City of Tacoma, Washington

ONE TACOMA

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

Equity Framework | July 2024

CONTENTS

1 PURPOSE

The City of Tacoma is updating its Comprehensive Plan One Tacoma to the year 2050. Equity is a key focus for the City of Tacoma and therefore this update. There are also statewide and regional efforts to articulate equity and orient policies and programs to achieve more equitable outcomes for Washington residents. For example, House Bill 1220 introduced new requirements related to housing equity in Growth Management Planning which the Comprehensive Plan will be subject to.

This framework is intended to curate measurable and observable equity goals for the City of Tacoma to prioritize in policy updates. This single evaluative framework will be used to assess the existing Comprehensive Plan and meet 1220 requirements. It will also be a guide for policy and program updates to the plan. The content of this framework is based on contextual research and analysis, a summary of which appears in an accompanying document: **Equity Assessment Context History and Baseline.**

2 EQUITY ASSESSMENT METHODS & CRITERIA

How did we develop the assessment and select outcomes to focus on in One Tacoma 2050?

2.1 Methods

The existence of equity occurs across multiple dimensions and can be considered among infinite ways of characterizing subgroups of people. Even with the guidance of existing policies and frameworks as described in the previous section, the Comprehensive Planning process needed to further focus priority equity outcomes. We undertook the following steps to arrive at the analysis contained in this document.

1. **Conduct background research and understand policy context.** The study team gathered existing documentation produced by state, regional, and city entities defining equity priorities. We also researched Tacoma's historical context. A summary review of findings from this research appears in the accompanying **Equity Assessment Context History and Baseline.**

2. **Develop and apply criteria.** The project team including consultants, City staff and key external partners met and discussed criteria by which the indicators would be filtered for inclusion in this Equity Assessment and which subgroups to prioritize for analysis. These criteria are described below. The consultant team and staff applied these criteria to develop the selected indicators.

3. **Conduct baseline analysis.** The consultant team produced the baseline analysis in this document assessing disparities in outcomes. The data comes from various sources and therefore was available for different subgroup definitions and geographic levels. Where possible, data was disaggregated by race, income, geography (neighborhood). The full compendium of analysis is available in Excel format. Key findings are included in this document while the full baseline appears in the accompanying **Equity Assessment Context History and Baseline**. Outcomes displaying high disparities between a given subgroup and the general population were prioritized for discussion in this document:

4. **Develop assessment rubric with project team**. One rubric guides the assessment of the policy/program **content** for impact and opportunities to move equity goals. A second helps screen for biased or vague **language**.

5. **Audit the Comprehensive Plan** for equity impact on desired outcomes, language, and (re)develop policy options. The Comprehensive Plan audit using the information and rubrics in this document is planned for June-July 2024.

2.2 Criteria

The following criteria were used to filter and focus on the equity outcomes most relevant to the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan:

Alignment Criteria

- Anti-Racism. The City's stated goal of becoming an anti-racist city is outlined in Resolution 40622. Indicators should be disaggregated and analyzed by race to be able to effect anti-racist policies.
- Targeted Universalism. The City of Tacoma's Equity and Empowerment framework led by the Office of Equity and Human Rights uses a strategy of "targeted universalism" which recognizes that we all need different strategies to achieve our full potential. We show a universal population measure and disparities by race and income according to this framework. The rubric guidance needs to be flexible enough to allow for different strategies for different populations.
- HB 1220. The new State requirement mandates housing analysis conducted by income and geography to identify and address housing disparities.

Implementation Criteria

- Drives the Vision. The Comprehensive Plan vision is a Tacoma where "every resident can reach daily essentials (groceries, school, parks, medical care etc.) within 15 minutes without a car." Outcomes that contribute to this vision were prioritized.
- Coordination with Council and Community Priorities. We prioritized adopting measures that have already been articulated to avoid duplication of effort, such as the homelessness strategy, the affordable housing action strategy, the climate action plan, and Vision Zero. Comprehensive Plan strategies and these actions should be mutually supportive.
- Replicable/trackable. We prioritized indicators with publicly available data or data that is already being tracked by the City to be able to assess future progress on.
- Actionable. We prioritized outcomes over which the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan have influence. This Equity Assessment is intended as key reference material for plan writers to craft policies and programs addressing key disparities. One key decision relating to actionability was to not include overall Index measures as an outcome (such as the Tacoma Equity Index or Displacement Indices), but rather, key component measures.

3 ONE TACOMA EQUITY OUTCOMES

Selected equity outcomes for One Tacoma 2050.

These outcomes were selected by the project team according to the criteria outlined above. A baseline analysis identified the areas and groups listed in the table as farthest from equitable outcomes. Designing programs and policies specifically for these areas and groups will help Tacoma achieve universal goals.

OUTCOME CATEGORY	INDICATORS	PRIORITY AREAS AND GROUPS
HOUSING	▪ First-time buyers of single dwelling structures	▪ South Tacoma ▪ Black households ▪ Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander households
	▪ Renter-occupied housing cost burden greater than 50%	▪ South Tacoma ▪ New Tacoma ▪ Black households ▪ Multi-race households ▪ Very low income and Low income households
	▪ Percent of residents living in the same house one year ago	▪ South Tacoma ▪ South End ▪ Hispanic/Latine individuals ▪ Multiracial individuals
HOMELESSNESS	▪ Rare: Point in time count	▪ Black individuals ▪ American Indian/Alaska Native individuals ▪ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders
	▪ Brief: Placement rate	▪ American Indian/Alaska Native individuals
	▪ One-time: 2-year return rate	▪ American Indian/Alaska Native individuals
HEALTH	▪ Life expectancy at birth	▪ Eastside ▪ New Tacoma ▪ South End ▪ South Tacoma
	▪ Access to healthy food	▪ North East ▪ South Tacoma ▪ West End

OUTCOME CATEGORY	INDICATORS	PRIORITY AREAS AND GROUPS
	▪ Youth mental health	▪ Grade 12 students ▪ American Indian/Alaska Native students ▪ White students ▪ Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander students ▪ Asian students
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE / CLIMATE IMPACTS	▪ Urban heat	▪ Central ▪ Eastside ▪ South Tacoma ▪ South End
	▪ Air quality (PM 2.5)	▪ North East and Eastside communities adjacent to freeways and freight routes
TRANSPORTATION	▪ High-capacity transit access	▪ South Tacoma ▪ North East
	▪ Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure	▪ North East ▪ Eastside ▪ New Tacoma ▪ South Tacoma ▪ West End
	▪ Household vehicle access (Transit dependency)	▪ New Tacoma ▪ South Tacoma
PUBLIC SERVICES AND AMENITIES	▪ Walkability	▪ North East ▪ South Tacoma ▪ West End
	▪ Commercial amenities per acre	▪ Eastside ▪ North East ▪ North End ▪ South Tacoma ▪ West End
COMMUNITY SAFETY	▪ Average time in minutes between call received and police dispatch	▪ Eastside ▪ North End ▪ South End ▪ South Tacoma
	▪ Perception of safety	▪ District 4 ▪ District 5 ▪ Hispanic/Latine individuals ▪ Multiracial individuals

OUTCOME CATEGORY	INDICATORS	PRIORITY AREAS AND GROUPS
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY	▪ Median household income	▪ American Indian/Alaska Native household ▪ Black households ▪ Hispanic/Latine households ▪ Other race households
	▪ Childhood Poverty - children under 5	▪ Eastside ▪ South Tacoma ▪ South End
	▪ Good and Promising job availability	▪ North End
CULTURAL VITALITY	▪ Level of access to arts, culture, science, and/or heritage programs or experiences in your community	▪ BIPOC community ▪ District 5
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	▪ Thematic representation	▪ unknown
	▪ Distribution of landmarks and districts	▪ Eastside ▪ South End ▪ South Tacoma ▪ West End

4   POLICY AUDIT RUBRICS

How can we assess which policies contribute to more or less equitable outcomes?

4.1   Policy Impacts on Equity Goals

This rubric is designed to be a tool for reviewers to assess Comprehensive Plan policies regardless of prior assessment and equity experience. The goal is not to "score" each policy on each of the Assessment Considerations. Instead, the considerations are guiding questions and lenses for reviewers to think through the policy and its characteristics and implications. After thinking though the considerations, we recommend assigning an overall rating as a synthesis of the results.

In the audit process, multiple reviewers independently review the policies and assign ratings. Comparing the results of these independent audits, policies where different ratings were assigned would warrant further discussion to arrive at a consensus. We note that the goal is not to have a plan full of transformative policies, but to build in key opportunities to advance equity, especially on priority outcomes and for priority groups listed above.

	Assessment Considerations	Overall Rating
Purpose	▪ Who is this policy intended to serve? ▪ What impact or outcomes does this policy intend to create? Does it affect priority equity outcomes? ▪ Was it created in response to input from the community it was intended to serve?	▪ Harmful/Exploitative - Perpetuates or exacerbates existing injustices in the distribution of benefits and burdens. ▪ Neutral/Blind - Does not call out or recognize differences by subgroup. May be implicitly biased according to dominant paradigms. ▪ Sensitive/Responsive – Recognizes differences by subgroups and targets interventions by subgroup to respond to differential needs within in the existing paradigm. ▪ Transformative – Structurally shifts systems of power and distribution of benefits and burdens in a just way.
Implementation	▪ How are the activities of this policy resourced (funding, staffing, public will/attention)? ▪ Are there explicit equity-focused priorities identified and resourced accordingly? ▪ Are resources for implementation of this policy distributed equitably? ▪ How do communities access the benefits of this policy? What unique barriers may exist for specific subgroups?	

	Assessment Considerations	Overall Rating
	▪ What is the process for implementation of this policy? Are there points at which bias may affect the outcome?	
Impact	▪ How is the policy aligned with Comp Plan goals and/or specific Equity outcomes? ▪ Who is impacted (benefiting or burdened) by the implementation of this policy? Are specific priority groups or areas identified? ▪ Is the policy alone sufficient for achieving equity outcomes? If no, are complementary policies and programs available and sufficient? ▪ What unintended impacts may result from this policy and how are the benefits and burdens of these distributed?	
Accountability	▪ Are there relevant disaggregated data and measures available to assess the success of this policy? ▪ Who is accountable for the results of policy implementation? ▪ Are results of this policy transparent to impacted communities? ▪ Are there mechanisms and venues to continue to engage impacted communities in the improvement and redesign of this policy?	

Example Review

Policy H-1.6 "Allow and support a robust and diverse supply of affordable, accessible housing to meet the needs of special populations, to include older adults, and people with disabilities, and permanent, supportive housing for homeless individuals, especially in centers and other places which are in close proximity to services and transit."

Rated: S with considerations for improvement

- If the City's role is to "allow and support" are complementary strategies and partnerships needed to achieve the implied goal? Can the City have a stronger/proactive role?
- Input from older adult, people with disabilities, and homeless individual housing needs
- Who already lives in the areas identified for this housing and how will they be impacted?
- How will we measure the housing outcomes for these subgroups?
- Add priority for housing American Indians and Alaska Native individuals who are affected most by homelessness.

4.2　Language

Similar to the policy rubric, the language rubric is intended as guidance to help reviewers screen for issues and opportunities to make policy language more inclusive and less subject to bias. An overall rating is assigned primarily to help quantify the results of the review and to plan for the work of updating the language. The rating should not be interpreted as a score.

	Assessment Considerations	Overall Rating
Purpose	▪ Does the policy have a clear purpose, rationale, and scope of application? ▪ Was it created in response to input from the community it was intended to serve?	▪ Harmful/Exploitative (H) - Perpetuates or exacerbates existing biases and stereotypes. ▪ Neutral/Blind (N) – Leaves space for biased interpretation according to dominant paradigms. ▪ Sensitive/Responsive (S) – Is explicit in purpose, responsible actors, and beneficiaries and uses appropriately inclusive and accessible language.
Inclusion and Accessibility	▪ Does the policy use asset-based language (and avoid deficit-minded language) when describing groups and goals? ▪ Does the policy use inclusive language that adequately covers the goal and intended beneficiaries? ▪ Does the policy include implicit assumptions about people and households? (common assumptions include ability, gender, citizenship, housing status, heteronormativity) ▪ Does the policy avoid unnecessary jargon, acronyms, and specialized language? ▪ Where relevant, does the policy include specific examples to aid interpretation?	
Bias and Accountability	▪ Does the policy language appropriately identify the responsible institutions, departments, and partners? ▪ Does the policy language specifically identity intended beneficiaries and/or priority populations? ▪ Does the policy use clear and universal terms to describe intended impact (and avoid vague and subjective terms like "neighborhood character" and "appropriate uses")? ▪ When listing groups, does the policy use the opportunity to list non-dominant groups first?	

Example Review

Policy H-1.6 "Allow and support a robust and diverse supply of affordable, accessible housing to meet the needs of special populations, to include older adults, and people with disabilities, and permanent, supportive housing for homeless individuals, especially in centers and other places which are in close proximity to services and transit."

Rated: S with considerations for improvement

- More specificity around older adults (age ranges) and disabilities (conditions).
- More specificity to define centers and proximity to services and transit.
- Clarity around whether the term "special populations" is broader than the named subgroups, and if so, who else is included.