located in this system upstream of Tacoma.

The associated drainage basin occupies approximately 1,065 square miles in the Puget Lowlands. Its two major tributaries are the White and Carbon Rivers. The lower portion of the river from its mouth to approximately two miles upstream is located within the City of Tacoma. The lower Puyallup at Commencement Bay is a salt-wedge estuary, with deeper marine water overlain by a layer of fresh water. Centuries of urbanization has extensively modified the estuary. Below River Mile 2.0 in the Tideflats Watershed, industrial activity is the dominant land use and 99 percent of the estuarine wetland has been lost.

The Puyallup River is listed as impaired (303d list) for fecal coliform and subject to a fecal coliform TMDL. Upstream tributaries in other jurisdictions are noted as needing a reduction in fecal coliform bacteria loading. There is a load allocation monitoring point at the Lincoln Avenue Bridge crossing, but Tacoma has not been identified as contributing to any water quality violations in this area.

Recent habitat restoration efforts completed with efforts of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, the Port of Tacoma, the City of Tacoma, and others have resulted in increased wetland acreage including a project at the Simpson Pulp Mill site and the creation of the Gog-le-hi-te wetland located near the mouth of the river on the east side across from the City's main wastewater treatment plant. As part of the Thea Foss and Wheeler-Osgood Waterways Remediation Project habitat mitigations sites were constructed along other waterways within the Puyallup River Watershed. The Puyallup River Side Channel Project provides off-channel habitat intended for use by juvenile salmonids for rearing and refuge during their outward migration to the Puget Sound. The project merged an existing isolated wetland and excavated an adjacent parcel, creating an off-channel habitat area. The existing flood control levee structure was breached following construction of a new levee to allow the river and associated tidal hydrology to enter.

Swan Creek

Swan Creek is a moderate sized tributary located within the larger Clear Creek basin. Swan Creek originates in Pierce County south of Highway 512. It flows north towards the Puyallup

River and along the City of Tacoma-Pierce County boundary. Swan Creek eventually flows into Clear Creek, which then flows into the Puyallup River.

The Swan Creek basin drains mostly residential neighborhoods and open spaces including Swan Creek Park with a drainage basin of about four square miles. Most of the drainage area is located in unincorporated Pierce County. A small portion of the basin lies along the City of Tacoma's eastern border. Much of the land located within the lower portion of the drainage basin is located within Swan Creek Park, which is owned and operated by Metro Parks Tacoma.

Chum salmon and cutthroat trout are the most common species present, with chum spawning in the lower creek. Swan Creek has a B-IBI score classified as poor (average of 21 between 2001 and 2009). Swan Creek is listed as impaired (303 d list) for fecal coliform. In the Puyallup River fecal coliform TMDL, the creek is noted as needing a reduction in fecal coliform bacteria loading. The City restored a large habitat site near the mouth of Swan Creek through the NRDA Consent Decree. A recently completed fish barrier removal project by Tacoma Public Utilities is also helping to open the creek for salmon use. Stream Team volunteers monitor water quality in Swan Creek for the City. An annual Salmon Homecoming celebration is also hosted at Swan Creek to increase community awareness of this valuable resource.

ESA Listed Fish Species Critical Habitat

Foss Waterway, Commencement Bay, and the South-Central Puget Sound are rearing and migratory areas for several fish populations. The Puyallup River, which also discharges into Commencement Bay within 1 mile of the waterway, has seven fish populations including:

- Coho, documented presence and rearing
- Spring and Fall Chinook, documented presence and rearing
- Fall Chum, documented presence
- Winter Steelhead, documented presence
- Sockeye, documented presence
- Pink Salmon (odd year), documented presence
- Bull Trout, documented presence

The WDFW's listed fish population for the Puyallup-White Watershed are:

Population Name	Species	Federal Status
White River (Puyallup) Bull Trout	Bull Trout	Threatened
Puyallup Chinook	Chinook	Threatened
White River Chinook	Chinook	Threatened

Puyallup/Carbon Winter Steelhead	Steelhead	Threatened
White River (Puyallup) Winter Steelhead	Steelhead	Threatened
Fennel Creek Fall Chum	Chum	Not Warranted
Hylebos Creek Fall Chum	Chum	Not Warranted
Puyallup/Carbon Fall Chum	Chum	Not Warranted
Puyallup Coho	Coho	Not Warranted
White River (Puyallup) Coho	Coho	Not Warranted
Puyallup Coastal Cutthroat	Cutthroat	Not Warranted
Puyallup Pink	Pink	Not Warranted

Source: City of Tacoma, 2024

Western Slopes

The Western Slopes Watershed covers 2,090 acres and is the only Tacoma watershed that drains to the Narrows Passage. The watershed is also part of WRIA-12 Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed. The watershed is predominately residential with many steep slopes that contain underground springs and near surface groundwater. The Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) railway system runs along the entire length of the waterfront along the base of the steep slope areas. Many culverts have been placed under the tracks to collect and convey the stormwater runoff; the creek flows under the tracks to the Puget Sound.

Exhibit 30: Land Use Designation within Western Slopes Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (Future Land Use Designation), 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024

Multiple short creeks are present along the slopes in this area. Significant creeks identified in the 2000 Tacoma Urban Creek Assessment Report include Gold Creek, Narrows Creek, Crystal Creek, Crystal Springs Creek, Marinera Creek and Titlow Park Gulch Creek. There are additional gulch systems that contain very little flow.

The Western Slopes forms a green belt between Point Defiance Park and Titlow Beach. This wildlife migration corridor is of great importance in Tacoma. Evidence of a large deer population

as well as raccoons, river otter, and other small animals are present along this corridor. Critical habitat issues in this watershed include development near steep slopes and the removal or topping of trees to enhance views to the Puget Sound.

Exhibit 31: Environmental Assets, Western Slopes Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (*Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Open Space Corridors*) 2024; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (*Biodiversity Areas and Wetlands*); Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 32: Environmental Hazards, Western Slopes Watershed.

Sources: City of Tacoma (Landslides and Erosion Hazards; Flood Hazard Areas; Liquefaction Susceptibility) 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Receiving Waterbodies and Stormwater Facilities

Western Slopes Sub-basins

There are four distinct sub-basins in the Western Slopes Watershed discharging stormwater to the Narrows Waterway. The northern most sub-basin (WS01) discharges stormwater from the

western portion of Point Defiance and the residential neighborhoods between Pearl Street and the Narrows. There are several small gulches in this sub-basin.

The WS02 is a small sub-basin discharging stormwater from a residential area along North Narrows Drive between North Mildred and North 17th Streets. The gulch systems draining this sub-basin area include Stormwater Pipe Alley, Deer Haven Gulch, Chinese Mining Gulch, and Jason's Gulch.

The WS03 sub-basin is the largest sub-basin in this watershed and receives discharges from both residential and commercial areas as well as Highway 16. The gulches in this system include Water Memorial Park Gulch, Tacoma Outboarder Association (TOA) Gulch, and the Pedestrian Bridge Gulch. This sub-basin also includes Narrows Creek.

The WS04 sub-basin is the southernmost basin in this watershed and borders University Place. This sub-basin receives stormwater discharges from areas with both residential and commercial development. The basin also includes most of Titlow Park and Titlow Park Gulch, Crystal Springs Creek, and Crystal Creek, which collects and conveys through the Day Island Marina storm system at the end of S. 19th Street. Stormwater runoff from a significant area of commercial and residential development in University Place drains north; it also is collected and conveyed by the City stormwater system in S. 19th Street.

Tacoma Narrows

The Narrows is a strait that is part of the Puget Sound, separating the Kitsap Peninsula from the City of Tacoma and separates the South Sound from the Main Basin. Due to the large tidal exchange and the narrow passage, the strongest currents in the Narrows can reach up to 5 knots. The Narrows is currently listed as a Category 5 on the 303d list for dissolved oxygen.

Marinera Stream

This stream and gulch runs parallel to the south of Marinera Street, just north of Gold Creek Gulch. Access to this a small gulch can be found at the end of Marinera Street or from the Vassault Park trail. There is a 10-inch stormwater pipe that drains Marinera Street. According to the Urban Creek Study, there is a possibility that the stream is fish accessible when the culvert is submerged during high tide.

Narrows Creek

Narrows Creek originates at Jackson Avenue and Highway 16 off-ramp intersection. The creek parallels Highway 16 and slopes into the stormwater inlet structure behind the closed Western Slopes Treatment Plant. The large gulch system is accessible from the entrance to the old treatment plant. There are impassable fish barriers including a trash rack on the storm line and a long culvert from the stormwater inlet structure to the outfall discharging to Puget Sound.

Titlow Park Lagoon and Beach

Titlow Park is the only beachfront park on the west side of Tacoma. The park contains a large 75-acre grassy and forested open space located at the base of 6th Avenue. The park contains marine shoreline, 25 freshwater wetlands, and four forested perennial streams: Titlow Park Creek, Crystal Springs Creek, Pedestrian Bridge Gulch, and Tacoma Outboarder Association (TOA) Gulch. The mature forest in the area provide beneficial wildlife habitat for birds, fish, and other wildlife.

Currently, the Titlow Lagoon is connected to the Puget Sound through two 40-inch culverts that pass under the BNSF railroad. A railroad bridge is being proposed to replace the culverts and allow open access from nearshore habitat to the lagoon. The City is investigating the potential for a regional stormwater treatment facility located in the park, which would treat the stormwater discharging into the lagoon. Titlow Park Creek begins in a ditch on Sunset Drive, travels through a residential area, and crosses 6th Avenue where it enters Titlow Park. The creek discharges to Upper Titlow Lagoon.

Crystal Springs Creek is a highly urbanized stream and its receiving water contain many culverts, channelized reaches through residential backyards, and other fish barriers along the length of the creek. Crystal Springs Creek headwaters are in University Place at approximately 22nd St. Ct. W and Crystal Springs Road. Crystal Springs Creek enters the stormwater system at the top of Titlow Road, where stormwater and creek flow are co-mingled. Crystal Spring Creek discharges to the Narrows and Lower Titlow Lagoon.

Pedestrian Bridge Gulch is a small creek located west of Narrow's Glen Retirement Center near 6th Avenue and Laurel Lane. Due to the steep gradient, culvert barrier under the railroad tracks, and low flows, this creek is not accessible to fish.

The creek associated with the TOA Gulch is located north of Pedestrian Bridge Gulch and west of Sunset Drive. Similar to Pedestrian Bridge Gulch, due to the culvert under the railroad tracks and low flows, there is small possibility that this stream is accessible to fish. There are no stormwater pipes draining into this gulch.

1.4 Habitat Restoration

Habitat restoration is a purposeful effort by people to reestablish ecological functions in an area where ecological functions were degraded, impaired, or lost because of industrialization, population growth and/or development. Tacoma is a highly urbanized city with most of the ecosystems and natural processes that were present historically eliminated or significantly altered due to urbanization. Habitat restoration efforts in Tacoma aim to restore valuable ecological functions to benefit the environment, wildlife and people; and to create a more climate resilient community.

There are many types of restoration projects. Restoration projects vary by the group or organization performing the work, future land use planned for the restoration site, the type of habitat or function being restored, permitting complexity, the amount of work needed to

complete the project, and other factors. Restoration of wetlands and riparian habitats are often prioritized because these habitats provide gains in ecologic functions and values. Restoration projects in Tacoma can be categorized as follows:

- Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Habitat Sites
- Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustees Sites
- The Foss Waterway Cleanup Habitat Mitigation Sites
- Port of Tacoma Habitat Sites
- Compensatory Mitigation Sites
- Metro Parks Tacoma Projects

1.5 Critical Areas

Critical areas, as defined by the Growth Management Act, include wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife conservation areas. They are briefly characterized below. Descriptions and accompanying figures indicate the general locations of these features in Tacoma. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the location of known critical areas.

Critical areas provide many important functions and protect communities from hazards. The functions mentioned in this section, and detailed further in the Best Available Science (BAS) Review report (Facet 2024) tend to focus on ecosystem processes and services. However, critical areas also provide social, cultural, and economic benefits including recreational and educational opportunities, and aesthetic value. For more information on the functions, values, anticipated climate change impacts, and protection mechanisms for critical areas, refer to the Best Available Science Review report (Facet 2024).

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas

Critical aquifer recharge areas are areas with a recharging effect on aquifers used for drinking water. Aquifers also discharge groundwater to wetlands and streams. This groundwater helps maintain base stream flows during the dry season. The Central Pierce County Aquifer Area is a large groundwater resource area which encompasses central Pierce County, areas to the south and west of Tacoma and extends into Tacoma city limits, most notably in the South Tacoma area.

Numerous individual and public water systems in Pierce County, including the City of Tacoma, use this aquifer as a water supply. Therefore, protection of both the quantity and quality of this aquifer is imperative. The Central Pierce County Aquifer Area supplies Tacoma with approximately five percent of the City's annual water requirements[8].

[8] Source: https://www.mytpu.org/about-tpu/services/water/water-source/ground-water-wells/

Groundwater and surface water interact through recharge, storage, and discharge. Aquifers support aquatic resources like streams and wetlands. In addition to potable water uses, the City is required to manage and balance groundwater use to support and maintain adequate stream flow for anadromous fish (Streamflow Restoration Act RCW 90.94).

Climate change will continue to impact water resources in Tacoma, led by changes to the timing and quantity of precipitation and snow accumulation in the Cascade mountains, soil moisture, and streamflow. Changes in water availability in turn will impact all resources that rely on surface water for recharge such as aquifer recharge areas. In general, higher temperatures will likely cause an increasing portion of precipitation to fall as rain rather than snow, resulting in continued decreases in spring snowpack and earlier snowmelt to west side rivers. The frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events, like atmospheric rivers, are projected to increase. At this time, it is unknown if these changes will have any effect on the City's drinking water supply.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (FWHCAs) include lands and waters necessary to support viable populations of fish and wildlife species within their natural ranges. They occur where endangered, threatened, and sensitive species have a primary association with habitat. FWHCAs also include important habitats, regardless of species' use, like streams, ponds, and Oregon white oak woodlands. Major streams and other waterbodies in Tacoma, which are types of FWHCAs, are described under Watersheds.

Notable FWHCAs present in Tacoma include the Puyallup River and other streams; habitat contained within the Puget Sound waters adjacent to the City; Point Defiance Park; and forested steep slopes and bluffs that meet the classification of Biodiversity Areas and Corridors. Urban development has severely reduced the quantity and quality of habitat available for wildlife use in the City. Preservation of FWHCAs is important for protecting sensitive species and Tacoma's remaining high-value habitat patches.

The changing climate affects fish and wildlife habitats in many ways including changes in water availability, temperature, and precipitation that affect forest species composition and overall plant assemblages, growing season for some plants, and the volume and timing of stream flows and stream temperatures. Among other effects, these changes are expected to affect the habitat needs of aquatic species and alter the timing of migration for some salmonid species (Snover et al. 2013). Sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, habitat loss and modification, the spread of pests and invasive species, and loss of biodiversity are collectively projected to negatively impact FWHCAs due to climate change (Sattar et al. 2021).

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil

conditions. Wetlands are often found near small lakes, ponds, streams, and wet meadows. They include swamps, marshes, bogs, and estuaries.

Wetlands are productive biological systems and provide numerous ecological functions. Wetland functions can be grouped into the following categories: improving water quality, hydrologic functions, and functions related to wildlife habitat. Wetlands can slow or retain stormwater runoff which can reduce downstream erosion potential and help recharge groundwater supplies. Wetlands desynchronize surface water flows by retaining and slowly releasing surface and groundwater. Wetlands function naturally to improve water quality by filtering out sediments, using excess nutrients, and breaking down some toxic chemicals.

Historically, Tacoma contained many more wetlands than are present today. Many of Tacoma's wetlands were filled and developed for commercial, industrial or residential land uses prior to the adoption of regulations that now protect these important natural areas. Current wetland areas in Tacoma are scattered throughout the city. North and west of Downtown Tacoma, remaining wetland areas are generally confined to undeveloped vegetated slopes and ravines, parks (e.g., China Lake Park and Snake Lake Park), and the Tacoma Community College campus. In East Tacoma and South Tacoma, wetlands are present in the vicinity of First Creek and Swan Creek, at Wapato Lake and Charlotte's Blueberry Park, and in small, isolated patches in residential neighborhoods. Similarly, wetland patches are interspersed across the Tideflats area and in Northeast Tacoma, mainly along the steep slopes facing the sound. The wetland patches in the Tideflats area include several wetland restoration sites (see Habitat Restoration).

Climate change is projected to increase frequency and intensity of extreme weather evens and shift seasonal weather patterns. Wetlands are vulnerable to these changes. Watershed scale changes, such as reduced snowpack and the altered runoff timing can impact wetland hydroperiods. Changes in timing and depths of wetland inundation are projected to stress established vegetation and wetland-dependent wildlife.[9] Coastal wetlands are under additional risk from increased inundation and erosion due to sea level rise, which are expected to cause habitat loss and shifts in habitat types (NRC, 2012).

Geologically Hazardous Areas

Geologically hazardous areas are areas that are susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. They are regulated to protect public health and safety. The geologically hazardous area designations present in Tacoma include the following:

- Landslide hazard areas: areas potentially subject to landslides based on a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors such as the type of bedrock, soil, slope, slope aspect, structure, or hydrology.
- Erosion hazard areas: areas where the combination of slope and soil type makes the area susceptible to erosion.

[9] Source: https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/wetlands/tools-resources/wetlands-climate-change

- Seismic hazard areas: areas subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake induced ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, soil liquefaction, debris flows, lahars, or tsunamis.

Landslide and erosion hazard areas occur throughout the city, primarily where steep slopes are present. They are mapped along much of the Puget Sound shoreline, along stream corridors and in limited pockets throughout the city.

High liquefaction susceptibility, areas likely to be inundated from modeled tsunamis, and lahar hazard zones—all types of seismic hazard areas—are located along the Puget Sound shoreline and Puyallup River Valley, overlapping the Port of Tacoma and Tacoma's largely industrial Tideflats Subarea.

Climate change is expected to increase frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events and raise sea level, both of which could cause an increase in potential landslides in Tacoma. Increased rainfall intensity could also make erosion-sensitive areas more susceptible to erosion. Extreme heat and precipitation changes are also expected to stress plants and cause mortality of some vegetation currently contributing to slope stability.

Flood Hazard Areas

Flood hazard areas generally include lands within the 100-year floodplain and other areas susceptible to flooding from high groundwater. Consideration for these areas is important for minimizing adverse impact to public health, safety, and public infrastructure. Frequently flooded areas also provide important habitat functions for fish and wildlife.

Tacoma's flood hazard areas are located along Puget Sound shorelines, the waterways within the Tideflats Subarea including the Puyallup River, streams that flow to the Tideflats Subarea (i.e., Swan Creek, First Creek, Wapato Creek, Hylebos Creek), and relatively isolated patches located in Central and South Tacoma (e.g., China Lake, South Tacoma Swamp, Snake Lake, Wapato Lake).

Climate change is expected to increase the risk of flooding which will increase the chance of damage to infrastructure located in or near current floodplains. For coastal areas, such as Commencement Bay and Puget Sound, sea level rise will exacerbate these risks. Direct impacts may increase storm surge resulting in temporary flooding of low-lying areas.

Mineral Resource Lands

Mineral resources in Tacoma consist of rock and gravel deposits. These resources support industries that are an important part of Tacoma's economy, providing jobs and needed products for local use and export.

1.6 Open Space

Open space lands in Tacoma provide multiple benefits contributing to a complete and livable urban environment. Benefits of having open space lands include:

- Habitat value for rare or endangered species
- Opportunity for low-impact recreation (such as bird and wildlife observation) and community stewardship
- Increased property values
- Heightened sense of community ownership and recognized value
- Stormwater retention and treatment
- Increased air and water quality
- Aesthetic relief from an urbanized environment
- Improved public health as a result of better air and water quality and opportunities for a more active lifestyle

These benefits are often referred to as “ecosystem services.” Without functional and healthy habitat areas, benefits would not be available or would have to be provided by human intervention. There are a wide variety of open space lands in Tacoma including:

- Parks and recreational lands with active uses like trails and viewpoints
- Natural areas regulated under the City’s CAPO
- WDFW priority habitats and/or biodiversity corridors
- Areas used for the conservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species
- Areas used for ecologic and other scientific study purposes
- Areas of outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, scientific, and/or educational value
- Areas providing a natural separation or buffer between land-uses
- Rivers, streams, wetlands, bays, and estuaries
- Forested areas, oak woodlands, and meadows
- Areas providing important habitat connectivity, including utility easements and unimproved rights-of-way
- Marine beaches, lake shores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands

The City of Tacoma classifies its types of open spaces into two categories: active and passive.[10]

- Active parks and open spaces, like playgrounds, playfields, waterfront areas, and nature centers, have developed amenities and features for formal active use. The **Parks and Recreation Element** discusses active open spaces in greater detail.
- Passive open spaces are typically undeveloped lands with vegetation and other natural features such as wetlands, rivers, and streams.

[10] City of Tacoma, Environmental Services Department, Strategic 20-Year Passive Open Space Plan, January 2017

Tacoma Metro Parks properties and recreational facilities provide many opportunities for outdoor activities in the urban landscape. The Metro Parks Strategic Master Plan has identified a “10-minute walk” level of service intending to provide Tacomans with easy access to nearby parks. Additionally, many of Tacoma’s shoreline waterfront areas offer public access to further recreational opportunities and enhance the City’s livability.

Historically, Tacoma’s unique passive open space areas, characterized by wetlands, buffers, and/or steep and unstable slopes, have remained undeveloped and dedicated to open space. These areas, due to their terrain and lack of development feasibility, are now under threat from increased pressure to infill to meet the demands of population and density increases.

The Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance of the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC 13.11) guides activities within critical areas (e.g., steep slopes, wetlands, wetland buffers, streams, stream buffers, and biodiversity areas/corridors.). As assessed, 47 percent of the passive open space acreage is considered a “steep” slope. Steep slope areas (≥40 percent slope) have special considerations that must be met before restoration work can begin. Geotechnical study, erosion control, and a detailed landscape management plan must be created and permitted prior to the start of work. Coordinating work along wetlands, streams, and their buffers is crucial to ensure the health of these resources. While some restoration work can occur without a permit, areas greater than 1,000 square feet require a city permit before work can begin. This coordinated approach is important to the success of restoration efforts and the health of these resources.

Many of the functions and values provided by habitat areas depend on connectivity with other habitat areas and habitat quality. Open Space Corridors often contain critical areas such as streams, wetlands, steep slopes, and animal and plant habitats. Thus, there is a strong link between the City’s critical area and open space goals.

Passive open space areas continue to face threats from invasive species, habitat fragmentation, adjacent land impacts, and other influences that prevent native species from regenerating. Active management and restoration are key to maintaining the overall health and ecosystem functions of these passive open space areas.

In the past, many passive open space areas have been neglected and subject to mismanagement. In some areas, historic vegetation management techniques included the topping of trees, which is currently prohibited within critical areas (TMC 13.11.210). This management technique was often used to enhance views and reduce a tree’s height with minimal time or skill. However, this method damages the overall tree canopy as it leads to weaker, dense re-growth and provides opportunities for pathogen and disease entry. This technique is not sustainable or healthy for trees, and where trees are located on a steep slope, these actions increase the likelihood of slope instability by reducing soil binding root mass.

Another critical factor impacting Tacoma’s forested areas is invasive plants. Invasive plants are opportunistic and easily take hold when the ground is disturbed. The dominance of non-native plant species, such as Himalayan blackberry, English ivy, and Scot’s broom, is reported to be a

significant cause of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.[11] These invasive plants lack natural population controls (e.g., predators) and are capable of rapid reproduction; they can quickly blanket the understory and prevent native plants from reseeding/regenerating. The result of invasive plant dominance is the creation of monocultures of invasive plants with little or no native plants in the understory.[12]

Timber trespass is also a challenge. Steep slope vegetation is sometimes illegally removed from City-owned properties to improve views.[13] The policing and enforcement of this activity is difficult, and the tree damage is irreparable in the short term while the safety risk is high. Open spaces experience other undesirable activities like dumping household waste and transient encampments. Often, undesirable activities are seen to decrease by initiating restoration activities and improving the site conditions through increased community involvement. Dumping yard waste and other materials into gulch areas is also frequently noted. It can be problematic on slopes as it adds weight and can cause slope instability and failure.[14] Outreach and education campaigns often minimize these adjacent impacts.

Most of Tacoma's undeveloped open space is clustered on steep slopes and around gulches and often restricts access and use, especially within a stream or wetland buffer or biodiversity corridor under the City's CAPO.[15] In 2014, the City's ESD acquired approximately 520 acres of passive open spaces to manage, maintain, and conduct restoration activities. Exhibit 33 below is a spatial visualization of Tacoma's passive open space sites.

[11] City of Tacoma, Environmental Services Department, Strategic 20-Year Passive Open Space Plan, January 2017

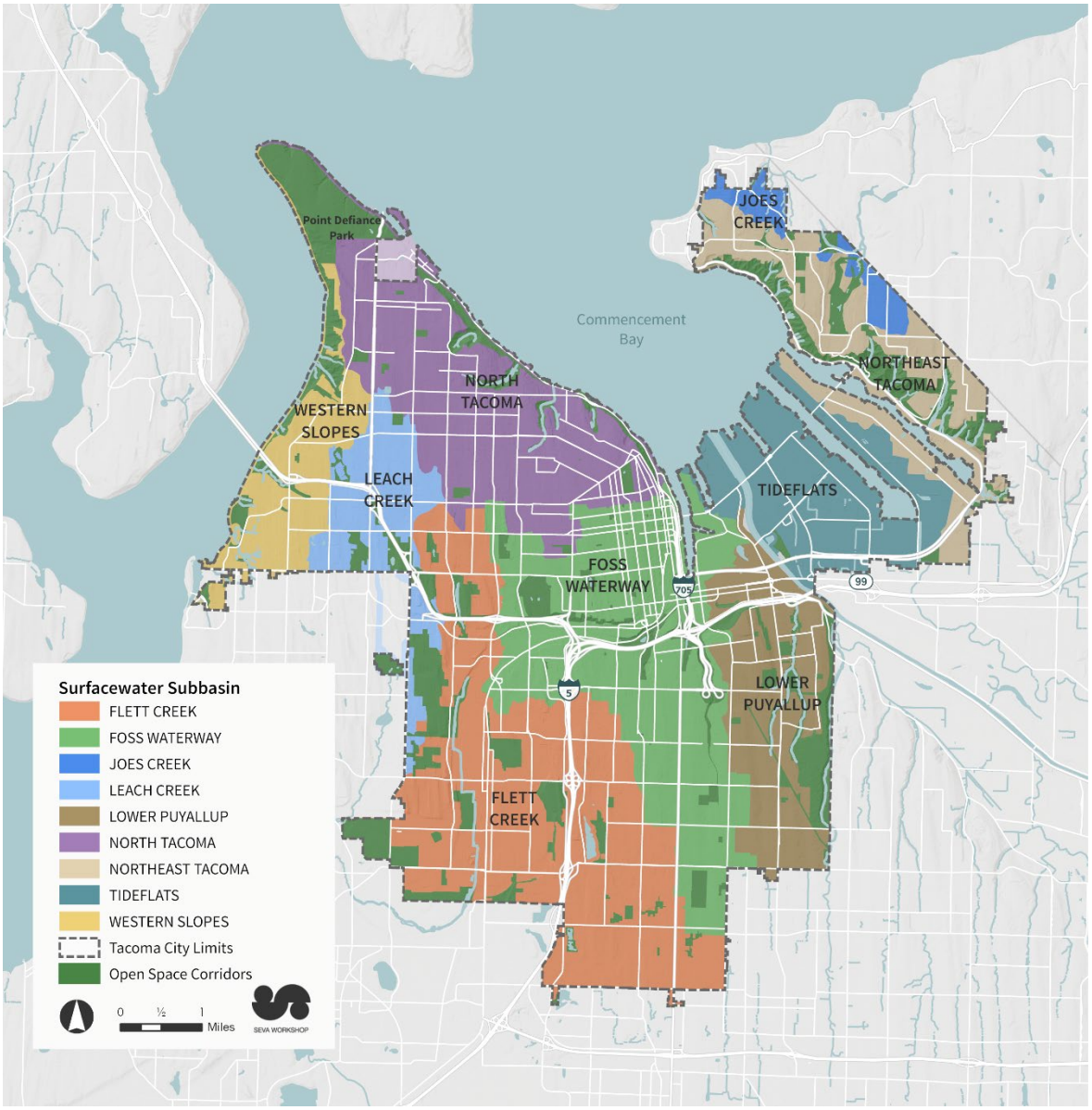
[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

Exhibit 33: Tacoma Passive Open Space and Stormwater Basin Map.



Source: City of Tacoma, Tacoma Urban Forest Plan, 2017.

1.7 Urban Forest

Trees are an integral part of Tacoma's communities and the ecological systems in which they exist. They provide significant economic, social, and environmental benefits, such as carbon sequestration, reduction of the urban heat island effect, energy savings, stormwater runoff reduction, water quality improvement, psychological healing and calming qualities, and increased value of business and residential properties. Planting and maintaining trees help a city become more sustainable and offsets the negative impacts of urban development. Trees

are as necessary as water, infrastructure, and energy to sustain healthy communities. The health of the urban forest is directly linked to the health of the Puget Sound.

Urban forests and forests in developing areas face a unique set of challenges that rural or wilderness forests do not. Unlike a rural forest area, which is often owned by a single owner or a limited number of owners and can be managed through simple single-purpose policies. In contrast, urban forests overlap with a complex set of ownerships, values, and goals. This complexity, coupled with differing maintenance levels and approaches to planting and preservation, requires a multi-faceted approach to the management of the urban forest. Tacoma's urban forest exists on different types of property that are managed differently depending on ownership (public vs. private), uses (commercial, residential, industrial, open spaces, etc.), and the vegetation present (invasive, native, climate-adapted).

Climate change is a significant factor influencing the structure and function of forest ecosystems. The projected changes in climate may lead to shifts in the species composition of urban forests, with some species being lost or gained depending on their climatic suitability. It is anticipated that periods of drought could increase, potentially affecting the growth, reproduction, and physical location of some species. However, the overall impact of climate change on urban forests in Tacoma is currently unknown. This uncertainty underscores the need for proactive planning and management to ensure the resilience and health of the city's urban forest in the face of these challenges.

In city environments, more heat from the sun is absorbed and retained by impervious surfaces. This can intensify temperatures locally, creating health impacts and impacting neighborhood livability. When an area has fewer green spaces and more impervious surfaces like roads, parking lots, buildings, etc., it absorbs and retains more heat from the sun and can create a heat island. The urban heat island effect is a phenomenon where built infrastructure in urban areas causes higher temperatures compared to their surroundings. A 2020 analysis by Earth Economics found that neighborhoods in Central and South Tacoma may be as much as 14°F hotter than neighborhoods in North Tacoma, including regional climate effects.[16] Urban heat islands in Tacoma increase maximum temperatures by as much as 6.2°F above the local baseline.[17] According to Tacoma Urban Forestry, higher-opportunity neighborhoods have 15 percent more tree cover than lower-opportunity neighborhoods. Inversely, lower-opportunity neighborhoods have 19 percent more impervious surfaces than higher-opportunity neighborhoods.[18] Further, neighborhoods burdened with the worst extreme heat typically suffer from the worst economic and health inequality. Trees, urban forestry, thoughtful development, and street design are all key tools to mitigate this urban heat island effect and create a more

[16] Urban Heat Island Analysis, Tacoma, Washington 2020, Earth Economics https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/enviro/UrbanForestry/TacomaWA_HeatIslandAnalysis.PDF

[17] Ibid.

[18] City of Tacoma, Urban Forestry, Tacoma Community Forestry: The Intersection of Trees, Equity, and Human Health, September 2024, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0b0e009ae2bf4fc3850161bfdfce5740

livable city. Exhibit 34 below shares the urban heat index scores by Tacoma neighborhood in comparison to the City-wide average.

Exhibit 34: Urban Heat Island Index by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	Urban Heat Index	Difference from City-wide Average
Central	86.9	0.52
Eastside	87.2	0.81
New Tacoma	86.0	(0.35)
North East	85.8	(0.59)
North End	85.9	(0.53)
South End	86.8	0.38
South Tacoma	86.6	0.18
West End	85.5	(0.87)
Tacoma	**86.4**	

Sources: City of Tacoma, Equity Index 2022, 2020 by block group; Earth Economics

The 2018 Tacoma Urban Tree Canopy Assessment established a baseline for the city's tree canopy. The results of this study indicated that in 2017, the City of Tacoma contained 20 percent urban tree canopy (or 6,406 of the city's 31,607 total acres); 13 percent non-canopy vegetation (4,257 acres); 14 percent soil/dry vegetation (4,469 acres); 52 percent impervious (16,344 acres); and less than 1 percent water (132 acres).[19] Of the city's 80 percent of land area not presently occupied by tree canopy, 13 percent (4,604 acres) was suitable for future tree plantings, and 67 percent (21,006 acres) was unsuitable due to its current land use or other restraint surfaces.[20] Compared to other communities assessed in the Puget Sound Region,

[19] City of Tacoma, Plan-it Geo, Urban Tree Canopy Assessment, December 2018, https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/enviro/UrbanForestry/TreeCanopy/Tacoma_UrbanTreeCanopyReport_2018.PDF

[20] Ibid.

Tacoma has the least amount of tree canopy as a percentage of land cover.[21] The City of Tacoma Urban Forestry team has committed to a goal of increasing this tree canopy cover to 30 percent by 2030. This increase in coverage is crucial for the health and sustainability of Tacoma's urban forest and wellbeing of communities in Tacoma. In an effort to increasing the city's tree canopy, the City developed the Urban Forest Management Plan, which established six strategies to preserve and increase the tree canopy in Tacoma. Changes to existing codes and policies were an identified strategy, resulting in the update of the municipal code in 2023**.** The changes included updating permit requirements for pruning, removing, and planting street trees, updating policies for reviewing public tree pruning requests, establishing the heritage tree program, impositions for penalties for violations, and updating the appeals process for tree permits.[22]

Various incentive programs and community partnerships were formed to help the City and wider Tacoma community reach its goal. First, Tacoma Urban Forestry developed a Tree Planting Priority Tool that utilizes City data to identify areas where tree planting would have the biggest impact.[23] Incentive programs that give free or discounted trees to residents, along with basic care resources, have been established, along with the Community Tree Program, focused on community engagement related to tree planting projects in Tacoma's low opportunity neighborhoods. Considerations for tree preservation have been factored into new housing zoning code amendments to protect older trees, set minimum tree-canopy cover requirements, and requirements related to the fee-in-lieu program.[24] Since the goal was established in 2018, an average of 3,500 trees have been planted annually by six City departments.

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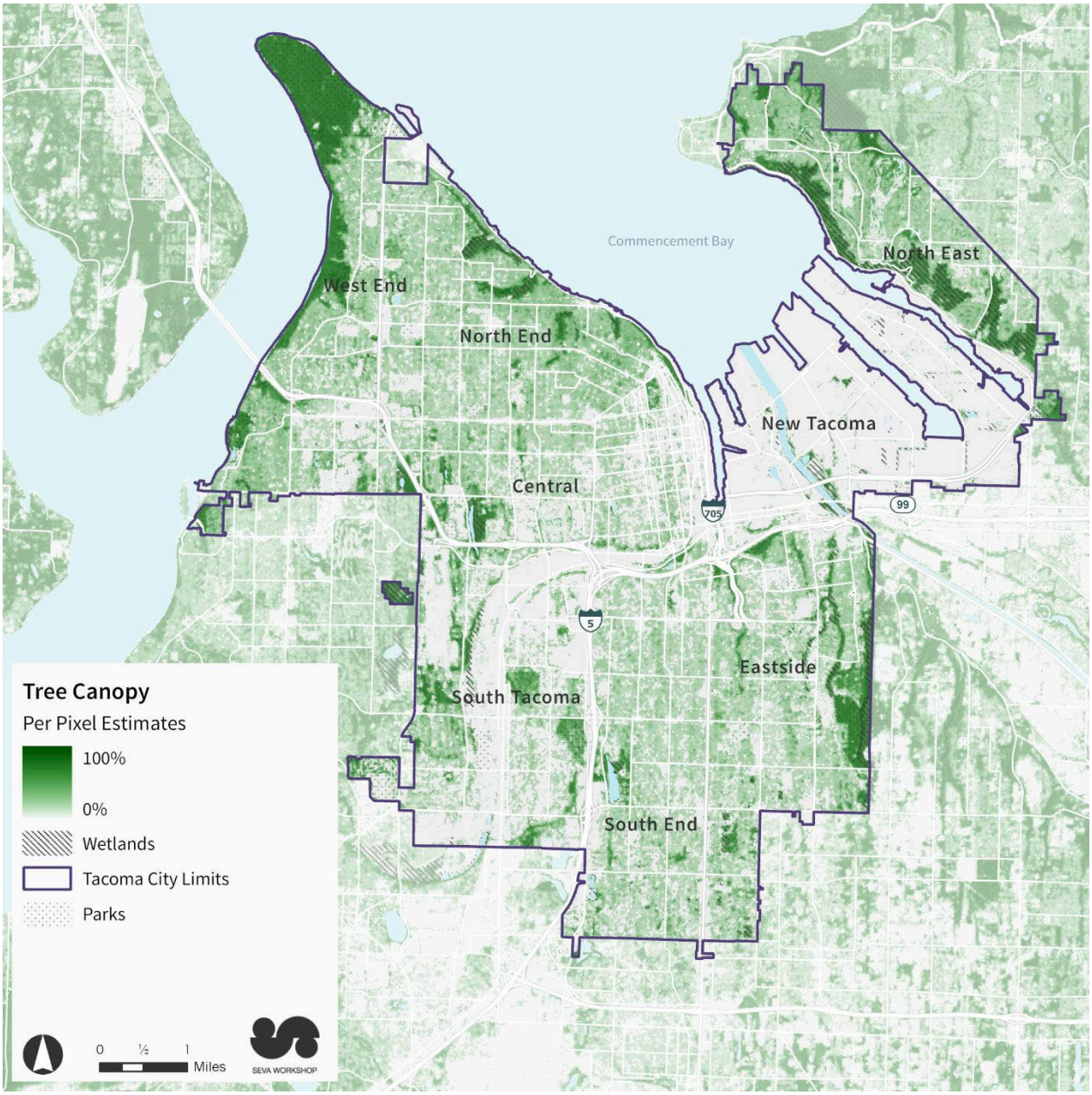
[21] City of Tacoma, Plan-it Geo, Urban Tree Canopy Assessment, December 2018, https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/enviro/UrbanForestry/TreeCanopy/Tacoma_UrbanTreeCanopyReport_2018.PDF

[22] Title 9 – Public Ways, Tacoma Municipal Code, City of Tacoma, June 2024 https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/cityclerk/Files/MunicipalCode/Title09-PublicWays.PDF#page=33

[23] City of Tacoma, Urban Forestry, Tacoma Community Forestry: The Intersection of Trees, Equity, and Human Health, September 2024, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0b0e009ae2bf4fc3850161bfdfce5740

[24] City of Tacoma, Affordable Housing, Home in Tacoma Project, Landscaping Code Coordination, https://www.cityoftacoma.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/cms/Planning/Affordable%20Housing/AHAS%20Planning%20Actions/HIT%20Landscaping%20Code%20Updates%20Analysis.pdf

Exhibit 35: Tacoma Tree Canopy Coverage, 2021.



Sources: USDA Forest Service, 2021 Seva Workshop, 2024.

2 DATA DICTIONARY

Environmental Assets

- **Streams, Wetlands, and Waterways.** City of Tacoma, 2024. One Tacoma Plan Map (web map link)
- **Fish + Wildlife**. WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2024. PHS on the Web Map (map link)
  - Note: To match the original map, PHS dataset was filtered to include both Biodiversity Areas and Corridor, as well as Wetlands
- **Aquifer Recharge Area.** City of Tacoma, 2024. One Tacoma Plan Map (web map link)
  - Note: The city included a different aquifer recharge layer with the requested data, which covers the majority of the city, minus most of the North East neighborhood.
- **Open Space Corridor.** City of Tacoma, 2024. Data request
- **Surfacewater Subbasins.** City of Tacoma, 2024. Data request
- **Tree Canopy**. USDA Forest Service, 2021.

Environmental Hazards

- **Landslide and Erosion Hazard.** City of Tacoma, 2024. Data request
- **Flood Hazard Areas.** City of Tacoma, 2024. Data request
- **Liquefaction Susceptibility.** City of Tacoma, 2024. Data request

City of Tacoma, Washington

ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

Housing Baseline Report | DRAFT August 2024

CONTENTS

EXHIBITS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tacoma's housing production has not been keeping pace with growth targets.

From 2017-2023, Tacoma's housing stock has grown at an average annual rate of 0.8%. To achieve the 2050 housing target, average annual growth needs to be double this, at 1.6%. Tacoma's housing production has proportionally slowed since the 1980s, when compared with Pierce County overall. Today, 64% of Tacoma housing units predate 1980 compared to 43% of the overall Pierce County housing stock. This reflects a countywide trend of population growth outside this regional metropolitan hub.

The existing housing stock is older and predominantly single family structures, while new production favors multifamily development.

Two-thirds of housing units in Tacoma (67%) are single family homes. However, when looking at housing built in recent years, 80% of units are in multifamily structures. Two-thirds of multifamily units are in larger buildings (50 units or more), and one-third are units in smaller and midsized multifamily structures. Downtown is a growing center for housing units, representing 40% of units built 2017-2023. North East and Central Tacoma are growing at the slowest pace.

There is racial disparity for homeownership in Tacoma, and this wealth-building opportunity is increasingly out of reach for moderate income households.

50% of Tacoma households are homeowners, but this rate is not consistent across race and ethnic groups. Homeownership rates are lowest among Black, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and "Other" households. This disparity is steeped in a history of racial exclusion and discrimination. Impacts from historic factors, such as redlining and racially restrictive covenants are still observed today. Modern phenomena, such as the foreclosure crisis, discriminatory lending practices, and lack of access to credit (to name a few) continue to block many People of Color from homeownership in Tacoma, and the city's Black community is particularly hard hit.

Forty-eight percent (48%) of Tacoma renters experienced housing cost burden in 2020, along with 27% of homeowners.

Cost burden rates for renters are particularly high (over 65%) in certain areas across the City, with highest concentrations in Central, South Tacoma, and the South End. Patterns in racial disparity are observed geographically for cost burden, as well. Black households experience the highest rates of cost burden in North East, South Tacoma, and the West End. Asian households have relatively lower rates of rental cost burden across most of Tacoma, but a concentration of cost-burdened Asian renters live in the North End. Hispanic renters are most cost-burdened in Central, Eastside, and South Tacoma neighborhoods.

Production of 59,052 units is needed in Tacoma by 2050 to meet housing targets. Market interventions will be essential to support housing units for lower income brackets.

From this target, 30% of units should be affordable to extremely low-income households, 34% for low- and very low-income households, and the remainder for moderate- and higher-income households. The distribution is based on Pierce County allocations and takes into account current housing needs to eliminate cost burden and homelessness, as well as the needs of future households. These production targets envision a future with no housing cost burden and no chronic homelessness in Tacoma.

Better integration of housing and employment centers could improve rates of commuting by public transit, bike, or walking.

Tacomans who commute are overwhelmingly traveling by car, and only 2% of employees walk to work. These patterns reflect a disconnect between residential centers and employment opportunities. It also demonstrates room for improvement in transit capture – currently only at 6%. Transit ridership rates are highest among Black and AIAN commuters and lowest among White and “Other” groups. Improved connections could be built by adding more housing in proximity to employment centers, as well as improvements to transit and bicycle networks.

Data Source Summary

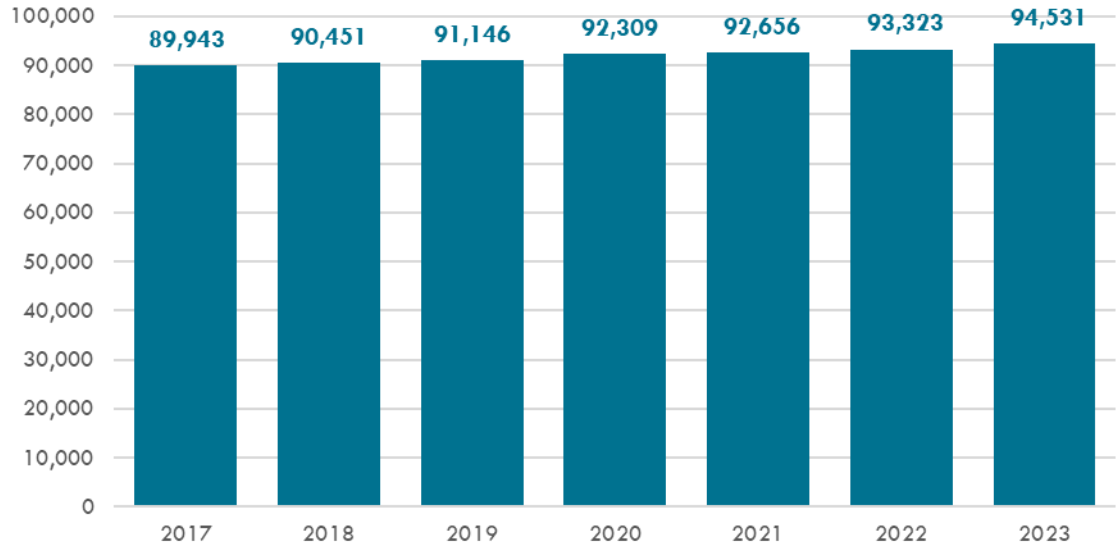
Datapoint	Source
Cost Burden	CHAS 2016-2020
Permit data	City of Tacoma
Housing Stock	OFM for numbers, ACS for detail categories (% for types), City of Tacoma data for ADUs
Demographics	ACS 5-year estimates, 2021
Home Prices	Zillow for home values and rents
Income	WSHFC reports for Pierce County for the area-wide median household income and income bands associated with “low-income” categories

1 INVENTORY

1.1 Housing Stock

Tacoma has 94,531 housing units.[1] Since 2017, Tacoma's base years for tracking its housing targets, the housing stock has increased by 4,588 units, reflecting an annual growth rate of 0.8%. Tacoma's 2017-2050 target for housing is to add 59,052 units which reflects an annual growth rate of 1.5% across the time period, a much faster pace of increase than experienced in these first six years. As of 2023, Tacoma needs to add a net new 54,464 housing units by 2050 to meet targets.

Exhibit 1: Tacoma Housing Units, 2017-2023



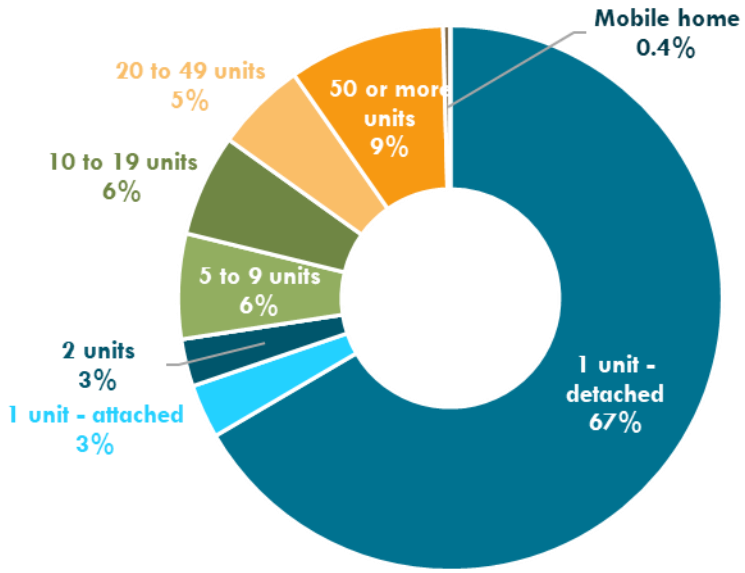
Sources: OFM, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Housing Units, by Type

Tacoma's housing stock is approximately 2/3 single family homes with the remaining 1/3 split across middle housing types and multifamily units in a range of building sizes. Specifically, 6% of units are in townhomes or duplexes, 12% are in small multifamily buildings (5-20 units), 5% are in midsized multifamily buildings (20-49 units), 9% are in lager multifamily buildings (50+ units), and less than 1% of are mobile/manufactured homes. See Exhibit 2.

[1] OFM, 2023

Exhibit 2: Tacoma Housing Units by Type, 2021.



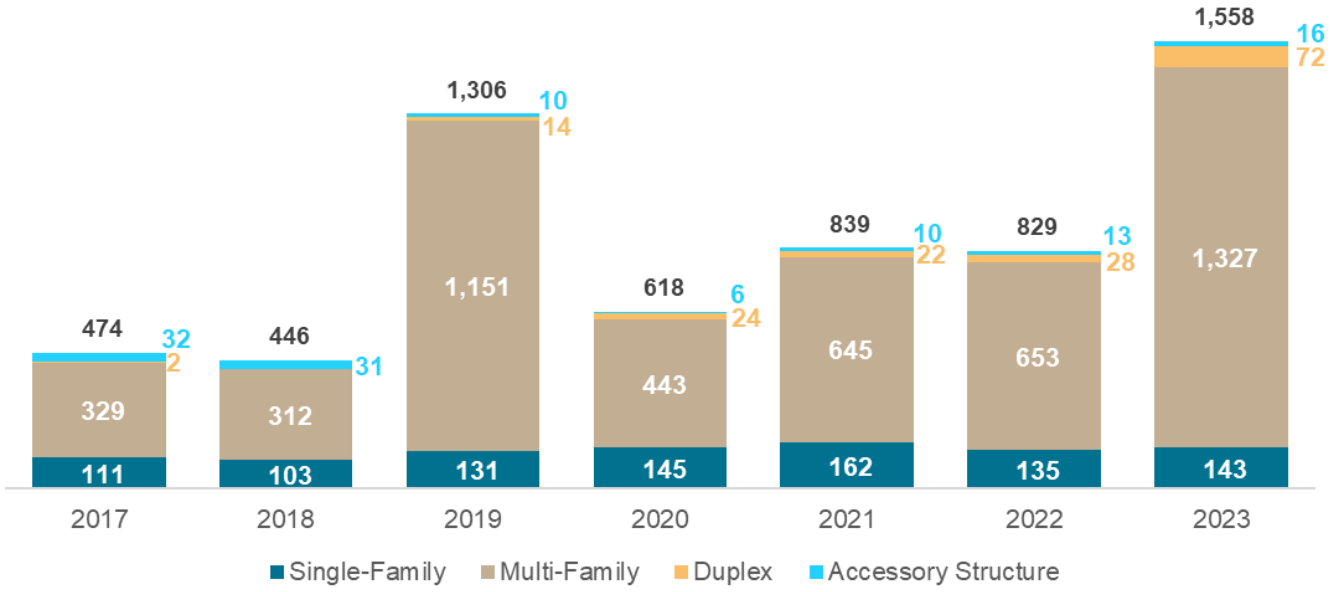
Sources: ACS 5-year estimates, 2021; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Recent trends in housing production for Tacoma lean to higher proportions of multifamily housing, which makes up 80% of units developed 2017-2023. Over this timeframe, Tacoma averaged new unit production at a rate of 867 units/year.[2] Although the City's permit data groups together middle housing types such as townhomes and multiplexes under the 'multifamily' category. Of the multifamily production, most are in buildings with 50+ units. About a quarter are in midsized multifamily buildings, and 9% of units are in smaller multifamily buildings. A summary of annual production rates 2017-2023 is provided in Exhibit 3 with detail on multifamily production in Exhibit 4. Single family homes make up 15% of new housing stock, duplexes 3%, and ADUs 2%.

Newer housing production is highest Downtown, accounting for 40% of new units produced since 2017. The West End, South End, and North End are the next neighborhoods for new unit counts, with 11% of production each. Lowest production rates are observed in North East (3%) and Central (6%) neighborhoods. See map in Exhibit 5.

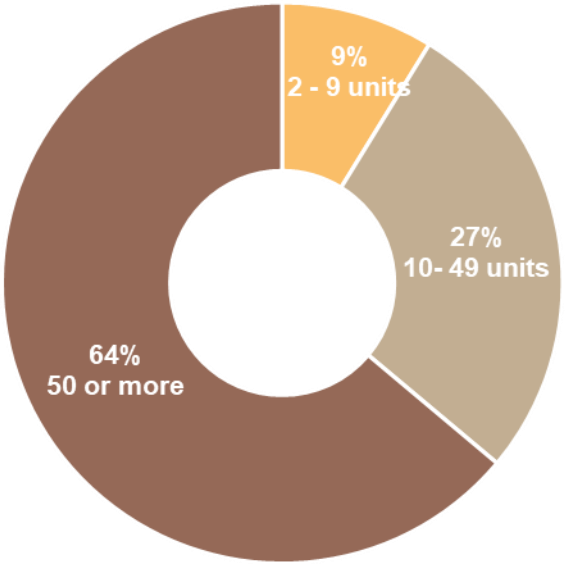
[2] The 6,070 units added 2017-2023 (867 average annual) comes from permit data. This figure differs from the OFM net units added over the same time period, quoted above at 4,588, which takes into account demolitions over the time frame and works from a slightly different reporting period for annual estimates.

Exhibit 3: Housing Production in Tacoma by Type, 2017-2023.



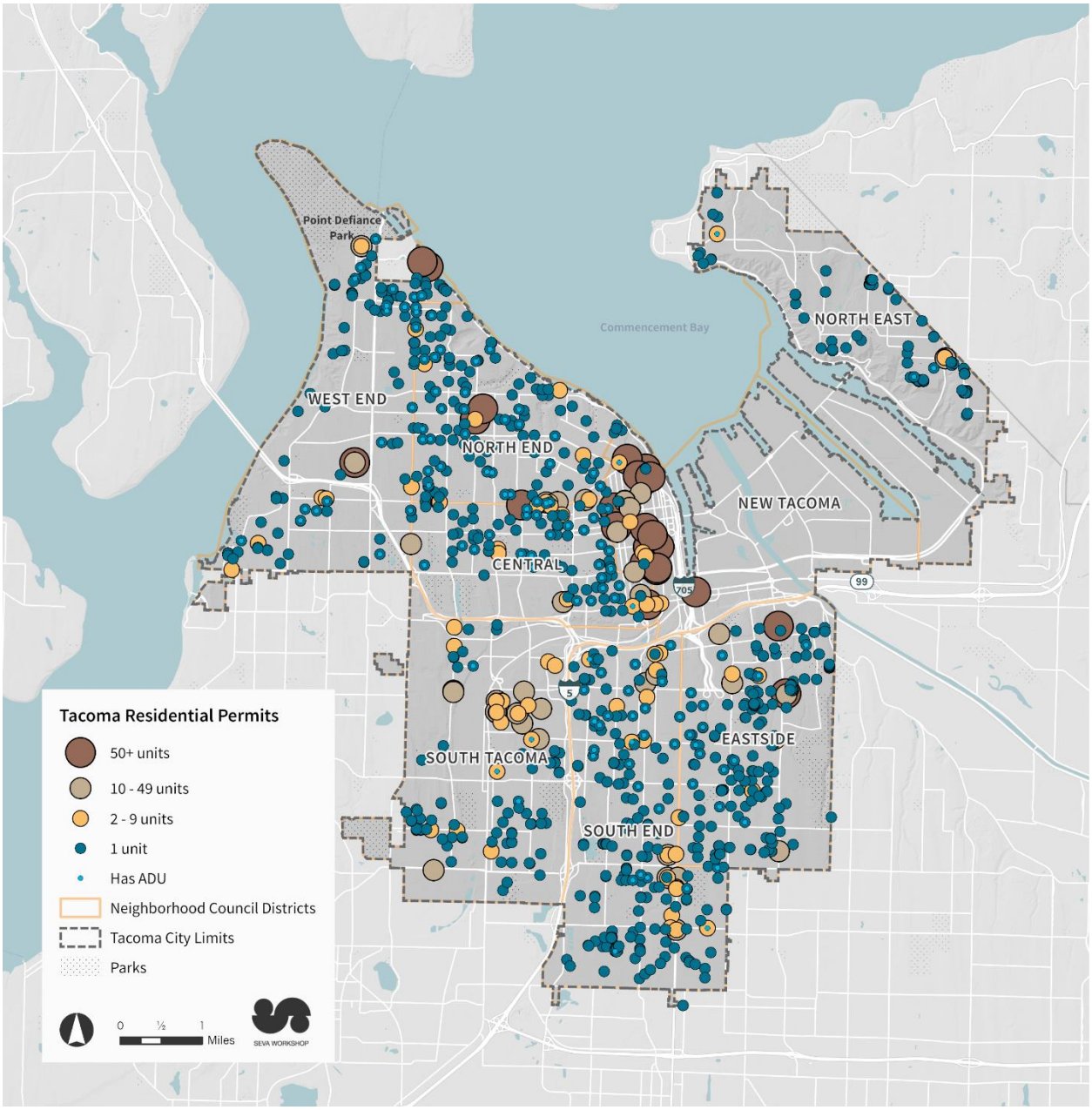
Note: City permit data for production does not take into account demolitions and works in a different annual data collection cycle than OFM. OFM estimates should be used for tracking total housing stock estimates.
Sources: City of Tacoma Permit data, 2017-2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 4: Multifamily Units by Size of Building, New Production in Tacoma 2017-2023.



Sources: City of Tacoma Permit data, 2017-2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 5: Map of Tacoma Residential Permits, 2017-2023.



Source: Tacoma Permit Data, 2017-2023.

Accessory Dwelling Units

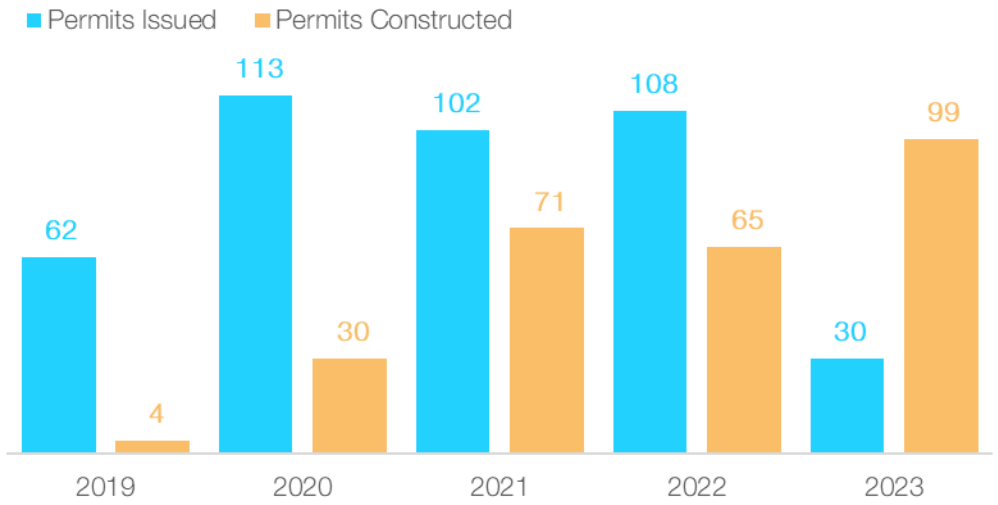
Accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, are an important component to a community's housing stock. They offer flexibility for homeowners to live multi-generationally or with caregiving support, to supplement income by renting the additional unit, and to meet a variety of other personal and familial needs. ADUs that become rental units are often priced at affordable

rates and may offer access to new neighborhoods that are predominantly occupied by homeowners.

ADUs are permitted across residential districts in Tacoma. Attached and detached ADUs are permitted on any lot, provided that site standards for size, setback, open space, and other requirements are met. The size of ADUs is limited to 1,000 SF or 85% of the area of the main building, whichever is smaller. The maximum height of structures is 18' or 20' if parking is incorporated.[3]

From 2019-2023, 421 ADU permits were issued and 269 ADUs were reported as constructed in Tacoma. See Exhibit 6. ADU policies in Tacoma were revamped in 2019 and subsequently amended in 2021 to make it easier and more affordable for homeowners to add these units to their property. ADU production is on the rise and the City is working to make the process as streamlined as possible. Still, the capital investment needed to create these units can be prohibitive and not all residential lots are a good fit for this use. ADUs represent one component in the larger picture of providing housing options that meet the needs and affordability levels of a diverse community.

Exhibit 6: Accessory Dwelling Units Permitted and Constructed in Tacoma, 2019-2023.



Sources: City of Tacoma Permit Data, 2019-2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

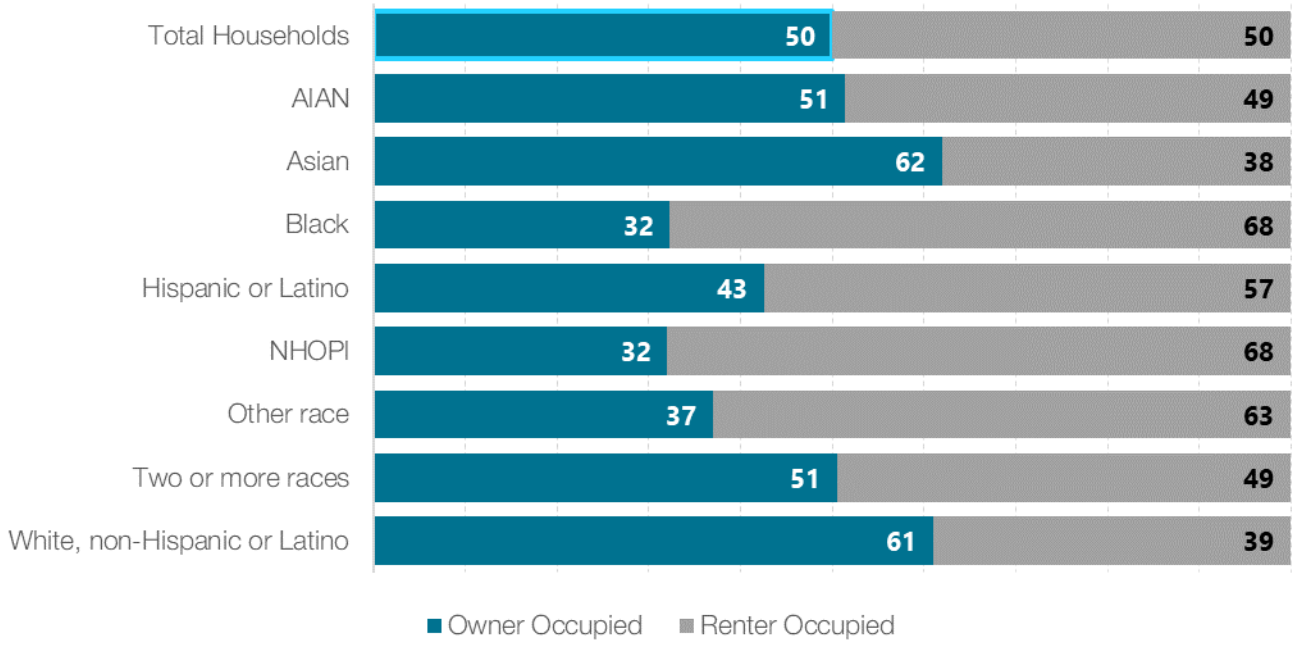
Housing Tenure

Overall in Tacoma, 50% of households are owners and 50% of households are renters. Patterns of racial disparity are observed in Tacoma's homeownership rates, with lowest rates of ownership among Black (32%), Pacific Islander (32%), "Other" (37%), and Hispanic (43%)

[3] TMC 13.06.080.A. This was

groups. Highest rates, by contrast, are found among Asian (62%) and White (61%) households. See Exhibit 7. In 2021, the City of Tacoma completed an in-depth study into its racial disparities related to housing. This report notes the decline in Black homeownership during the 30-year period from 1990-2020, while all other racial groups experienced increased or stable rates. It also analyzes lending data that demonstrates low rates of mortgage loan approvals for Black applicants.[4] Homeownership rates are important, as this is the most common avenue toward wealth building for American households.

Exhibit 7: Tacoma Housing Tenure by Race and Ethnicity (Shown as %), 2021.



Note: AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Hispanic or Latine is an ethnicity. The Hispanic or Latino category includes Hispanic and Latine people of all races. All other categories show non-Hispanic races.
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates; Seva Workshop, 2024.

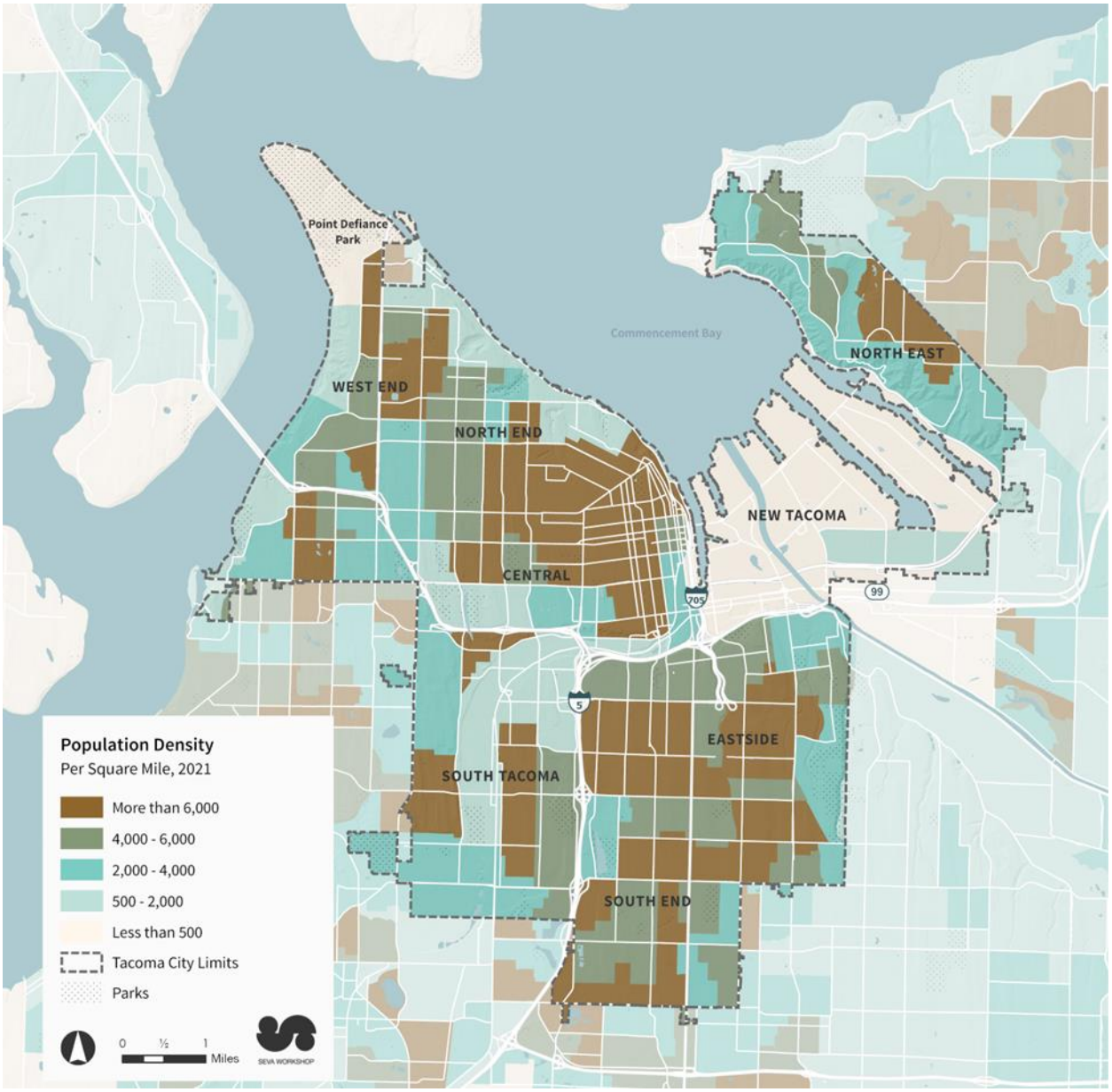
Geographic Distribution

Tacoma's residential centers are distributed across the city, as shown in Exhibit 8. Central Tacoma, Eastside, and South End have the greatest land areas with higher population density, more than 6,000 people per square mile. The neighborhoods of West End, South Tacoma, and North East are less densely populated though every neighborhood except for New

[4] ECONorthwest and BDS Planning, *Analysis of Systemic Disparities in Achievable Housing Options,* 2021. https://www.cityoftacoma.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/cms/CBCFiles/Tacoma%20Housing%20Disparities%20Report_2021.pdf

Tacoma has at least one densely populated area. Incorporated areas surrounding Tacoma to the northeast, south, and west demonstrate similar patterns.

Exhibit 8: Tacoma Population Density, 2021.



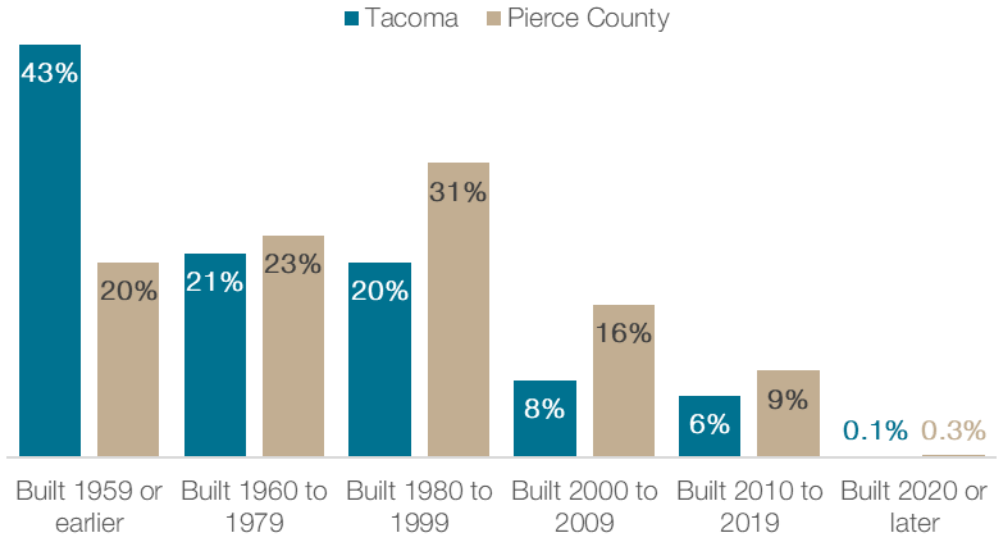
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017 to 2021).

Building Age

Tacoma's housing stock skews older, with 43% of structures built prior to 1960. Production rates in Tacoma slowed in the 2000s - less than 15% of units have been built 2000

or later. By contrast, Pierce County overall has only 20% of its housing stock built prior to 1960 and 25% of units have been built 2000 or later.

Exhibit 9: Tacoma and Pierce County Housing Stock by Building Age, 2021.



Sources: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017 to 2021); Seva Workshop, 2024.

HOMES THAT NEED REPAIRS

ACS reports on housing issues such as homes lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities. In Tacoma, approximately 415 housing units (0.5%) are identified as having incomplete plumbing facilities. Most of these are rental units. About twice this rate, 950 housing units (1.1%) are reported as lacking complete kitchen facilities.[5]

Tacoma's Home Rehabilitation Program addresses a wider range of home repair issues, such as: roof replacement, exterior/interior painting, window replacement, carpet and flooring replacement, heating and air system replacement, electrical work, sewer repair or installation, termite and pest repair, repairing or replacing concrete (such as sidewalks, driveways, or ADA ramps), door and window screen replacement, or foundation/structural repairs. From 2019 – 2024, 66 major ($15-60k) renovations and 204 minor (<$15k) renovations were completed through this program. Homeowners are provided low interest loans to cover the cost of the needed repairs and households at or below 50% of AMI can repay the funds with no interest.[6]

[5] ACS B2516 and B25052 5-year estimates, 2021

[6] City of Tacoma Home Rehabilitation Program

Units for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) establishes thresholds for income groups at the household level. These brackets are relative to the area's median income and establish eligibility for income-restricted affordable housing units. The categories used for their data reporting are:

- Moderate Income: Between 80 – 100% of the area median income
- Low Income: Between 50 – 80% of the area median income
- Very Low-Income: Between 30 – 50% of the area median income
- Extremely Low-Income: Less than 30% of the area median income

AMI = Area Median Income. Different programs scale their "area median" based on different geographies. HUD uses a specific "HUD Area Median Family Income" (HAMFI) to set their income ranges, scaled with household size. In Tacoma for 2024, for example:

100% AMI is $112,300 (family of 4)

80% AMI is $92,650

50% AMI is $57,900

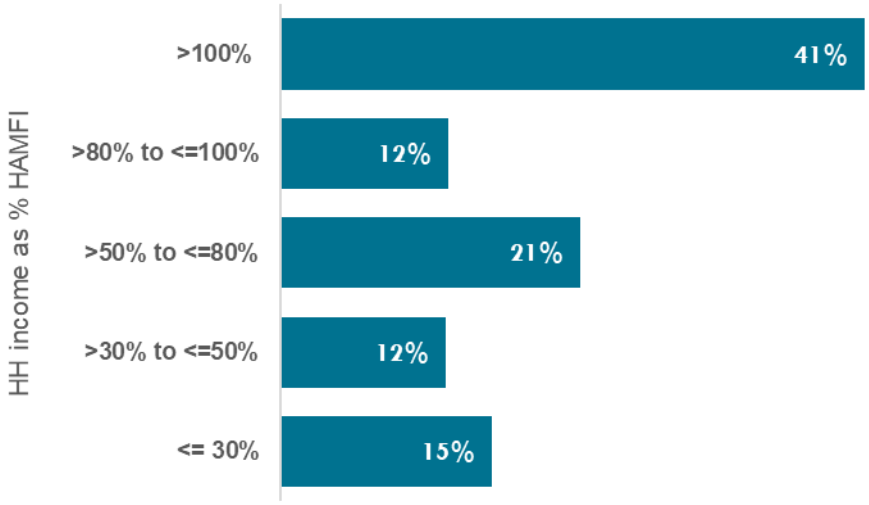
30% AMI is $34,750

HUD Income Limits 2024

Household Income Brackets

Tacoma households skew lower income when compared to the region – 59% are at or below the area median income. Using the income groups described above, 12% of Tacoma households are moderate income, 21% are low-income, 12% are very low-income, and 15% are extremely low-income. See Exhibit 10. These designations are based around the HUD-defined area median income (HAMFI), which is calculated at a regional scale. A table summarizing the incomes assigned to each category for the most recent year available, 2024, can be found in When determining eligibility for income-restricted affordable housing units, household size is taken into consideration.

Exhibit 10: Households by Income Bracket, Tacoma, 2020.



Source: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020; Seva Workshop, 2024.
Error! Not a valid link. Sources: Washington State Housing Finance Commission, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

The table in Exhibit 11 describes housing types in Tacoma that are most likely to fall within the affordability range of each group, based on the incomes described above. An analysis of the existing housing stock then counts the units in Tacoma that could be a fit for households in each category without incurring housing cost burden.

Exhibit 11: Matching Housing Types with Income Brackets

Household Income Bracket	Housing Types Likely to be Affordable for This Group	Count of Housing Units in Tacoma
<= 30% HAMFI	Income-restricted affordable housing, transitional housing units, permanent supportive housing	**4,155** 2,900 income-restricted affordable housing units; 137 permanent supportive housing units; 1,118 emergency housing units
>30% to <=50% HAMFI	Income-restricted affordable housing, some rental units in older buildings	**4,195** 4,195 rental units (some income-restricted)
>50% to <=80% HAMFI	Income-restricted affordable housing, Older multifamily or middle housing rentals, Mobile homes	**16,146** 15,790 affordable rental units (some income-restricted) 356 mobile homes
>80% to <=100% HAMFI	Multifamily rental, Middle housing types (ownership)	**8,270** 7,230 affordable rental units; 1,040 middle housing owner units
>100% to <=120% HAMFI	Multifamily rental, ownership opportunities for smaller and/or older homes	**17,067** 2,013 affordable rental units; 1,371 ownership units

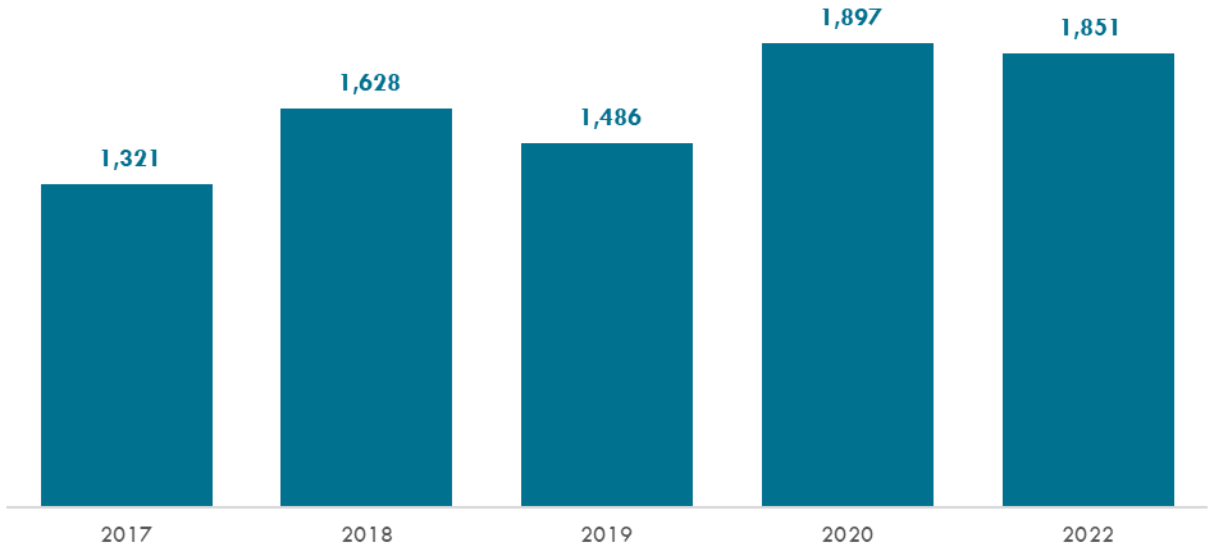
>120% HAMFI	All products	**40,813** 8,052 affordable rental units; 32,761 ownership units;

Notes: Middle housing ownership units calculated as ownership units in 1-unit attached housing through structures less than 20 units; Split between 80 – 100% HAMFI and 100-120% HAMFI. Multifamily ownership in buildings 20-49 units added to 100-120% HAMFI and ownership units in 50+ buildings added to >120% HAMFI. Affordable rental units for >100% HAMFI split between 100-120% and >120% HAMFI 20/80. Single family homes split between these two groups at a 30/70 rate to reflect older housing stock of Tacoma homes.
Sources: HUD CHAS Table 18C, 2016-2020 for counts of affordable rental units; ACS B25032 5-year estimates, 2017-2021 for ownership units and mobile homes; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing

In 2017, the City of Tacoma declared homelessness a public health emergency. The count of people experiencing homelessness in the region has continued to rise since then – an estimated 40% increase from 2017-2022 in Pierce County. The count of people experiencing homelessness in Pierce County in 2022 was 1,851.[7] The existing supply of emergency housing, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing in Tacoma is estimated at 1,362 in 2022.[8] This includes 1,225 shelter beds and 137 units of permanent supportive housing. The City hopes to transition many of its shelter beds into longer-term forms of housing support such as permanent supportive housing and affordable housing units.

Exhibit 12: Homelessness Counts in Pierce County, 2017-2022.



[7] Point-in-Time Counts

[8] Tacoma Homelessness Strategy, 2022.

Note: The PIT count for 2021 was not conducted, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Sources: Washington Department of Commerce PIT Counts, 2017-2022; Seva Workshop, 2024.

1.2 Affordability

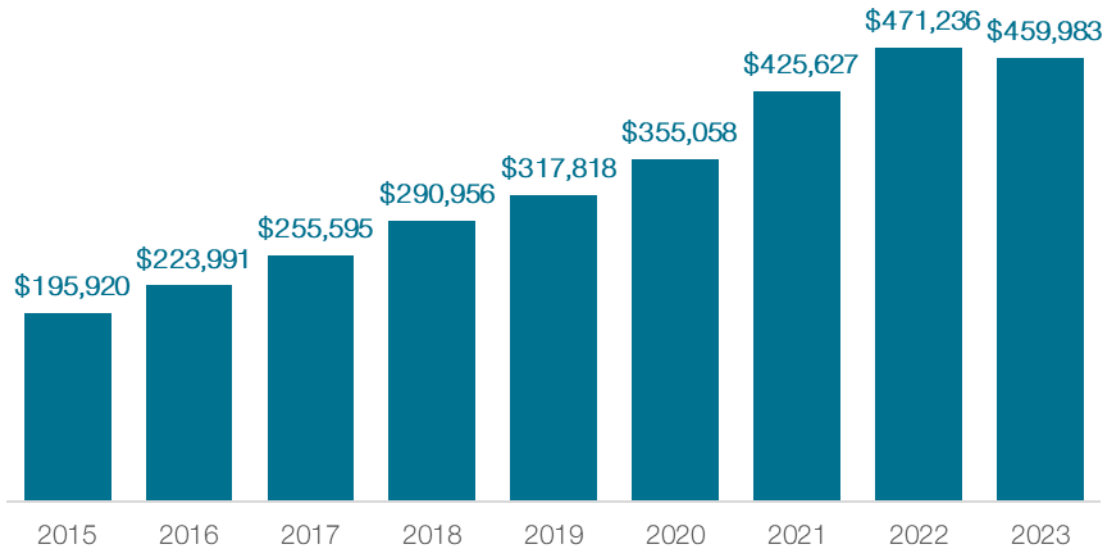
Housing costs in Tacoma have risen dramatically in the past decade, leading to affordability challenges across almost all segments of the market. In recent years, homeownership affordability has become increasingly strained, being reserved for an increasingly exclusive segment of Tacoma's society.

Ownership Housing

Homeownership is becoming increasingly out of reach for moderate income households in Tacoma. The average home price in Tacoma in 2023 was $460,000, a 58% increase from 5-years prior (2018). See Exhibit 13. Over the same timeframe, mortgage lending rates increased by 50%, from an average of 4.5% to 6.8%.[9] This combination of factors dramatically increases the cost to purchase a new home, particularly for a first-time homebuyer. Using estimates for average home prices, typical 30-year mortgage lending rates, and expected costs such as property taxes and homeowners insurance, the mortgage on an average home in 2023 is affordable to households at 126% AMI – just out of reach for households in the moderate income band. Using a consistent set of assumptions, in 2018 the mortgage for an average priced home was affordable to households at 103% AMI.

[9] Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis 30-Year Fixed Rate Mortgage Averages, 2018 & 2023.

Exhibit 13: Tacoma Average Home Prices, Annual Change (%), 2015-2023.



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Annual Change (%)	14.3%	14.1%	13.8%	9.2%	11.7%	19.9%	10.7%	-2.4%

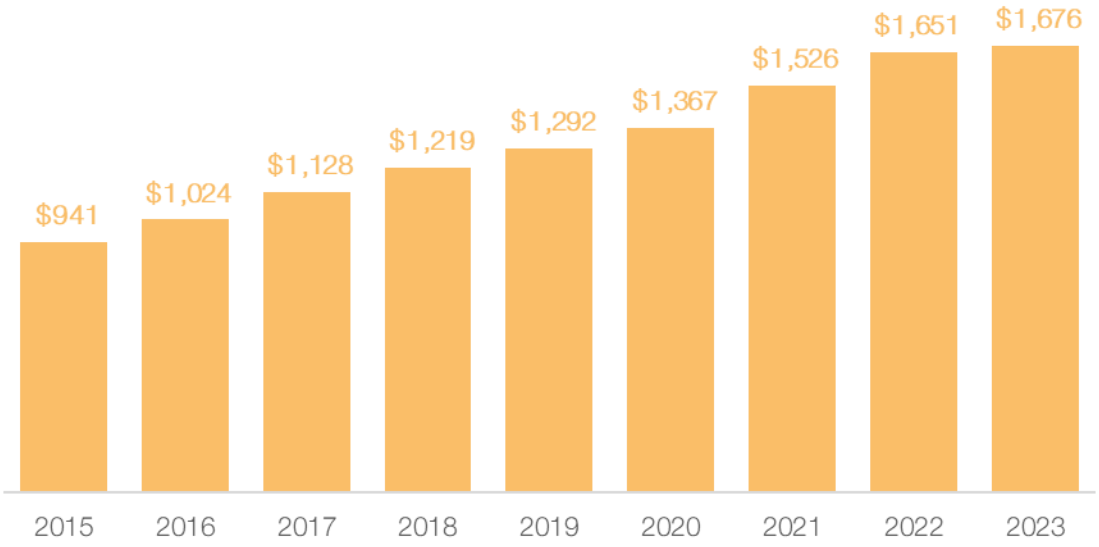
Sources: Zillow Home Value Index, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Rental Housing

Average rent in Tacoma is affordable for households at 60% AMI. The average rent in Tacoma is $1,676 per month, an increase of 78% since 2015. See Exhibit 14. This analysis, however, does not account for the size of the rental unit which may not align with the household size. Rents vary widely depending on unit condition, size, and location. For example, in a “high market area” for Tacoma, rents are estimated anywhere from $1,500 to $2,890 a month depending on unit type. This range spans affordability for households at 60% AMI to 100% AMI.[10]

[10] HIT Feasibility Analysis Memo, 2024.

Exhibit 14: Average Rents in Tacoma, 2015-2023.



	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Annual Change (%)	8.9%	10.1%	8.0%	6.0%	5.8%	11.7%	8.2%	1.5%

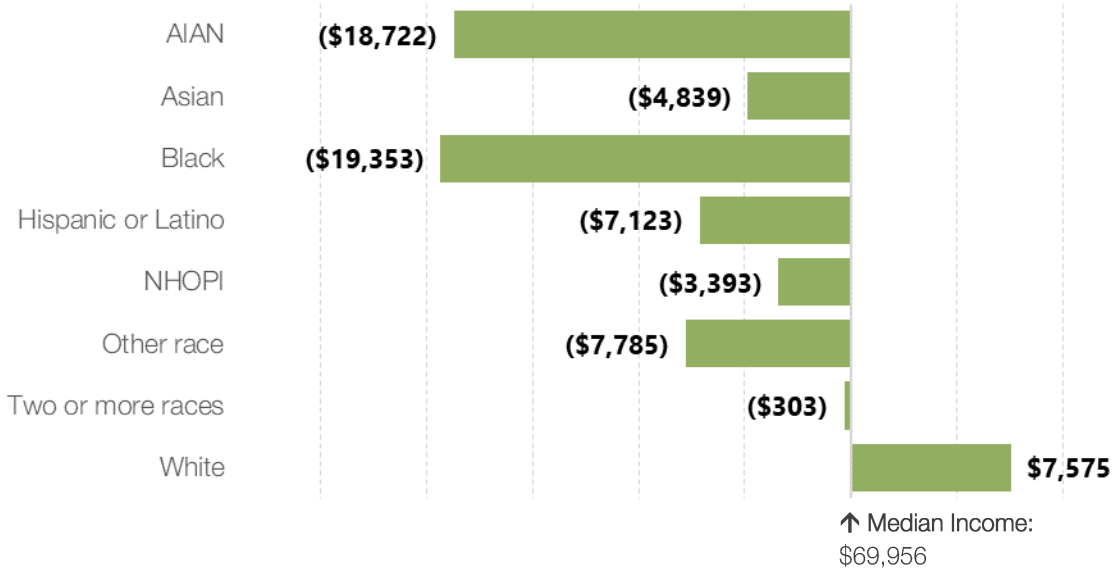
Sources: Zillow Observed Rent Index, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Household Incomes

Tacoma's overall median household income in 2021 was $69,956, a 42% increase from the overall median household income in 2011, which was $49,232. There are wide disparities for median household income when comparing by race and ethnicity, as shown in Exhibit 15. White households have a higher median household income at $77,531. Black and AIAN households have the lowest incomes with medians at $50,603 and $51,234, respectively. All other BIPOC groups also have median household incomes below the citywide median. This median household income falls well below the Pierce County median income in 2021, estimated at $82,574 or the HUD-area median income at $91,100.

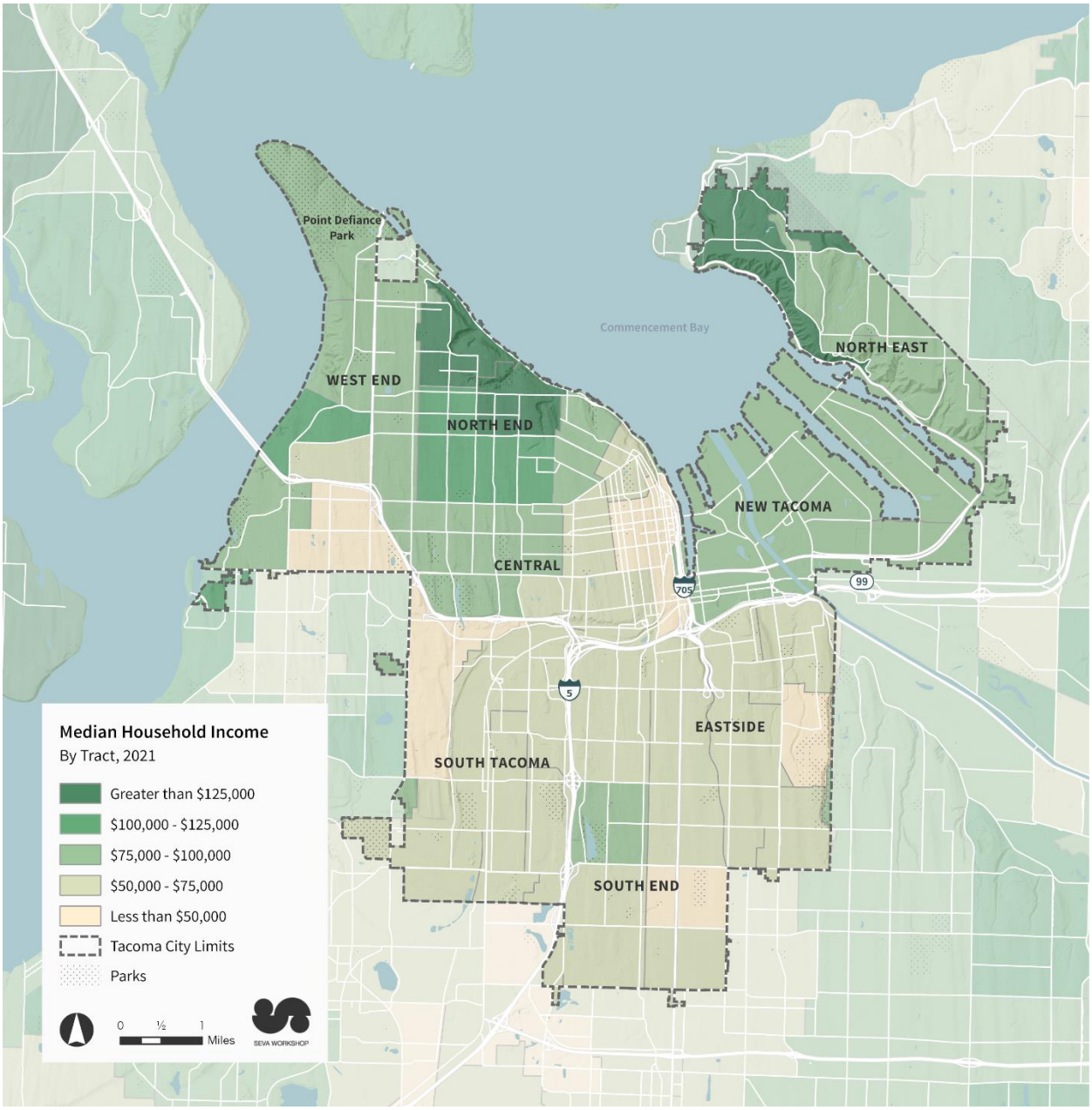
In Tacoma, incomes are higher in areas around the North End, West End, and Northeast Tacoma. Incomes are lowest in South Tacoma, the South End, and the Eastside. These geographic trends are visualized in the map in Exhibit 16.

Exhibit 15: Median Household Income by Race & Ethnicity, 2021.



Note: Exhibits per group are compared to the overall median income.
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021); Seva Workshop, 2023.

Exhibit 16: Median Household Income by Census Tract in Tacoma, 2021



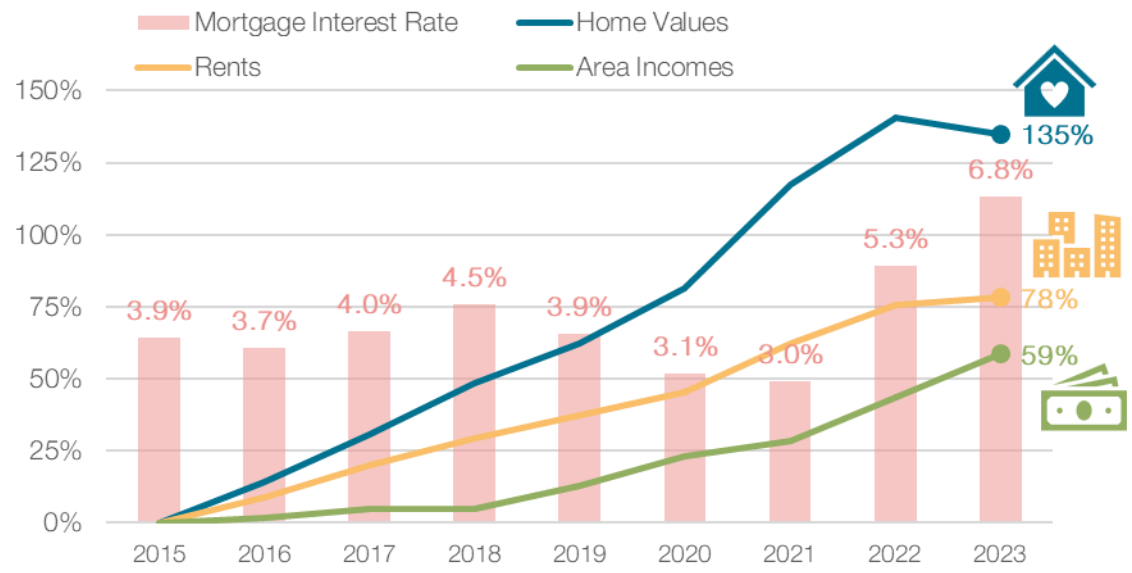
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021).

Affordability

Housing affordability is an increasing challenge in Tacoma, particularly for ownership housing. As shown in Exhibit 17, the cost of ownership housing has increased at more than double the rate of median area incomes since 2015, 135% and 59% respectively. Rents increased 78%. These disparities shown a decline in affordability for both rental and ownership housing in Tacoma, but most dramatically for ownership units. Rates of increase for ownership housing spiked, in particular, from 2019-2022. A slight cooldown was observed from 2022-2023.

First-time homebuyers are particularly hard-hit by the combined factors of increasing housing costs and mortgage lending rates. The average fixed-rate 30-year mortgage lending rate in the US was at a low of 2.96% in 2021 but jumped to 5.34% in 2022 and 6.81% in 2023. Higher interest rates have a big impact on monthly housing costs, particularly for first time homebuyers who cannot leverage established equity from previous purchases for a higher down payment amount. In 2022, 56% of Tacoma mortgages were given to first-time homebuyers. The demographics of these homebuyers demonstrate a skew toward White and Asian households and a proportionate underrepresentation of Black and Pacific Islander buyers. See Exhibit 18.

Exhibit 17: Housing Cost and Income Increases as a % Change from 2015 in Tacoma, Average Annual Mortgage Lending Rates 2015-2023.



Sources: Zillow Home Value Index and Observed Rent Index, Downloaded April 2024; WSHFC Area Median Income, 2015-2023; St Louis FED Mortgage Interest Rates, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 18: First-time Homebuyers in Tacoma by Race & Ethnicity, 2022.

	First-time homebuyers by race/ethnicity	All households by race/ethnicity	Delta
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	2%	-1%
Asian	11%	7%	4%
Black or African American	6%	10%	-4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	3%	-3%
White	72%	68%	4%
Multi-race household	10%	9%	1%
Hispanic or Latino	14%	12%	2%
Not Hispanic or Latino	86%	88%	-2%

Sources: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Public Use Database (PUDB) - Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, 2022 Single-Family Census Tract File; Seva Workshop, 2024.

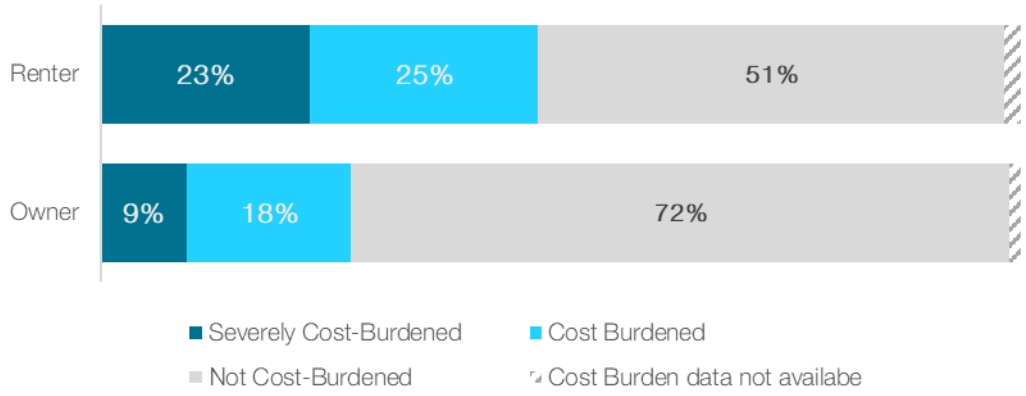
Cost Burden

Households that pay 30% or more of their income toward housing are considered cost-burdened. These households may struggle to cover other essential household expenses, such as transportation or healthcare. Households that pay 50% or more of their income towards housing are considered extremely cost-burdened.

Renters in Tacoma are much more likely than homeowners to experience housing cost burden. Forty-eight percent (48%) of renters experienced housing cost burden in 2020, along with 27% of homeowners. See Exhibit 19. When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the highest rates of renter cost burden are observed among “Other” households (56%), Black households (54%), Pacific Islander households (51%), and Hispanic households (49%). These rates are shown in Exhibit 20.

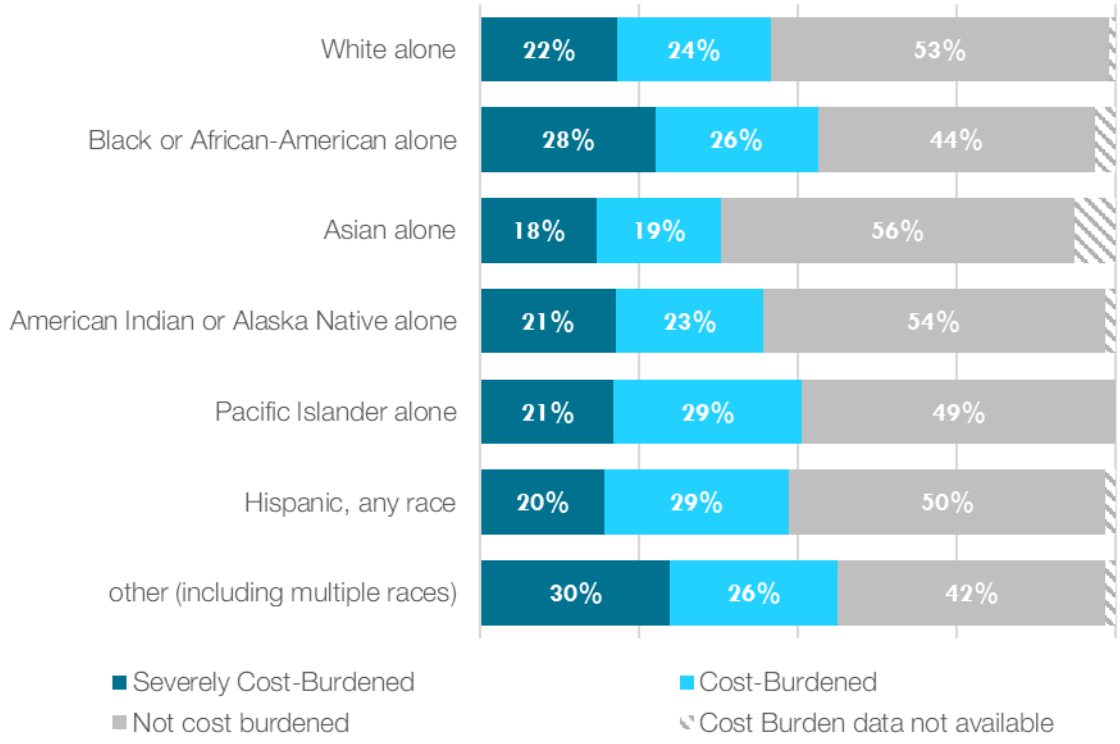
Cost burden rates are particularly high (over 65%) in areas across the city, but are most concentrated in Central, South Tacoma, and the South End. The map in Exhibit 21 explores the geographic distribution of these trends. The detailed table in Exhibit 22 further dives into the geographic distribution of renter cost-burden and disaggregates neighborhood rates by race/ethnicity. Demographic groups differ in location of renter cost burden concentration. For example, Black households have the highest rates in North East, South Tacoma, and the West End. Asian households have relatively lower rates of rental cost burden across most of Tacoma, but a concentration of cost-burdened Asian renters live in the North End. Hispanic renters are most cost-burdened in Central, Eastside, and South Tacoma neighborhoods.

Exhibit 19: Percent of Households Cost Burdened by Tenure, 2020.



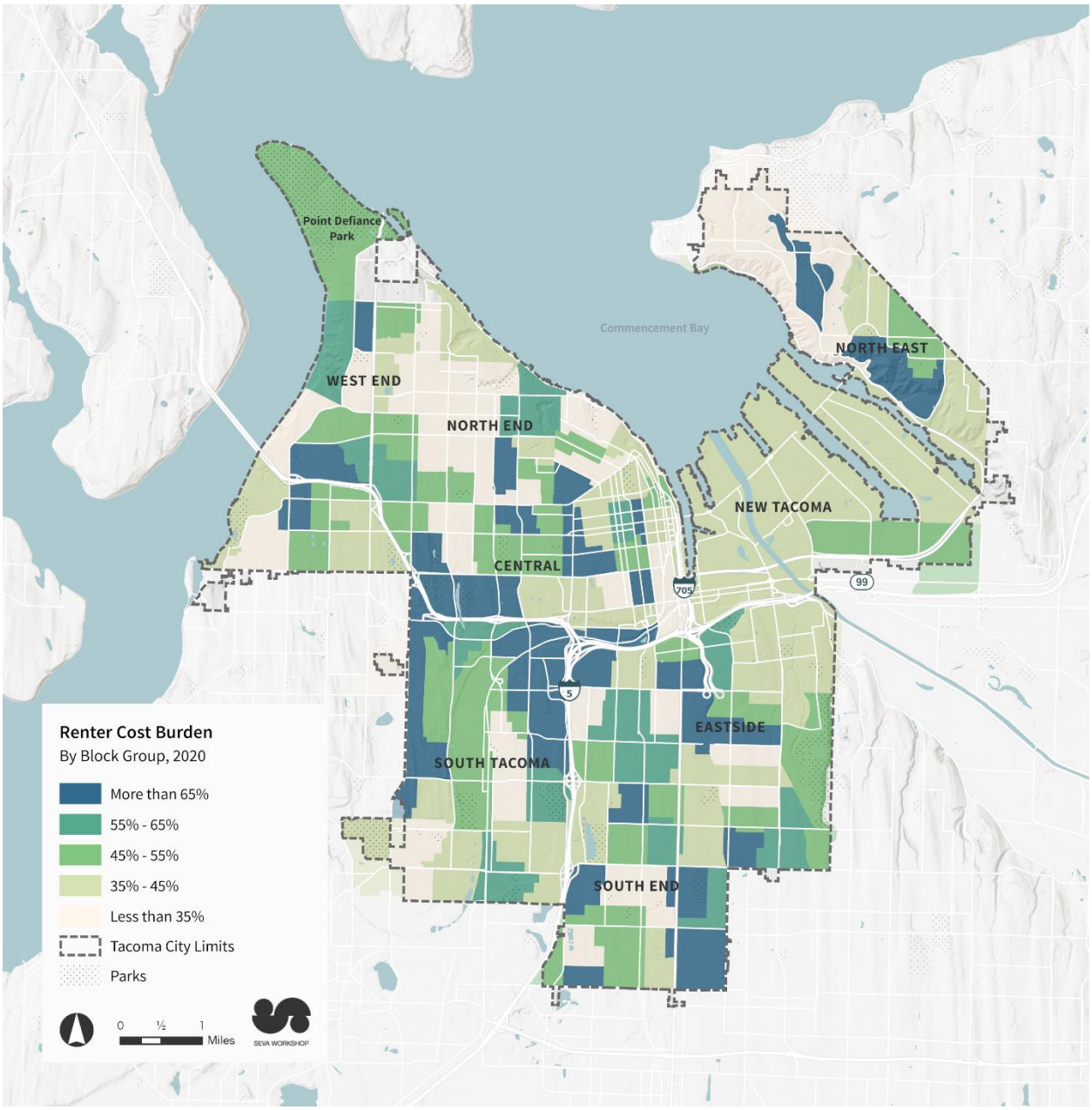
Note: Cost-Burdened households spend between 30-50% of income toward housing. Severely cost-burdened households spend more than 50% of gross income for housing.
Sources: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 20: Renter Households Cost Burdened in Tacoma (%), by Race & Ethnicity, 2020.



Note: Cost-Burdened households spend between 30-50% of income toward housing. Severely cost-burdened households spend more than 50% of gross income for housing.
Sources: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 21: Distribution of Renter Cost Burdened-Households in Tacoma, as a % of Block Group Population, 2020



Source: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020.

Exhibit 22: Renter Cost Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Neighborhood in Tacoma, 2020.

	Central	Eastside	New Tacoma	North East	North End	South End	South Tacoma	West End
White alone, non-Hispanic	52%	51%	40%	43%	32%	49%	51%	43%
Black or African-American alone, non-Hispanic	51%	52%	41%	58%	20%	52%	57%	62%
Asian alone, non-Hispanic	47%	38%	42%	40%	85%	36%	39%	24%
AIAN, non-Hispanic	*n/a*	34%	67%	38%	*n/a*	72%	45%	24%
Pacific Islander alone, non-Hispanic	87%	40%	75%	71%	*n/a*	54%	71%	*n/a*
Hispanic, any race	59%	63%	40%	32%	17%	48%	55%	31%
Other (including multiple races, non-Hispanic)	47%	39%	49%	67%	44%	56%	64%	66%

55 - 65% Cost Burden Rate
Over 65% Cost Burden Rate

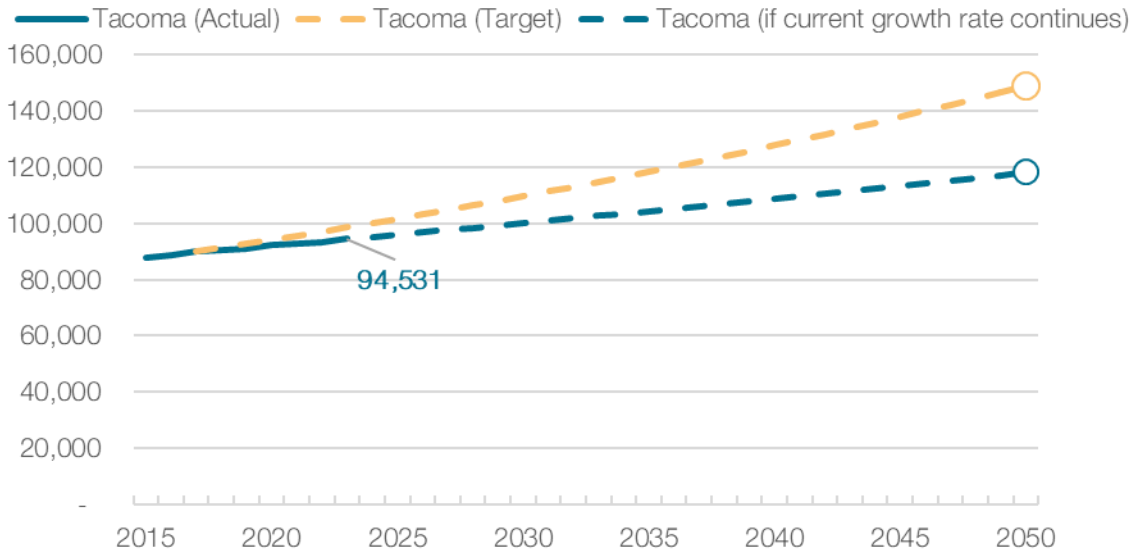
AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native.
Note: Green highlighting indicates a rate >55% and blue highlighting indicates a rate >65%. Margins of error will be higher for groups with smaller sample sizes.
Sources: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2016-2020; Seva Workshop, 2024.

2 PROJECTED HOUSING NEED

2.1 Growth targets

Tacoma's growth target for 2017-2050 is to add 137,000 people or 59,052 housing units. So far, 4,588 units have been added to the City's housing stock (2017-2023) which leaves a remaining 54,464 unit gap. The annual growth rate needed to achieve the 2017-2050 target is 1.5%. The achieved annual growth rate for the 2017-2023 period is 0.8%. The pace of production will need to increase in future years to align with this vision for growth in Tacoma.

Exhibit 23: Tacoma Housing Units, Actual and Target 2015-2050.



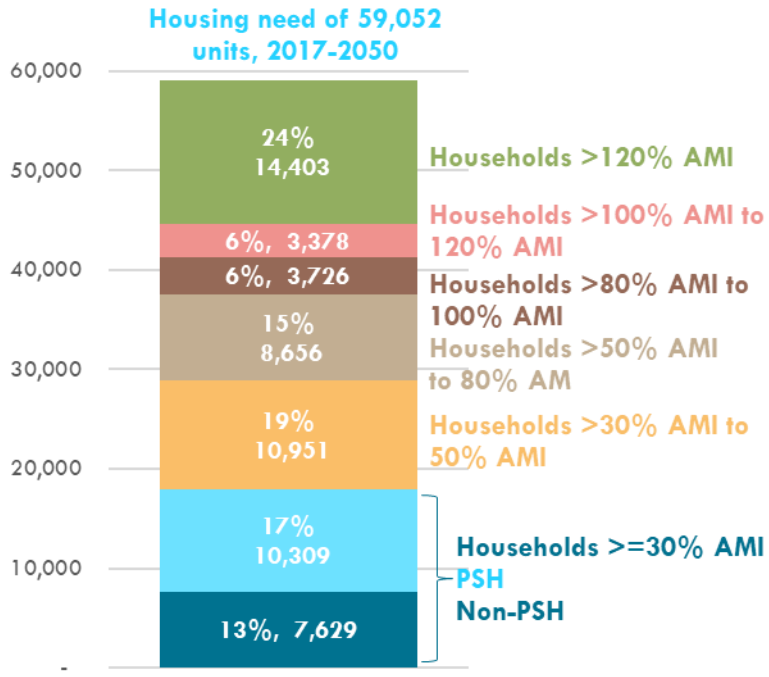
As of 2023, there is a gap of **54,464 housing units to fill by 2050** to achieve regional growth targets in Tacoma.

Sources: OFM Housing Units, 2015-2023; PSRC Housing Target for 2017-2050; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Distribution of targets across income brackets

Tacoma strives to meet its growth targets equitably, which means that new housing units should accommodate households across the income spectrum. The Department of Commerce has outlined a methodology for projecting housing need by income bands that takes into account a full spectrum of needs at the countywide scale. Pierce County has taken this methodology and assigned targets to each of its jurisdictions, both totals and allocations by income bracket. This summary takes Pierce County's 2020-2044 allocations for Tacoma and applies the distribution across income bands to the 2017-2050 housing target of 59,052 units. See Exhibit 24.

Exhibit 24: Housing Units Needed by Income Bracket in Tacoma, 2017-2050.



The production of 59,052 units is needed in Tacoma by 2050. 30% of this is at the lowest affordability level, 34% for low- and very low-income households, and the remainder for moderate- and higher-income households. The distribution is based on Pierce County allocations and takes into account current housing needs to eliminate cost burden and homelessness, as well as the needs of future households. These production targets envision a future with no housing cost burden and no chronic homelessness in Tacoma.

Sources: Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies Appendix A, 2022; PSRC, Vision 2050; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Emergency Housing Needs

Communities also need to plan for emergency housing and emergency shelters. In implementation, the lines between these two types of accommodation can be blurred and thus for planning purposes they are calculated together as a single category. Housing types in this category must be indoors and allow access to personal hygiene facilities. It includes emergency shelters, hotel rooms, tiny home villages, and short-term apartments.

Existing supply (2020): **1,118**

Target for 2017-2050 planning period: **3,615**[11]

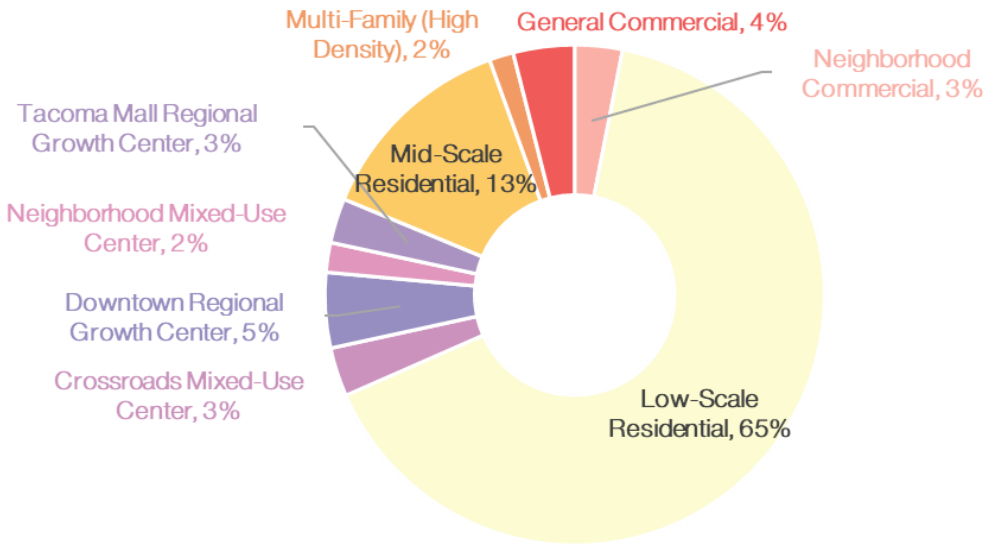
[11] Supply and targets for 2020-2044 found in Emergency Housing Needs from Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies Appendix A, 2022. Extended ratio to the 2017-2050 planning period.

3 LAND CAPACITY

3.1 Existing land capacity for housing

Tacoma has capacity for an additional 68,049 housing units across its residential zones, according to Pierce County's 2022 Buildable Lands study**.** This exceeds the housing target of an additional 59,052 units by 2050. Additionally, housing policy that is currently following the legislative process will add another 300,000 – 650,000 units of capacity to the City's residential zones, largely allocated for middle housing types.[12] This chapter details Tacoma's residential zoning districts and their capacity to meet the city's housing targets – considering a diverse set of needs to align with a diverse population.

Exhibit 25: Land Use Designations that Allow for Residential Uses, % of Total Acreage.



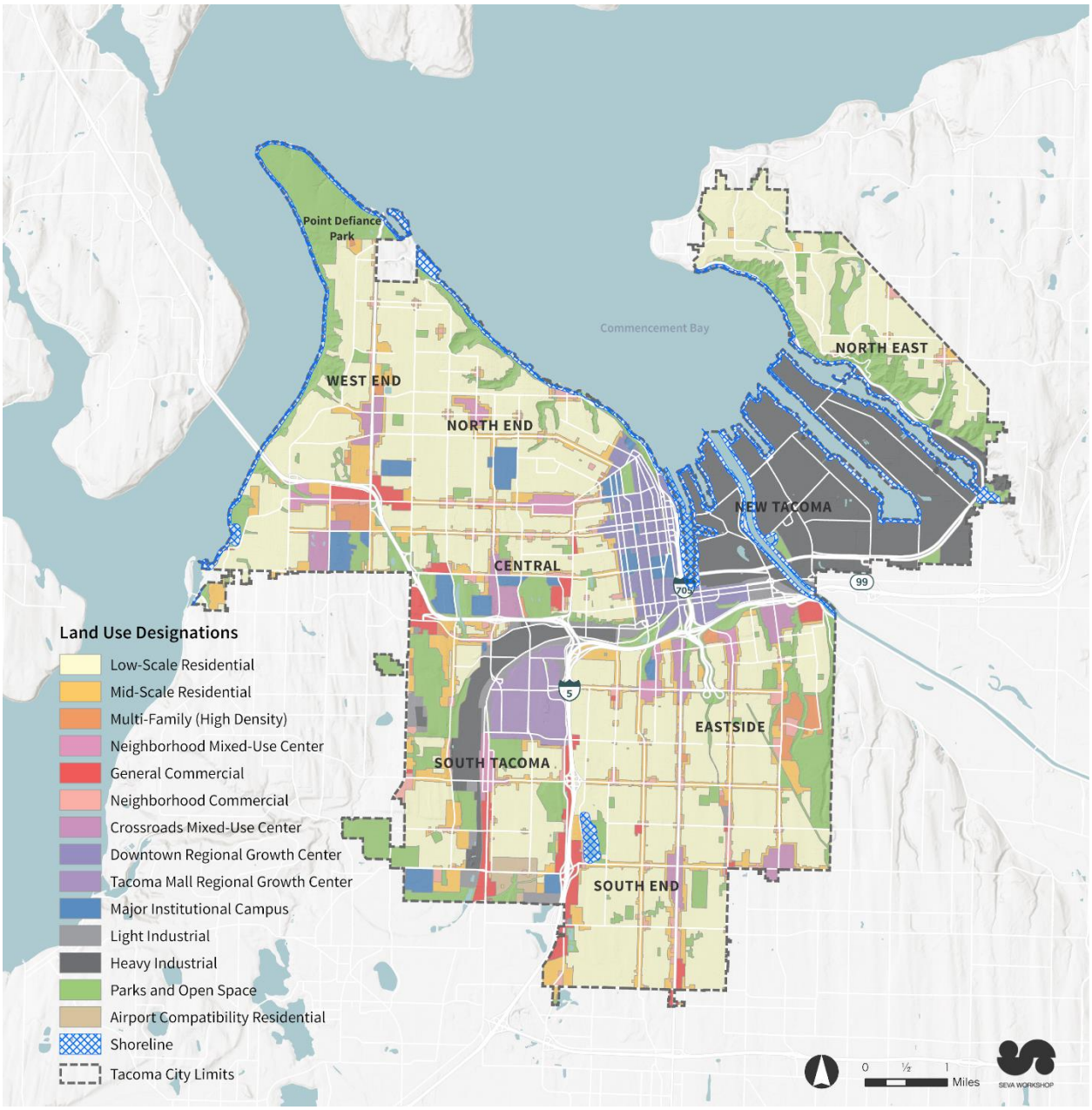
Sources: City of Tacoma; 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Tacoma's current land use framework follows a 'center and corridors' model. The largest and densest centers are the Regional Growth Centers located Downtown and at the Tacoma Mall. Mixed-Use Centers are distributed across the city and are often buffered by gradual density step-downs from multifamily zones to lower density residential blankets that cover 41% of the city's land (65% of land from areas that allow for residential uses). Tacoma currently allows residential uses in 9 of its 15 broader land use designations. Zones that do not allow for residential use are the industrial districts, parks, institutional campuses, airport areas, and

[12] Capacity range from HIT DEIS page 2-6

shorelines. The chart in Exhibit 25 shows the share of land allocated across these broader land use designations that allow for residential uses, and the map in Exhibit 26 identifies Tacoma's land use designations geographically.

Exhibit 26: City of Tacoma Land Use Designation Map, 2023.

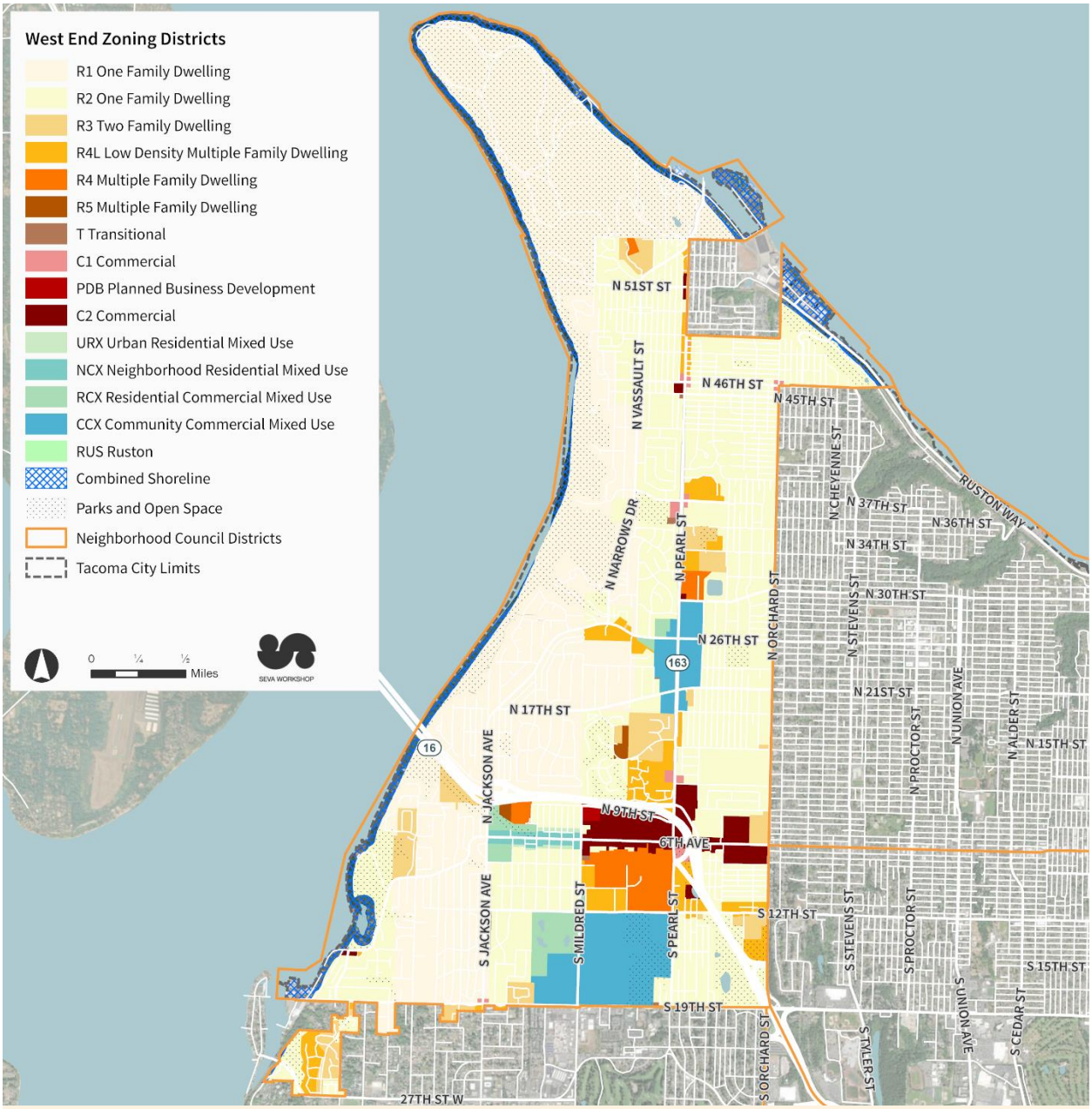


Source: City of Tacoma, 2023.

Zoning

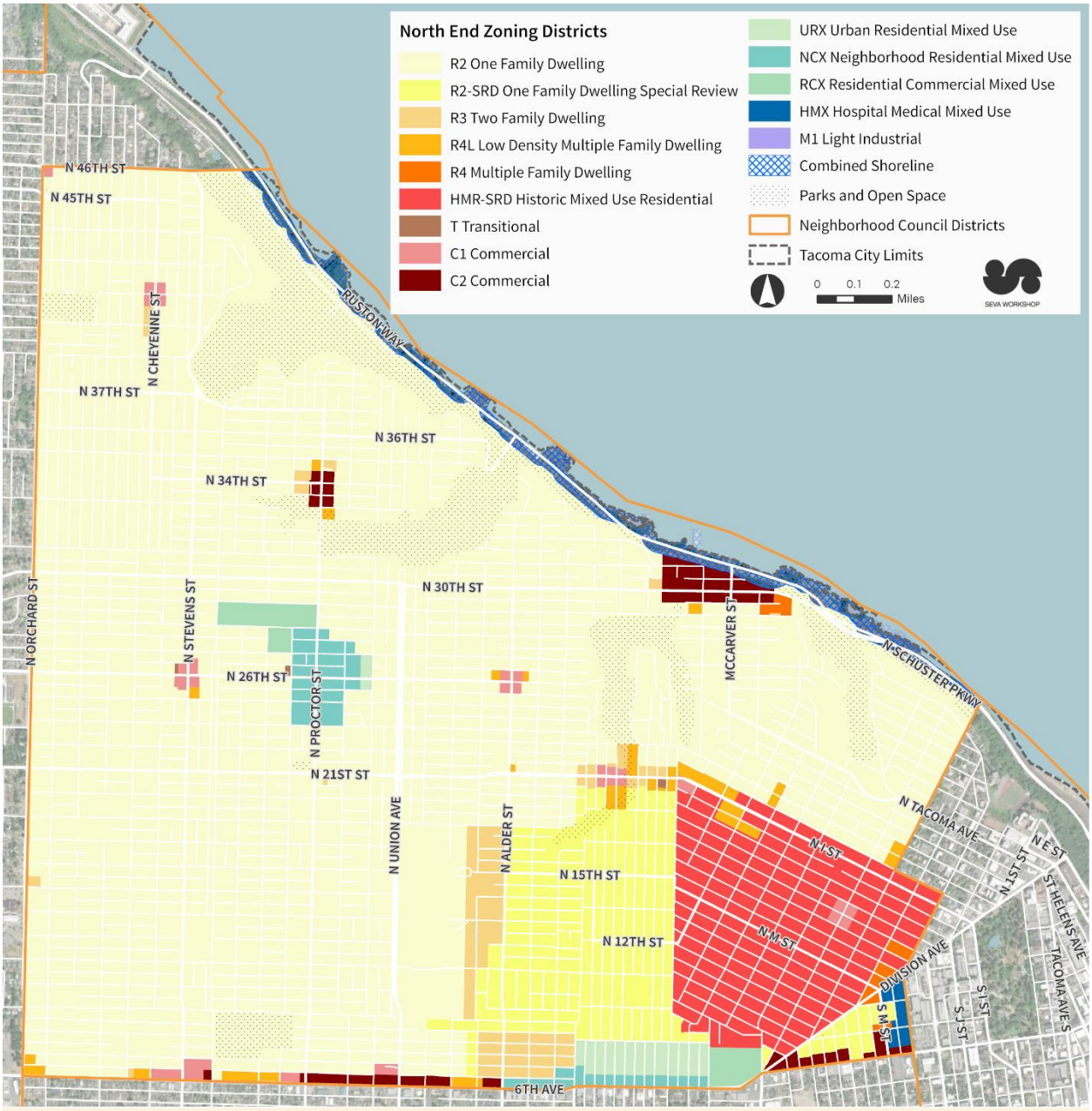
The broader land use designations represent a wider range of detailed zoning districts. These districts are mapped at the neighborhood level in this section, on pages 29 through 36.

Exhibit 27: West End Zoning Districts



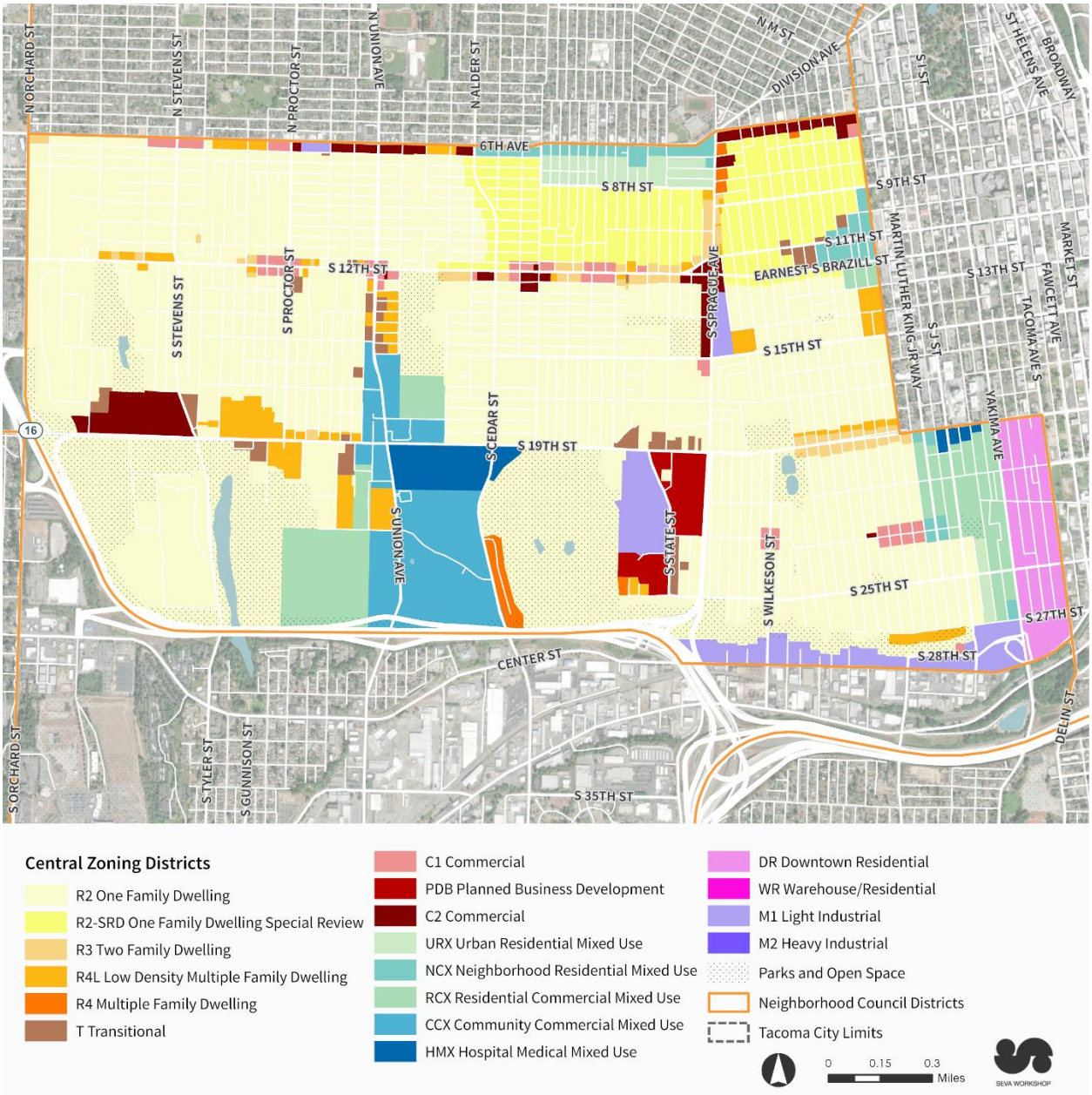
Much of the West End neighborhood is covered by lower density residential zones, R1 and R2. Pearl Street is the prominent north/south hub for mixed use and higher density zoning districts, such as CCX, R4, and C2. The east/west corridors on 6th Ave and S 12th Street are also denser activity areas.

Exhibit 28: North End Zoning Districts



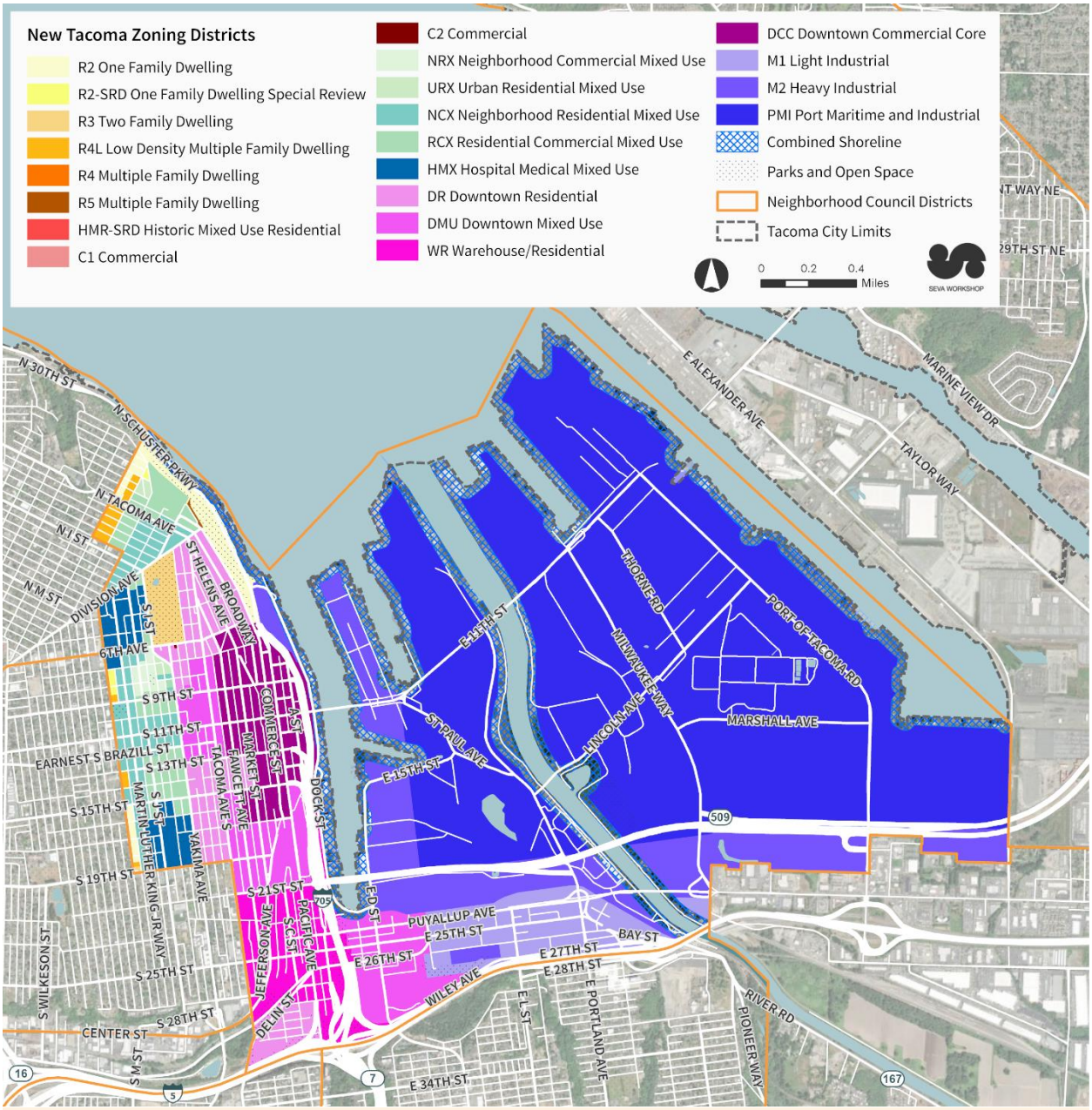
The North End neighborhood is characterized by R2 residential zoning. The southeastern pocket of this neighborhood is designated as a Historic Mixed-Use residential district. There is a small corridor of NCX and C2 zoning along the southern border (6th Ave).

Exhibit 29: Central Zoning Districts



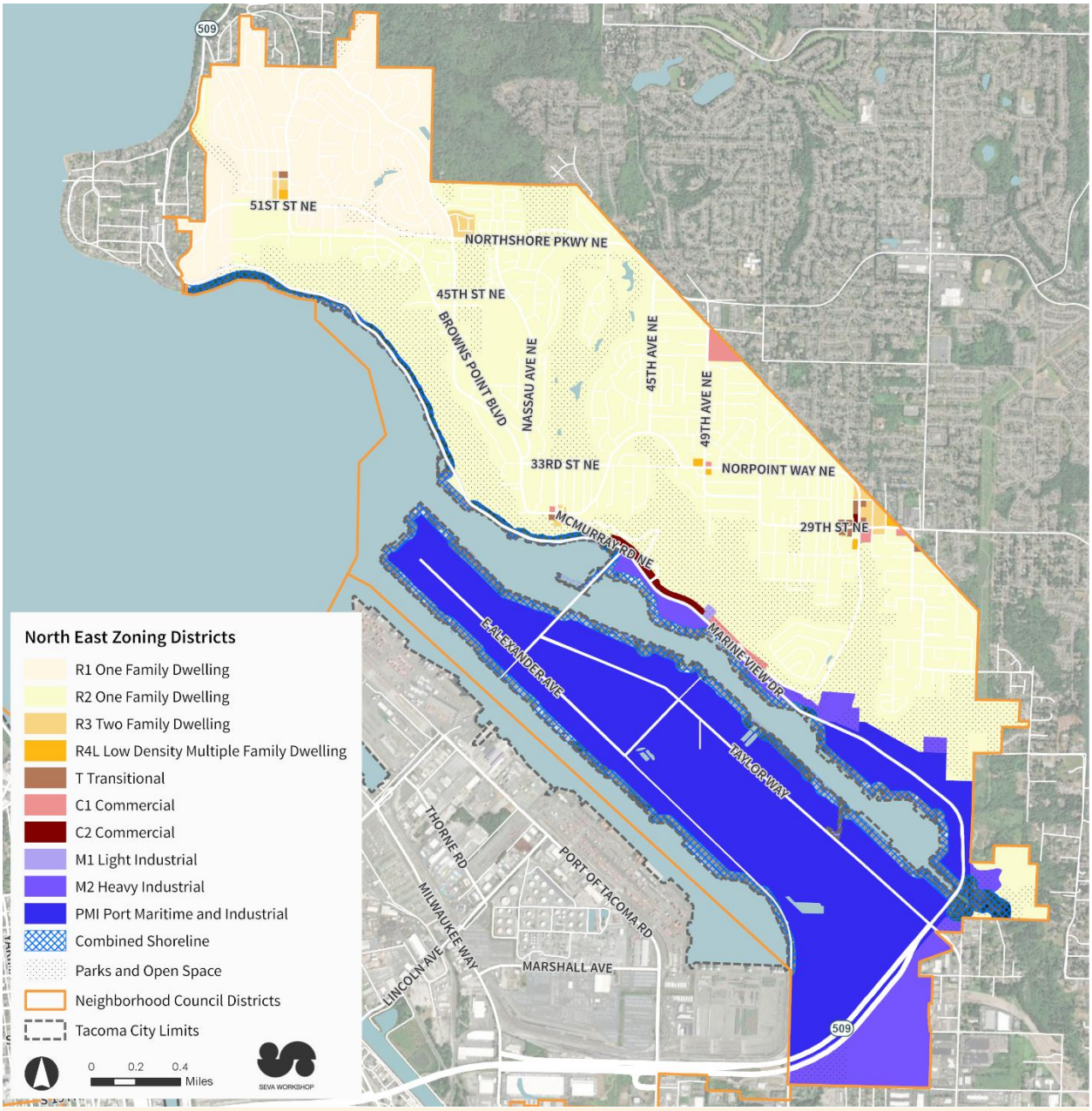
Central Tacoma includes a wide range of zoning districts, including areas of low-, mid-, and higher- density.

Exhibit 30: New Tacoma Zoning Districts



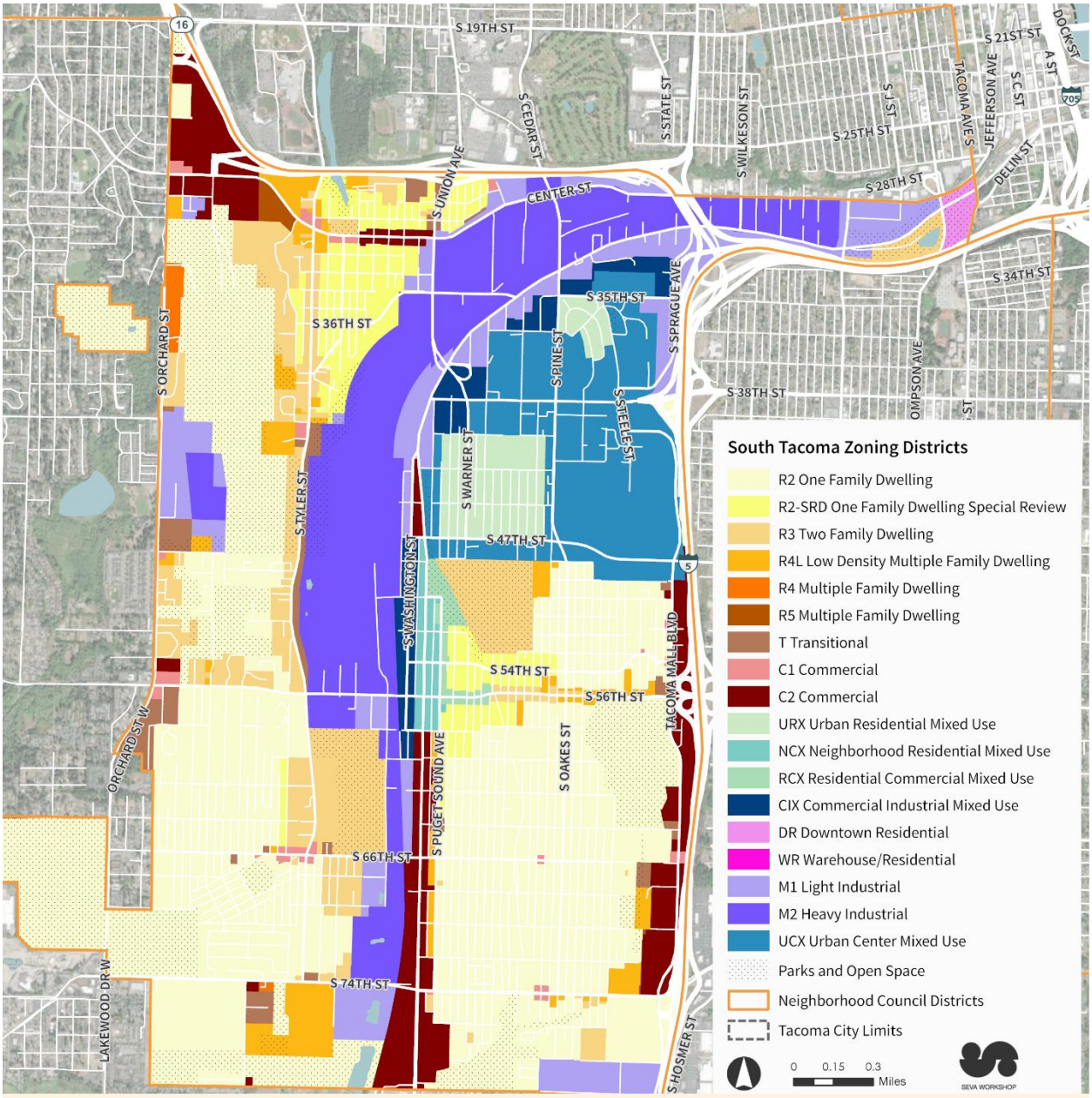
New Tacoma includes Downtown and the industrial district of the Tideflats. Downtown zones allow for the highest density of residential uses in the city.

Exhibit 31: North East Zoning Districts



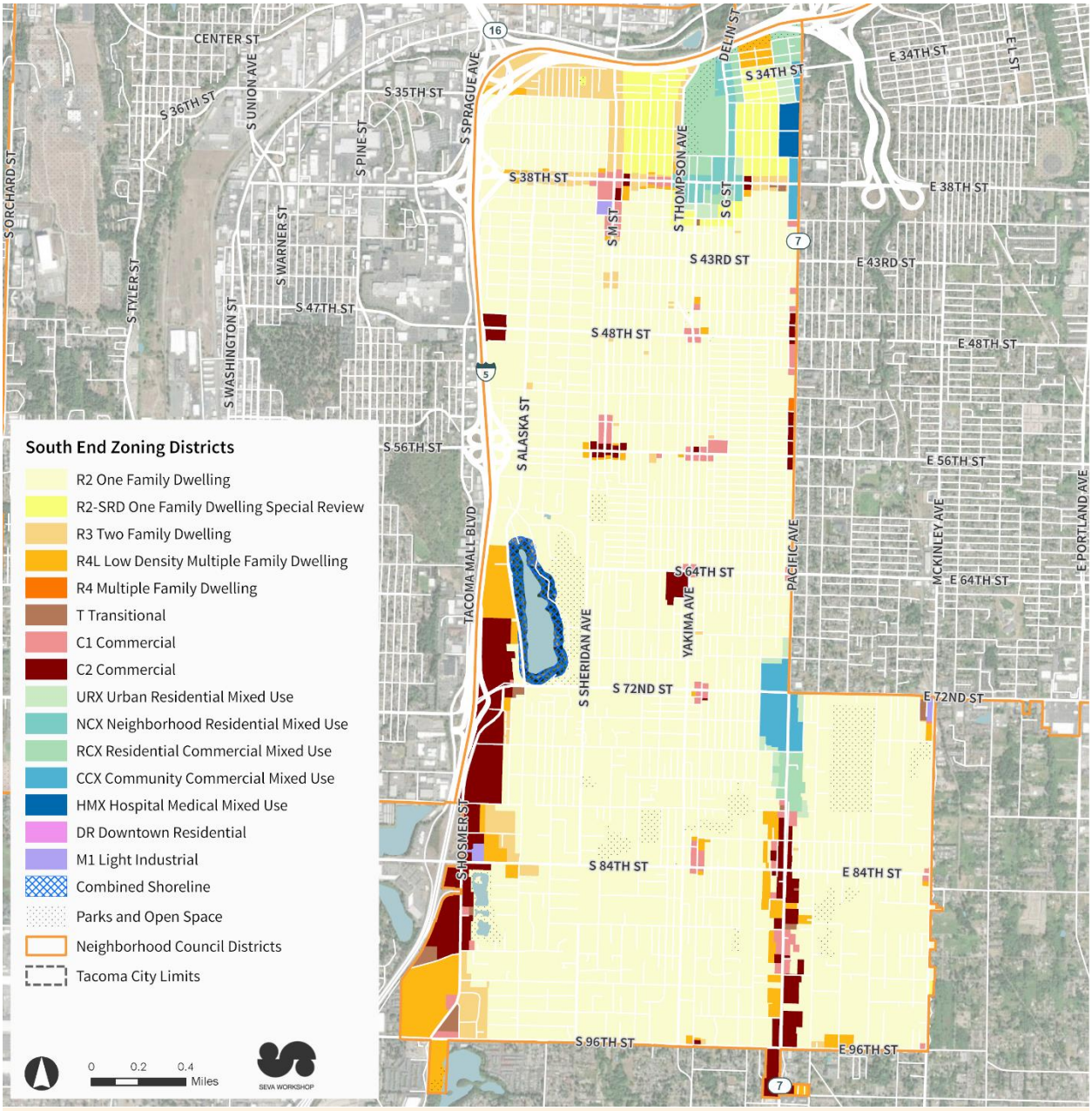
The North East neighborhood is almost entirely R1 and R2 zoning in the areas outside of industrial use. There are a few small nodes of commercial activity where a greater mix and density of uses are allowed.

Exhibit 32: South Tacoma Zoning Districts



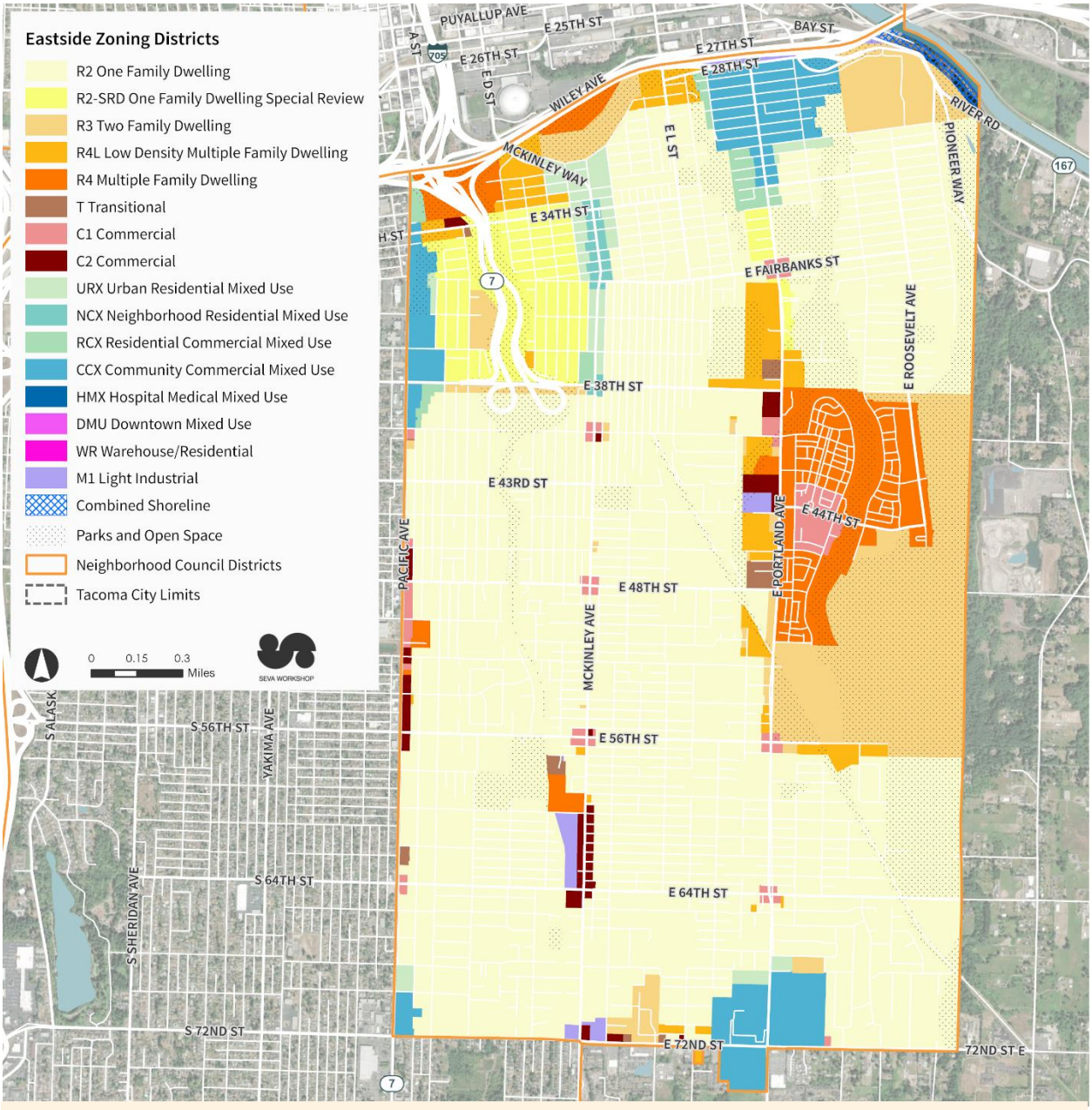
The South Tacoma neighborhood features a wide range of densities and use types. There are industrial lands running along a central spine, but a mix of commercial and residential areas to either side.

Exhibit 33: South End Zoning Districts



The Sound End of Tacoma is blanketed mostly by R2 zoning. There are commercial corridors running north/south along Pacific Avenue and Tacoma Mall Blvd. A pocket of mixed use districts exists in the north of the subarea.

Exhibit 34: Eastside Zoning Districts



Tacoma's Eastside has a range of zoning districts. Most of the central area in the neighborhood is designated as R2. The northern portions of the neighborhood include a range of commercial and mixed use areas. The eastern edge features higher density and mixed use districts along Portland Avenue.

Capacity

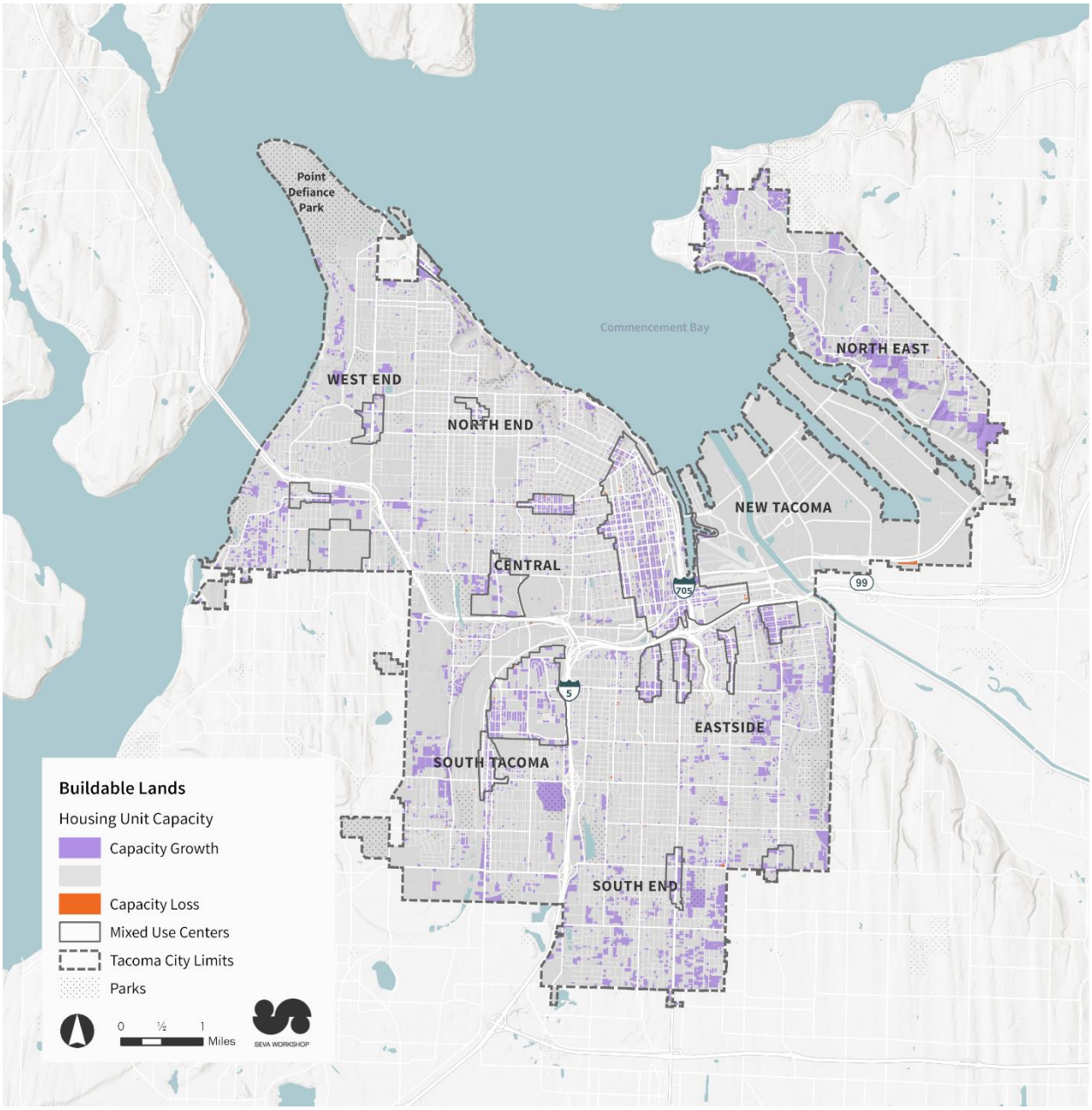
The Pierce County 2021 Buildable Lands Study identifies capacity for an additional 68,049 housing units in Tacoma under existing zoning regulations. The table in Exhibit 35 breaks out this capacity by zone. Half of Tacoma's residential capacity is concentrated in 4 zoning districts: Downtown Residential/DR (15%), Urban Residential Mixed-Use/URX (14%), Residential Commercial Mixed-use/RCX (11%), and Downtown Mixed-Use/DMU (10%). Another 40% of residential capacity is found across 6 districts: Single Family/R2 (9%), Warehouse Residential/WR (8%), Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use/NCX (8%), Community Commercial Mixed-Use/CCX (6%), Downtown Commercial Core/DCC (5%), and Urban Center Mixed-Use/UCX (5%). The remaining 10% of capacity is spread across 15 districts that each have 2% or less of total capacity. A map of this capacity can be found in Exhibit 36.

Exhibit 35: Tacoma Residential Land Capacity, by Zone, 2022.

Zone	Vacant	Underutilized	Vacant Single Unit	Pipeline	Total Capacity	% Total
C2	53	514	0	17	584	0.9%
CCX	733	3,145	0	0	3,878	6%
DCC	164	3,340	0	0	3,504	5%
DMU	1,782	5,011	0	0	6,793	10%
DR	2,668	7,146	0	78	9,892	15%
NCX	470	5,176	0	0	5,646	8%
NRX	8	160	0	0	168	0.2%
R1	395	472	84	0	951	1%
R2	2,601	2,383	1,031	74	6,089	9%
R2-SRD	84	544	40	0	668	1%
R3	224	502	24	16	766	1%
R4	284	799	0	58	1,141	2%
R4L	220	611	13	0	844	1%
R5	0	5	0	0	5	0.01%
RCX	1,226	5,970	0	15	7,211	11%
S15	13	0	0	561	574	0.8%
S8	145	648	0	0	793	1.2%
T	71	143	25	4	243	0.4%
UCX	302	3,005	0	0	3,307	5%
URX	500	9,266	0	10	9,776	14%
WR	1,409	3,851	0	0	5,260	8%
Total	**13,352**	**52,637**	**1,227**	**833**	**68,049**	

Source: Pierce County Buildable Lands, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024.

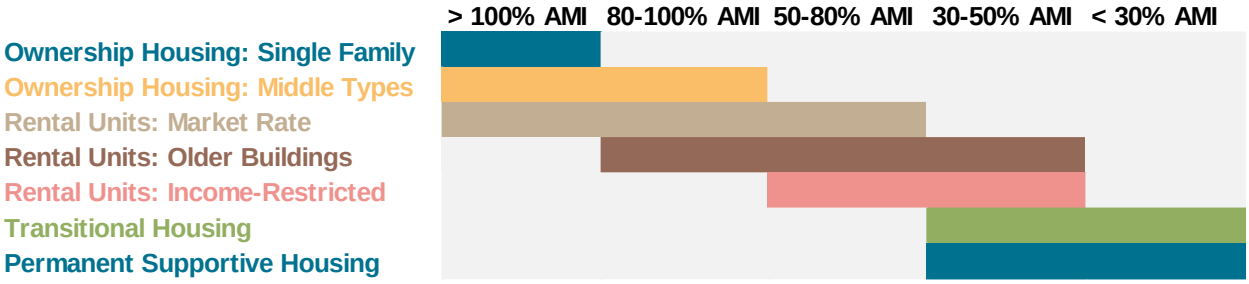
Exhibit 36: Tacoma Housing Capacity, 2022.



Sources: Pierce County Buildable Lands, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Capacity for special housing types

- Housing for moderate income households in Tacoma includes ownership opportunities for middle housing types and rental opportunities for most types of rental units.[13]
- Housing for low-income households in Tacoma includes much of the rental housing stock but few homeownership opportunities without public subsidy or nonprofit support. There are some units of income-restricted affordable housing set aside for these renters.
- Housing for very-low income households in Tacoma includes income-restricted affordable housing and some market-rate rental units in older buildings.
- Housing for extremely low-income households in Tacoma includes transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and income-restricted affordable housing.



Middle housing types, such as townhomes, 2-3-4-plexes, and cottage housing are allowed across most all residential districts in Tacoma. The R1 zone is the most restrictive for these types. The table in Exhibit 37 summarizes middle housing types permissions across residential zones. For each type, the minimum lot size varies and is larger in lower density zones. Capacity analysis shows the most space for additional housing units in the R-2 zone (6,089 units).

Exhibit 37: Middle Housing Types across Residential Zones (permit type - minimum lot area in SF)

Dwelling Type	R-1 Zone	R-2	R-2 SRD	HMR-SRD	R-3	R-4-L	R-4	R-5
Single-family detached, small lots	P - 6,750	P - 4,500	P- 4,500	P- 4,500	P- 2,500	P- 2,500	P- 2,500	P- 2,500
Two-family	N	CU - 6,000	P/CU - 6,000	P/CU - 6,000	P - 6,000	P - 4,250	P - 3,750	P - 3,500
Three-family	N	N	P/CU - 9,000	P/CU - 9,000	P -9,000	P - 5,500	P - 5,000	P - 4,500
Townhouse	N	CU - 3,000	CU - 3,000	CU - 3,000	P - 3,000	P - 1,500	P - 1,000	P - 1,000
Cottage housing	CU	CU	CU	CU	CU	CU	CU	CU

CU = Conditional Use permit required
Sources: TMC 13.06.020(F); Seva Workshop, 2024.

[13] HIT Feasibility Analysis Memo, 2024.

Manufactured housing, described in the zoning code as mobile homes and trailer courts, are allowed as a conditional use in the R-4-L and C-2 zones. The R-4-L zone,is described as "low density multifamily" and can be found in small areas south of Downtown and the Tideflats, as well as scattered sites across Tacoma's neighborhood districts. See map on the next page, Exhibit 39, which identifies these areas. There are approximately 356 units of manufactured housing in Tacoma today.[14] Capacity for additional units in the R-4-L zone is 844 and in the C2 zone is 584. Mobile home communities are increasingly rare within city limits, due to financial pressures that lead to redevelopment.

Multifamily housing is allowed in many residential districts. Mid-scale residential (R3) allows multifamily as a conditional use on lots at least 9,000 square feet in size. In all residential and commercial zones above this, multifamily housing is permitted outright.

Permanent supportive housing and income-restricted affordable housing is allowed anywhere that multifamily housing units are permitted. Exceptions exist if units are classified as group housing or emergency housing – explored below.

Group housing and foster care facilities are allowed uses across almost all residential, commercial, and mixed-use zones, although lower density residential zones limit the quantity of residents in group housing facilities. In mixed use zones such as NCX or CCX these uses are not allowed at the street level along frontage of pedestrian streets.

Emergency and transitional housing is allowed as a conditional use in many Tacoma zones such as R-4-L, R-4, and R-5. They are allowed uses in Urban Center, Commercial Mixed-Use, Downtown Commercial Core, and other higher density zones. The table in Exhibit 38 summarizes where these housing types are currently allowed in Tacoma.

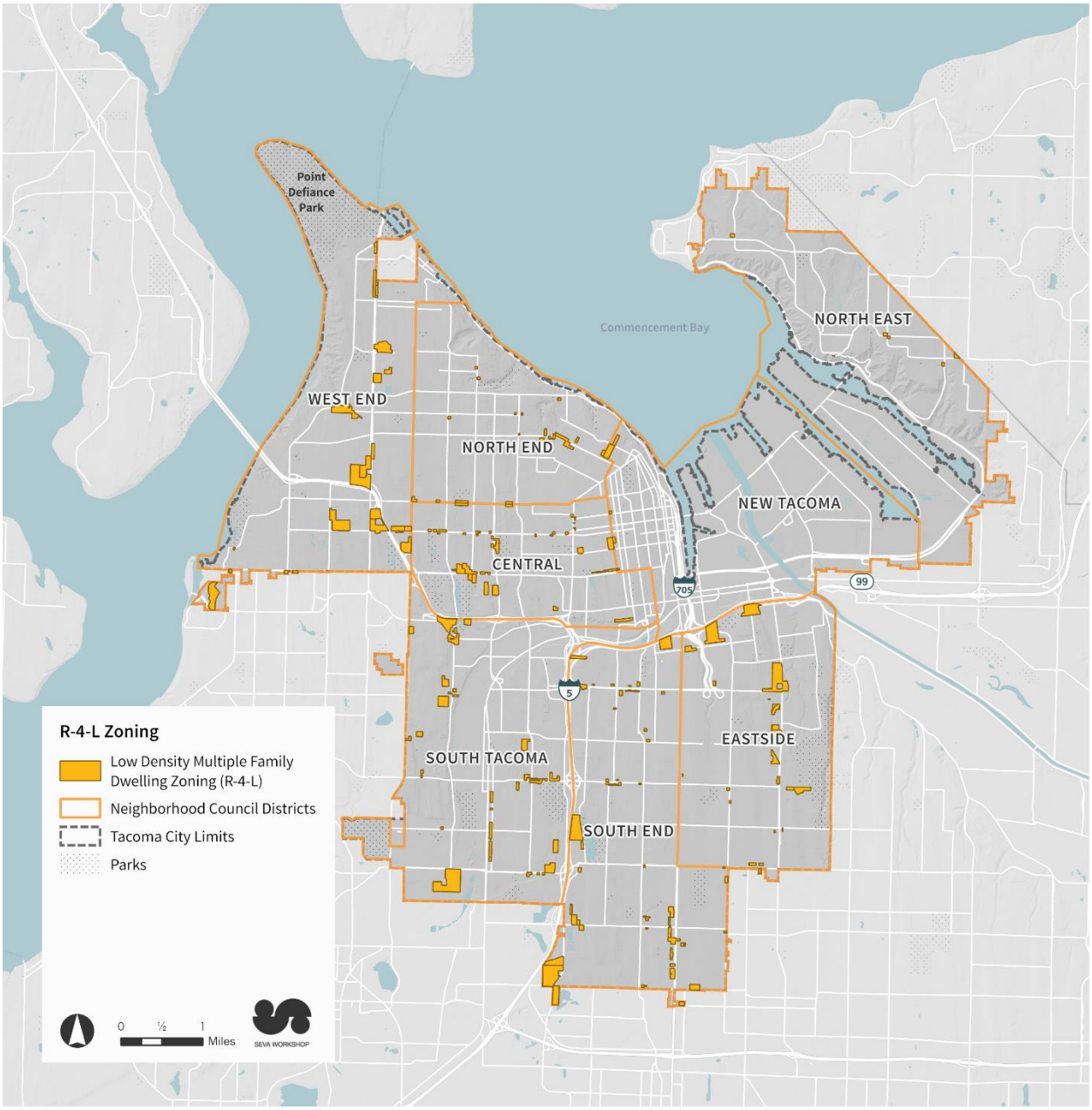
Exhibit 38: Special Needs Housing Types as Permitted Uses in Tacoma

	Size (number of residents)	R-1, R-2, R-2SRD, HMR-SRD, NRX	R-3	R-4-L, R-4, R-5, PRD, URX, RCX, NCX, T, C-1, HM, HMX, PDB	UCX, CCX, CIX, C-2, M-1, DCC, DMU, DR, WR	M-2, PMI
Emergency and Transitional Housing	Limit 6	N	N	CU	P	N
Emergency and Transitional Housing	7-15	N	N	CU	P	N
Emergency and Transitional Housing	16 or more	N	N	CU	P	N
Confidential Shelter, Adult Family Home, Staffed Residential Home	Limit 6	P	P	P	P	N

N = Not permitted; CU = Conditional Use; P = Permitted
Source: TMC 13.06.080.N

[14] ACS 5-year estimates, 2021

Exhibit 39: City of Tacoma Areas Zoned as R-4-L.



Sources: City of Tacoma, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

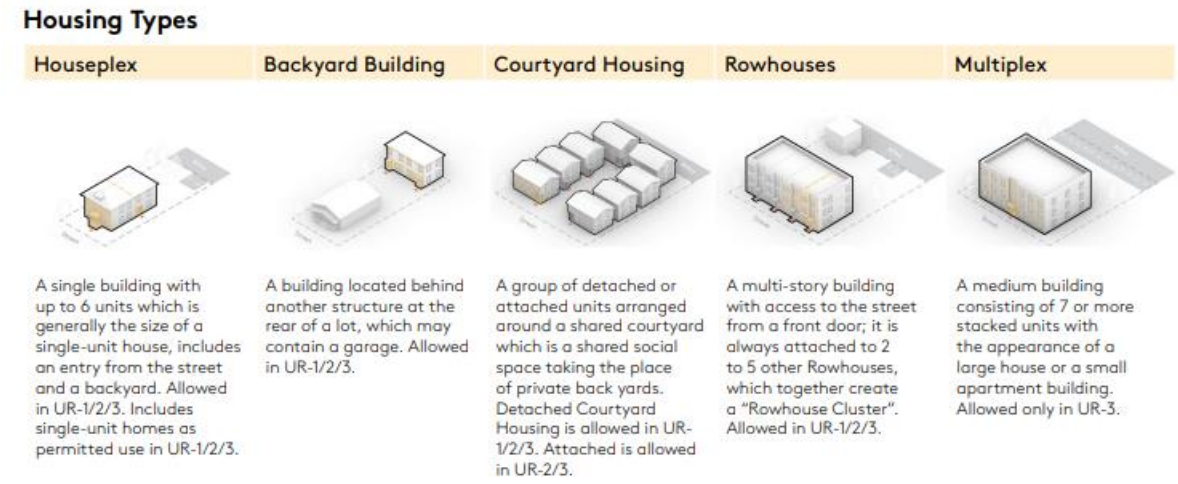
3.2 Home in Tacoma

Home in Tacoma (HIT) is a project with phase I adopted in December 2021 enacting changes to the city's housing growth strategy by supporting middle housing types citywide and taking action to ensure that housing growth can meet multiple community goals. In 2023, the City conducted intensive engagement as part of the project's second phase. In the meantime statewide

legislation such as HB 1110 (middle housing), HB 1337 (ADU support), and SB 5412 (SEPA Exemptions) was passed. Tacoma adjusted its package of policy reforms to align with these legislative directives. The public comment period for HIT ended in March 2024. The changes for this package of reforms include[15]:

Middle Housing Zoning Framework

Single family zoning will be replaced with Urban Residential (UR) zoning that allows for a range of building sizes that include multiple units, also known as middle housing. New housing types and permitting frameworks will be developed to support this shift.



Middle Housing Standards

New form-based building design standards will correspond with these zoning changes. Revised site development standards will follow suit to update buildings' height, scale, parking and landscape requirements. Housing types will be: houseplex, backyard building, courtyard housing, rowhouses, and multiplex.

Affordable Housing Regulatory Tools

These policies are designed to increase housing supply, choice, affordability, and ownership opportunities in Tacoma. They expand the City's inclusionary housing program to target unmet needs and align with market conditions. The structure of the City's bonus program is revisited to be more user friendly, reduce administrative burden, and to set parameters for income targets. MFTE is recommended for the new UR-3 zone.

[15] City of Tacoma Home in Tacoma Project Summary, Feb 2024

4 PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

4.1 Addressing gaps and needs

The City of Tacoma has been very active in recent years to address its housing challenges. In February 2024, the City adopted its Anti-Displacement Strategy which adds 21 policy and program options for the City to take that address a lack of affordable housing and displacement pressures in the City. The list below captures these initiatives designed promote greater affordability and equity in the city's housing market:

Income-Restricted Affordable Housing Policies and Investments

- **Affordability incentives** such as height and density bonuses, tax reduction, and permitting support are examples of supports that Tacoma has implemented to promote the inclusion of affordable units within market rate housing developments.[16]
- **Inclusionary zoning**. This policy framework takes the above incentives and makes them mandatory in areas of the city where the market supports denser development. Tacoma currently has inclusionary zoning in place in the Tacoma Mall Regional Center (2018).[17]
- **Land banking** is the process of purchasing land or buildings in areas of the city that can be used for the development of affordable housing. The Tacoma Community Redevelopment Authority (TCRA) Board is the City's mechanism for land banking.[18]

Supporting Homeownership and Wealth Building

- **Down-payment homebuyer assistance** includes homebuyer education as well as assistance for down payment funds for first-time homeowners. Tacoma's program began in 2023.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** are allowed in Tacoma and new policies promote increased development of this housing type, which helps build equity for homeowners and offers housing stock that meets a variety of community needs. Tacoma's ADU program was revamped in 2019 and new supports help homeowners with the financing needed for increased production.
- **Home Maintenance Support** helps low-income homeowners pay for necessary repairs that make their housing suitable for long-term living.

[16] https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/planning_and_development_services/DevelopmentServices/development_and_housing_incentives

[17] TMC 13.18

[18] Tacoma Community Redevelopment Authority (TCRA) Board

Tenant Protections

- Tacoma's **rental inspection program** assesses quality of conditions for renters, holding landlords accountable to health and safety standards. This program mitigates displacement that could be caused by violation of these standards by identifying pathways to remediation for property owners. In today's version of this program, the tenant must request the inspection.[19]
- **Rental Housing Code**. In 2018, Tacoma adopted the Rental Housing Code, which provides protections for tenants in the city. It includes requirements for notice prior to termination of tenancy or rent increases, or notice and relocation assistance when the building will change use or redevelop.[20] Landlords are penalized if they are out of compliance with these regulations.
- **Tenant Relocation Funds.** This program provides $2,000 in relocation assistance to eligible tenants to assist with moving costs when displacement occurs due to demolition, rehabilitation, or a change in use.

Direct Assistance to Address Housing Insecurity

- **Utility assistance** provided by Tacoma Public Utilities and Environmental Services offers reduced utility costs to eligible households.

Policies and Programs Under Consideration

- **Home in Tacoma (HIT).** As described on page 41, this package of reforms widely expands access to middle housing types across Tacoma. These housing types can offer homeownership at rates that are affordable to a broader range of income bands.
- **Right of First Refusal** is being explored as a policy option to pair with Tacoma's Preservation Ordinance. This would give affordable housing developers the first chance at purchasing certain properties, at market rate, before the building is offered to other potential buyers.
- **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA).** This program help tenants organize to purchase a building collectively rather than have the property sold to another investor. This action builds equity for renters in areas experiencing displacement and share in any gains to land values built in their communities.
- **A Housing Preservation Fund** would create a dedicated stream of funds for the acquisition of properties, or the provision of low-interest financing, to support preservation efforts.
- **Community land trust (CLT) support.** The City could allocate funds to offset startup or operating costs associated with CLTs in Tacoma.

[19] https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/equity_and_human_rights/landlord-tenant_program/landlord-_tenant_code_compliance_inspection

[20] https://cms.cityoftacoma.org/CBCFiles/RentalHousingCode/rentalhousingcodeflyer.pdf

- **A Community Prioritization Policy** would give preference to households who have been displaced, who descend from displacement, or who are actively at high risk of displacement when reviewing applications for income-restricted affordable housing.

5 ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

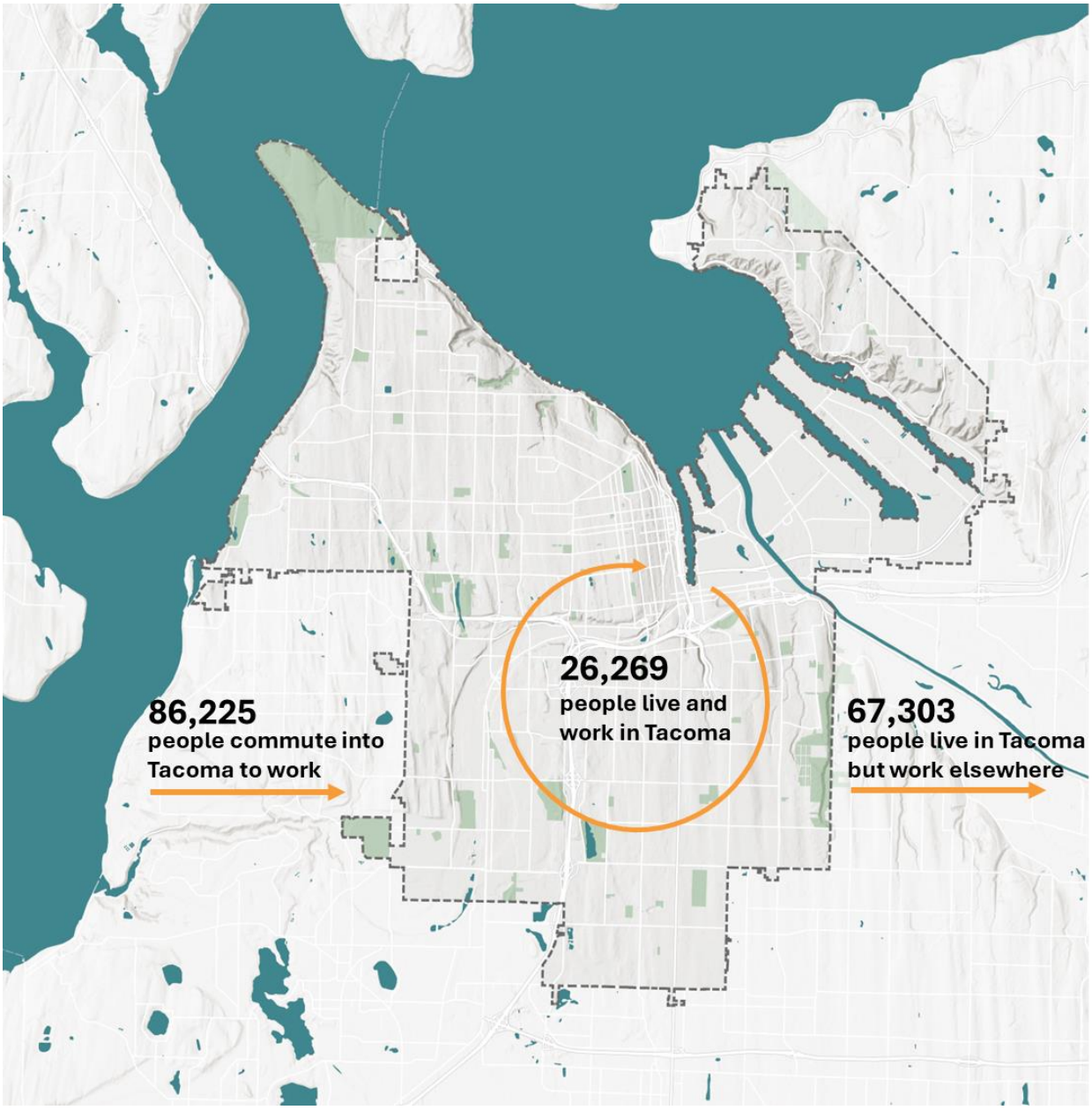
According to 2021 LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), 28% of working Tacoma residents both live and work Tacoma. A combined 22% percent have places of employment in surrounding cities of Lakewood, Kent, Auburn, Federal Way, and Fife. Twelve (12%) of Tacoma workers have their place of employment in Seattle. About one-third work elsewhere – this includes at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, one of the largest Tacoma resident employers. See Exhibit 40. It is important to note the LEHD data is based on administrative records such as unemployment insurance reporting connecting place of residence and place of employment. These numbers reflect both commuters and those who are working remotely. They also do not include self-employed workers who are more likely to work from home.

The American Community Survey is based on self-reported respondent experiences and will be inclusive of self-employed workers. **Based on the 2021 ACS data, the Tacoma workforce largely commutes by car, 70% driving alone and another 10% carpooling.** The mean travel time to work is 30.4 minutes with 22.7% of workers commuting 45 minutes or more to work. Ten percent of the workforce works from home and only 6% of workers use public transportation. See Exhibit 41.

The likelihood of Tacoma workers taking a certain means of transportation to work varies by race and ethnicity. Exhibit 42 compares the distribution of commute methods to the underlying distribution of workers by race and ethnicity. Communities of color are more likely than average to carpool. Black workers are much more likely than average to commute to work by public transportation. White, non-Hispanic or Latino, workers are the most likely group to commute alone by car, truck, or van.

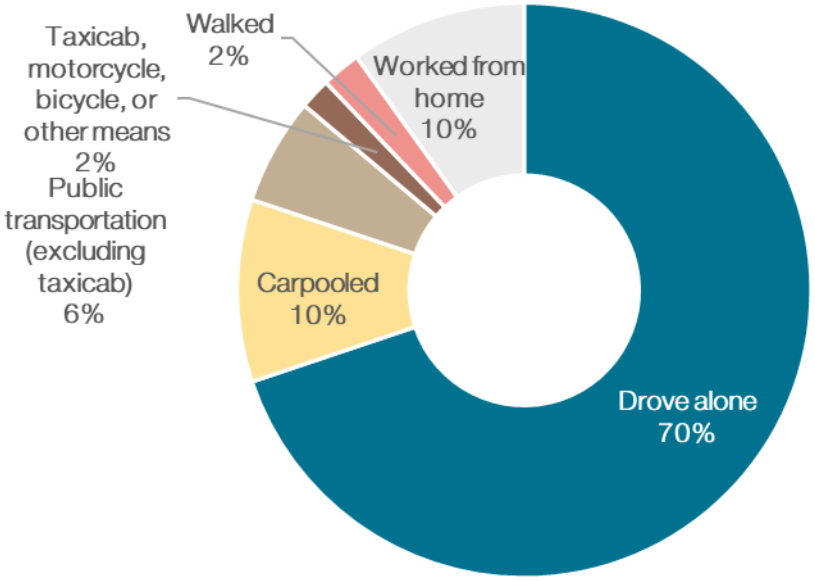
Tacoma's biggest job center is Downtown, followed by the Tacoma Mall, Tideflats, and South Tacoma MIC areas. Strengthening public transportation options from residential centers to these employment hubs could improve the public transportation capture rate from the city's commuters. Given the higher ratio of Black workers using public transportation, continued improvement of bus service can help meet racial equity goals. Very few Tacomans report walking to work (2%). This indicates that there is not a complementary clustering of work opportunities and housing centers within the city.

Exhibit 40: Tacoma Inflow/Outflow Analysis, 2021.



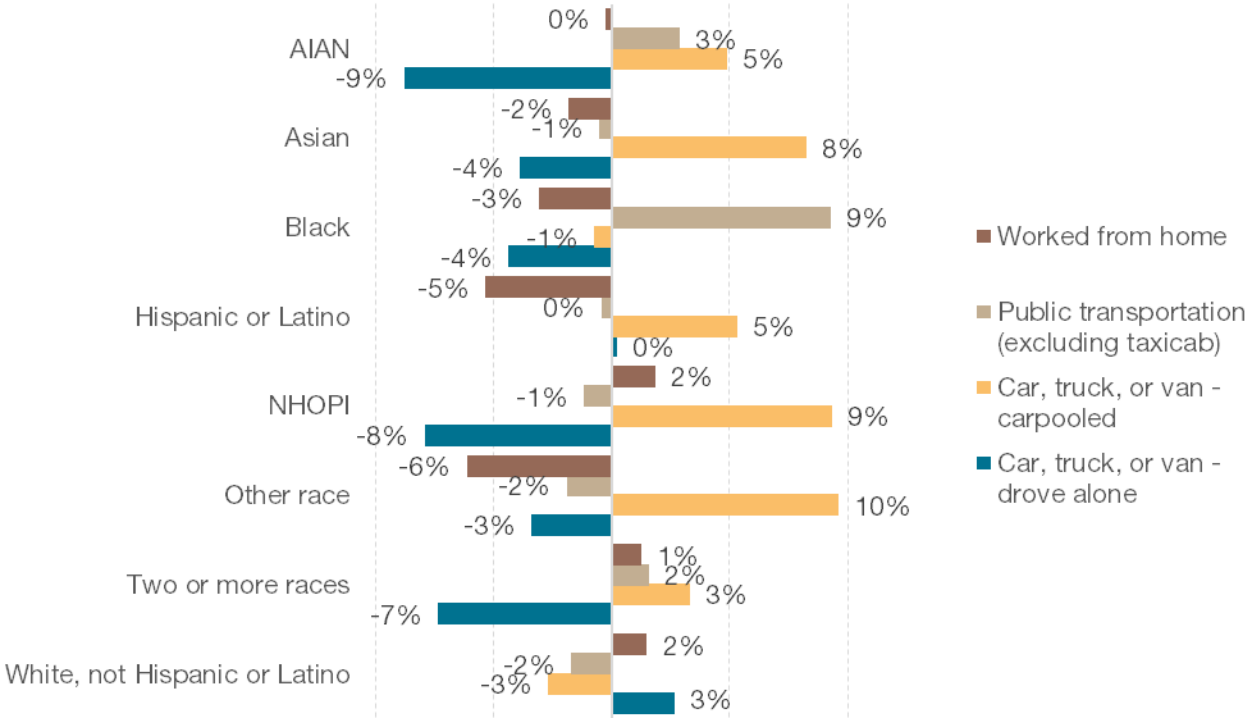
Sources: Census OntheMap, 2021; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Exhibit 41: Means of Transportation to Work, 2021.



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021)

Exhibit 42: Means of Transportation to Work by Race and Ethnicity, 2021.



Note: A value of 0 indicates the share of that group using that means of transportation is equal to their share in the overall population. AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Hispanic or Latine is an ethnicity. The Hispanic or Latino category includes Hispanic and Latine people of all races. All other categories show non-Hispanic races.
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021) (B08119, B08105B-I)

6 RACIAL EQUITY IN HOUSING POLICY

6.1 Racially disparate impacts

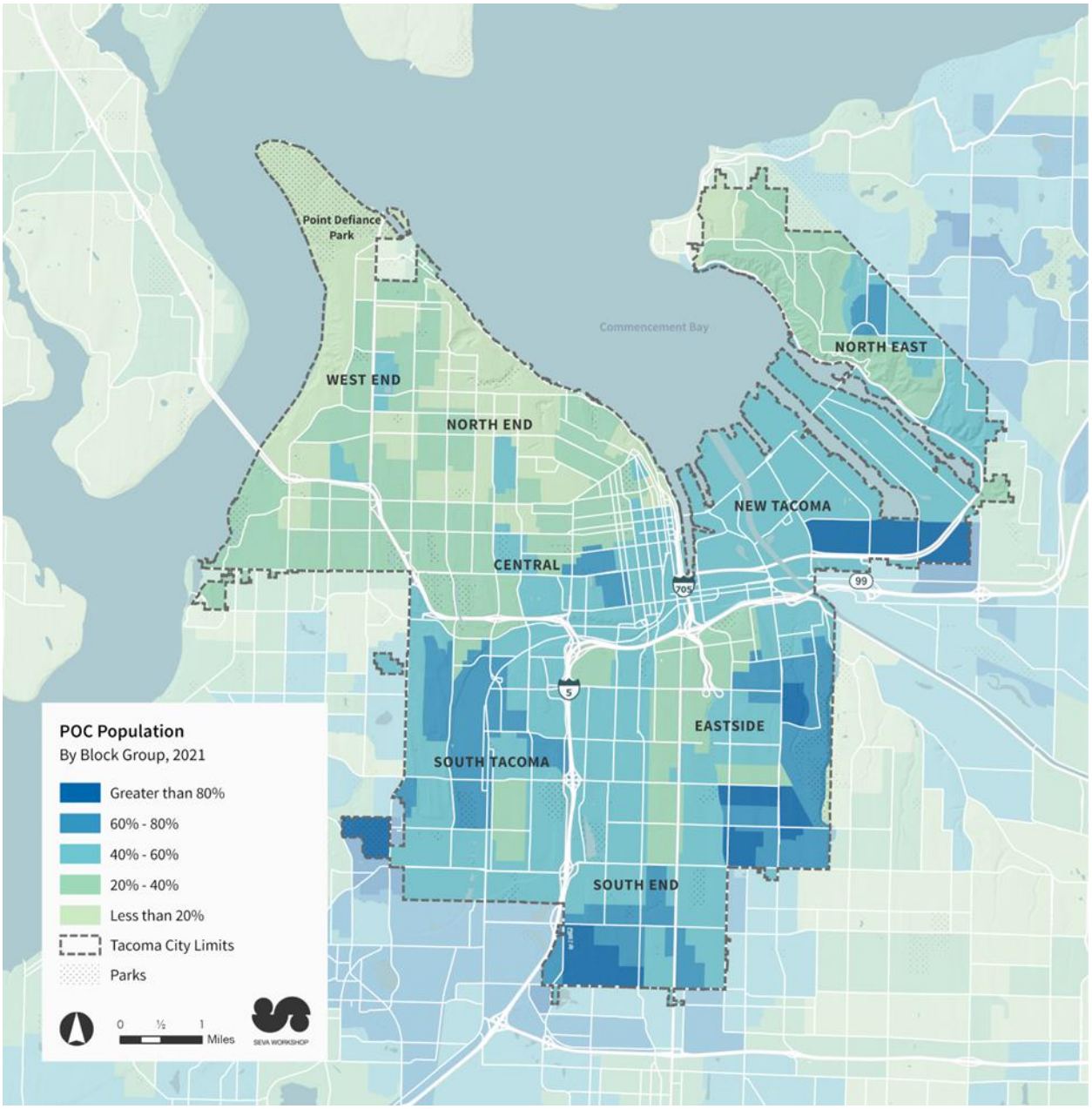
In Tacoma, racial disparities are observed in homeownership rates (see Exhibit 7), household incomes (see Exhibit 15), and rates of housing cost burden (Exhibit 20). Non-white households have lower rates of homeownership and lower household incomes, and Black households experience the greatest disparities across these datapoints. Geographically speaking, Tacoma's communities of color are more densely populated in south and east Tacoma neighborhoods, as shown in the map in Exhibit 43. Location decisions are a function of many factors at the household level, including available resources and access to desired amenities. Today's distribution of racial groups is also influenced by historical policies and practices, such as treaties, redlining, Japanese incarceration, and Chinese expulsion[21].

During active redlining in Tacoma, the North End and areas extending to the bay were identified as the most desirable parts of the city. Downtown, the Hilltop area, the northern parts of Eastside, and parts of South Tacoma were labeled as "hazardous" (pink) or "undesirable" (yellow) due to the presence of non-white residents. These practices concentrated communities of color in neighborhoods that were de-prioritized for public investment and services. Areas identified as "first" (green) or "second" (blue) grade were more favorable and predominantly White homeowners. These same areas remain whiter than other Tacoma neighborhoods today. See Exhibit 44 for the 1937 map used by mortgage lenders.

Today, the decline in homeownership affordability for moderate and low-income households perpetuates these inequities. Rising interest rates and house prices raise the barrier to entry for home ownership. In Tacoma, racial disparity persists among first-time homebuyers, particularly for Black and NHOPI households. See Exhibit 18. Policy proposals included with Home in Tacoma address this decline in affordability by expanding opportunities for middle housing types. The proposed zoning changes and incentive programs would take steps to address this disparity.

[21] For a more detailed history see: Mapping Inequality, https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/map/WA/Tacoma/context#loc=12/47.2481/-122.4546

Exhibit 43: People of Color as a Proportion of the Population in Tacoma, 2021.



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021).

Exhibit 44: Tacoma "Residential Security Map", 1937.

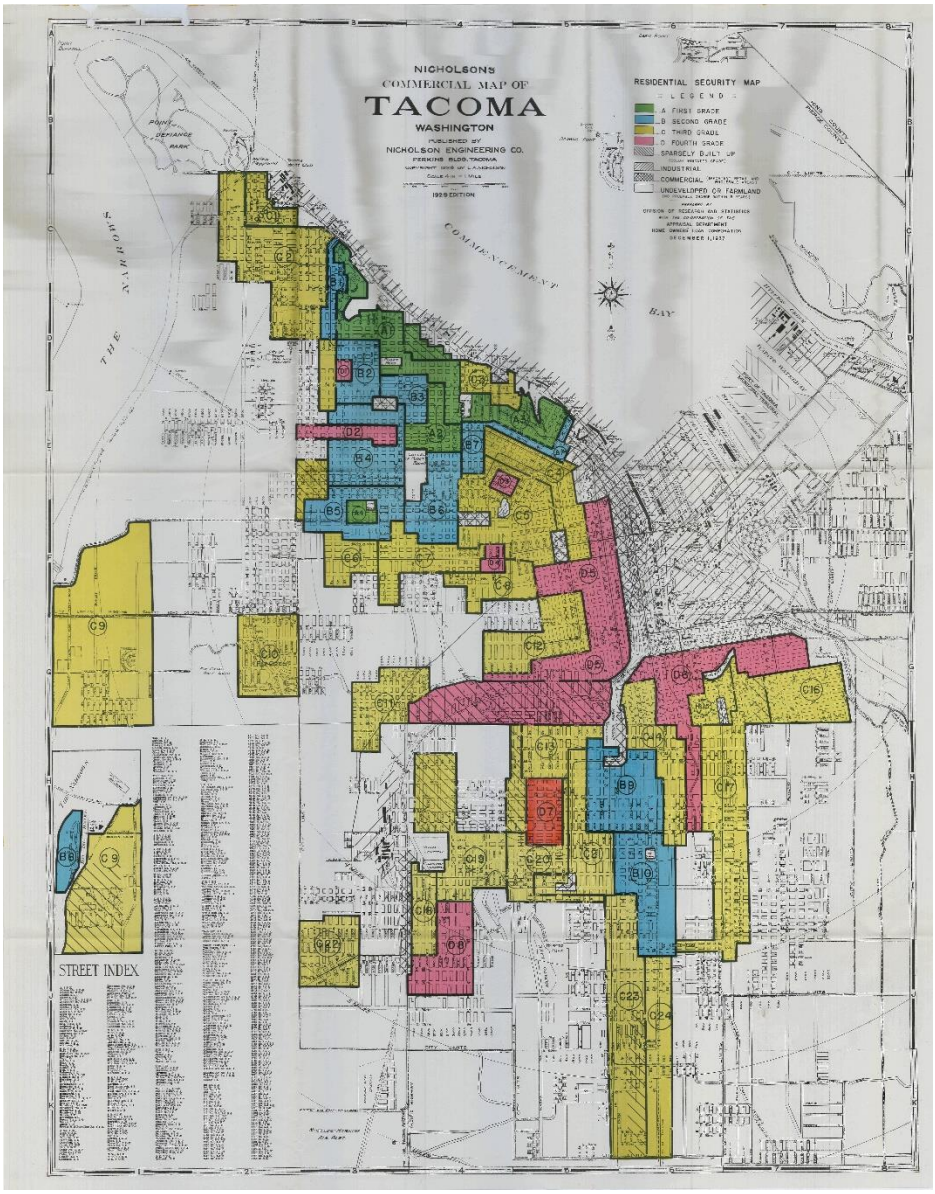
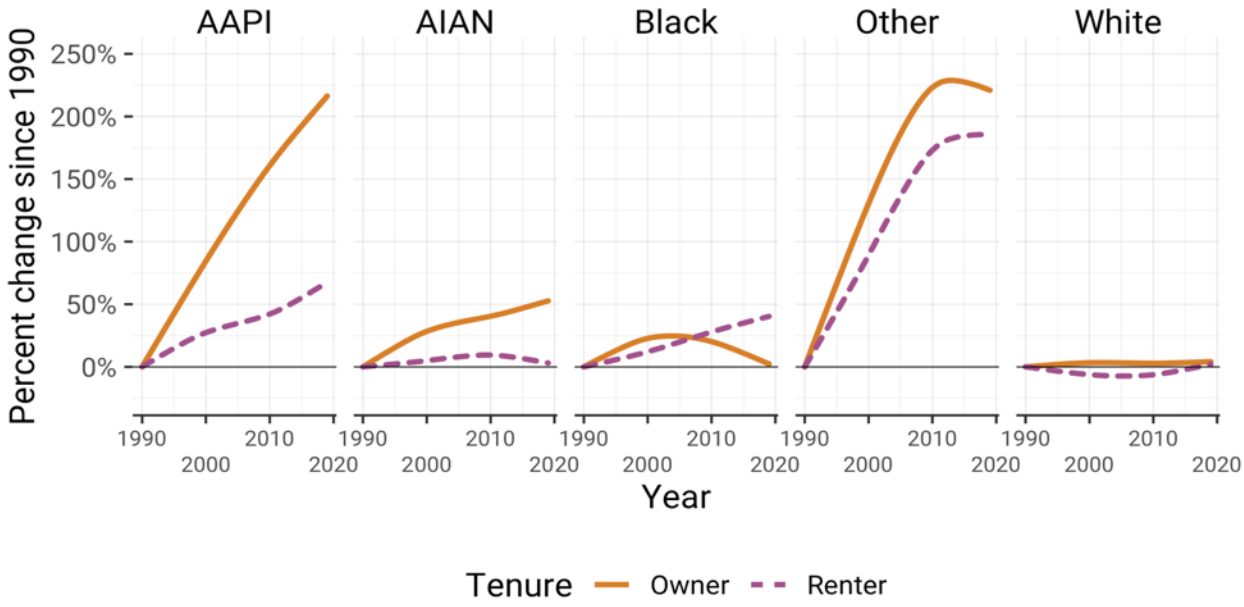


Image Source: "Mapping Inequality" website, hosted by the University of Richmond.

In 2021, the City of Tacoma conducted an in-depth study into its systemic race-based disparities in housing. This report studied both quantitative and qualitative sources related to housing, discrimination, and homeownership opportunity in Tacoma. Key findings from this study include:

- Black households have experienced a stark decline in homeownership from 1990-2020 in Tacoma. All other racial groups experienced increase or stable rates of homeownership over this time period. Black and Hispanic households across the country are shown to have been more significantly impacted by the predatory and subprime lending practices that led to the 2008 foreclosure crisis. See Exhibit 45.

Exhibit 45: Percent Change of Owner and Renter Households by Race, in the City of Tacoma 1990-2020.



Notes: AAPI is Asian American and Pacific Islanders, AIAN is American Indian and Alaska Native, Other refers to people not fitting into a provided group. The multiracial category was not introduced until 2000 and thus not included.
Sources: Sources: U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS), 2015- 2019 (5 Year Survey) and NHGIS (National Historical GIS) iPUMs data; EcoNorthwest "Tacoma Housing Disparities", 2021.

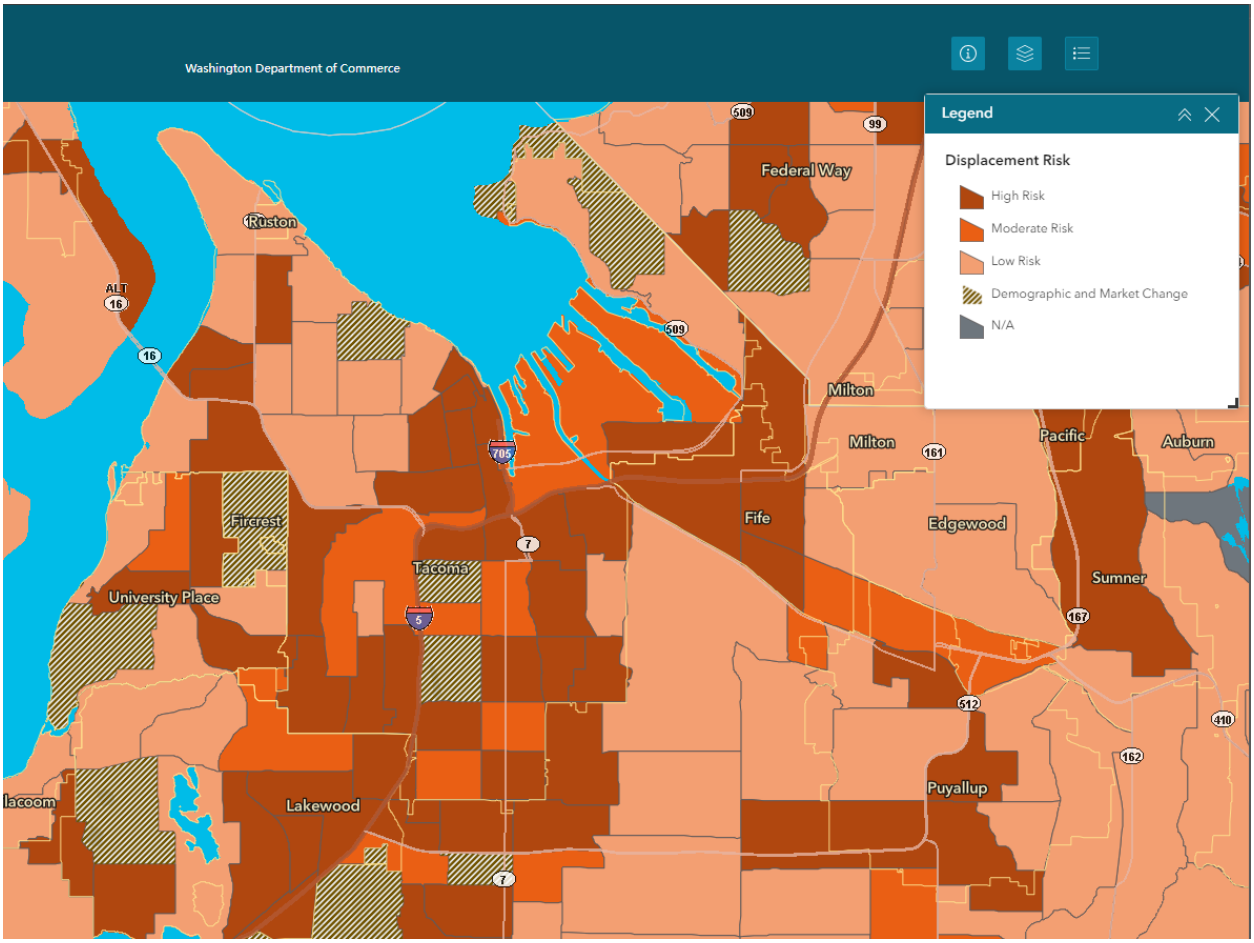
- Tacoma's educational attainment levels are significantly lower than statewide rates across almost every race category. In Tacoma, 19% of Black residents have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to a rate of 33% for White residents. Lower levels of educational attainment impact expected income generation potential, which connects directly to a household's ability to avoid cost burden.
- Racial disparities for household income are observed in Tacoma, connecting to trends in homeownership and educational attainment. Black households have the lowest median income.

6.2 Displacement

In 2024, the City of Tacoma adopted an Anti-Displacement Strategy that outlines policies and programs that address housing stability for vulnerable residents. These strategies address four types of displacement: **physical displacement**, occurring when building conditions change like in case of natural disaster, condemnation, or eminent domain; **economic displacement**, when housing cost increases are dramatic enough that a resident must move or is evicted; and **cultural displacement**, when a household moves because the businesses/services/community that cultivate a sense of belonging for them are no longer present.

The strategy studies displacement risk mapping exercises completed by the Department of Commerce, Puget Sound Regional Council, UC Berkeley Urban Displacement Project, Evictions Study Map, and the City's own Equity Index.[22] Rather than creating a new displacement risk mapping tool, the City evaluated these 5 different, but related, analyses for a comprehensive study of the various factors impacting displacement risk in Tacoma.

Exhibit 46: Displacement Risk Mapping in Tacoma, Draft 2024.



Note: This is a Draft version
Source: Washington Department of Commerce, 2025.

Under these displacement definitions and considering the findings of these five studies, the strategy identifies particular displacement risk:

- Geographically, in the Hilltop neighborhood and in parts of South and East Tacoma

[22] Department of Commerce Displacement Risk Map, Draft, 2024, PSRC Displacement Risk Map, 2019, https://www.urbandisplacement.org/, https://evictionlab.org/, and Tacoma Equity Index, 2022

- Racially, People of Color are shown to be at higher displacement risk than White residents

Additional detailed study into movement of particular households is conducted in the 2021 "Tacoma Housing Disparity Study". This report observes that between 2000-2019, residential patterns of Black households indicate that the central, west end, and eastside areas of Tacoma show signs of gentrification and displacement risk.

Existing policies and programs that might contribute to displacement in Tacoma are:

- Concentrated and significant upzones contribute to displacement risk. Land becomes more valuable as denser development is allowed on each site, which contributes to financial pressures toward economic displacement. When certain parts of the city remain very low density while others are dramatically upzoned, displacement risk is concentrated in those upzoned areas. In Tacoma, there are many neighborhoods where low density residential zoning is protected, meaning that other areas, such as the Downtown and Mixed-Use Centers, have experienced this increased displacement risk.
- Large public investments in infrastructure and amenities can contribute to displacement risk. These investments, such as new public transit infrastructure, increase the desirability of neighborhoods and can increase land values. Light rail expansion in Tacoma will increase displacement risk near station areas, both from physical displacement via eminent domain and economic displacement form increased property values. Future stations are planned in the Portland Avenue and Tacoma Dome areas, with service starting in 2030.

Existing policies and programs that are aimed at mitigating displacement pressures:

- Concentrations of residential zones with very low density also contribute to a city's overall displacement risk. Maintaining these areas means that during periods of growth when development pressures rise, there is less land to spread these pressures across. Areas vulnerable to displacement pressure feel a more intense version of those forces. State policies that eliminate exclusive single family zoning (HB 1110) and new legislation proposed through Home in Tacoma would make a big impact on increasing housing options in Tacoma.[23]
- Affordable housing incentive programs increase the supply of income-restricted housing units. These units provide assurance that households with lower incomes will have a place in the community, for the long term. When applied in areas with higher concentrations of vulnerable populations, they can have a bigger anti-displacement impact. Examples of these programs in Tacoma today include: Inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE), and priority permit review.
- Down-payment homebuyer assistance program. Since 2014, the City has intermittently contracted with Washington State Housing Finance Commission to administer downpayment assistance funds for eligible households with incomes at or below 80% AMI. This program ended in 2023, but the City is working to implement a new, internally operated program.

[23] apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2023-24/htm/bill%20reports/House/1110%20HBA%20HOUS%2023.htm

6.3 Exclusion

Historic Practices

A history of exclusionary legal practices provides a framework for modern residential patterns. A longer exploration of this history can found in the Equity Assessment Context History and Baseline document for this project. Key takeaways from this review, relevant to residential exclusion, include:

- Intense decrease in Tribal populations after early arrival of White settlers due to diseases such as smallpox and influenza. Displacement of indigenous inhabitants via treaties that cede Tribal lands in areas now known as Tacoma.
- Labor movements and fear-based campaigns against Chinese railroad workers, leading to a ban on citizenship and land ownership for these immigrants in the late 1800s. This included a mob in 1885 that marched through Tacoma's Chinatown, destroying homes and businesses.
- The internment of Japanese and Japanese-Americans to concentration camps during World War II.
- Redlining and Racially Restrictive covenants, as explored in the Racially Disparate Impacts section, blocked many – particularly Black Americans – from homeownership and settlement in certain designated areas of Tacoma until these practices started being dismantled with the Fair Housing Act of 1968

Modern Lending Practices

Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data show that Black, Hispanic, and other minority applicants are less successful than White applicants in obtaining mortgage financing in Tacoma. The most common denial reasons listed for loan applicants in Tacoma are debt to income ratio (28%) and credit history (23%). Credit history is a more prevalent reason for denial among Black and Indian/Alaska Native applicants, while Hispanic applicants are more likely denied based on debt-to-income ratios.[24] Access to credit is a major factor in determining eligibility for homeownership and building generational wealth.

Location Quotient Analysis

A location quotient is a metric calculated to show the concentration of communities of interest in each census tract relative to patterns across a lager geography. It is a useful tool for illustrating patterns of segregation and exclusion. For example, if 7% of a neighborhood population is Black, and 7% of that county's population is Black, then the location quotient is 1. A tract where 14% of residents are Black would have a location quotient of 2. And a track where only 3.5% of residents are Black would have a location quotient of 0.5. So, tracts

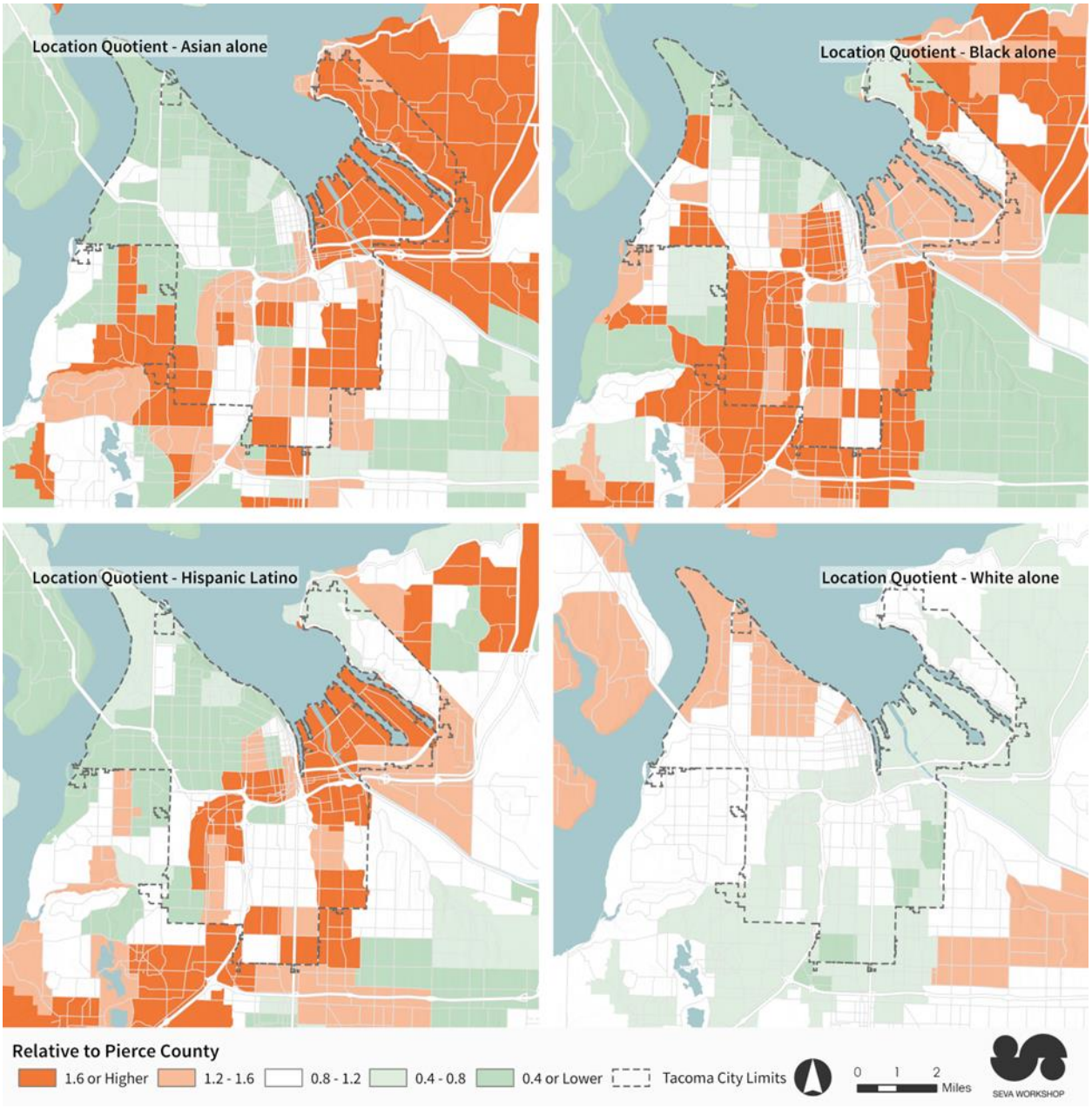
[24] "Tacoma Housing Disparity Study", 2021. Data from 2020.

with high location quotient scores have a greater share of that population compared to the rest of the County.

Tacoma has long been more diverse than Pierce County has a whole. As noted above, the City has historically been home to particularly high concentrations of Asian and Black residents as compared to Pierce County. Asian communities in Tacoma are highly represented in the southern parts of the city, particularly in South Tacoma and Eastside. Black communities have higher representation across many Tacoma neighborhoods, but notably low representation along the waterfront in the North End. Both Black and Asian communities are also highly represented in areas outside of the Tacoma City boundary and in other urban and peri-urban areas of Pierce County. See Exhibit 47.

The durability of redlining effects can be seen in North End that has a higher concentration of White households than compared to Pierce County as a whole and lower concentration of Asian, Black and Hispanic/Latino residents. The location quotient maps suggest that the concentration of White communities is relatively even across Tacoma, with lowest prevalence in southern neighborhoods. Hispanic/Latino communities of Tacoma are most densely represented in Eastside, New Tacoma, and South Tacoma neighborhoods.

Exhibit 47: Location Quotient, Asian, Black, Hispanic Latino, White Alone



Sources: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2017-2021); Seva Workshop, 2024.

A location quotient is a metric calculated to show the concentration of communities of interest in each census tract relative to patterns across a lager geography. It is a useful tool for illustrating patterns of segregation and exclusion. In the above maps, the darker orange shade identifies concentrations of the studied group across Tacoma, and the green identifies low prevalence of the group. In the top left, Asian households. Top right, Black households. Bottom left, Hispanic/Latino households, and bottom right- White households. These rates are relative to Pierce County's overall demographics, hence the overall lower ratios of White households in Tacoma.

City of Tacoma, Washington

ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

Economic Development Baseline Conditions Report | November 2024

Current Baseline Economic Data

Employment Targets and Capacity

The Pierce County Buildable Lands Report (Nov 2022) tables below provide employment estimates and remaining need to meet employment targets.

The table below shows the 2020-2044 Pierce County employment growth target for Tacoma is 70,800 jobs and the employment capacity is 84,436. Tacoma meets the Growth Management Act requirements for planning for employment.

Tacoma Employment, 2010-2020 Growth, 2044 Target, Need, and Employment Capacity							
2010 Jobs	**2020 Jobs**	**2010-2020 Growth**	**2010-2020 Annual Growth**	**2044 Employment Target**	**2020-2044 Employment Target Growth**	**Annual Growth Needed Between 2020-2044**	**2020-2044 Employment Capacity**
104,399	121,183	16,784	1,678	191,983	70,800	2,950	84,436

Through VISION 2050, the Puget Sound Regional Council has set an employment growth target for Tacoma to plan for 94,000 additional jobs by 2050.

Growth Strategy Chapter – Baseline Data

Employment by Industry Sector by Center

Tacoma Employment by Industry Sector by Center, 2022									
Mixed Use Center	**Const /Res**	**FIRE**	**Manufacturing**	**Retail**	**Services**	**WTU**	**Government**	**Public Education**	**Total**
6th Avenue	*	*	-	190	840	10	-	80	1,140
Downtown	660	3,080	1,200	610	27,200	520	3,180	1,600	38,060
James Center	-	30	*	*	720	10	-	760	1,670
Lincoln	-	-	*	160	310	*	10	170	670
Lower Pacific	-	*	-	90	350	*	680	30	1,230
Lower Portland Avenue	40	-	-	*	30	*	610	-	710
McKinley	-	10	*	*	360	*	30	-	400
Narrows	*	*	-	20	100	-	30	80	290
Point Ruston	-	30	-	10	120	-	-	-	160
Proctor	*	60	-	360	500	*	60	130	1,120
South Tacoma Way	80	70	40	140	480	10	20	-	850
Tacoma Central	-	170	*	790	4,100	*	60	-	5,230
Tacoma Mall	320	580	80	3,050	4,440	440	1,520	20	10,450
Upper Pacific	20	50	-	340	360	-	-	-	780
Upper Portland Avenue	*	*	-	80	580	-	120	-	820
Westgate	-	110	-	280	820	10	-	-	1,220
South Tacoma MIC	1,260	90	1,020	270	2,400	960	1,360	-	7,360
Port of Tacoma MIC	600	110	2,540	420	1,740	4,230	700	-	10,340
City of Tacoma	**4,416**	**5,182**	**5,269**	**11,146**	**59,387**	**7,287**	**12,249**	**5,650**	**110,587**

A dash (-) denotes zero covered employment. An asterisk (*) denotes data suppression. Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024

Acronyms for table:

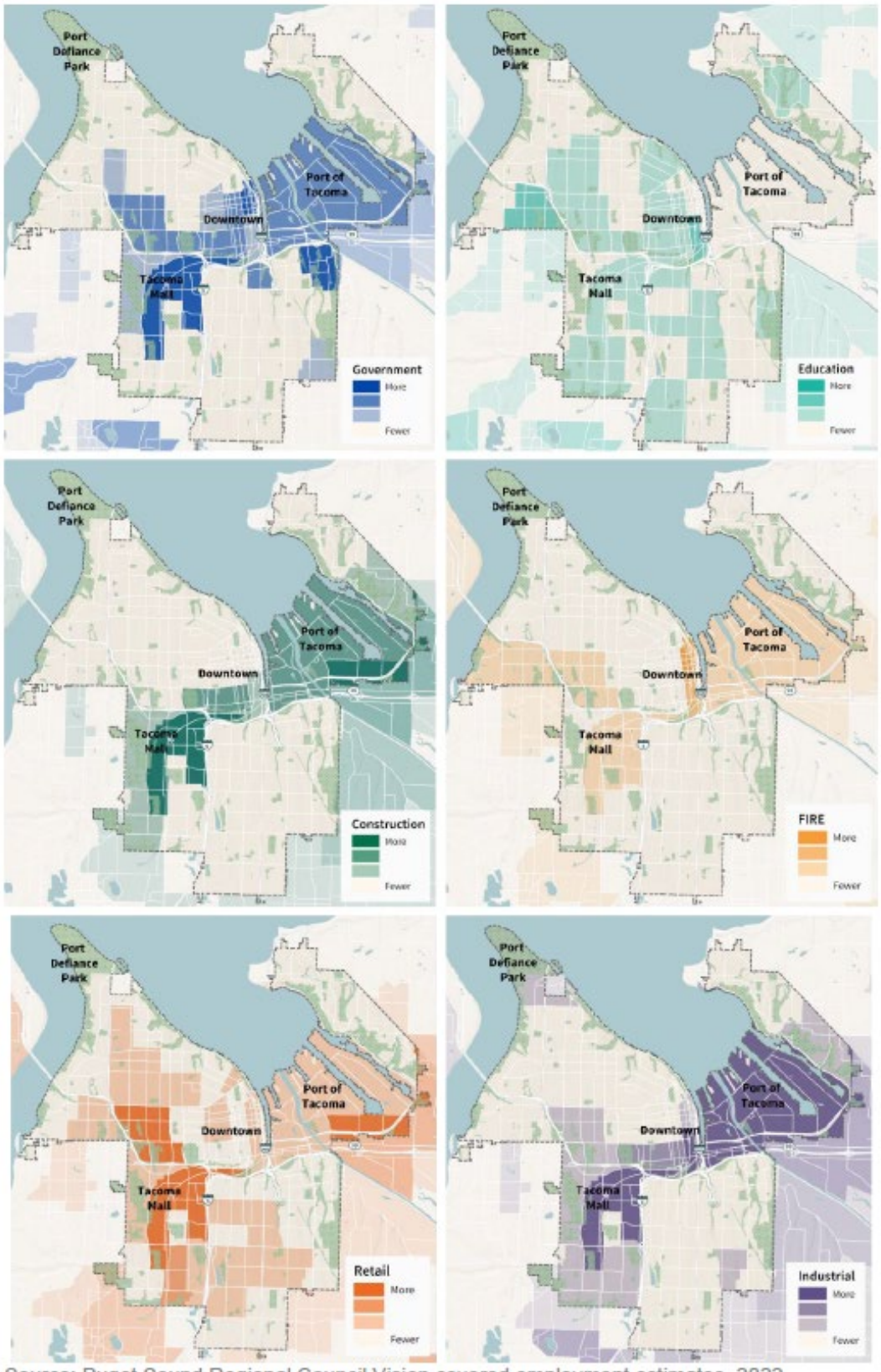
- FIRE – Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Services
- WTU – Warehouse, Transportation, and Utilities
- Const/Res – Construction Resource

Jobs by Acre, by Center

Tacoma Jobs by Acre by Center, 2022			
Location	**Gross Acres**	**Jobs**	**Jobs / Acre**
6th Avenue	86	1,140	13.3
Downtown	1,385	38,060	27.5
James Center	248	1,670	6.7
Lincoln	100	670	6.7
Lower Pacific	84	1,230	14.7
Lower Portland Avenue	105	710	6.7
McKinley	57	400	7.1
Narrows	62	290	4.7
Point Ruston	36	160	4.4
Proctor	42	1,120	26.4
South Tacoma Way	94	850	9.0
Tacoma Central	200	5,230	26.1
Tacoma Mall	573	10,450	18.2
Upper Pacific	74	780	10.5
Upper Portland Avenue	76	820	10.8
Westgate	92	1,220	13.2
South Tacoma MIC	826	7,360	8.9
Port of Tacoma MIC	5,070	10,340	2.0

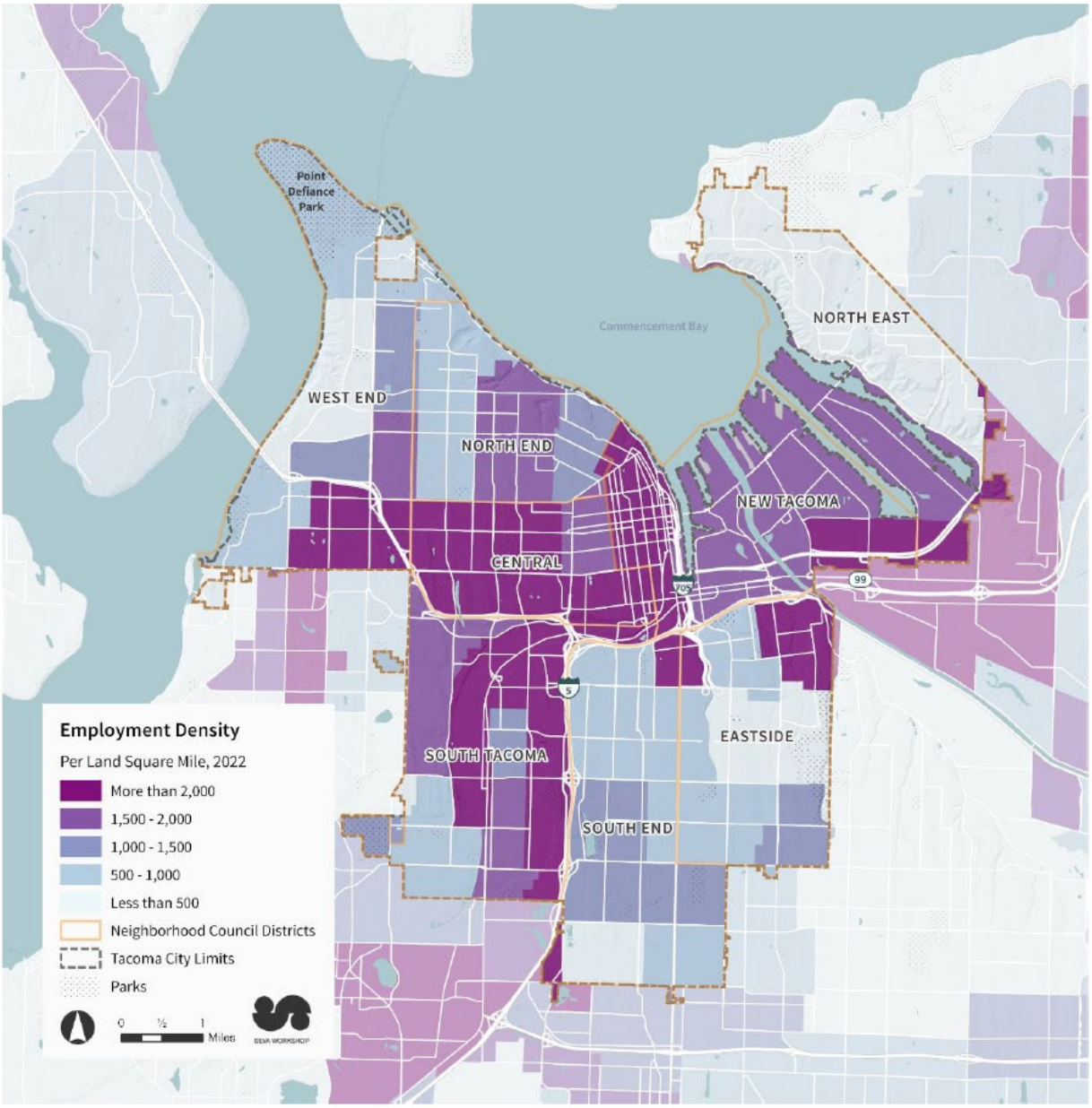
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024

Proportions of Employment by Sector, 2022



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council Vision covered employment estimates, 2022

Employment Density, 2022



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2024

One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan - Equity Assessment Context History and Baseline [LINK]

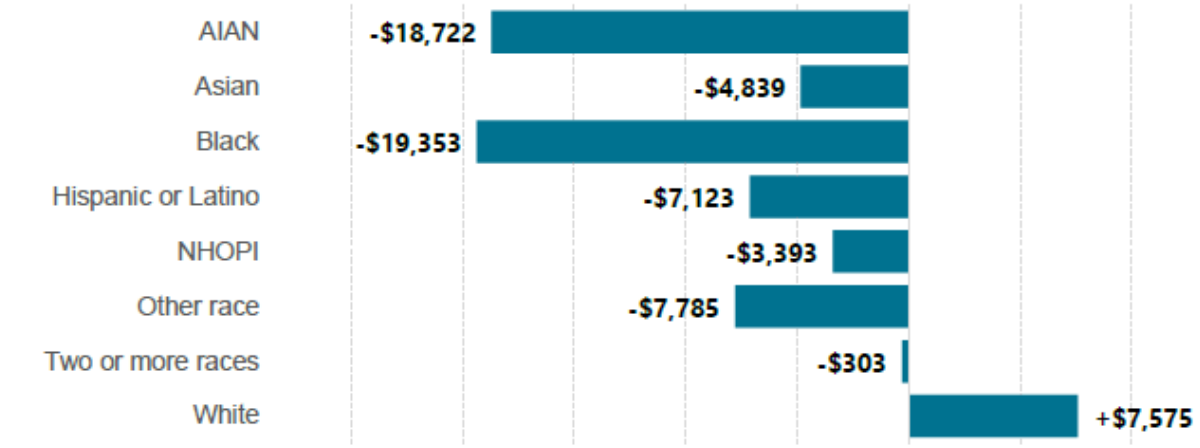
Economic Opportunity Excerpt

4.8 Economic Opportunity

Median Income

The University of Washington Center for Women's Welfare **Self-Sufficiency Standard** defines the income working families need to meet a minimum yet adequate level, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs. The standard is published for the western cities in Pierce County annually and it reflects the income needed to be earned by each adult in the household. Tacoma's 2021 median *household* income was $69,956. Compared to the self-sufficiency standard for Westen Pierce county, this level of income is insufficient for most households with two children, and many households with one child especially if they are below school age. Median income varies in Tacoma according to the race and ethnicity of the head of household as shown below. The median income among American Indian and Alaska Native households and Black headed households is nearly $20,000 less than the overall Tacoma median. Median incomes among Hispanic headed households and households headed by other races also experience a significant lag against the overall median.

Figure 21 Median Household Income by Race Compared to Overall Tacoma Median ($69,956)



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates (B19013A-H)

Child Poverty

Child poverty highlights a lack of opportunity and resources at a crucial developmental stage. The incidence of poverty is related to the economic opportunities available to caregivers, as well as the availability and effectiveness of public anti-poverty programs and services such as SNAP. The experience of childhood poverty is disproportionately high in the communities of Eastside, South End and South Tacoma. Across Tacoma, Black communities, multi-racial, and Hispanic and Latino communities experience a disproportionately high prevalence of childhood poverty. These childhood poverty rates are linked other priority outcomes related to health, housing, education, and economic opportunity for the coming generations.

Figure 22 Disproportionality in Children Under 5 in Poverty, by neighborhood and race/ethnicity

	DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 IN POVERTY	DISTIRBUTION OF ALL POPULATION BY NEIGHBORHOOD	DIFFERENCE
Central	4%	9%	-6%
Eastside	25%	15%	10%
New Tacoma	0%	7%	-7%
North East	4%	9%	-5%
North End	1%	12%	-11%
South End	28%	20%	8%
South Tacoma	33%	15%	18%
West End	5%	13%	-8%

	DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN UNDER 5 IN POVERTY	DISTIRBUTION OF ALL POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY	DIFFERENCE
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%	1%	1%
Asian	6%	8%	-2%
Black or African American	18%	10%	7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2%	1%	1%
White	19%	57%	-39%
Multi-race household	27%	9%	18%
Other race	3%	1%	3%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	24%	12%	11%

Source: U.S. Census, ACS 5-year estimates 2018-2022 by tract (B17001A-I)

Good and Promising Job Availability

Over 100,000 jobs are located in Tacoma. Health care, retail, government, and administration are some of the sectors that comprise the largest shares of Tacoma-based jobs. The Brookings Institute Opportunity Industries report and analysis examined industries for their ability to provide pathways and quality employment to workers without college degrees. They also produced metropolitan area level estimates by industry about the availability good and promising jobs according to the following definitions:

- **Good jobs** provide stable employment, middle-class wages and benefits.
- **Promising jobs** are entry-level positions from which most workers can reach a good job within 10 years.
- **High-skill jobs** are Good and promising jobs held by workers with a bachelor's degree. The bachelor's degree represents a barrier to entry.
- **Other jobs** do not provide decent pay, benefits, or pathways to good jobs.

About 17% of jobs located in Tacoma are considered good or promising by the Brookings Institute definition. Another 24% are high-skill good or promising jobs. The North East has the highest share of good jobs, driven largely by the number of logistics jobs located there. Many Tacomans have work locations outside of the city but may choose to work closer to home if the opportunity was available.

Figure 23 Good and Promising Jobs by Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD	PROMISING JOBS	GOOD JOBS	HIGH-SKILL JOBS	OTHER JOBS	DIFFERENCE FROM CITY-WIDE GOOD AND PROMISING JOBS RATE
Central	8%	7%	25%	60%	-1%
Eastside	8%	9%	23%	60%	1%
New Tacoma	8%	9%	27%	57%	0%
North East	9%	18%	18%	55%	10%
North End	9%	5%	23%	63%	-3%
South End	10%	5%	17%	68%	-1%
South Tacoma	10%	7%	18%	64%	1%
West End	9%	5%	20%	66%	-2%
Tacoma	**9%**	**8%**	**24%**	**60%**	

Source: U.S. Census, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) LODES 8.1 Workplace Area Characteristic (WAC), All jobs (JT00), 2021 by block; Brookings Institute, Opportunity Industries for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA 2018

Health Excerpt

Access to healthy food

Access to healthy food is a key component of health equity. City plans and programs can create the conditions for healthy food stores and temporary food markets to open in neighborhoods, as well as support mobile food options, food affordability, and food distribution. The Tacoma Equity Index uses the modified Retail Food Environment Index (mRFEI) to measure access to healthy food. The mRFEI is the percentage of all food retailers in an area that are considered healthy. This measure captures areas with no food options ("food deserts"; correspond to a score of

zero) as well as areas that have food outlets that are dominated by large relative amounts of unhealthy snack foods (“food swamps”; correspond to lower scores) (Centers for Disease Control). Tacoma overall has an mRFEI score of 0.7. The South End and New Tacoma stand out as areas with relatively healthy food options. The North East, South Tacoma, and West End have relatively unhealthy options.

Figure 8 Access to Healthy Food by Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD	HEALTHY FOOD AVAILABILITY	DIFFERENCE FROM CITY-WIDE AVERAGE
Central	0.9	0.20
Eastside	0.5	(0.16)
New Tacoma	1.3	0.63
North East	0.1	(0.62)
North End	0.5	(0.23)
South End	1.4	0.67
South Tacoma	0.3	(0.35)
West End	0.3	(0.38)
Tacoma	**0.7**	

Source: City of Tacoma, Equity Index 2022 by block group; ESRI Business Analyst

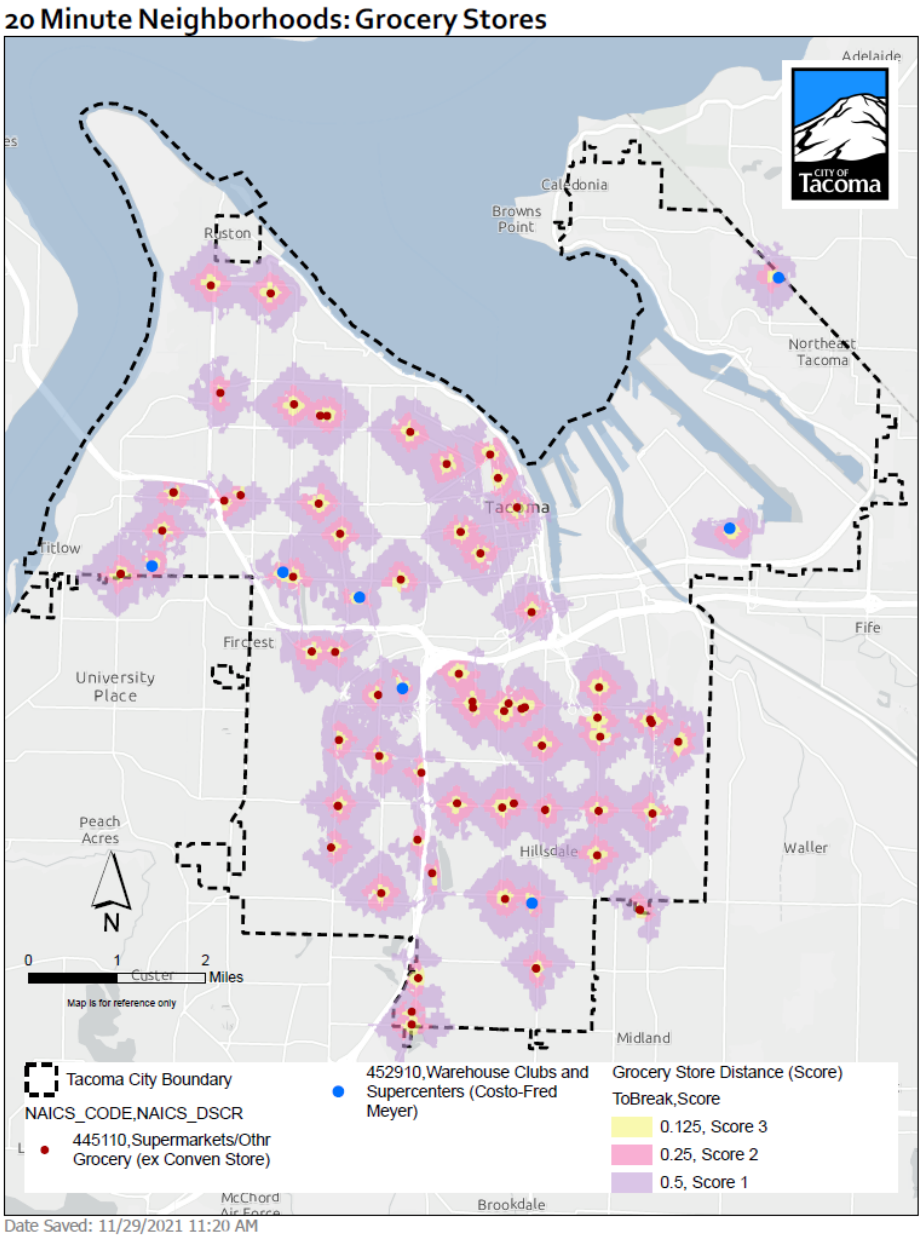
The distribution of grocery stores by neighborhood largely reflects similar patterns as the mRFEI. However, contrasting figures for South Tacoma and West End suggest that while there are relatively more food outlets available, they are not necessarily healthy options. More equitable distribution of healthy food access would result in less variation in this index across the city. Tacoma also has a goal for daily essentials, including grocery, to be within a 15-minutewalk of all residences. In North East, where a single grocery serves many people in a large area, many residents likely drive to a neighboring city or to other parts of Tacoma for grocery access.

Figure 9 Grocery by Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD	GROCERY	ACRES PER GROCERY	PEOPLE PER GROCERY	ACRES PER GROCERY DIFFERENCE FROM CITY-WIDE RATE
Central	7	346	2,939	(73)
Eastside	11	331	2,974	(88)
New Tacoma	6	788	2,536	369
North East	1	2,986	19,760	2,567
North End	6	471	4,458	52
South End	21	213	2,061	(206)
South Tacoma	12	440	2,728	21
West End	10	466	2,881	47
Tacoma	74	419	2,963	

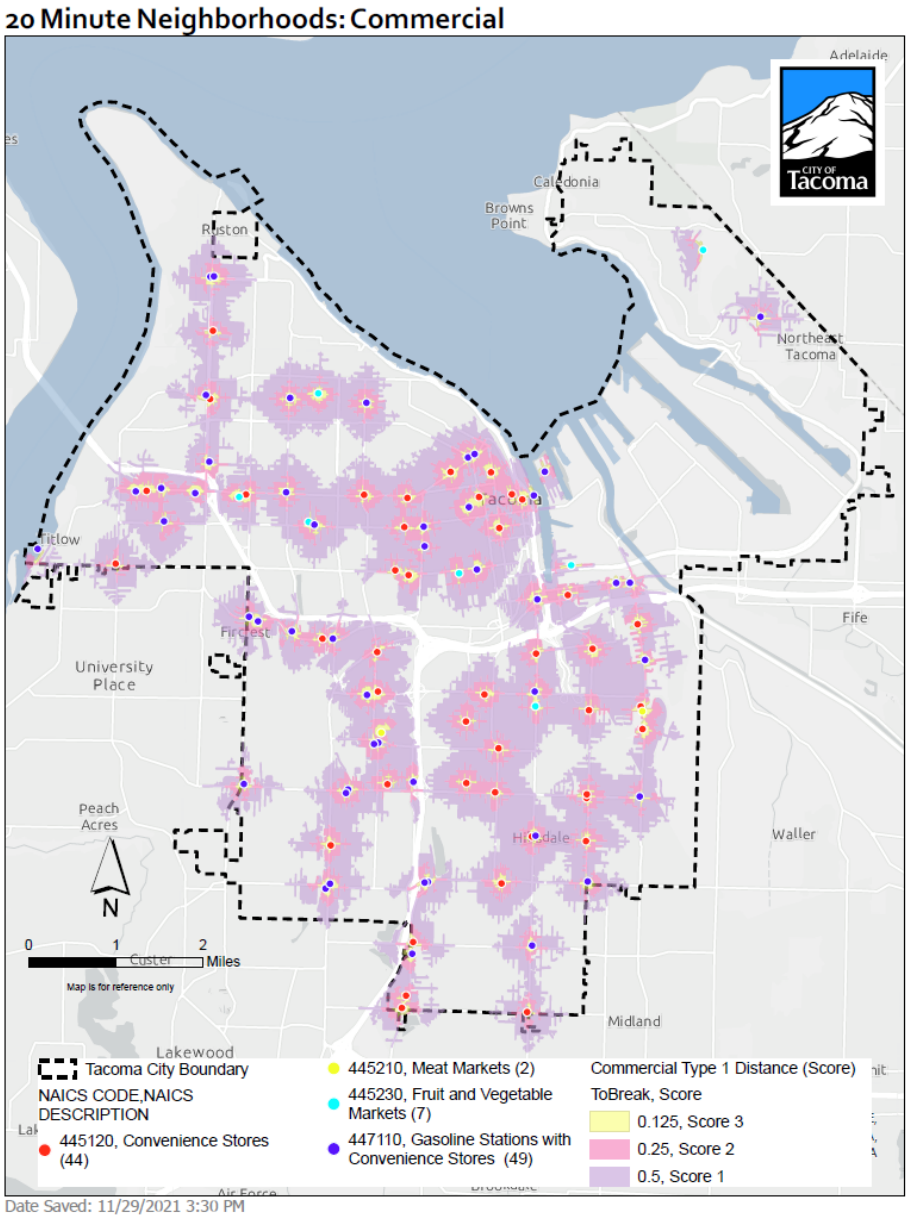
Sources: City of Tacoma, 2022.

15-Minute Neighborhood Mapping



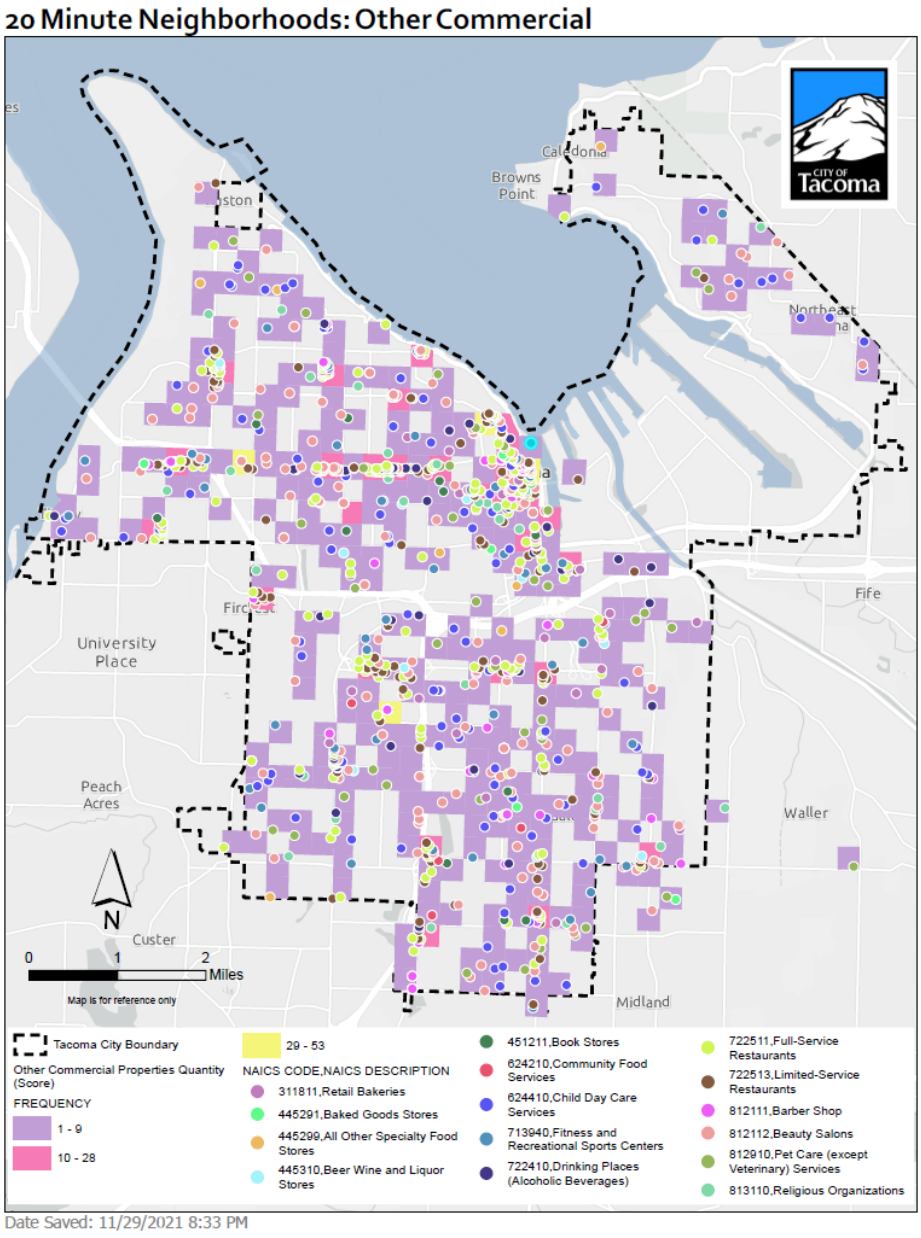
Map 1. Food Access and Commercial Grocery Stores

- Mapping NAICS: Supermarkets, warehouse-type grocers
- Buffers: Walking Distance of 1/8 mile (0.125), 1/4 mile (0.25), and 1/2 mile (0.50)
- Scoring: Weighted by Walkshed Distance



Map 2. Commercial Type 1 – Mapping of Convenience Stores and Markets

- Mapping NAICS: Convenience stores, meat markets, fruit and vegetable markets, gasoline stations with convenience store
- Buffers: Walking Distance of 1/8 mile (0.125), 1/4 mile (0.25), and 1/2 mile (0.50)
- Scoring: Weighted by Walkshed Distance



Map 3. Commercial Type 2 - Other Commercial (Services)

- Mapping NAICS: Services: book stores, fitness, barber or beauty shop, full service restaurant, pet care, religious organizations, and Personal service level: (dentist, doctor, pharmacy)
- Buffers: Quarter-mile Squared Grid Cell
- Scoring: Weighted by Number of Occurences per Quarter-mile Squared Grid Cell (Density of Services)

ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

Parks and Recreation Baseline Report | DRAFT

November 2024

CONTENTS

EXHIBITS

1 INTRODUCTION

Parks promote health and wellness, encourage early childhood development, build community connection, and contribute to resilience and ecological health.[1] In Tacoma, most of the City's robust park system operations are run by Parks Tacoma, an independent parks district that maintains and improves most of the City's parkland. Parks Tacoma organizes its work across three key mission areas:

1. Active Living and Community Wellness. The facilities, amenities, and programming associated with this category fulfill what a "typical" parks and recreation agency might offer.
2. Arts, Culture, & Heritage. This mission area further enhances the community benefits of Tacoma's park system. A network of heritage and historic sites, visual and performing arts programming, and public gathering events build additional public connections to the park system through local history and artistic expression.
3. Nature & Environment. Open spaces and natural areas are important environmental assets in a community. Public access to preservation areas differs across sites, but these areas are key for building awareness of and meeting many habitat and ecological system needs.

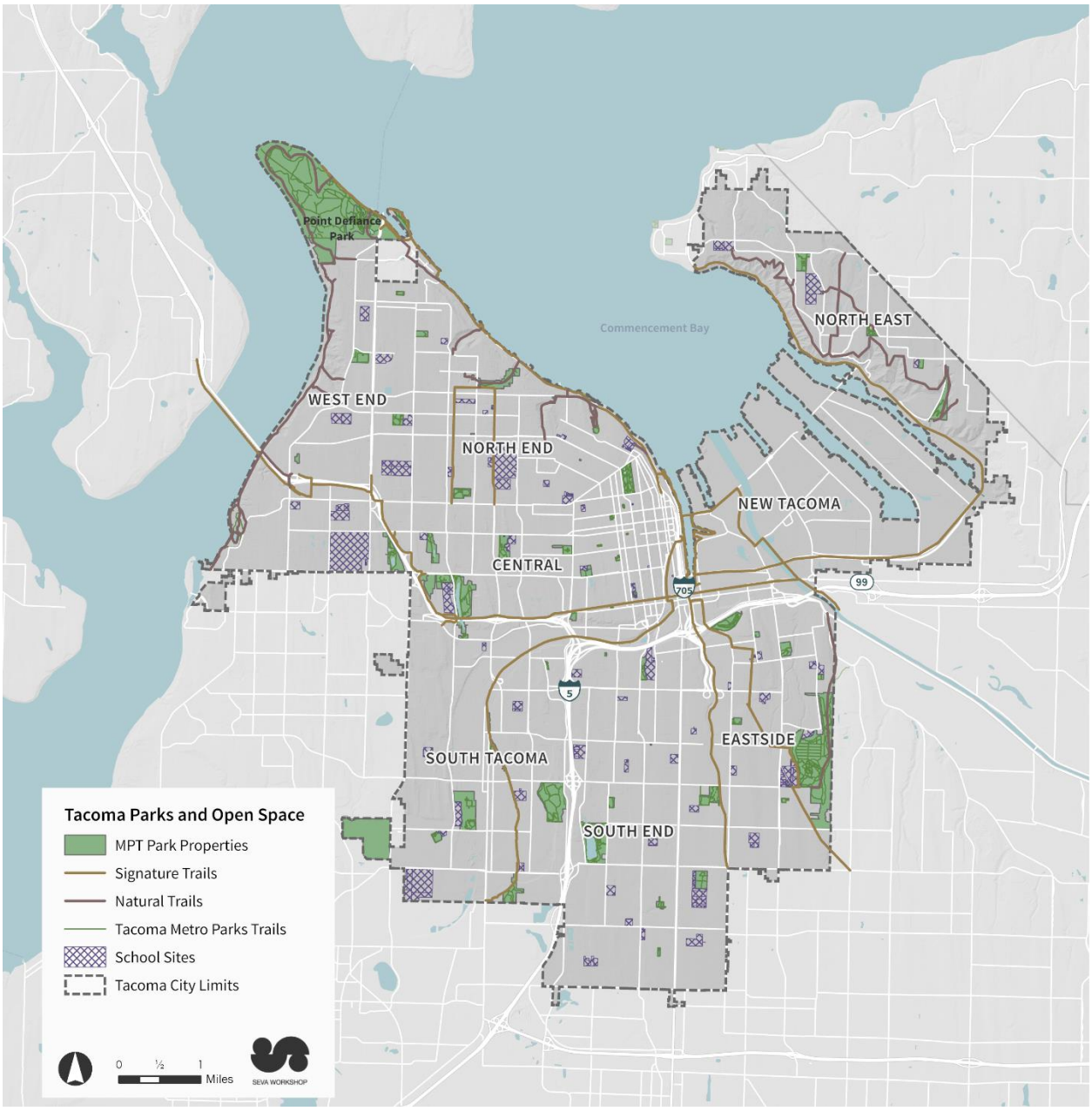
Parks Tacoma' work and plans are guided by a six-year strategic plan. The 2018 Strategic Plan is currently in the process of an update to a System and Strategic Plan to guide the agency through 2024-2030. This document sets the vision, goals, and policies for the parks district. Supplementary to this, the City owns and maintains a network of open space sites and the trail network outside of park boundaries. It also maintains access to parks via public rights-of-way.

[1] NRPA "Parks and Recreation is Essential"

2 INVENTORY

Tacoma is home to 2,901 acres of park and open space and 161 miles of trail. The map in Exhibit 1 identifies Parks Tacoma's inventory of parks and open spaces. This system is jointly managed by the City of Tacoma and Parks Tacoma. An additional 880 acres of school sites, shown in purple, add to this network of spaces to walk, play, and connect with nature.

Exhibit 1: Parks Tacoma System Map.



2.1 Parks and Facilities

Between Parks Tacoma and the City, the Tacoma Parks system includes 97 properties offering a wide range of recreation opportunities and facility access.[2] Highlights of the system include Point Defiance Park, which includes an accredited zoo and aquarium, a marina, an old-growth forest and Fort Nisqually Living History Museum; Meadow Park Golf Course; W. W. Seymour Botanical Conservatory inside an arboretum; Tacoma Nature Center; sports complexes; and 5 swimming pools.[3] These parks are distributed across the city. In addition to official park space, school grounds provide opportunity for outdoor recreation. These areas have more limited hours for public access but represent an important partnership opportunity for enhancing public access to park space, facilities, and amenities.

Park Types

City of Tacoma Classification System

In the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Tacoma classifies parks as urban parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, natural areas, community gardens, special recreation facilities, trails, open space corridors, and waterfront.

Urban parks offer breathing space in an otherwise concrete built environment. These are a special type of open space that serves the unique lifestyles and recreation needs of those who live or work in or close to Downtown and designated centers.

- Examples: Thea's Park, 21st Street Park

Neighborhood parks provide daily convenience for recreation access by nearby residences via foot or bike. They are generally small in size and are developed primarily for spontaneous and non-structured recreation activities.

- Examples: Sawyer Tot Lot, Optimist Park

Community parks are typically 5 acres or more in size, providing visitors with access to high and low impact recreation opportunities. They are designed to enhance community identity and preserve open space.

- Examples: McKinley Park, Wapato Park

Regional parks are usually over 100 acres in size. They provide visitors with access to unique regional features and attractions. Often they accommodate large group activities and have the infrastructure to support special events and festivals.

- Examples: Point Defiance Park

[2] Metro Parks (now Parks Tacoma) 2023 Year-end Report

[3] https://www.metroparkstacoma.org/about/agency-plans-partnerships/strategic-plan/

Community gardens are gardened by local groups for food, plant, or fiber production. They provide access to fresh produce, encourage connections to the environment, and support general health and wellbeing.

- Examples: 40th Street, Neighbors Park

Special recreation facilities offer opportunities for programmed activities that promote active living, an appreciation for nature and the environment, and foster respect for culture and heritage. These facilities might be freestanding within a community or regional park and are usually managed by Parks Tacoma.

- Examples: Spray park at South End Recreation & Adventure Campus, Meadow Park Golf Course

Trails serve both a recreation and active transportation function. Trails in Tacoma provide opportunity for walking, bicycling, jogging, in-line skating, dog walking, and wildlife watching.

- Examples: Dome to Defiance promenade, Titlow Park trail

Parks Tacoma Classification System

Parks Tacoma categorizes parks in its system as Regional (13), Community (24), Neighborhood (30), Natural Areas (11), and “Other” (3). A list of parks by types can be found in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Parks Inventory, by Type

	Neighborhood Parks
1	Alderwood Park
2	Baltimore Park
3	Browns Point Playfield
4	Cloverdale Park
5	Fern Hill Park
6	Ferry Park
7	Frank Alling Park
8	Gas Station Park
9	Irving Park
10	Jane Clark Park
11	Jerry Meeker Memorial
12	Lincoln Heights Park
13	Lots for Tots
14	Manitou Park
15	McCarver Park
16	Neighbors Park
17	North Slope Historic Park
18	Northeast Tacoma Playground

19	Oakland Madrona Park
20	Old Town Park
21	Optimist Park
22	People's Park
23	Proctor Gardens
24	Puget Park
25	Rogers Playfield
26	Roosevelt Park
27	Ryan's Park/Celebration Park
28	Sawyer Tot Lot
29	Sheridan Park
30	Thea's Park

	Community Parks
1	Browns Point Lighthouse Park
2	Center at Norpoint
3	Dash Point Park and Pier
4	Eastside Community Center
5	Franklin Park
6	Heidelberg/Davis Park
7	Jefferson Park
8	Kandle Park
9	Lincoln Park
10	McKinley Park
11	Norpoint Park
12	Peck Field
13	People's Community Center
14	Portland Avenue Park
15	South End Recreation & Adventure (SERA) Campus
16	South Park
17	Stanley Playfield
18	Stewart Heights Park
19	Titlow Park
20	Vassault Park
21	Verlo Playfield
22	W. W. Seymour Conservatory

23	Wapato Park
24	Wright Park

	Regional Park
1	Dickman Mill Park
2	Dune Peninsula at Point Defiance Park
3	Fort Nisqually Living History Museum
4	Hamilton Park
5	Jack Hyde Park at Commencement Bay
6	Marine Park
7	Old Town Dock
8	Point Defiance Boathouse Grounds
9	Point Defiance Park
10	Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium
11	Ruston Way
12	Swan Creek Park
13	Weyerhaeuser Jr. Park

	Natural Area
1	Catherine Ursich Park
2	Charlotte's Blueberry Park
3	China Lake Park
4	Delong Park
5	Garfield Gulch
6	Garfield Park
7	Julia's Gulch
8	Oak Tree Park
9	Puget Gardens
10	Tacoma Nature Center Park/Snake Lake Natural Area
11	Wapato Hills Park

	Other
1	Al Davies Boys and Girls Club
2	Boy Scouts of America Pacific Harbors Council
3	Parks Tacoma Headquarters

Park Facilities

Park facilities are physical assets and amenities that expand the range of activities that can be enjoyed across the parks system. Typically, these facilities also require additional maintenance efforts and investment. Examples include spray parks, basketball courts, picnic shelters, and dog parks. The list in Exhibit 3 details the range of facilities and amenities across Tacoma's park network.

Exhibit 3: Facilities and Amenities in Tacoma's Park System

Facilities and Amenities	Total Count
Pools	5
Picnic Shelters	40
Water Access	12
Beach Access	9
Skate Features	8
Spraygrounds	10
Playground	47
Athletic Field	18
Off leash Dog Park	4
Diamond Fields	26
Biking Infrastructure	17
Community Centers	4
Historic Site	24
Community Gardens	8
Display Gardens	2
Tennis/Pickleball	11
Basketball	31
Benches, Open Lawn and/or Picnic Tables	64
Rain Garden	1

Source: Parks Tacoma, 2024; Seva Workshop, 2024.

2.2 Level of Service (LOS) Standards

LOS standards are metrics created to track the performance of a park system. When first popularized in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, LOS was measured with a population-based standard for the number of amenities, facilities, trail miles, or park land acres available to residents. Today, these metrics are broadened to encompass a variety of characteristics within a system. Access is one major consideration that is not well addressed with a population-based metric.

Parks Tacoma takes a system-wide approach to understanding and evaluating LOS, understanding that community needs are complex and contextual. This allows the organization to consider that certain parts of the City have different focus areas for improvement, leading to a cohesive network of spaces and programs.

The 2018 Strategic Plan sets 2 key performance measures for the park system, in addition to 4 other measure more relevant to their operations as an organizatoin:

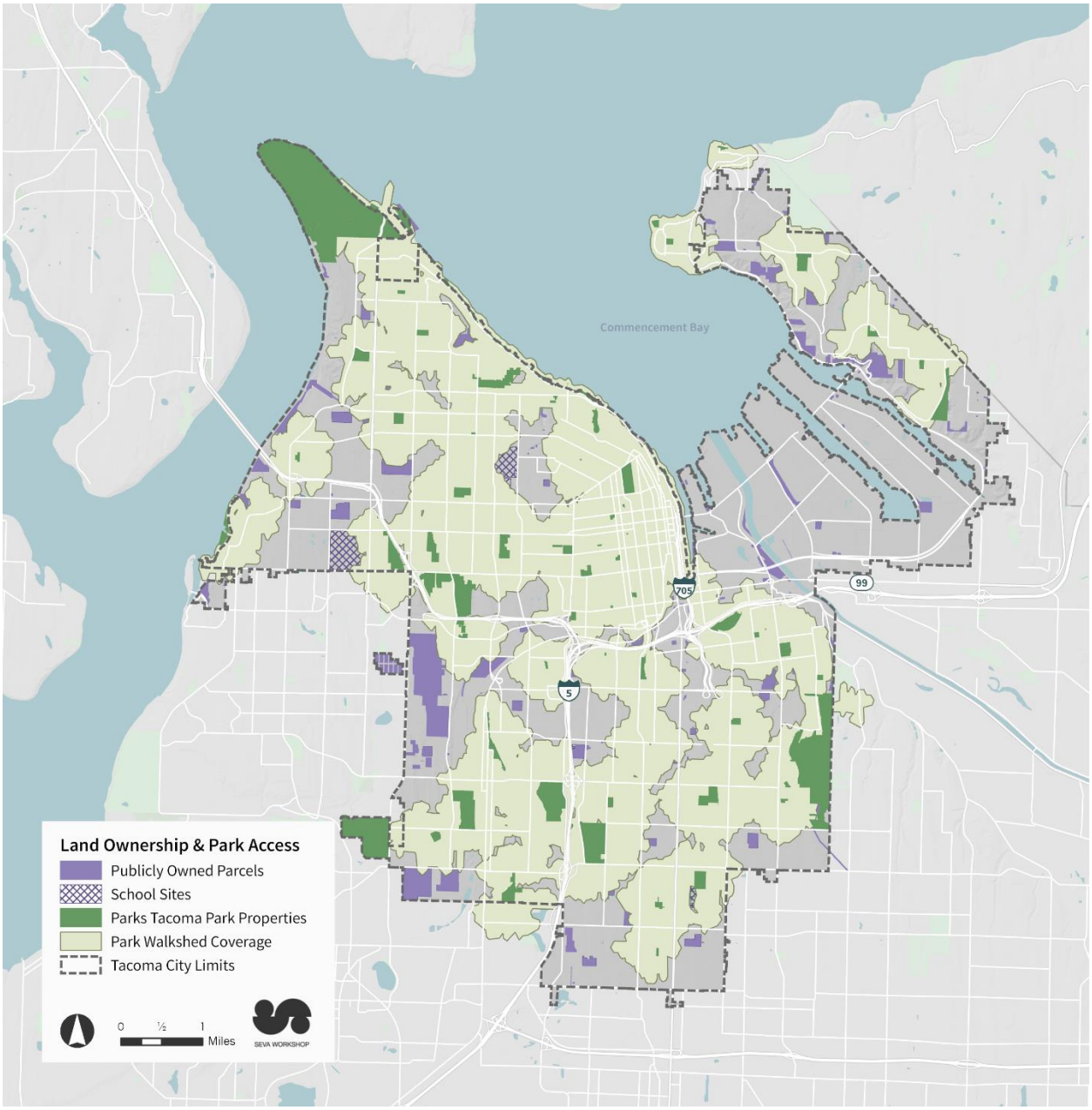
1. Walkable Access – Ensure that all District residents, regardless of location, have access to a park or open space within a 10-minute walk from their residence.
2. Programming – Maintain at least 40% of classes at 75% registration capacity or higher.

Walkable Access

The walkshed map in Exhibit 4 shows the 10-minute walkshed around each of Tacoma's parks. Areas of the City outside of these walksheds are considered "gap areas". In 2018, Parks Tacoma adopted an LOS goal to ensure that all residents, regardless of location, have access to a park or open space within a 10-minute walk of their residence. At the time, coverage was at 74% (inclusive of K-12 school properties), with the goal of reaching 90% by 2023. Reporting from the Trust for Public Land (TPL) in 2024 estimate slower progress, at 76% coverage.[4] The City measures this walkshed coverage without the public school properties considered, as access to these facilities varies across the City. With that lens, the current 10-minute walkshed coverage rate is 64%.

[4] https://parkserve.tpl.org/mapping/index.html?CityID=5370000#/?CityID=5370000

Exhibit 4: Tacoma Parks and Walksheds Map.

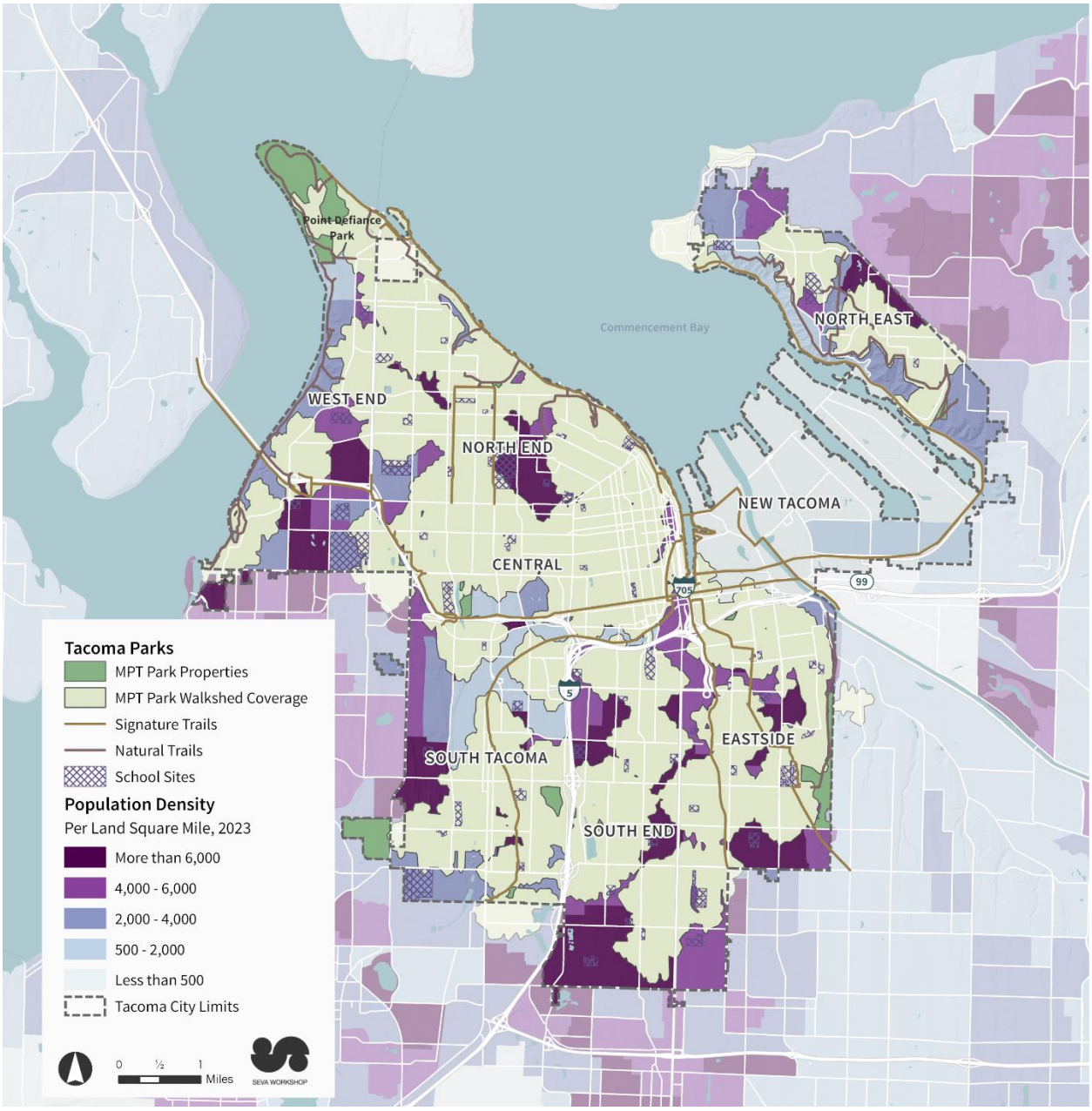


Sources: Parks Tacoma, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

The map in Exhibit 5 overlays population density data for areas that fall outside of the park walkshed map. This highlights priority areas for improvement to park access, based on the goal of increasing proximity of parks for more residents. There is some nuance to these gaps, as shown by the location of school sites and trails. Gap areas with higher population density are listed below, along with equity priority communities identified in higher proportions based on Community Profile analysis:

- **The southern and northwestern parts of South End**
  - The southern proportion has a high proportion of People of Color, and there is a lower median household income for both areas
- **The southern area of Eastside**
  - There is a high proportion of households with children, People of Color, and a lower median household income
- **The western areas of South Tacoma**
  - There is a high proportion of households with children and a lower median household income
- Southern and central portions of West End
  - There are lower median household incomes
- The central area of North End
  - There is a high proportion of household with children
- Eastern edge of North East

Exhibit 5: Park Walkshed Gaps and Population Density in Tacoma.



Sources: Parks Tacoma, 2024; OFM Population density, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

Recreation and Programming

Recreation facilities, classes, athletic clubs and leagues, and cultural events all contribute to the connection and activation of Tacoma's park system. The range of offerings should reflect the population's diverse interests, abilities, and cultures. Participation in recreation classes and leagues builds community and connects families in a unique way. In 2023, Parks Tacoma reports offering 4,118 classes and events across the year, with 539,519 total participants. Continued surveying and community conversations help public agencies respond to changing desires for recreation and events in Tacoma.

The Parks Tacoma Needs Assessment summarizes recreation trends by neighborhood in Tacoma. They include categories of: Exercise/Personal Health Activities, Sport Activities, Outdoor Activities, and Programming-Related Enrichment Activities. Scores over 100 reflect higher than national average demand for the described activity, and scores under 100 represent lower than national average. Average demand is indexed on national trends. Summary tables for all studied activities are shown in Exhibit 6 through Exhibit 9, grouped by category of activity.

Note: Study area boundaries in the Parks Tacoma report are slightly different than the study areas for this comprehensive plan update. We have summarized at the closest approximate overlap.

Exercise and Personal Health Activities

This study finds that Parks Tacoma residents exhibit averages that generally align with national averages for exercise and personal health activities. Northern planning areas score highly for almost all of the studied exercise/ personal health activities such as walking, swimming, and aerobics. This directly relates to the trail system development, fitness opportunities, and aquatic space available in these neighborhoods. Southern planning areas overall score lower for demand for these activities., although Zumba is popular in these areas. Pilates, weight lifting, and yoga also score higher for demand in these areas.

Exhibit 6: Exercise and Personal Health Activities, MPI by Study Area

Activity	Central	New Tacoma + North East	West End + North End	Eastside + South End	South Tacoma	Overall
Zumba	99	106	95	122	129	110
Pilates	107	124	115	86	101	104
Weight Lifting	93	120	107	101	102	104
Yoga	102	120	121	86	96	104
Jogging/Running	91	120	117	92	99	103
Walking for Exercise	96	113	111	88	88	99
Swimming	89	114	106	90	92	98
Aerobics	86	118	110	84	88	96

Note: Study area boundaries in the Parks Tacoma report are slightly different than the study areas for this comprehensive plan update. We have summarized at the closest approximate overlap.
Sources: Metro Parks (now Parks Tacoma) "Needs Assessment: Recreation Trends", 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024

Sport Activities

All sport activities score above 100 in the New Tacoma + North East neighborhood area. Citywide, the highest ranking sports are ping pong, soccer, bowling, basketball, and softball. South Tacoma shows higher demand for volleyball, while the West End + North End neighborhoods exhibit higher demand for tennis, frisbee, and golf. The Central area shows the lowest overall demand for sport activities.

Exhibit 7: Sport Activities, MPI by Study Area

Activity	Central	New Tacoma + North East	West End + North End	Eastside + South End	South Tacoma	Overall
Ping Pong	106	116	107	105	120	109
Soccer	82	119	99	118	109	106
Bowling	95	110	101	106	110	104
Basketball	91	104	88	108	120	101
Softball	85	110	89	108	123	101
Tennis	91	117	111	82	91	97
Volleyball	83	103	91	96	107	95
Baseball	75	118	89	96	78	91
Frisbee	82	124	107	75	80	91
Football	77	108	82	94	99	90
Golf	70	127	113	73	71	90

Note: Study area boundaries in the Parks Tacoma report are slightly different than the study areas for this comprehensive plan update. We have summarized at the closest approximate overlap.
Sources: Metro Parks (now Parks Tacoma) “Needs Assessment: Recreation Trends”, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024

Outdoor Activities

The top two outdoor activities both relate to biking – mountain and road – indicating a priority for continued enhancement of the trail network. Downhill skiing also ranks high cityside. Northern neighborhoods show higher demand for a variety of outdoor activities, such as backpacking, kayaking, hiking, fishing, horseback riding, boating, and archery. More investigation should be given to understand the outdoor activity needs for residents in Central and Southern neighborhoods.

Exhibit 8: Outdoor Activities, MPI by Study Area

Activity	Central	New Tacoma + North East	West End + North End	Eastside + South End	South Tacoma	Overall
Bicycling (Mountain)	97	134	106	105	106	107
Bicycling (Road)	95	120	122	87	87	102
Skiing (Downhill)	84	129	133	85	63	101
Backpacking	99	113	117	87	84	100
Canoeing/Kayaking	93	120	115	86	83	99
Hiking	92	124	113	82	85	98
Fishing (Salt Water)	78	117	101	93	84	94
Archery	87	95	103	82	97	92
Horseback Riding	77	110	94	76	97	88
Fishing (Fresh Water)	83	90	89	80	92	86
Boating (Power)	79	112	100	64	72	83

Note: Study area boundaries in the Parks Tacoma report are slightly different than the study areas for this comprehensive plan update. We have summarized at the closest approximate overlap.
Sources: Metro Parks (now Parks Tacoma) “Needs Assessment: Recreation Trends”, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024

Program-Related Enrichment Activities

There are many program-related activities exhibiting high demand in Tacoma. Visiting the zoo is highly rated across planning areas. The arts have positive trends across Tacoma including painting/drawing, dancing, and visiting art galleries. Video gaming (console, portable, and computer) have relatively high scores indicating there may be an opportunity to explore e-gaming as a programmatic offering. Several differences exist across the planning areas that should be considered when program planning. For example, billiards/pool is more highly ranked in South Tacoma, while woodworking scores higher in New Tacoma + North East.

Exhibit 9: Programming-Related Enrichment Activities, MPI by Study Area

Activity	Central	New Tacoma + North East	West End + North End	Eastside + South End	South Tacoma	Overall
Art Gallery	101	120	135	95	99	111
Video Game (Console)	120	99	99	113	122	110
Computer Game (Offline)	106	106	107	106	110	106
Museum	102	123	122	92	92	106
Painting/Drawing	106	103	109	104	109	106
Dancing	103	100	101	108	116	105
Video Game (Portable)	104	96	98	114	110	105
Dance Performance	106	120	112	90	105	104
Board Game	98	113	111	98	97	103
Chess	102	103	108	96	98	102
Computer Game (Online)	111	102	106	94	102	102
Cooking	99	110	109	93	102	102
Zoo	93	112	106	100	102	102
Indoor Gardening or Plant Care	97	106	110	93	93	100
Baking	96	107	109	92	93	100
Birdwatching	101	103	111	90	95	100
Theater	94	124	120	80	86	100
Adult Education Course	93	112	107	89	97	99
Cards	102	109	109	88	88	99
Book Club	89	126	120	81	80	98
Photography	99	111	109	86	93	98
Barbecued	92	108	101	94	92	97
Fantasy Sports	92	125	109	90	75	97
Billiards/Pool	89	91	94	96	110	96
Drone	93	97	96	99	94	96
Musical Instrument	94	113	110	77	85	95
Sudoku	90	113	104	85	90	95
Bingo	93	90	96	96	91	94
Photo Albums/ Scrapbooking	90	98	102	85	97	94
Water Park	66	113	90	72	80	82
Woodworking	81	103	93	68	74	82

Note: Study area boundaries in the Parks Tacoma report are slightly different than the study areas for this comprehensive plan update. We have summarized at the closest approximate overlap.
Sources: Metro Parks (now Parks Tacoma) “Needs Assessment: Recreation Trends”, 2022; Seva Workshop, 2024

3 DEMAND AND NEEDS

3.1 Future Demand and System Needs

As Tacoma's population grows and changes, the demands and system needs for its park network evolve as well. Looking to the future, considerations for the size, accessibility, quality, and variety of offerings in Tacoma's park system are all taken into account to promote health and wellbeing across the city.

LOS by System Size and Population Estimates

Today's population is served by 13.0 acres of park space and 0.72 miles of trail per 1,000 population.[5]

- If no expansions to the park system are made, the 2050 population will have an LOS of 8.3 acres and 0.46 miles of trails per 1,000 population.
- To maintain a consistent LOS with 2050 target population growth, 1,659 acres of park space and 92 miles of trails need to be added.
- While regional parks may not scale with population growth, the acreage of community and neighborhood parks can be tracked so that new development is adequately served by park space.

LOS by Walkshed

Parks Tacoma emphasizes a key focus on park accessibility, with the target that every residence in the city be within a 10-minute walk of a park. This LOS metric takes into account that it isn't always feasible to acquire park land at the pace of population growth, but strategic acquisitions can ensure broad accessibility of open space and recreation amenities. As measured in 2018, Parks Tacoma reports 74% of Tacoma is within a 10-minute walk of a park. This figure, however, adds K-12 school properties as part of the service network. Not all schools offer many windows of access to the general public, however, so the City has also calculated the 10-minute walkshed without these sites at 64%.

- Focus areas for addressing walkshed gaps are the southern and northwestern gap areas in South End, the southern portion of Eastside, and western areas of South Tacoma.
- Second tier priority gaps are in the southern and central portions of West End, the central area of North End, and the eastern edge of North East.

[5] Parks Tacoma reports an LOS of 13.1 acres per 1,000 population but this includes a service area that extends beyond the City's boundaries. The figure shown adjusts acreage and population to City of Tacoma only.

- As demonstrated in the difference between walkshed coverage estimates, partnerships with local schools within service gap areas can make a meaningful difference in improving public access to parks and open space.

Maintenance and Capital Improvements

In addition to the size and availability of the park system, the quality of park spaces is another important consideration. Adequate funds must be earmarked to care for landscaping, repair damaged or aging equipment, upkeep restrooms and indoor facilities, and replace assets at the end of their useful life. In 2022, the City of Tacoma allocated $7.2 million to Parks Tacoma for its staffing, supplies, and capital investments in the 2023-24 biennium.[6] Other major sources of revenue for Parks Tacoma include property tax, earned revenue, sales tax, donations, intergovernmental funding, and grants. Their staff includes 458 full time positions budgeted by the end of 2024.

- If system expansions are implemented proportional increases in staff allocations will be needed to maintain these new spaces.
- In 2014, voters approved a $198 million capital improvements bond which has included a wide range of projects, including major investment in the zoo.
- The Tacoma Department of Public Works budgeted $4.3 million to capital investments in paths and trails for the 2023-24 biennium.
- Current priorities for capital spending include $28.4 million of investment:[7]
  - Chinese Reconciliation Park (new phase)
  - Downtown Fountains (reconditioning)
  - Fireman's Park (improvements)
  - Catherine Ushka's Gas Station Park – recently completed
  - Melanie Jan LaPlant Dressel Park – recently completed
  - Prairie Line Trail – Art Park
  - Waterway Park

Recreation and Programming

One LOS metric for Parks Tacoma is that at least 40% of its classes attain 75% registration capacity or higher. In 2022 the overall average fill rate for Parks Tacoma programs was over 68%. In 2023 the average was over 56%. If population targets are achieved, continued and increased demand for recreation programs is anticipated.

[6] Parks Tacoma 2023-2024 Budget Presentation, 2022.

[7] Tacoma 2023-2028 Capital Facilities Program

3.2 Tree canopy

Tacoma, with 20% of the land area covered by tree canopy, has the least amount of tree canopy as a percentage of land cover for all communities assessed in the Puget Sound Region[8]. The City of Tacoma Urban Forestry team has committed to a goal of 30% tree canopy cover by 2030. At the neighborhood scale, tree coverage ranges from a low of 12% in New Tacoma to a high of 32% in North East Tacoma. Tacoma's existing tree canopy is summarized by neighborhood in Exhibit 10 and is mapped in Exhibit 11. Areas of Tacoma with lowest rates of tree canopy coverage are New Tacoma, South End, and Central neighborhoods.

When an area has fewer green spaces and more impervious surfaces like roads, parking lots, and buildings, etc. it absorbs and retains more heat from the sun and can create a heat island. Because of built infrastructure, many urban areas experience higher temperatures compared to their rural surroundings. This difference in temperature is what defines an urban heat island effect. A 2020 analysis conducted by Earth Economics found that urban heat islands in Tacoma increase maximum temperatures by as much as 6.2°F above the local baseline. Combined with regional climatic effects, neighborhoods in Central and South Tacoma may be as much as 14°F hotter than neighborhoods in North Tacoma.

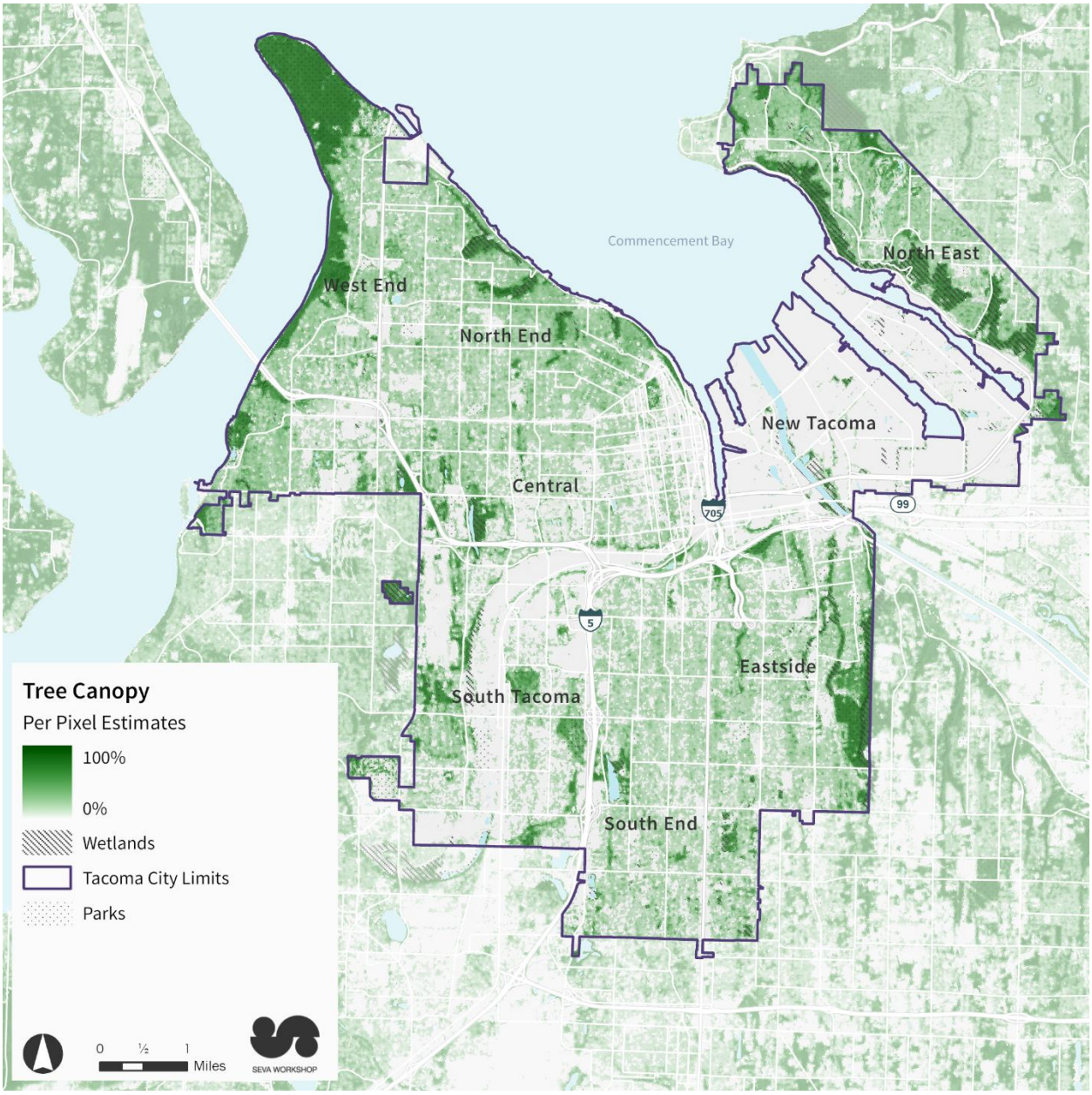
Exhibit 10: Urban Heat Index and Average Tree Coverage in Tacoma, by Neighborhood.

Neighborhood	Urban Heat Index*	Average tree coverage (%)
Central	86.91	17%
Eastside	87.20	23%
New Tacoma	86.04	12%
North East	85.80	32%
North End	85.86	23%
South End	86.77	16%
South Tacoma	86.57	19%
West End	85.52	21%
All Tacoma	86.39	20%

*Urban Heat Index measures the average afternoon and evening temperature during a single day.
Sources: iTree Landscape, 2017; Earth Economics Analysis, 2020; Seva Workshop, 2024.

[8] "Urban Tree Canopy Assessment" City of Tacoma, 2018

Exhibit 11: Tree Canopy in Tacoma, 2017.



Source: City of Tacoma, 2017; Seva Workshop, 2023.

4 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Success for Tacoma's park system relies on multiple organizations and departments to work in coordination. Some of the key players in this ecosystem include:

- Parks Tacoma: Maintains and operates the active park spaces in Tacoma and provides and manages recreation programming
- City of Tacoma: Owns most of the space dedicated to passive parks and natural areas in the city; Public Works department maintains trail network outside of physical park boundaries, as well as public rights-of-way which connect users to park system amenities
- Tacoma Public Schools: Partner with communities to offer public access to amenities during hours when facilities are not otherwise in use
- State Agencies: Offer grant funding for improvement and operations of the park system

ONE TACOMA

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Historic Preservation Baseline Conditions Report | DRAFT

September 2024

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Architectural Resources Group (ARG) has prepared this memorandum to provide an overview of the City of Tacoma's policies and regulations regarding historic properties and lay the groundwork for historic preservation considerations in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. Accordingly, the second half of this memo summarizes identified deficiencies in the existing policies and regulations and preliminarily maps out ways these deficiencies could be addressed.

Historic Resources in Tacoma

The City of Tacoma maintains the Tacoma Register of Historic Places (TRHP), which includes individually registered City Landmarks in addition to Historic Districts and Conservation Districts. The Tacoma Register includes approximately 190 City Landmarks, including residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial properties with construction dates ranging from the 1840s to 1950s. Many of these properties are also listed on the Washington Heritage Register (WHR) and/or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Landmarks are located across the city but are clustered in Downtown Tacoma, Central Tacoma, and the North Slope, areas of the city with the highest concentration of older building stock. See a map of historic resources in Exhibit 1.

In addition to individual landmarks, the Tacoma Register includes four historic districts, two of which are also conservation districts:

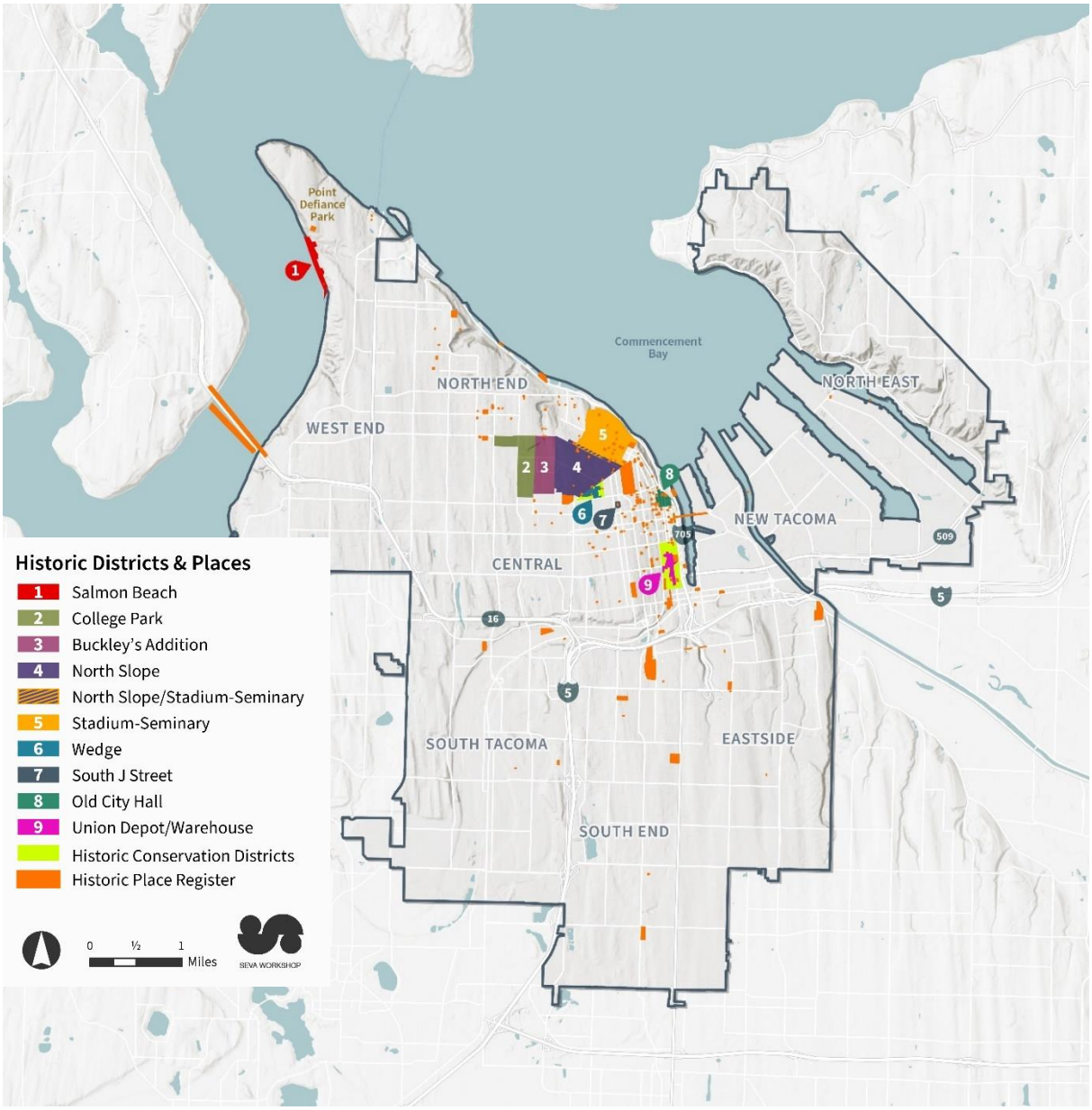
- Old City Hall Historic District
- North Slope Historic District
- Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District and Union Station Conservation District
- Wedge Neighborhood Historic and Conservation Districts

Eight historic districts are, including the four Tacoma Register districts, are listed on the Washington Heritage Register:

- Buckley's Addition Historic District
- College Park Historic District
- North Slope Historic District
- Old City Hall Historic District
- Salmon Beach Historic District
- South J Street Historic District
- Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District and Union Station Conservation District
- Wedge Neighborhood Historic and Conservation Districts

All but one of these eight districts (Salmon Beach) are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[1]

Exhibit 1: Tacoma Historic Resources Inventory, 2024.



Sources: City of Tacoma, 2023; Seva Workshop, 2024.

[1] Additional information regarding the properties on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is available in Zoe Scuderi, "2021 Report on Tacoma Register of Historic Places Index," Tacoma Department of Planning and Development Services, Office of Long-range Planning, 2021-22.

2 TACOMA'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

2.1 Summary of Historic Preservation Plan

Tacoma's Historic Preservation Plan (HP Plan) was adopted in 2011 and replaced the Culture and History element from the prior Comprehensive Plan. As a programmatic element in Book 2 of the existing Comprehensive Plan, the HP Plan defines the City of Tacoma's preservation goals, policies and actions for preservation and neighborhood conservation. It also provides a framework for organizations engaged in community-based initiatives with interests in protecting and experiencing cultural resources. In addition to an Executive Summary, the HP Plan is divided into five sections, each of which is described below.

Introduction

The Introduction to the HP Plan offers some general background on historic preservation, and, in particular, describes how historic preservation can foster cultural/social sustainability (by promoting social interaction and fostering retention of communities' cultural traditions and social fabric) , environmental sustainability (through retention of materials and conservation of energy embodied in existing buildings), and economic sustainability (through higher property values, support for local businesses and trades, and increased heritage tourism).

The Introduction also includes a "Vision Statement for Historic Preservation in 2020," which identifies nine aspirational characteristics for Tacoma's Historic Preservation Program:

- Historic resources are integral to the city's overall goals and objectives.
- Historic resources convey the humanity of Tacoma.
- Historic resources are key to the city's sustainability initiatives.
- A network of individuals and organizations supports Historic Preservation throughout the community.
- Historic Preservation is "horizontally integrated" into planning efforts.
- The City's Historic Preservation program is readily accessible.
- Historic Preservation looks forward while valuing the past.
- Historic preservation is solution oriented.
- The preservation program guides treatment of historic resources.

Chapter 1: Historic Resources

Chapter 1 of the HP Plan provides a brief summary of historic resources in Tacoma, including a synopsis of the local preservation movement, a description of historic property types and a summary of the city's existing historic landmarks and districts. Chapter 1 includes summaries of three over-arching historical themes that are important to understanding many of Tacoma's historic resources: Native American settlement, Early European settlement, and transportation development. The chapter also points to more general themes (community development, social institutions and movements, political themes, cultural themes, and economic themes) that provide an understanding of Tacoma's historic development.

Chapter 1 also separates Tacoma's historic property types into industrial resources, commercial resources, residential resources, civic and religious resources, and mid-century resources, and describes examples and common characteristics of each type. Finally, Chapter 1 provides an overview of Tacoma's currently designated landmarks, historic districts, and conservation districts.

Chapter 2: Program Components

Chapter 2 of the HP Plan describes how Tacoma's preservation program works and is broken into six sections: Administration, Identification, Management Tools, Incentives and Benefits, Education, and Advocacy. Each section closes with a summary of known issues or areas for growth associated with that program component.

- The *Administration* section describes the responsibilities of the City's Historic Preservation Office.
- The *Identification* section describes how properties are surveyed and designated, including a discussion of how historic contexts and surveys inform significance evaluations, and a summary of the City's historic resource listing process. The section also summarizes previously completed historic resource surveys.
- The *Management Tools* section describes specific mechanisms for protecting historic resources and, as such, summarizes relevant portions of Tacoma's Municipal Code, including the zoning code, building code, demolition regulations and, most notably, the design review process.
- The *Incentives and Benefits* section describes programs that seek to stimulate investment in historic properties, including the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, the Washington State Special Tax Valuation, the Pierce County/City of Tacoma Current Use Assessment, the City of Tacoma Tax Incentive for Multi Family Housing, and City of Tacoma Zoning Incentives (such height bonuses or parking requirement waivers).
- The *Education* section describes tools, such as a yearly events calendar or preservation month activities, that can strengthen the preservation program by helping to build community awareness and expertise.

- Finally, the *Advocacy* section summarizes partnerships that support preservation, identifying categories of local preservation partners; state, regional and national preservation partners; and potential preservation partners.

Chapter 3: Program Goals

Chapter 3 of the HP Plan lays out goals, policies, and actions for historic preservation in Tacoma. These include a collection of overall goals, policies and actions, along with goals, policies, and actions for each of the six program components (Administration, Identification, Management Tools, Incentives and Benefits, Education, and Advocacy) identified in Chapter 2.

Within each section, *Goals* summarize the desired outcome at the highest level (e.g. “A livable community with a strong sense of history”), *Policies* addressing one aspect of that goal (e.g., “Integrate Tacoma’s historic resources into community planning efforts”), and *Actions* describe specific, achievable tasks against which success can be measured (e.g., “Encourage neighborhood-level preservation and conservation programs”). Both overall and project component goals are summarized below.

Overall

- A Livable Community With a Strong Sense of History
- A Sustainable Community Supported by Preservation Efforts
- An Economically Vibrant Community Supported by Preservation Activities
- Tacoma’s Preservation Program Employs Nationally Recognized Best Practices
- Preservation is Integral to Other Community Goals and Policies
- Historic Resources are Integral Features of the Public Realm

Administration

- The City Maintains a Functional, Integrated Preservation Program

Identification

- A Detailed Understanding of Tacoma’s History Provides a Base for Preservation Efforts
- Historic Survey Information Supports All Program Components

Management Tools

- Historic Resources are Protected from Demolition
- Clear and Complete Ordinances Guide the Preservation Program
- The City’s Project Review and Enforcement Programs Promote Preservation Objectives
- Resource Designation Categories Indicate Priorities for Conservation of Resources
- The Desired Character of Traditional Areas of the City is Maintained

Incentives and Benefits

- A Coordinated System of Incentives and Benefits Stimulates Preservation and Conservation in Tacoma

Education

- The Public Appreciates Tacoma's Diverse History and Its Historic Resources
- Practical Education Programs Support Historic Preservation

Advocacy

- Community Organizations are Strong Advocates for Historic Preservation
- City Departments Collaborate to Promote Historic Preservation

Chapter 4: Implementation

The final chapter of the HP Plan identifies and sequences actions to reach the Plan's stated preservation goals. The chapter links to a prioritized, 10-year implementation table that maps out when each of the Actions identified in Chapter 3 of the plan were anticipated to be completed.

2.2 Summary of Relevant Code Sections

A series of regulations in Tacoma's Municipal Code (TMC) establish the basic rules for construction related to historic resources and set forth the process for establishing protections for these resources. The most relevant chapters are summarized in this section, in the order in which they appear in the code. In some cases, additional detail regarding code language is provided in Section 2B of this report.

Chapter 1.37 Transfer of Development Rights

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Administrative Code establishes procedures for the operation of the City's TDR Program. The TDR Program is designed to advance the goals of the State's Growth Management Act by providing a tool to advance the City's conservation goals, historical preservation goals, and built environment goals by encouraging the voluntary redirection of development potential away from areas where the City wants less or no development potential, called "sending areas," toward areas that the City has designated as suitable for bonus development potential, called "receiving areas."

Chapter 1.42 Landmarks Preservation Commission

Chapter 1.42 identifies the composition, powers and duties of the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). The primary duties of the LPC are to identify and actively encourage the conservation of the City's historic resources by establishing and maintaining a register of historic landmarks, landmark sites, historic special review districts, and conservation districts; review proposed changes to register properties; raise community awareness of

the City's history and historic resources; and serve as the City's primary resource in matters of history, historic planning, and preservation.

Chapter 1.42 also specifies that the Director of the Planning and Development Services Department shall appoint a Historic Preservation Officer to serve as the primary staff contact to the LPC and carry out myriad other duties in support of the LPC's purpose.

Chapter 8.35 Neglect of Historic Properties

Chapter 8.35 lays out administrative procedures designed to encourage property owners to maintain historically designated properties such that they do not deteriorate to the extent that the only option to abate the health and safety risks caused by such deterioration is demolition. These procedures are restricted to (1) properties individually listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places, and (2) contributing properties, excluding residential structures containing four or less units, within in Historic Special Review Overlay Zones and National Register Historic Districts. Chapter 8.35 specifies the deteriorated conditions that establish a property as a "neglected historic property" and describes the penalties and enforcement associated with such a classification.

Subsection 13.05.010A Historic Conditional Use Permits

Subsection 13.05.010A describes the conditional use permit process, which is intended for uses that may be appropriate in a given zone but because of their size, operating characteristics, potential off-site impacts and/or other similar reasons warrant special review on a case-by-case basis. In particular, this subsection establishes that for proposals that affect properties that are listed individually on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, or are within historic special review or conservation districts, the use shall be compatible and consistent with applicable historic preservation standards, along with goals, objectives and guidelines of the historic or conservation districts. The subsection also specifies multiple criteria that must be met to obtain a conditional use permit for the reuse of a historic structure or site, including that the proposed reuse and design of any modifications to the historic structure(s) and site shall be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

13.05.040 Historic Preservation Land Use Decisions

Section 13.050.040 specifies the regulatory procedures for historic preservation decision making bodies. This includes summaries of the relevant authority and responsibilities of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Historic Preservation Officer. In addition, this section lays out the Certificate of Approval process, including what types of proposed modifications to a historic property require a Certificate of Approval, the Certificate application requirements, and the review process, including the appeals process. The section also describes how an applicant may submit a claim of economic hardship in cases

where a Certificate of Appropriateness has been denied, and the application requirements and review process when applying to demolish a city landmark.

Chapter 13.06 Zoning

As the city's zoning code, Chapter 13.06 provides the basic regulations that shape development

throughout Tacoma, including defining permitted uses and densities and dimensional limits such as setbacks and building heights. The zoning code identifies several base zone categories (such as residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) along with a series of overlay zones. Subsection 13.06.070E describes the purposes of the Historic Special Review Overlay District. Other portions of the chapter with special relevance to historic preservation include:

- Detailed rules regarding height bonuses associated with projects involving historic properties, such as retention of a city landmark adjacent to new construction or voluntary designation of a building on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places
- Regulations pertaining to live/work units
- Parking requirements, from which historic properties are generally exempt

Chapter 13.07 Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code

The Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code establishes the Tacoma Register of Historic Places and describes procedures related to the Register, including: nomination and designation to the Register; rescission of landmark designation; the certificate of appropriateness process; review criteria for relocation or demolition of a city landmark; and eligibility for special tax valuation.

REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

A property that is at least 50 years old and retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance may be designated to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places if it:

a. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
b. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
c. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
d. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
e. Abuts a property that is already listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places and was constructed within the period of significance of the adjacent structure; or
f. Is already individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or

g. Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or City.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

While most regulations related to the Certificate of Appropriateness process are included in Section 13.05.040, language in Chapter 13.07 establishes that the relevant standards for the Landmarks Preservation Commission in reviewing a Certificate request are the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The chapter also identifies regulations applicable to the city's Historic Special Review Districts and Conservation Districts, including:

- Old City Hall Historic Special Review District
- Union Depot/Warehouse Historic Special Review District
- Union Station Conservation District
- North Slope Historic Special Review District
- Wedge Neighborhood Historic Special Review District
- Wedge Neighborhood Conservation Special Review District

Section 13.12.570 Cultural Resources

Section 13.12.570 of the Environmental Code sets forth provisions for addressing archaeological, cultural, and historic resources for projects located within the Downtown Tacoma Regional Growth Center and within the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Regional Growth Center in areas where a Subarea Plan and a companion area-wide, non-project Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") have been completed. These provisions include assessment requirements and cultural resource management plan requirements.

This section also sets forth provisions for review of demolition permits that affect structures that are 50 years of age or greater at the time of permit application, and that involve demolition of 4,000 gross square feet or more on a parcel, or are located within a designated Mixed Use Center, or are properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places either as part of a district or individually listed.

2.3 Local Historic Overlay District Moratorium

On April 23, 2024, Tacoma City Council passed Amended Ordinance 28962 establishing a temporary moratorium on the consideration and creation of new local historic overlay districts in residential areas, for a period of one year. This moratorium applies to areas of Tacoma with the land use designations of Low-Scale Residential, Mid-Scale Residential, High- Density Multifamily, or Airport Compatibility Residential. The moratorium does not apply to existing historic districts, nor does it affect National Register nominations or nominations of individual properties to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

The moratorium was enacted in response to a series of policy and code issues raised by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the Planning Commission regarding the historic district nomination process. The Planning Commission recommended that these issues be addressed (1) as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update and (2) prior to the establishment of any new districts.

Specifically, the LPC's formal recommendations included:

- The Historic Comprehensive Plan Element and associated regulatory codes should be reviewed during the next code and policy amendment process to assess and evaluate compatibility with the broad City policy of objectives concerning diversity, equity and inclusion, to identify barriers, gaps in preservation policy, and criteria used by the Commission, and to identify additional tools and incentives for owners and residents of historic properties.
- A review of the historic district designation process should be conducted to clarify the roles and scope of the review by the Landmarks Commission and Planning Commission, and to improve coordination between the two processes.
- The City should identify additional resources to support researching and proactive creation of historic districts and designation of historic buildings, especially in areas that are underserved by historic preservation, in order to improve familiarity with and access to historic preservation land use tools, promote investment in older neighborhoods, and celebrate neighborhood identity and enhance quality of life.[2]

The Planning Commission made the following recommendations:

- Comprehensive Plan policies and regulatory code relating to historic districts should be reviewed and amended at the earliest appropriate amendment cycle, to include review of consistencies between historic preservation policies and policies elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan relating to housing, equity, and sustainability.
- The Planning Commission concurred with the Landmarks Preservation Commission's recommendation for a review of the code that outlines the historic district designation process, to improve understanding of the respective roles of each commission, and City Council, and to align the process with other similar land use policy reviews.
- The utility of fees for design review for properties on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places should be reviewed, including those within locally designated historic districts and individual City Landmarks; particularly if the value to the City is appropriately balanced with the impact to community members.
- For future local historic district proposals, the Planning Commission concurred with the Landmarks Preservation Commission's recommendation to reduce the burden

[2] The LPC recommended these unresolved policy and code issues be addressed without placing a temporary moratorium on new district listings.

on property owners and residents within local historic districts by relaxing or reducing design review requirements.

2.4 Identified Issues/Deficiencies

The following summary of known issues is intended to lay the groundwork for the historic preservation-related components of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The historic preservation scope of the Plan Update entails revisiting and reshaping the Historic Preservation Plan to remove redundancies and inconsistencies, while adding important missing content. We describe the general recommended approach in Section 2A below, followed by a discussion of specific policies and/or regulations that could be changed to clarify City processes and priorities regarding the designation and regulation of historic resources.

2A. Reformat Historic Preservation Plan

Tacoma's Historic Preservation Plan defines the City's preservation goals, policies and actions for preservation and neighborhood conservation. As currently structured, however, the HP Plan includes extensive background information that, instead of being part of the Comprehensive Plan itself, may be more suitable as part of an ever-evolving public reference document that is managed and made available by the Planning Department.

GUIDE TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN TACOMA

We recommend that the portions of the HP Plan other than Chapter 3 (Program Goals) be reformulated as the "Guide to Historic Preservation in Tacoma," a reference manual for both City staff and the public regarding the City's historic preservation program. The existing City document "Nominating a Property to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places" could be incorporated into this reference manual as well. Repackaging the existing content in this way would enable the wide variety of reference information that is currently in the HP Plan to be regularly updated outside of the formal Plan Amendment process. Potential updates in support of this transformation that pertain to specific chapters of the HP Plan are summarized below.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The section "A Vision for Historic Preservation in 2020" (p. III) should be removed or updated.
- If there is desire to keep them, the summaries of goals and policies by program area (pp. IV-XI) will need to be updated to reflect any changes to the goals and policies of the HP plan element.

INTRODUCTION

- The “Historic Preservation and Sustainability” section (pp. IN-5 to IN-9) should potentially be broken out as its own chapter, given the importance of its themes. Regardless, this section should be reviewed for potential added discussion of the City’s goals regarding housing, resiliency, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- The section “A Vision for Historic Preservation in 2020” (pp. IN-10 to IN-11) should be removed or updated.

CHAPTER 1: HISTORIC RESOURCES

- The narrative in the section entitled “The Preservation Movement in Tacoma” (pp. 1-1 to 1-2) ends in 1985 and would benefit from at minimum a one- to two-paragraph description of preservation trends and milestones over the past four decades.
- The section “Historic Themes and Topics” (pp. 1-3 to 1-8) discusses three over-arching historical themes that are important to understanding many of Tacoma’s historic resources: Native American settlement, Early European settlement, and transportation development. This section may warrant expansion to address additional themes. Alternatively, discussion of historical themes could be moved to a separate “historic contexts” document, which could be extensively expanded in the future and managed by the City as separate references.
- Given the recent recognition of the importance of encouraging the documentation and designation of nontraditional historic properties, properties that are primarily significant for their cultural association, rather than architectural distinction, could be specifically called out as a category in the “Historic Property Types” section (pp. 1-9 to 1-12).
- The statistics in the “Existing Landmarks and Districts” section (pp. 1-13 to 1-16) should be reviewed for accuracy – the number of City Landmarks, for example, needs updating. Similarly, the district discussion does not mention the Wedge Neighborhood Historic District.
- The maps at the end of the chapter (pp. 1-18 to 1-19) should be updated to reflect designations that have occurred in the last decade.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- The description of completed surveys in the “Identification” section (pp. 2-14 to 2-16), including the map and chart, should be updated to include surveys completed (or started) since adoption of the HP Plan.
- The various programs referenced in the “Education” section (pp. 2-35 to 2-40) should be vetted to identify any that are no longer pertinent or additional programs, such as the Black Heritage Survey, that should be added.
- The bulk of the “Advocacy” section (pp. 2-41 to 2-45) consists of lists of local, state, regional, and national preservation partners. If there is desire to retain it, consider renaming it “Preservation Partners” or retooling it to include more advocacy-related content.

CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION

- Because the Implementation Table is directly tied to identified Actions (linked to Policies and Goals), it may be more appropriate to remove the table from this document and make it an appendix to the new Historic Preservation element.

PRESERVATION POLICIES, GOALS, AND ACTIONS: THE NEW HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

We recommend that Chapter 3 (Program Goals) of the existing HP Plan be used as the starting point for the new Historic Preservation plan element. Generally, it is anticipated that the goals, policies, and actions of that chapter will be systematically reviewed to identify four types of needed improvements:

- Identify policies that are redundant with similar, overlapping, or duplicate policies elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan and could potentially be removed from the HP element.

Example: Some policies related to design review and residential development standards may be redundant.

- Identify policies or actions that are inadequately aligned with, or do not address, goals in the Comprehensive Plan and that may need to be adjusted for consistency.

Example: Some policies and actions may be modified to better support City housing and growth goals.

- Identify existing policies and actions that warrant clarification

Example: Clarification could be added to the historic district nomination process as described in Chapter 13.07 of the TMC.

- Identify new goals, policies, or actions that are needed to address initiatives that are not adequately addressed in the existing HP Plan.

Example: Goals, policies, and actions that more directly consider diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) objectives may be warranted. Examples, which are discussed further below, include reviewing nomination criteria in TMC Chapter 13.07 to ensure that register eligibility is inclusive; giving consideration to adding a more expansive commemorative historic register; and increasing technical support for underserved areas.

In many cases, changes to policies will also require modification of associated sections of the Tacoma Municipal Code.

2B. Key Policy and Regulatory Issues

A central component of the Comprehensive Plan Update scope consists of reviewing City policies and code sections pertaining to historical resources in order to develop proposed changes that would better align those policies and code sections with the goals of the

Comprehensive Plan. We close our report by summarizing identified policy and regulatory objectives that could be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

For each objective, we describe one or more ways City policies or regulations may be changed to address the identified deficiency. Some of the objectives primarily pertain to the Historic Preservation element and, potentially, other sections of the Comprehensive Plan; other objectives would be addressed primarily through changes to the Tacoma Municipal Code. Not surprisingly, many of the following objectives will require adjustment to both the Comprehensive Plan and the regulatory code.

The key policy and regulatory objectives have been divided into the following thematic categories:

- Equity Framework and Design Review
- Nomination Criteria and Process
- Cultural Resource Review
- Demolition Review

In addition, note that the City of Tacoma is currently undertaking a review and analysis of economic and development incentives that encourage the continued use and adaptive reuse of historically designated and older structures. This incentives study will likely result in additional policy and code changes.

EQUITY FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN REVIEW

One of the primary goals in updating City policies and regulations regarding historic resources is to develop an equity framework that helps foster the equitable distribution of historic preservation-related services across Tacoma's diverse neighborhoods and communities. Potential key aspects of that framework are described below.

Objective: Enhance consistency between historic preservation goals and housing, equity, and sustainability goals.

Discussion: The Historic Preservation Plan describes several ways in which preserving historic places promotes environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and cultural/social sustainability. This discussion warrants an update and expansion. Accordingly, as part of the update process, Comprehensive Plan policies and regulatory code will be reviewed and amended to address inconsistencies between historic preservation policies and policies elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan relating to housing, equity, and sustainability.

Objective: Evaluate the appropriateness of design review fees for historic properties.

Discussion: As directed by City Council, design review fees for properties on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, including those within locally designated historic

districts and individual City Landmarks, will be reviewed to assess their appropriate utility and scale. In particular, this assessment will evaluate whether the value to the City provided by such fees is appropriately balanced with the impact to community members.

Objective: Consider reducing design review requirements within historic districts.

Discussion: The Planning Commission concurred with the Landmarks Preservation Commission's recommendation to reduce the burden on property owners and residents within local historic districts by relaxing or reducing design review requirements. Sample changes that will be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Exempting alterations to non-visible elevations from historic district design review requirements.
- Expanding existing exemptions in the Wedge and North Slope Historic Districts to other districts.
- Focusing design guidelines more on assessing the impact of a proposed project to the overall district than impacts to individual properties.

Objective: Consider adding diversity-based significance eligibility criteria.

Discussion: The criteria for designation to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places that are specified in TMC 13.07.040(B) will be reviewed to assess whether any criteria should be modified, or new criteria added, in order to better address culturally significant properties that are associated with one or more communities or histories that are currently underrepresented on the Register. Consideration will also be given to other potential approaches to increasing the diversity of the properties included on the Register, including:

- Reducing the minimum age threshold (below the traditional 50 years of age) for culturally significant properties.
- Creating a commemorative/cultural sites register for important sites that are not buildings and/or may not warrant regulatory review.

Objective: Seek ways to balance preservation services citywide.

Discussion: The City's preservation services tend to be focused on those districts and neighborhoods that proactively seek to document and designate properties, with underserved areas receiving less attention. The goals, policies, and actions of the Historic Preservation element will be reviewed to assess how

they could be expanded to encourage better balancing of preservation services citywide, so that preservation is also seen as a meaningful service for historically underserved communities.

Objective: Expand historic documentation requirements.

Discussion: The nomination process specified in TMC 13.07.050 will be reviewed to assess whether additional documentation requirements would be appropriate. For example, there could be a requirement for residential district nominations to address the history of "redlining," the common twentieth-century real estate practice of systematically excluding specified racial or ethnic groups from purchasing properties in certain areas, if such history is relevant to that district. (Ideally, the City could develop a context statement on redlining citywide to support such a requirement.) Similarly, all district nominations could be required to include a summary of the Native American Tribal history of the location in question.

NOMINATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Objective: Clarify the roles of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and City Council in the historic district designation process.

Discussion: As directed by City Council, the sections of code Chapter 13.07 that outline the historic district designation process will be reviewed and amended to improve understanding of the respective roles of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and City Council in the historic designation process. For example, historic district nominations could originate as an area-wide rezone application at the Planning Commission and be referred to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for historic review.

In conjunction with clarifying review body roles, the historic district designation process could be realigned to be consistent with other with other land use policy reviews in Tacoma. Historic overlays are currently the only type of proposed zoning change that does not receive City Council review if they are not approved by the Planning Commission. This could be modified to specify that district nominations go to City Council regardless of the Planning Commission recommendation.

Objective: Consider giving priority to certain categories of potential historic districts.

Discussion: Consideration will be given to ways of fostering and prioritizing the development, review, and approval of historic district nominations that meet

specified criteria, such as districts that are tied to a neighborhood plan or that are related to a BIPOC community organization, for example.

Objective: Ensure social and cultural significance is just as much a path to designation as architectural significance.

Discussion: Historic registers tend to have an abundance of architecturally distinctive properties, while properties that are significant for their social or cultural associations are comparatively underrepresented. To help offset this imbalance, the City could develop a series of thematic and cultural context statements that could be used as key references in nominating socially or culturally significant properties and districts.

Objective: Assess potential advantages of separating designation approval from approval of controls and incentives.

Discussion: The merits of restructuring the nomination process will be investigated. Specifically, consideration will be given to separating the designation process – which could be done by the LPC and not require City Council approval – from the establishment of design review and incentives – which would require City Council approval. A process that is bifurcated in this way would separate the question of whether a given property or district satisfies the TRHP eligibility criteria from the question of whether it is appropriate to apply preservation controls to that property or district.

Objective: Clarify designation process for significant interior spaces.

Discussion: There are ambiguities in the code language in TMC sections 13.05.005.A, 13.05.005.A.2.c, and 13.07.030 regarding significant interior spaces. The code will be updated to clarify whether including “significant interior spaces” in a nomination is only permitted for publicly owned buildings, and whether such “significant interior spaces” are limited to “public” areas of the building, such as a lobby.

Objective: Streamline the relationship between the local, state, and national historic registers.

Discussion: Consideration will be given to ways of streamlining the process whereby properties that are already listed on the Washington Historical Register or the National Register of Historic Places can be listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places. While it is essential to retain a local legislative process for local designation, that process could be simplified or fast-tracked

for properties that are already WHR- or NRHP-listed. In particular, the amount of additional documentation a property owner(s) is asked to provide to support a local nomination could be significantly reduced in instances where a WHR or NRHP nomination form for the property already exists.

CULTURAL RESOURCE REVIEW

Objective: Review Cultural Resource Review language for clarity and consistency.

Discussion: TMC 13.12.570 will be reviewed for clarity. In particular, the code language will be adjusted to clarify what types of permits require Cultural Resource Review and which are exempt. Consideration will also be given to developing a simplified permit application for simpler CR Reviews, and to assessing whether changes should be made to more clearly prioritize consultation with tribal governments.

Objective: Update code to reflect the citywide Unanticipated Discovery Plan (UDP) requirement.

Discussion: TMC 13.12.570 requires, for any project within the jurisdiction of that code section, the submittal of an Unanticipated Discovery Plan (UDP), which is a document outlining the steps to be taken in the event of the discovery of human remains or suspected archaeological materials during the course of construction. There are many areas within City limits, however, that are outside of the areas covered by TMC 13.12.570 but that have a high to moderate probability for the discovery of archaeological materials, or that are significant based upon ethnographic data. In response, Planning and Development Services Director's Rule 01-2022 (June 27, 2022) established, as an interim measure, that a UDP would be required for development permits citywide. As part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, consideration will be given to whether to make this rule permanent and, if so, how best to integrate the new requirement language into the code.

DEMOLITION REVIEW

Objective: Review and update the City's code language regarding demolition.

Discussion: City regulations pertaining to demolition are currently spread across multiple sections of the Tacoma Municipal Code, most notably 8.35 (Preventing Neglect of Historic Properties), 13.07.110 (Demolition of City Landmarks), and 13.12.570(B) (Demolition of Historic Resources – Citywide). In addition, Planning and Development Services Director's Rule 04-2021 (August 23, 2021) established interim procedures intended to ensure that the historic review of demolition permits weighs the balance of the public benefit of

protecting the subject property against the potential impacts to the development project, and considers alternatives and mitigations in making the determination as to whether a property should be historically designated.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, these demolition code sections will be comprehensively reviewed for clarity and consistency, and updated to address multiple goals, including:

- Incorporate the language of Director's Rule 04-2021 as appropriate;
- Make demolition review process more transparent and efficient;
- Clarify cultural resource protections and mitigation procedures;
- Better account for considerations of financial or economic impacts of preservation;
- Clarify that the assessment in a district should be whether the building to be demolished is important to the district, not whether it is individually significant;
- Clarify how demo review should be done in areas with multiple overlay zones; and
- Incorporate Tribal consultation more effectively.

Objective: Consider expanding historic preservation enforcement section of the code.

Discussion: Discussion of penalties and enforcement related to historic resource-related violations is currently limited to TMC 8.35.060, which outlines the penalties associated with owning a neglected historic property. Consideration will be given to (1) expanding this section to provide more detail regarding enforcement and (2) developing a more broadly applicable enforcement code section that addresses additional classes of violations related to historic properties.

City of Tacoma, Washington

ONE TACOMA

A Comprehensive Plan for a Vibrant, Connected, and Sustainable City

DRAFT Recent Engagement Gap Analysis | December 2023

CONTENTS

1 CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

- The City of Tacoma is updating its Comprehensive Plan (to 2050) and concurrently will refresh its Strategic Plan (to 2035). The planning effort will go from approximately September 2023 to June 2025.
- Both plans require equitable and inclusive community engagement to inform policies and strategies.
- The Tacoma community has been extensively engaged in recent years for many intersecting initiatives. Metro Parks Tacoma is also conducting engagement in Fall 2023. However, there are likely to be gaps.
- This community engagement strategy is intended to maximize leverage of existing data and existing engagement efforts to minimize respondent burden and confusion. Additional resources or “new engagement” should be focused on thematic gaps and/or gaps by community group.
- Early conversations with City staff highlighted that Outreach should not start from scratch and should build from prior outreach efforts. An early task will be to review data from prior outreach and summarize themes. Findings from this task will be used to check in to see if it still reflects current thoughts.

2 GAP ANALYSIS METHODS

In October and November 2023, Seva Workshop sourced existing engagement reports from the City of Tacoma, relevant partners, and internet research. We limited our review to studies that had direct engagement with community members in recent years (2016 or later). We did not include studies or plans that were created only through stakeholder interviews or those created through a single representative advisory or steering body. The full list of reviewed documents is included in the Appendix.

Over fifty documents were coded in Max QDA to conduct a gap analysis to determine which planning themes and which communities have not been addressed in recent years. Each document was reviewed and coded for the following topics related to Comprehensive Plan Chapters, neighborhoods within Tacoma, group demographics and identities, engagement methods used, and Tacoma 2035 Goal Areas. The full list of codes is listed in the Appendix.

Limitations

The analysis was limited by the structure of the source documents. For example, each study presented their findings in different ways, using different types of disaggregation or different ways of describing groups or neighborhoods. Many studies did not disaggregate findings at all, making it impossible to determine which subgroups were represented.

Some studies also presented helpful overall reflections on their targeted audiences and the gaps that they experienced in trying to reach them and lessons learned about effective engagement methods. However, the majority of engagement summaries did not.

3 OVERALL GAPS AND PRIORITY AUDIENCES FOR ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Gaps by topic include:

- historic preservation
- economic development
- downtown

Gaps by group include:

- The **8 percent of the Tacoma population that speaks a language other than English at home and speaks English less than "very well."** This includes Pacific Islander languages (Chukkese), Asian languages (Vietnamese, Korean, Khmer, Tagalog, Mandarin Chinese), Russian and Ukranian (in West End), and Spanish (Eastside and throughout Tacoma).
- Relative to their share of the population, **Hispanic/Latine** residents and **Asian** residents are consistently the least connected to engagement efforts. **Black** residents – outside of Hilltop – are also less likely to engage.
- **Renting** households are also typically underrepresented (when data is available disaggregated).
- There has not been any explicit effort to collect data from **seniors** though seniors are one of the fastest growing populations in Tacoma in recent years. **LGBTQIA+** population is infrequently disaggregated in engagement and has not been a focus of recent engagement.
- **South Tacoma** and **South End** residents (especially residents in the Tacoma Mall area) and **Central Tacoma** (outside of Hilltop) have been identified by staff as focus groups for engagement.

4 EXISTING ENGAGEMENT THEMES BY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TOPIC

4.1 VISION

Engaged Tacomans consistently raised priorities related equity, to affordability and livability, and sustainability.

- **Equity.** Continued prioritization and use of the Equity Map and community engagement, repair of past inequities and disinvestment, and partnerships. Resolution 40622 (2020) affirms the City of Tacoma's commitment to anti-racist systems transformation and will continue to undergird future planning work.
- **Affordability and Livability.** Safe, affordable, and vibrant neighborhoods with easy access to healthy food, public services and amenities, tree shade, and community gathering spaces.
- **Sustainability.** A community and economy that is resilient to future changes. Themes across studies included prioritizing environmental and water stewardship, green jobs, and electrification. City of Tacoma (City) 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" (Resolution 38247).

4.2 URBAN FORM

While there was no engagement that explicitly focused on urban form, several related themes were present in existing engagement. Key themes from existing outreach about urban firm included:

- Need for better pedestrian and bike connectivity and multi-modal transportation choices across the city neighborhoods.
- Interest in vehicular traffic safety improvements, traffic calming on major corridors.

We should make residential streets safer by installing traffic calming and eliminating the possibility of through traffic. There should be no non-local traffic on a residential street. Cul-de-sac, one-way, skinnier

residential streets, etc. can all save kids' lives. This can be accomplished with low-cost bollards, curbs, and planters (Vision Zero Community Engagement Summary Report, P. 58: 1294)

- Interest in income-diverse neighborhoods, mixed housing types, and modest residential density increases.
- Concentrate on infrastructure, fix infrastructure, and zoning was the second highest priority role for the City in the 2022 Community Survey.

4.3 DESIGN + DEVELOPMENT

While there was no engagement that explicitly focused on city-wide design and development, several related themes were able to be extracted from existing engagement. The more detailed design and development input came from engagement projects from neighborhood planning, as well as at the school and station area level from Trust for Public Land and Sound Transit projects.

These data will more heavily represent McKinley, Proctor, Tideflats, Eastside and South Tacoma school areas, Hilltop, and the South Tacoma station area. Key themes from existing outreach about design and development included.

- Residents love the distinct character of the neighborhoods and want design and development to reflect local history, context, and cultures.
- Tacomans want more green.
  - This includes trees for shade and interest in the streetscape.
  - Plantings, planter boxes that serve as seating areas and or traffic barriers were also popular.
  - Interest in natural habitat restoration, water stewardship, and native plants such as rain garden project.
  - Local food projects, such as community gardens and food forests were also popular features.
- High levels of support for small businesses and arts and creative spaces.
- Engaged communities enjoy color and art in the streetscapes.

4.4 ENVIRONMENT + WATERSHED HEALTH

There have been several engagements explicitly focused on environment and watershed health in recent years. These include environmental services strategic planning outreach, the Urban Waters Protection Plan, the Urban Forest Management Plan. Topics related to habitat functions

and values, open space lands and tree canopy were also prevalent in many other plans where the environment was not the core focus, such as the Metro Parks Tacoma Community Needs Assessment and the Tideflats Subarea Plan.

- Environmental clean-up was a top priority across multiple engagements. For example:
  - Tacoma residents are generally concerned with the impact that human activities and continued development has on Tacoma's natural spaces and receiving waters like the Puget Sound. Both the survey and the workshop revealed that cleanliness of streams, ponds, lakes and beaches is the most important priority for residents. (UWPP)
  - Survey respondents overwhelmingly identified the restoration and cleanup of natural areas as one of their top three opportunities for the Tideflats, followed by preserving and strengthening jobs, transitioning away from fossil fuel facilities, and transportation improvements. (Tideflats engagement)
- Respondents and staff generally urged integration of environmental and watershed health actions with other goals such as green jobs, climate action, equity, parks and green spaces, and transportation and housing.
- Desire to partner with the Puyallup Tribe in water and environmental restoration and stewardship was common.
- Barriers and concerns included need for more funding to protect groundwater, and funding to develop and maintain needed infrastructure.
- Air and water pollution were a high concern due to impacts on community health. This may be related to recent wildfire smoke events.

The UWPP specifically notes that Latinx/Hispanic groups and Spanish-speaking communities were underrepresented in their engagement. Renters were also underrepresented. Foss Waterway, Flett Creek, and North Tacoma were the most represented watersheds.

4.5 CLIMATE

The 2021 Climate Action Plan process included robust citywide engagement. Other engagement related to potential climate policies included the Integrated Resource Plan, the Urban Waters Protection Plan and the Tacoma Tideflats engagement summary. Themes prevalent in engagement include:

- Interest in transitioning away from fossil fuels, support for reducing vehicle miles traveled and improved transportation choices
- Concern about equity and need to consider equity impacts from policies such as green building codes and the intersection between housing and vehicle miles traveled.
- Interest in green economy and green jobs
- Interest in expanding tree cover
- The 2022 Community Survey ranked "The efforts of the City to reduce climate change emissions" as a top three priority among social and environmental issues. However, there was a statistically significant gap between homeowners (64%) and renters (84%) in ranking this as a priority.

The Climate Action Plan includes reflections on gaps in engagement. They specifically note that Hispanic/Latinx participation and Asian participation was not at levels hoped for.

4.6 HOUSING

Housing is a major topic of explicit and broad engagement in the Home in Tacoma effort to evaluate diverse housing types and inclusionary zoning options throughout Tacoma as well as the broader Affordable Housing Action Strategy. It was the second highest priority (after homelessness) social issue in the 2022 Office of Strategy Community Survey.

The 2021 Housing Disparities Report also used targeted engagements to understand race-based disparities in housing experiences and outcomes, and to develop recommendations. Housing, particularly affordable housing, has also been a core topic of engagement in neighborhood plans. As housing is a topic of great concern in Tacoma and integrated with many other planning issues, it is also raised in many engagements that are not specifically centered on housing such as the Climate Action Plan.

- Home in Tacoma Survey Results describe the top goals for the future of housing as neighborhoods with mature trees and green spaces, affordable housing at a range of income levels, that some historic buildings remain, that infrastructure and services keep pace with growth, and that transportation choices include walking, biking, and transit.
- Tacomans sense a great deal of urgency and concern related to housing affordability and homelessness in the city. However broad engagement suggests appetite for only very modest increases in density and development speed.
  - The housing shortage is of most concern to District 3 residents according to the 2022 Community Survey.
- Parking and traffic, preserving neighborhood character, views, and open space, and associated infrastructure and services were some of the most common concerns.
- Encouraging infill, DADUs, and ADUs were popular policy levers.
- Engagement and analysis show race-based disparities in housing experiences and desire to address past harms. “Historic racism in lending and housing policies directly and indirectly contribute to present-day displacement challenges impacting Black residents and their ability to keep their homes. Beyond the systems of discrimination themselves, the narratives associated with this history continues to impact many Black family’s approach to planning for homeownership, with many believing it perpetually beyond reach. Additionally, respondents described impediments to homeownership access such as rising home prices, low inventory, and challenges associated with income, credit, and the lack of wealth. Interviewees spoke to the need of providing education, counseling, and wrap-around services in addition to financial support. (Tacoma Housing Disparities Report_2021, P. 8: 943)”

4.7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development input is mostly sourced from the neighborhood and subarea or station area level, including the McKinley Hill neighborhood plan, South Tacoma work by Sound Transit and the Economic Green Zone application, and the Tideflats subarea plan. Apparent for the available engagement is that:

- High levels of support for small businesses and creative artistic enterprises that lend neighborhood character as well as economic development opportunities.
- Support for green jobs, especially as relates to the Port and utilities and transportation.

Economic development at a broader level has not been a focus of explicit community engagement that we have found. Tacoma has a Green Economy Economic Development Strategy, but this work was not the result of community engagement.

4.8 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an integral topic that is raised in nearly every community engagement no matter the topic including community health assessments, domestic violence needs assessments, and climate action planning.

Transportation has also been the explicit topic of engagement in neighborhood focused community engagements by Sound Transit around station areas in Hilltop and South Tacoma. The Vision Zero effort to reduce traffic related injury and death has also conducted recent community engagement related to transportation. The Vision Zero Action Plan to eliminate car traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030 was informed by significant community engagement and adopted by Council in 2020.

Themes from existing engagement suggest that:

- Traffic violence is a major concern in Tacoma. This is evident from Vision Zero engagement where 47% of respondents said they or someone they were close to have been involved in a serious crash in Tacoma. Outside of Vision Zero engagement, pedestrian safety and motorist speed is also frequently raised as a concern.
- Tacomans desire more frequent and reliable transit service. They do not yet feel that transit is a reasonable substitute for driving given levels of transit service and the available transit network.
  - The 2022 Community Survey shows that District 3 has the highest satisfaction with Public Transit services at 89%. Satisfaction in other districts ranged from 64-81%.
- There is a high level of support for improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to create walkable neighborhoods and to support climate goals and reduce traffic violence.
  - Improving the ease of bicycle travel in Tacoma was the top priority area for improvement in the 2022 Community Survey. The second was street, trail, and other transportation enhancements in your neighborhood.

- There is a sense that transportation investments, especially sidewalk infrastructure, is not equitably available and maintained across city neighborhoods. Equity issues for persons using wheelchairs for mobility are also a common concern.

4.9 PARKS + RECREATION

Equitable parks access has been a focus of MetroParks Tacoma. Their community outreach for the community needs assessment provides ranked priorities for parks by region of Tacoma. They are also engaging in a series of listening sessions in late 2023. At a more local scale, the Trust for Public Land has conducted community engagement and surveys for a series of green school yard projects mainly in South Tacoma and Eastside.

4.10 PUBLIC FACILITIES + SERVICES

There has not been broad citywide engagement related to the public facilities and services. However most existing engagement does include input on the following list of public facilities and services. There are also planned future and ongoing community engagement on some of these topics that will occur before 2025.

- **Libraries.** Library services in Hilltop and Eastside were specific topics of engagement in 2021-2022. This engagement echoed many parks and neighborhood engagement in highlighting a desire for safe third spaces for youth and families and community gathering spaces for social events, celebrations, and meetings.
  - The 2022 Community Survey shows that District 2 has the highest satisfaction with Public Library Services at 97%, while other districts are in the 83-89% range.
- **Homelessness.** Homelessness was the top priority social issue in the 2022 Office of Strategy Community Survey. It was also one of the top three roles recommended for the city.
- **Childcare.** Childcare was the fourth priority social issue in the 2022 Community Survey. It is commonly highlighted in neighborhood plans as a desired amenity and mentioned in relation to housing (desire for ADU, DADU, multigenerational units or more mixed income housing throughout the neighborhood to support kinship caregiving. Childcare is also an economic development issue.
- **Community safety and policing.** Existing relevant studies include the Hosmer perceptions of safety hope and change study, the Strategic Alliance on Domestic Violence strategy, and the Peace Point community driven plan for Youth Safety. Vision Zero highlighted a citywide desire for increased traffic enforcement and the 2022 Community Survey listed greater policing and enforcement as the top role for the City in addressing community concerns. Further engagement related to community safety and policing is underway and planned with the Office of Strategy.
  - There is a wide range of concern related to crime, gang activity, drugs, and gun control by councilmanic district as shown by the 2022 Community Survey. 1% of District 1 and

5% of District 4 respondents listed this as a major issue for the next ten years, statistically significantly lower than the city average. In contrast, this was a top issue for 25% of District 5 respondents and 22% of District 2.

The 2022 Community Survey also includes statistically representative satisfaction ratings related to City provided public services. These are available disaggregated by race, gender, income, housing tenure, and councilmanic district. EMS, fire services, sewer and power have the highest overall satisfaction ratings. Storm drainage, street cleaning, police investigations, and code enforcement had the lowest.

- District 1 had statistically significantly higher satisfaction ratings for public sewer, drinking water, and street cleaning services. They were also most likely to be satisfied with fire response and suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), police patrol, and police community programs.
- District 2 had lower than average ratings of EMS, but higher than average ratings of utility billing and customer service.
- District 4 had the lowest satisfaction rating of police community programs.
- District 5 had significantly lower satisfaction rating with electrical power and drinking water compared to city averages.
- Concentrate on infrastructure, fix infrastructure, and zoning was the second highest priority role for the City in the 2022 Community Survey.

4.11 ENGAGEMENT + ADMINISTRATION + IMPLEMENTATION

4.12 DOWNTOWN

5 APPENDIX

Documents Reviewed

Note this list includes all documents shared with Seva Workshop and then reviewed. Not all documents included relevant of community engagement that could be then coded for the gap analysis.

	Organization / Author	Title	Year
1	City of Tacoma	2030 Climate Action Plan Section 7, Community Engagement Summary	2021
2	City of Tacoma	2030 Climate Action Plan Section 7, Environmental Justice Leaders Workgroup	2021
3	City of Tacoma	2030 Tacoma Climate Action Plan	2021
4	City of Tacoma	Affordable Housing Action Strategy	2018
5	South Tacoma Neighborhood Council	AMENDMENT APPLICATION PACKET TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE	2021
6	City of Tacoma, BS, ECONorthwest	Analysis of Systemic Disparities in Achievable Housing Options	2021
7	City of Tacoma and Americans for the Arts	Arts and Economic Prosperity 6: The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences in City of Tacoma	2022
8	Metro Parks Tacoma	City in A Park: System and Strategic Plan Themes for Future Planning	2023
9	City of Tacoma	College Park Historic Special Review District Overlay Zone – Public Comments	2022
10	Tacoma Office of Environmental Policy and Sustainability	Community Engagement Phase III Climate Action Planning	2021
11	TPCHD	Community Health Assessment Pierce County	2019
12	Metro Parks Tacoma	Community Needs Assessment Planning Area Results	2022
13	City of Tacoma, MDB Insight	Community Survey - Key Findings	2018
14	Downtown on the Go	Downtown on the Go Final Report	2017
15	Tacoma Public Library	Eastside and Hilltop Feasibility Study - Community Engagement Summary	2022
16	City of Tacoma; Community Attributes	Economic Development Strategic Plan	2019
17	City of Tacoma	Environmental Services Strategic Plan 2018-2025: Appendix	
18	Sound Transit	Fall 2022 Engagement Summary	2022

	Organization / Author	Title	Year
19	City of Tacoma	From Climate Emergency to Shared Prosperity: Tacoma's Green Economic Development Strategy	2023
20	Metro Parks Tacoma, Tacoma Public Schools, Trust for Public Land	Green Schoolyards for Tacoma	2020
21	Tacoma Public Schools, BERK Consulting	Head Start Community Needs Assessment	2021
22	Home in Tacoma	Home in Tacoma Housing Choice Survey Results: Phase 2	2023
23	Home in Tacoma	Home In Tacoma Project – Phase 2 Engagement Summary	2023
24	Tacoma Public Utilities	Integrated Resource Plan	2022
25	Links to Opportunity	Links to Opportunity Round I Outreach Summary	2017
26	Sound Outreach	LTO - Streetscape Outreach Project Concluding Report	2017
27	Foundation for Tacoma Students	Making the Case: The Great Reset	
28	City of Tacoma	McKinley Hill Neighborhood Plan	2023
29	TPCHD	Perceptions of Safety, Hope and Change in Hosmer	2022
30	City of Tacoma	Picture Pac Ave Community Engagement Plan	2023
31	City of Tacoma	Proposed College Park Historic Special Review District Findings and Recommendations Discussion Document	2022
32	City of Tacoma	Proposed College Park Historic Special Review District Planning Commission's Findings and Decision Report	2022
33	City of Tacoma	Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) Plan	2023
34	City of Tacoma & Pierce County Human Services	Strategic Alliance to End Family Violence Report	2021
35	Metro Parks Tacoma	Strategic Master Plan - 7.3 Community Survey Report	2018
36	Downtown on the Go	Streetscape Report	2017
37	Tacoma Tideflats	Summary of Engagement: Visioning Phase	2021
38	City of Tacoma	Tacoma 2025 Shared Vision Shared Future	2014
39	City of Tacoma	Tacoma 2025 Shared Vision Shared Future: Process	2014
40	City of Tacoma	Tacoma 2025 Shared Vision Shared Future: Signature Spreads	2014
41	City of Tacoma , Cascadia Consulting Group	Tacoma Climate Adaptation Strategy	2021
42	City of Tacoma; MDB Insight	Tacoma Community Survey 2022 Final Report	2022
43	City of Tacoma; MDB Insight	Tacoma Community Survey Final Report	2020

	Organization / Author	Title	Year
44	Tacoma Public Utilities	Tacoma Power 2022 IRP Workshop Notes	2022
45	Tacoma Public Utilities	Tacoma Power 2022 IRP Workshop Notes	2022
46	Tacoma Public Utilities	Tacoma Power 2022 IRP Workshop Notes	2022
47	Tacoma Public Utilities	Tacoma Power 2022 IRP Workshop Notes	2022
48	Environmental Services	Tacoma Urban Waters Protection Plan Community Engagement Summary	2021
49	Peace Point	The Community-Driven Plan for Youth Safety	2023
50	City of Tacoma, PlanIT GEO	Urban Forest Management Plan Action Plan	2019
51	City of Tacoma, PlanIT GEO	Urban Forest Management Plan Research Summary	2019
52	Vision Zero	Vision Zero Community Engagement Report	2022
53	TPCHD	Youth & Young Adult Violence Assessment	2022

Code System

CODE SYSTEM
Code System
Tacoma 2035 Goal Areas
Organizational Effectiveness (Government Performance)
Environmental Health and Climate Justice
Human Health
Belief and Trust in Local Government
Access to Facilities and Services
Livable Wage Jobs
Housing and Homelessness
Community Safety
Sentiments
Desires
Uncertainty

CODE SYSTEM
Concern
Excitement
Postive
Neighborhoods
Puget Sound Partnership
Puyallup Watershed
Chambers Clover
New Tacoma
Tideflats
West End
South End
North End
College Park
Proctor
Eastside
Salishan
Dometop
McKinley Hill
Pacific Ave
Central
Hilltop
Southwest
Southeast
Tacoma Mall
Northwest
Northeast
South Tacoma
Hosmer
Groups
Khmer language
Vietnamese language
Mandarin Chinese language

CODE SYSTEM
Foreign Born
Undocumented
Limited English
Korean language
First-generation
Asian
BIPOC
Black
Disabled
Elders (65+)
High school / GED
Homeowners
Latinx
LGBTQIA+
Living with 3+ generations
Low-income
Middle Eastern North African
Native
Puyallup
Pacific Islander
Renters
Russian Ukranian language
Spanish language
Vietnamese language
White
Youth (16-22)
Methods
Prioritization Tool
Participatory Design
Bicycle tour
Capacity building
CBO Hosted

CODE SYSTEM
Community ambassadors
Focus group
Ideas Wall
Intercept survey
Interviews
Online form
Online meeting
Online Open House
Online survey
Open House
Pop-up
Publicity and Promotion
Road show
Meeting in a Box
Social media comments
Tabling
Walking tour
Workgroup
Workshop
Comp Plan Themes
Historic Preservation
Public Facilities and Services
Engagement and Administration
Parks and Recreation
Transportation
EV
Transit
Bus
Station areas
Connections
Pedestrian infrastructure
Bicycle infrastructure

CODE SYSTEM
Parking
Economic Development
Environment and Watershed
Housing
Design and Development - like urban design standards
Urban Form - big pic land use
Vision
Other Themes
Child care
Tree Canopy
Food
Health
Climate
Equity
Safety and Security