



# **2021 AAPA Lighthouse Award Competition**

## **Communications Entry**

**Classification: 7. Overall Campaign**

**Entry:**

**Port of Tacoma Strategic Plan**

**Category 2**

# **Port of Tacoma Strategic Plan**

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## Executive summary

One of the major priorities for the Port of Tacoma Commission and Executive Director Eric Johnson in 2020 was to develop a new Strategic Plan. The Port's last major strategic planning effort was done in 2012. While it had been reviewed and updated annually, the creation of The Northwest Seaport Alliance—by the Port of Tacoma and the Port of Seattle in 2015—dramatically changed many parts of the original 2012 plan. It was time to take another look at the Port of Tacoma's focus for the future.

In December 2019, the Port Tacoma Commissioner approved hiring the consulting firm Maul, Foster, Alongi (MFA) to work with the Commissioners, Port leadership and staff to develop a new Strategic Plan. The plan would help guide the Port's priorities and focus for the next five years—2021 to 2026. MFA has a strong track record in this area, having worked on strategic plans for the Port of Vancouver USA, the Port of Pasco and many others.

While the original project timeline was to complete the plan by the end of the year 2020—the global pandemic added several complexities to the effort. The fact that in-person meetings with the Commissioners and with the public were not possible presented a major challenge to the Strategic Plan team. In fact, one Port Commissioner suggested the entire process be postponed a year until the pandemic was over and in-person meetings were possible again. After much discussion, the decision was made to move ahead with work, following the original timeline as much as possible.

Since in-person meetings were not possible, new ways had to be developed and implemented to ensure the Port was giving customers, members of the public and staff members opportunities to be included in the process and to have their ideas and suggestions heard. By developing virtual tools—including a Strategic Plan Online Open House, online surveys and virtual employee workshops—the Port was able to get even more staff and public engagement and involvement than it had when it had done its 2012 Strategic Plan. For example, about 66% more employees completed the survey on this Strategic Plan as compared to our survey about our 2012 plan.

Because of the pandemic, it took about four months longer to complete the plan than originally anticipated. The new Strategic Plan was unanimously approved by the Port of Tacoma Commission on April 15, 2021.

This entry contains highlights of the work involved in developing the plan, project milestones as well as some of the highlights of our work to engage the community—and our employees—in developing the plan.

## **Budget**

The Port Commission authorized a total of \$340,000 for the development of the Strategic Plan and the implementation work for it.

## **Staffing**

The Port's Executive Director, Eric Johnson, led the Strategic Plan work from a Port staff perspective, carefully coordinating all aspects of the project with the five-member Port Commission and the consultants.

Other key staff members of the core Strategic Plan team were:

- Deirdre Wilson, Senior Manager, Planning
- Rod Koon, Senior Manager, Communications
- Carol Bua, Communications Director (who joined the Port in September 2020)

In addition, other Port staff were involved in various aspects of the Strategic Plan work that pertained to their departmental work and areas of expertise.

## Project milestones

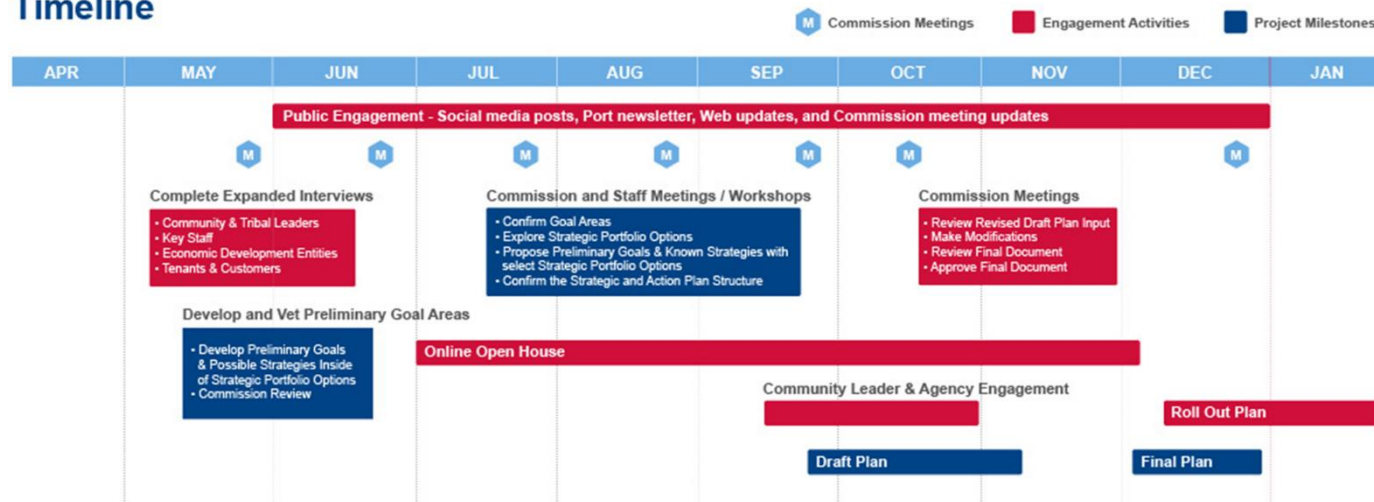
### March 2020: Presentation to the Port Commission

At the regular monthly Commission meeting, the consultant (MFA) presented their overall strategy and timeline for working with the commission, staff and key stakeholders in developing the Port's new strategic plan. The presentation was led by Jim Darling, a Principal Planner with MFA and former executive director with the Port of Bellingham.

He highlighted how the consultants are designing the process and major phases, which included:

- A virtual workshop and survey for employees
- Outreach to Port customers, business and community leaders and other key stakeholders.
- Strategic Plan Online Open House

#### Timeline



**COVID AND THE CALENDAR:** The original plan was to complete the entire Strategic Plan process in 2020. Due to the challenges the COVID presented, the project timeline was eventually extended by four months.

## **Project milestones**

### **April 2020: Virtual workshops for Port employees and Commissioners**

Port employees and Commissioners were encouraged to attend one of the three virtual workshops focusing on the Strategic Plan were held April 8 and 9, 2020. The meetings were conducted using Zoom. Workshop attendees were:

- Given an overview of our strategic plan approach and timeline
- Briefed on the port powers and practices
- Asked for their perspective on Port's area of strength and areas to work on, and
- Generated ideas on how the Port can best serve our community in the future

During the workshops, employees and Commissioners were also encouraged to share their ideas by completing an online survey that was made available shortly after the workshops were completed.

Mentimeter, an interactive presentation software, was also used in these workshops to get real-time ideas and feedback from the attendees. Mentimeter proved to be a very effective engagement and communications tool in these workshops. This tool was also used at many other stages of the Port's Strategic Plan work.

## April 2020: Virtual workshops for Port employees and Commissioners

[illegible]

## April 2020: Workshop “word cloud” responses to two Menti questions

[illegible][illegible]



## Project milestones

### May and June 2020: Community outreach ramps up

Once the internally focused virtual workshops were done, the Strategic Plan work shifted outward to our community. Phone interviews were done with many community leaders, elected officials, business and labor leaders to get their ideas on where the Port should focus its future priorities and projects to continue to be successful in the future.

In addition, the Port set up five ways that the public could keep informed and provide their ideas and input into the process:

1. **Port website:** The site contained an overview of the entire Strategic Plan effort. People could also sign up receive regular updates about the Strategic Plan work.
2. **Strategic Plan Hotline:** The Port set up a dedicated phone line where people could share their comments and questions about our Strategic Plan.
3. **Strategic Plan email:** Citizens could also share comments about the plan by sending an email to: [strategicplan@portoftacoma.com](mailto:strategicplan@portoftacoma.com).
4. **Commission meetings:** The Strategic Plan was a topic of discussion at more than 10 Port Commission meetings in 2020 and 201. All these meetings are web streamed live and archived so the public can view them at their convenience. A system was also set up to enable people to provide public comments about the plan remotely, since the Commission meeting were not being held in person.
5. **Virtual open house:** Work on this special website was underway throughout June. The site was launched in July (*see p. 10 for details*).

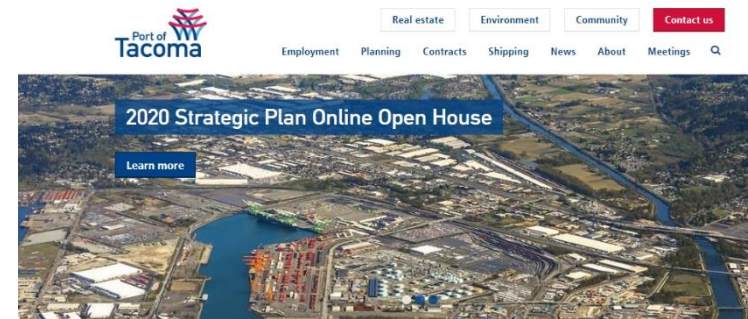
## Project milestones

### July 2020: Virtual open house

On July 8, 2020, the Port launched an online open house website that focused on the Strategic Plan. People could access the open house through the Port's website.

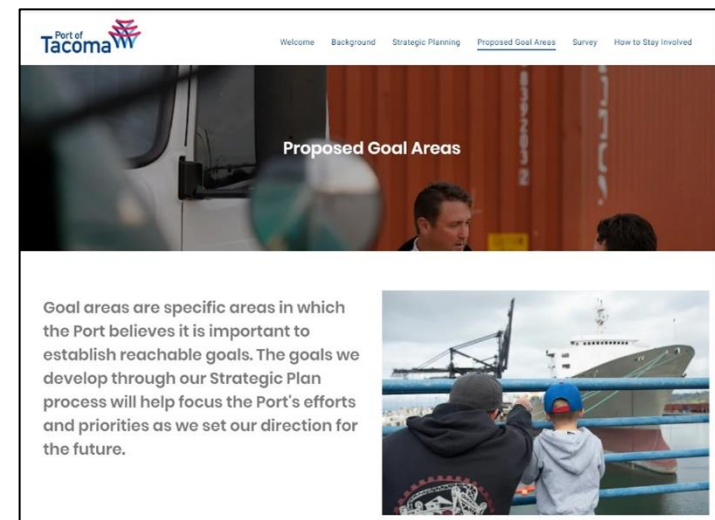
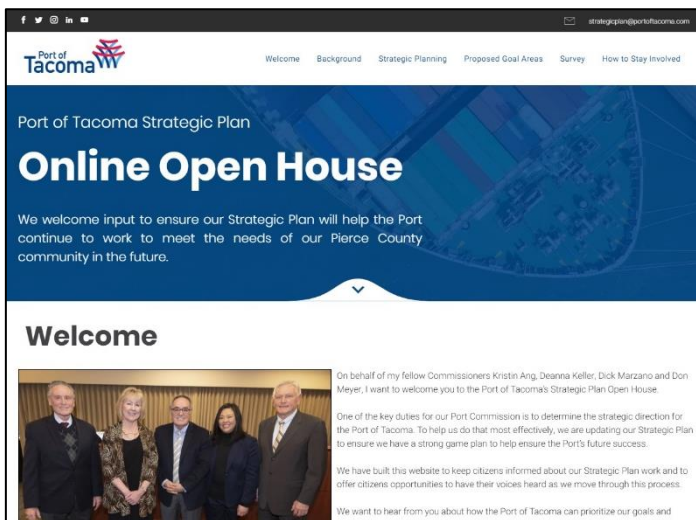
The site gave viewers background and history of the Port of Tacoma, an overview of Washington ports and their powers, the strategic planning process and project timeline, proposed goal areas, resources on how to stay involved and an online survey where people could offer their ideas and suggestions about the Port and its future course and priorities.

The Port send our more than 4,200 emails to promote the online open house site and to encourage people to take the online survey. The emails went to: Pierce County residents, civic groups, chambers of commerce, Port customers, elected officials, environmental groups, schools, universities, labor and businesses located in the Tacoma Tideflats area (where Port facilities are located).



**Your success is our priority**

The ports of Tacoma and Seattle have formed **The Northwest Seaport Alliance** to jointly manage marine cargo operations to strengthen the Puget Sound gateway. Our strategic location in the northwest corner of the U.S. and focus on efficiency, reliability and customer service help make us the easiest and best place for moving your cargo.



## Project milestones

### July 2020: Open house online survey

The online survey contained a combination questions where people were asked to rank various issues and possible priorities for the Port as well as open-ended questions. Survey Monkey was the tool used to create the survey. On average, it took people about 8 minutes to complete the short survey.

This combination of types of questions allowed the Port to gather good statistical data in many key areas as well as to hear about other ideas and suggestions that people had about the Port and its future. *(See p. 12-13 to see two of the questions and responses.)*

7. Do you have any other comments or ideas the Port of Tacoma's Strategic Plan team should consider in the strategic planning process? Please note them here:

A large, empty gray rectangular box for text input.

0 of 8 answered

powered by SurveyMonkey

Port of Tacoma

Welcome Background Strategic Planning Proposed Goal Areas **Survey** How to Stay Involved

### Survey

We welcome you to provide feedback on the strategic planning process by completing the survey below. The survey will take you about 5-10 minutes to complete. Survey results and comments received will be used to help develop the 2020 Strategic Plan, ensuring it takes the goals and priorities of the community into account.

3. There are many ways the Port can use the tax levy money (\$20 million in 2019) paid by Pierce County residents. (Please rank your **top 5 choices**)

- ☐ Invest/reinvest in revenue-producing projects
- ☐ Build and improve road and rail infrastructure beyond our current real estate boundaries
- ☐ Support economic redevelopment programs throughout Pierce County
- ☐ Help cover costs of addressing current Port environmental liabilities
- ☐ Reduce debt
- ☐ Cover the operating costs of the Port
- ☐ Restore the natural environment by creating more habitat mitigation

0 of 8 answered

## Project milestones

### August 2020: Sample survey question and responses

There are many ways the Port can use the tax levy money (\$20 million in 2019) paid by Pierce County residents. (Please rank your top 5 choices)

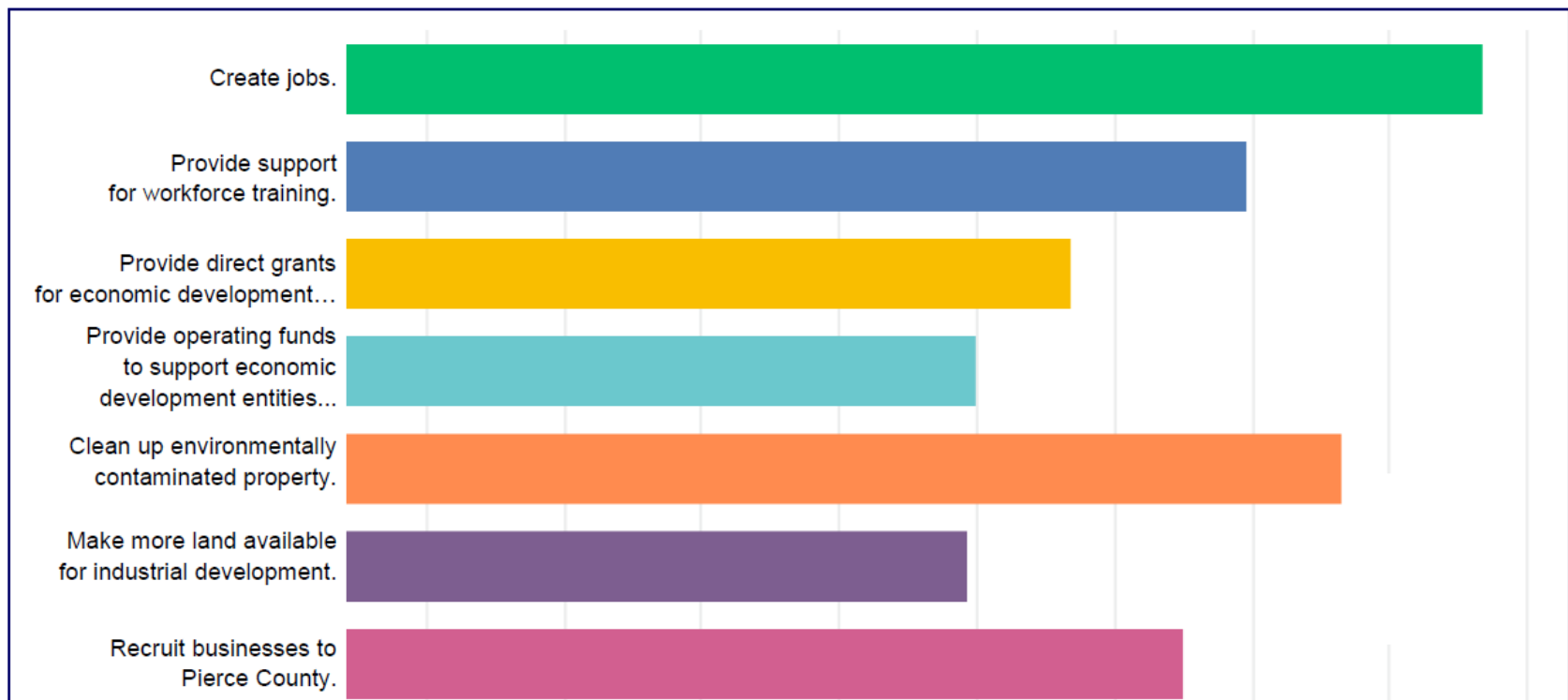
Rank	Response	Score
1	Invest/reinvest in revenue-producing projects	5.61
1 (tie)	Help cover costs of addressing current Port environmental liabilities	5.61
2	Restore the natural environment by creating more habitat mitigation	5.55
3	Support economic redevelopment programs throughout Pierce County	5.26
4	Cover the operating costs of the Port	4.97
5	Build and improve road and rail infrastructure beyond our current real estate boundaries	4.80
	Reduce debt	4.03
	Build parks and open spaces in the community	3.57

## Project milestones

### August 2020: Community feedback on Port priorities

One of the key questions asked in online survey was “What do you think will be the Port of Tacoma’s most important role for Pierce County for the next five years?”

People were asked to pick from a list of 10 options. By early August, a total of 300 people had completed the online survey. While many more people took the survey before it closed at the end of 2020, “Create jobs” continued to be the leading response.



## **Project milestones**

### **October, November and December 2020: Foundational goals**

In October 2020, the Port Commission received a briefing from Executive Director Eric Johnson about the five foundational goals proposed for the Strategic Plan. The Commission approved all five of them.

In November and December 2020, a total of five different Commission meetings were held to do a “deep dive” into each of these goals and allow the Commission and key staff to discuss and further refine them.

#### **1. Economic Vitality**

Advance living-wage job creation and business development opportunities in Pierce County with a focus on marine trade and transportation.

#### **2. Environmental Leadership**

Protect and enhance the environment of Commence Bay and the Puyallup River by continuing to clean up contaminated land, improve habitat and water quality, and minimize air emission from Port operations.

#### **3. Organizational Success**

Create and sustain a transparent culture prioritized the Port’s fiduciary role as trustee of public assets and commitment to financial responsibility.

#### **4. Transportation Advocacy**

Promote road, rails and navigation infrastructure improvements to strengthen the regional maritime industry and economy.

#### **5. Community Connections**

Engage and advance relationships with the Pierce County community and beyond in a timely, accessible and inclusive way.

## Project milestones

### November 2020: Port mission and values

Another key focus of the Strategic Plan work was to develop more clarity on the Port's overall mission and values. At their November meeting, the Commission provide input on both of these key topics by answering four questions (via Mentimeter). The Commissioners' responses—which are shown below—provided important feedback that enabled the Strategic Plan team to refine the mission and values and bring them back in January 2021 for additional Commission review.

#### Rate these guidelines for the development of the Mission Statement?



#### What phrases should make up the Mission Statement?



#### What do you value?



#### What do you value?—additional key words





## Project milestones

### **February 2021: Draft plan presented and reviewed**

At the February 2020 meeting, Eric Johnson presented the latest draft of the Strategic Plan. The Commissioners offered their comments and suggestions for some minor additional changes.



## Project milestones

### **March 2021: Commission approves draft Strategic Plan**

After the Strategic Plan team incorporated the Commissioners' comments into the revised document, Eric presented the entire plan to the Commission—page by page—at their March meeting. Once the Commission approved the document, the final draft was posted on the Port's website—with links sent out via social media and email—for the public to see and comment on as well.

## Project milestones

### **April 15, 2021: Commission approves new Strategic Plan**

In their April 15 meeting the Commission reviewed the plan one more time. It was in this meeting that the new Strategic Plan was unanimously approved by the Commission.



## Project milestones

### **April 16, 2021: Executive director email to employees**

Here are some highlights from the email that Port Executive Eric Johnson sent to employees the day after the Commission approved the Strategic Plan:

*To borrow a quote from the “A” Team, “I love it when a plan comes together.”*

*And after more than a year of tremendous effort by our Commission and staff, our new Strategic Plan has finally come together.*

*It happened at yesterday’s Commission meeting when the Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the new Strategic Plan for the Port of Tacoma. It’s a plan that will help us prioritize our projects and investments over the next five years and keep us in sync with our Commission, our customers and our community.*

*For more than a year, the development of our new Strategic Plan has been a top priority for me and the Commission. Developing a comprehensive new Strategic Plan for any organization is a challenging task—even in the best of times. In our case, the global pandemic made the challenge even greater...*

*I want to thank each of our Commissioners for their leadership on this important body of work. I also want to thank the many employees who brought their energy, ideas and insights to the table to help develop the plan. I won’t even try to list everyone’s name here—because I fear I would inadvertently leave someone out...*

*Again, thanks for all you’ve done to get us this far with our Strategic Plan.*

*And I also thank you in advance for the work we’ll be doing together as we work with the Commission to chart the course of our Port over the next five years.*

*Eric D. Johnson  
Executive Director, Port of Tacoma*

## **Strategic Plan implementation**

Work is currently underway to develop a full implementation effort to support the Strategic Plan. An overview of this work will be presented at the June 8 Commission meeting. The full Implementation Plan should be completed by the end of the June.

In addition, here are some of the ways we are working to keep the plan “alive” and visible in the organization:

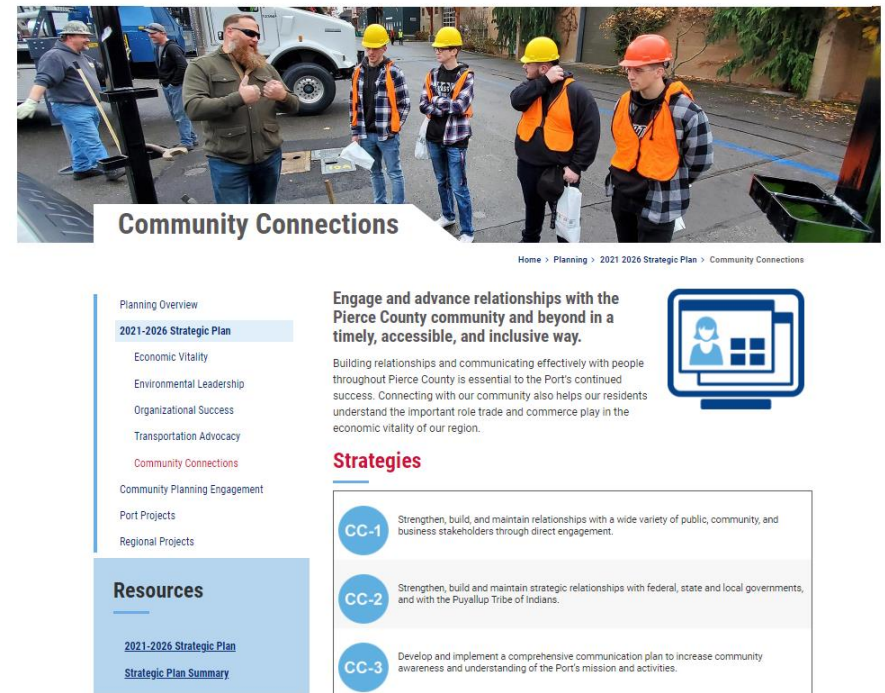
- **All employee meetings**  
Each of these meetings—which are held every two months—will feature an update on a part of the Strategic Plan--highlighting a key aspect of it (e.g., a foundational goal, the Port’s mission, values, etc.).
- **New employee orientation**  
The Strategic Plan is now part of every new employee orientation meeting. In addition, every new employee receives a printed copy of the Strategic Plan document.
- **Employee newsletter**  
This newsletter will continue to highlight various aspects of the Strategic Plan focusing on specific projects/employees that are helping advance our Strategic Plan, foundational goals, etc.
- **Commission meetings**  
When staff make presentations about potential projects to the Commission, they will also highlight how that project connects to one of the Port’s foundational goals and/or strategies.

## Strategic Plan on the Port's website

Once the Strategic was approved by the Commission, the Port's website was updated to include details on the foundational goals and strategies, along with a PDF version of the final Strategic Plan document.

People can also register online here to receive updates on the Port's Strategic Plan on a regular basis.

You can view the site at: [2021-2026 Strategic Plan | Port of Tacoma](#)



## Results and evaluation

Here are some of the highlights of the Port's community outreach efforts about the Strategic Plan:

- **3,823** people visited the Port's Strategic Plan online open house, which was open from July to December 2020
- **450** people completed the online survey that was in the Strategic Plan online open house.
- **41** one-on-one interviews were conducted with Port Commissioners and key business and community leaders
- **12** presentations and updates about the plan were made at Port Commission meetings
- **50** presentations were made by Port Commissioners and staff to a wide range of local community, business and governmental entities, reaching more than **2,500** people
- **24,000** emails were sent out by the Port to promote the online open house and survey
- **24** social media posts made by Port staff to highlight progress on the Strategic Plan throughout the process

### By the numbers: "Internal" outreach to Port employees

Here are some of the ways we kept employees informed throughout the Strategic Plan process:

- **3** Port virtual workshops were held for Port staff
- **7** updates on the Strategic Plan were given by Eric Johnson at the virtual Port all-staff meetings
- **7** internal newsletter articles highlighted various aspects of the Strategic Plan work throughout the project  
This newsletter is available to employees both digitally and in print

*NOTE: A printed copy of each of these newsletters was mailed to AAPA to support this entry.*

## Results and evaluation

Here are some of the statistics regarding the Port's website and news releases that highlighted the Strategic Plan:

### **Port of Tacoma Strategic Plan page (<https://www.portoftacoma.com/strategic-plan>):**

- 3,160 pageviews from Oct. 1, 2019 to present
- 2,981 pageviews from Jan. 1, 2020 to present

### **Strategic Plan feedback form (March 22-April 5, 2021):**

- 56 pageviews from March 22 to April 15, 2021

### **News release: Strategic Plan comment form (sent March 22, 2021):**

- Sent to 3,599 news release and Strategic Plan list subscribers
- 1,587 total opens (44%)

### **News release: Port Commission adopts Strategic Plan (sent April 16, 2021):**

- 71 pageviews on website
- 1,326 emails sent, 362 total opens (27%)

## Strategic Plan document

Details of the Port's Strategic Plan are contained in a 28-page document (*see the following pages*). The document includes the Port's five foundational goals, the strategies that will be used to reach those goals, along with some details on the community outreach that was also a key part of this project.

A PDF version of the Strategic Plan document is available on the Port's website.

In addition, we also printed a few smaller versions of the Strategic Plan document for our Human Resources Department to include in the orientation packets they hand out to new employees. *NOTE: A printed sample of this document was mailed to AAPA to support this entry.*



 Kristin Ang Commissioner	 Daanna Keller Commissioner
 Dick Marzano Commissioner	 John McCarthy Commissioner
 Don Meyer Commissioner	 Eric D. Johnson Executive Director

### Charting a vision for the future.

Together with the Port of Tacoma Commissioners, we are pleased to share the Port's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. This new Plan is our roadmap for the next five years, laying out the Port's goals in key priority areas, along with specific strategies to help us achieve these goals.

We would like to thank the entire Port commission for their leadership and support of this project, in addition to the many staff members who dedicated their expertise to the development of this plan.

Port staff will use this Strategic Plan to determine the use of resources to maintain, improve and grow our operations in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner — key components of the Port's business model as we continue to drive prosperity for our stakeholders and community.

For over 100 years, the Port of Tacoma has served greater Pierce County by providing world-class marine and industrial facilities. Today, the combined ports of Tacoma and Seattle, with maritime operations managed by The Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA), are a key gateway for Asia-Pacific trade, providing manufacturers and agricultural producers throughout the region and the nation, valuable access to foreign markets. The Port is committed to strong fiscal stewardship of public funds, active marketing and development of Port assets to promote business growth and jobs, environmental remediation of Port-owned properties, and building stronger relationships with our customers, partners, and the community.

This Plan is the culmination of many hours of work over the past year by the Port Commissioners, Port staff, and many community stakeholders. Due to the pandemic, new approaches were needed to connect with our partners and the community. The Port received input through several "virtual" channels, including an online open house, our website, remote public and community meetings and other direct communication. We thoughtfully considered and truly appreciate the input and feedback we received.

As we work to reach our Strategic Plan goals through the implementation of a variety of strategies and our annual Implementation Plan, we recognize that, ultimately, the key to this Plan's success is through collaborative partnerships with our business, public agency and community stakeholders. We are grateful for these partnerships and proud to be part of the Pierce County community.

  
Dick Marzano  
Commission President, Port of Tacoma

  
Eric D. Johnson  
Executive Director, Port of Tacoma



Port of Tacoma Strategic Plan 2021-2026 2





# Strategic Plan

2021-2026





**Kristin Ang**  
Commissioner



**Deanna Keller**  
Commissioner



**Dick Marzano**  
Commissioner



**John McCarthy**  
Commissioner



**Don Meyer**  
Commissioner



**Eric D. Johnson**  
Executive Director



# Charting a vision for the future.

Together with the Port of Tacoma Commissioners, we are pleased to share the Port’s 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. This new Plan is our roadmap for the next five years, laying out the Port’s goals in key priority areas, along with specific strategies to help us achieve these goals.

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**Dick Marzano**  
Commission President, Port of Tacoma



**Eric D. Johnson**  
Executive Director, Port of Tacoma





## History

The Port of Tacoma was established by a vote of Pierce County citizens on November 5, 1918.

The Port started out on 240 acres of land in the Tacoma Tideflats. The Edmore, a commercial steamship that arrived March 25, 1921, to pick up lumber bound for Japan, was the first vessel to call at the Port.

For more than 100 years, the Port has served as an economic engine that generates jobs throughout Pierce County and connects our region to a world of opportunity.

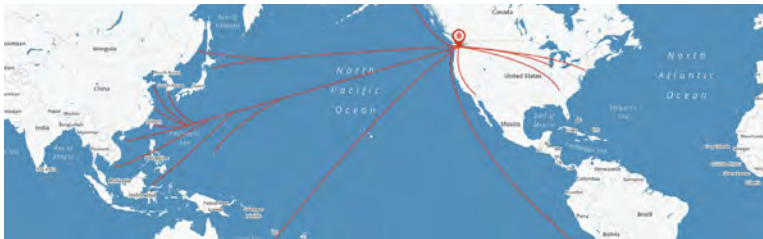


# About the Port of Tacoma

## The Port of Tacoma

The Port is an independent municipal corporation that operates under Title 53 of the Revised Code of Washington. The Port serves greater Pierce County by promoting trade, supporting family-wage jobs, and improving the environment.

The Port's trade customers move goods from all corners of Washington and the United States through the Tideflats to people all over the world. We value our relationships with the community, customers, the NWSA, the Port of Seattle, municipal governments, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Joint Base Lewis–McChord (JBLM), and our regional economic development partners.



**STRATEGIC SEAPORT:** The Port of Tacoma is a formally federally-designated Strategic Seaport to coordinate efficient port operations during peacetime and national emergencies. The Port is a key support facility for JBLM.

## Organizational Structure

The Port's five Commissioners are elected by Pierce County voters and serve as the board of directors for the Port. The Commission sets the Port's strategic direction and delegates the implementation of the Strategic Plan to the Port's executive director who, in turn, works closely with Port staff to carry out the goals and strategies contained in the plan.

The Port has nine departments that support the vital role we play in creating and sustaining sound economic development for Pierce County and Washington state. The Port's major departments and function areas are:

- Executive
- Engineering, Environmental, and Planning Services
- Finance, Contracts, Purchasing and Public Records
- Communications and Governmental Affairs
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Maintenance (Equipment and Facilities)
- Real Estate
- Security

A detailed organizational chart is available at:  
[www.portoftacoma.com/about/organization](http://www.portoftacoma.com/about/organization)





## The Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA)

The NWSA is a partnership between the Port of Tacoma and the Port of Seattle that was created in 2015.

The NWSA markets and manages the container, breakbulk, auto and some bulk terminals in Tacoma and Seattle.

The success of the Port and the NWSA are intertwined. In 2020, about two-thirds of the Port of Tacoma's operating revenue was generated through this partnership.



# About the Port of Tacoma

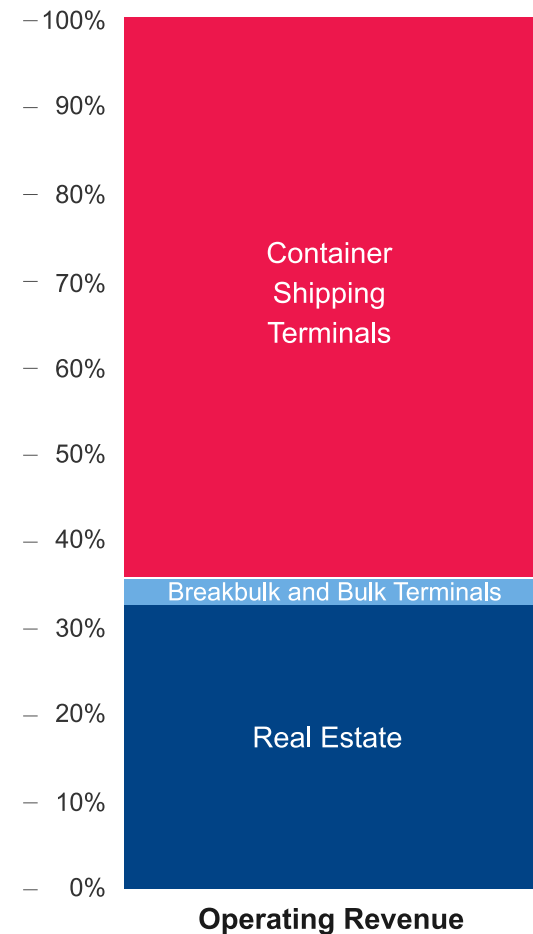
## Major Business Areas

**CONTAINER SHIPPING TERMINALS:** The Port has five major container terminals where some of the world's largest container shipping lines call. These terminals are managed by the NWSA. The Port licenses about two-thirds of its property in the Tideflats to the NWSA to support this business area.

**BREAKBULK AND BULK TERMINALS:** Breakbulk cargoes—ranging from John Deere tractors to Caterpillar equipment—also move through Port-owned and operated facilities. The Port also has a grain terminal on Schuster Parkway, which exports corn and soybeans that come to Tacoma by rail from the Midwest.

**REAL ESTATE:** The Port leases land and buildings to job-creating customers for a wide range of uses including, logistics support, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution. The Port owns and leases space at The Fabulich Center, a five-story office building located in the Tideflats that opened in 1985.

**TAX LEVY:** The Port of Tacoma levies a property tax (at less than the maximum allowed by law) that is only used for debt repayment, environmental projects and transportation investments. The tax levy is not used for Port operations.







The Port's Strategic Plan is designed to grow the region's economy and connect our community to a world of opportunity.

Our success relies on the ability to achieve strong financial performance from investment decisions and operating results.

A major focus of our Strategic Plan is supporting maritime trade and our customers. A substantial portion of the Port's operating revenue and resulting economic benefits come from maritime trade activities.



# Mission and values

## Mission

**The Port of Tacoma makes strategic investments in our harbor and community to promote prosperity, trade and jobs, while protecting and enhancing our environment.**

## Values

### Integrity and Transparency

The Port conducts all business and decision-making with integrity and transparency, inside and outside the organization.

### Excellence

The Port strives for excellence throughout our workplace to best serve the needs of our team, our customers and our community.

### Adaptability

As an enterprise government, the Port is committed to adapting to the challenges of a dynamic workplace and market environment.

### Stewardship

The Port is a responsible steward of our natural environment and of the public financial resources that are entrusted to us.

### Teamwork and Partnerships

The Port is committed to internal teamwork and external partnerships in pursuit of a shared vision for the future.

### Health and Safety

The Port is committed to the health and safety of our employees, labor partners, customers and community.

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Port supports the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout our organization and our community.





To further our unique and important role in the community and beyond, the Port has established five foundational goals that will guide our priorities through 2026.

Each foundational goal is accompanied by a set of strategies designed to support and achieve the Port's mission.

Central to the Port's mission is promoting economic prosperity through the advancement of maritime trade and growth in the regional economy. A key to that prosperity is the ongoing success of the NWSA.



# Five foundational goals





The Port is an economic engine that makes strategic investments to generate jobs and promote vitality for our region.

---

***"Making investments that help attract new jobs to Pierce County."***

---

***"Serve as an economic engine for the region."***

---

***"Growing apprenticeships and internships to make sure that we have a well-trained workforce in the future."***

\* Quotes included throughout this document are from the Strategic Plan online open house community survey.

# Foundational goal

## Economic Vitality

Advance living-wage job creation and business development opportunities in Pierce County with a focus on marine trade and transportation.



### STRATEGIES

EV-1

Strategically acquire and develop real estate to support marine trade activity of the Port and The Northwest Seaport Alliance.

EV-3

Develop and support land use and infrastructure policies that protect the cargo supply chain and promote a robust employment base.

EV-2

Invest in assets that support living-wage job creation throughout Pierce County.

EV-4

Partner with regional organizations to facilitate career development and business growth in Pierce County.







Environmental stewardship is integrated into all aspects of the organization, from our development activities to the ongoing operations of the Port and our customers.

***"Ensuring environmental safety of Port operations."***

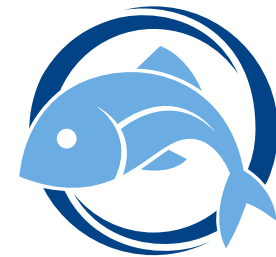
***"Protect the climate, natural environment, and the health and safety of the community."***



# Foundational goal

## Environmental Leadership

**Protect and enhance the environment of Commencement Bay and the Puyallup River by continuing to clean up contaminated land, improve habitat and water quality, and minimize air emissions from Port operations.**



### STRATEGIES

EL-1

Remediate contaminated Port properties in a manner that ensures protection of human health and the environment while enabling economic development.

EL-3

Invest in projects that improve the quality of stormwater runoff from Port properties, embody best practices and empower our tenants to comply with complex permits.

EL-2

Reduce the air and climate pollution generated by Port and tenant activities while protecting their operations from the impacts of climate change.

EL-4

Create wetland opportunities and improve fish habitat independent of regulatory obligation.





The Port and its Commission act as trustees for the best management of the public's assets. To be successful, the Port must create and sustain a productive and safe work environment, continue to focus on its customers, commit to its strategic direction, and for the sake of efficient and effective performance, embrace sound financial practices and internal alignment.

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***"Being a force for sustainable change, a good neighbor, and great place to work for Port employees."***

# Foundational goal

## Organizational Success

Create and sustain a transparent culture prioritizing the Port's fiduciary role as trustee of public assets and commitment to financial responsibility.



### STRATEGIES

OS-1

Provide continued solid Port financial success and fiduciary performance.

OS-4

Plan, design, and construct a new Port staff workspace that also provides spaces for community engagement and mixed-use opportunities.

OS-2

Protect the public's investment by maintaining existing assets and positioning them for future growth.

OS-5

Integrate the values of diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as health and safety, into the Port's culture and decision-making framework.

OS-3

Ensure the Strategic Plan is the day-to-day roadmap for all decisions and actions by the organization.

OS-6

Foster an organizational culture that attracts, develops and retains a diverse, high-performing, and engaged workforce.







Efficient transportation connections and systems for roads, rail and waterways are essential components of a robust economy.

The Port collaborates with partner agencies on key transportation projects that support freight mobility needs.

***"Complete the connection from 167 to I-5 to enable a smooth flow of traffic."***

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***"Establish efficient logistics infrastructure with capacity for growth."***



# Foundational goal

## Transportation Advocacy

Promote road, rail and navigation infrastructure and technology improvements to strengthen the regional maritime industry and economy.



### STRATEGIES

TA-1

Support infrastructure projects that increase Port freight mobility, prioritizing the SR 167 Gateway Project, and the Port of Tacoma Road/I-5 interchange.

TA-3

Develop criteria and policies to guide decision-making for Port transportation advocacy efforts and to prioritize infrastructure investments.

TA-2

Advocate for the transportation infrastructure and system management needs of Port-related businesses in the Tideflats and Pierce County.

TA-4

Develop and maintain an understanding of regional transportation projects that support Port-related mobility.





Building relationships and communicating effectively with people throughout Pierce County is essential to the Port's continued success. Connecting with our community also helps our residents understand the important role trade and commerce play in the economic vitality of our region.

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***"Making all the residents in Pierce County aware of who the Port is and what they do."***

# Foundational goal

## Community Connections

Engage and advance relationships with the Pierce County community and beyond in a timely, accessible, and inclusive way.



### STRATEGIES

CC-1

Strengthen, build, and maintain relationships with a wide variety of public, community, and business stakeholders through direct engagement.

CC-2

Strengthen, build and maintain strategic relationships with federal, state and local governments, and with the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

CC-3

Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to increase community awareness and understanding of the Port's mission and activities.







This Strategic Plan guides the Port's priorities and actions through 2026.

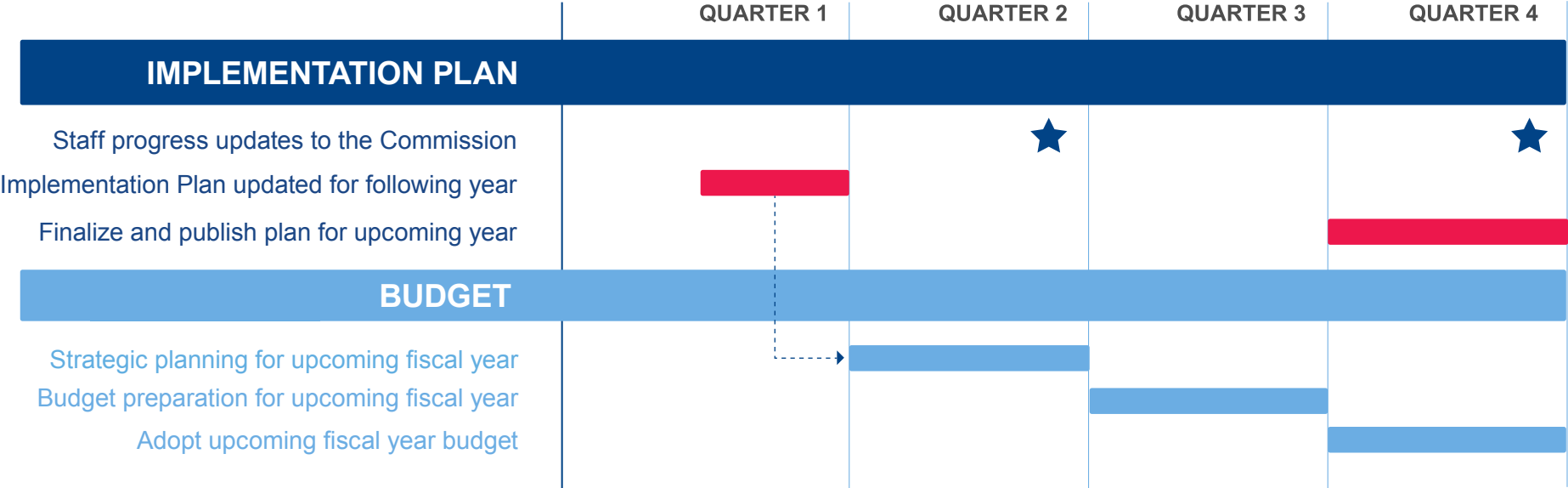
Success of this Plan requires intentional integration into the Port's day to day activities. The primary vehicle to do this is the Implementation Plan.

The Port's executive director works continuously with the Commission to develop priorities, and with staff to develop the Implementation Plan.

The Port's budget development process is a key tool for clarifying priorities and providing resources needed for the actions contained in the Implementation Plan.

# Plan in action

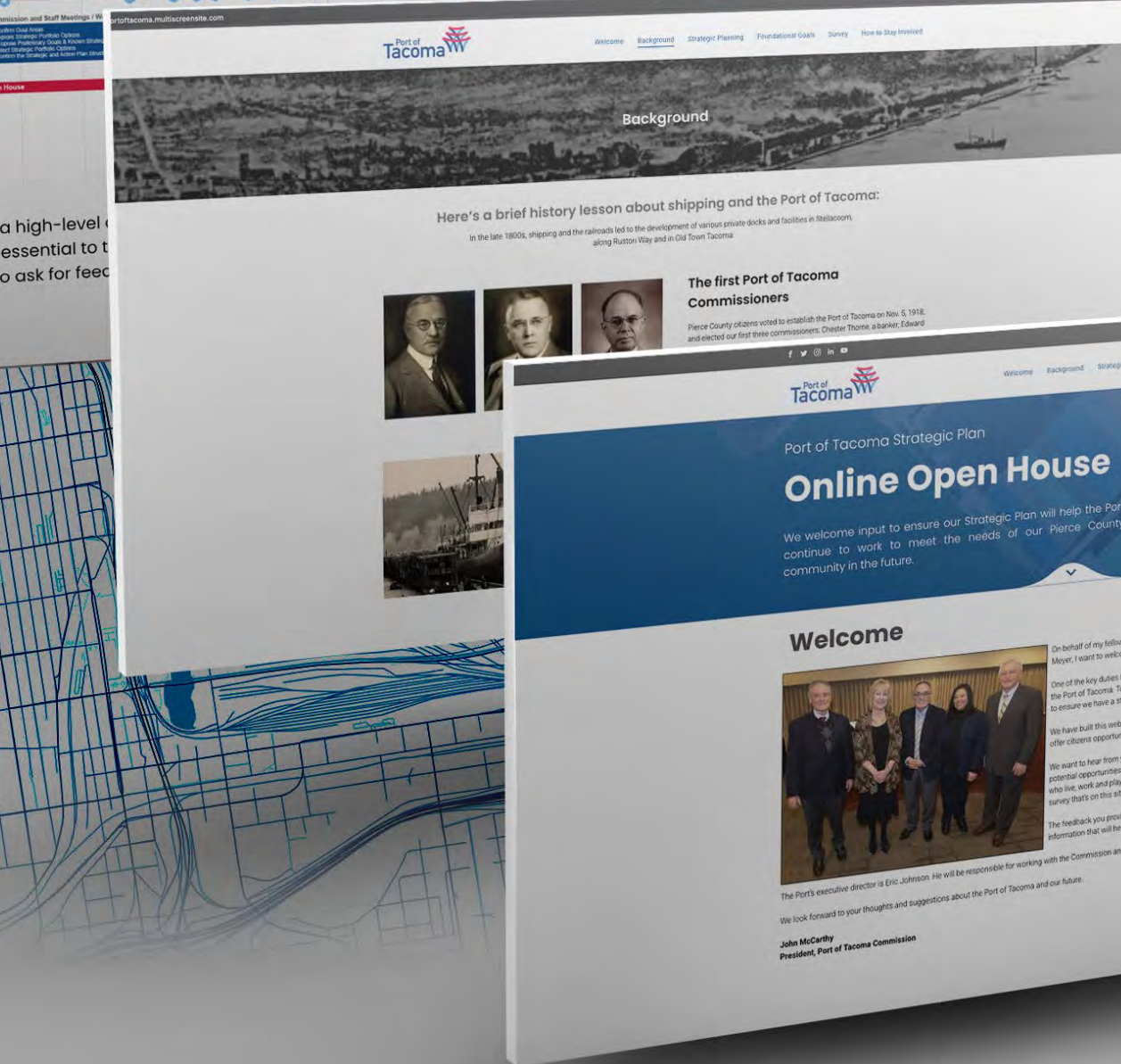
The Implementation Plan is an integral part of this Strategic Plan and will provide details on specific tasks that will be undertaken to advance and measure progress on the foundational goals and supporting strategies. The annual budget will be informed by the Implementation Plan which will include details on timing and resource needs. The graphic below illustrates the relationship between the Strategic Plan and the budget.



**THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME OF HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS (CSHI):** Background & Statutory Requirements Chapter 53.20.010 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) requires port districts to prepare and update a “comprehensive scheme” of their proposed capital improvements. To view the most current Port of Tacoma CSHI [visit here](#).







# Thank You

The Port thanks the many individuals, organizations, governments and customers that shared their ideas and suggestions about the Port's future direction during our year-long Strategic Plan outreach effort.

We especially want to thank the Port Commission for their involvement and leadership throughout this process.

We are also grateful to our Port employees who are working every day to make this plan a reality.

# Plan development and outreach

The process to create the new Strategic Plan began in early 2020, and throughout that year and into 2021, the Port's executive director, strategic planning team and consultant team met regularly to work on its development. This work included consultation and input from Commissioners along with extensive community outreach to obtain feedback and ideas. In July 2020, the Port launched an online Strategic Plan open house that proved to be a key outreach tool during the pandemic when in-person methods were not possible.

Visitors to the online open house were able to learn more about the Port of Tacoma's history, current operations, and the developing foundational goals for the Strategic Plan. In addition, people were encouraged to share their ideas, perspective, and suggestions by completing an online survey.

## Highlights from our Strategic Plan outreach efforts include:

**3,823** visitors to the online open house

**450** survey responses

**41** one-on-one interviews with Port Commissioners and key business and community leaders

**12** presentations and updates at Port Commission meetings

**50** presentations to local community, business and governmental entities, reaching more than 2,500 people

**24,000** emails to promote the online open house and survey

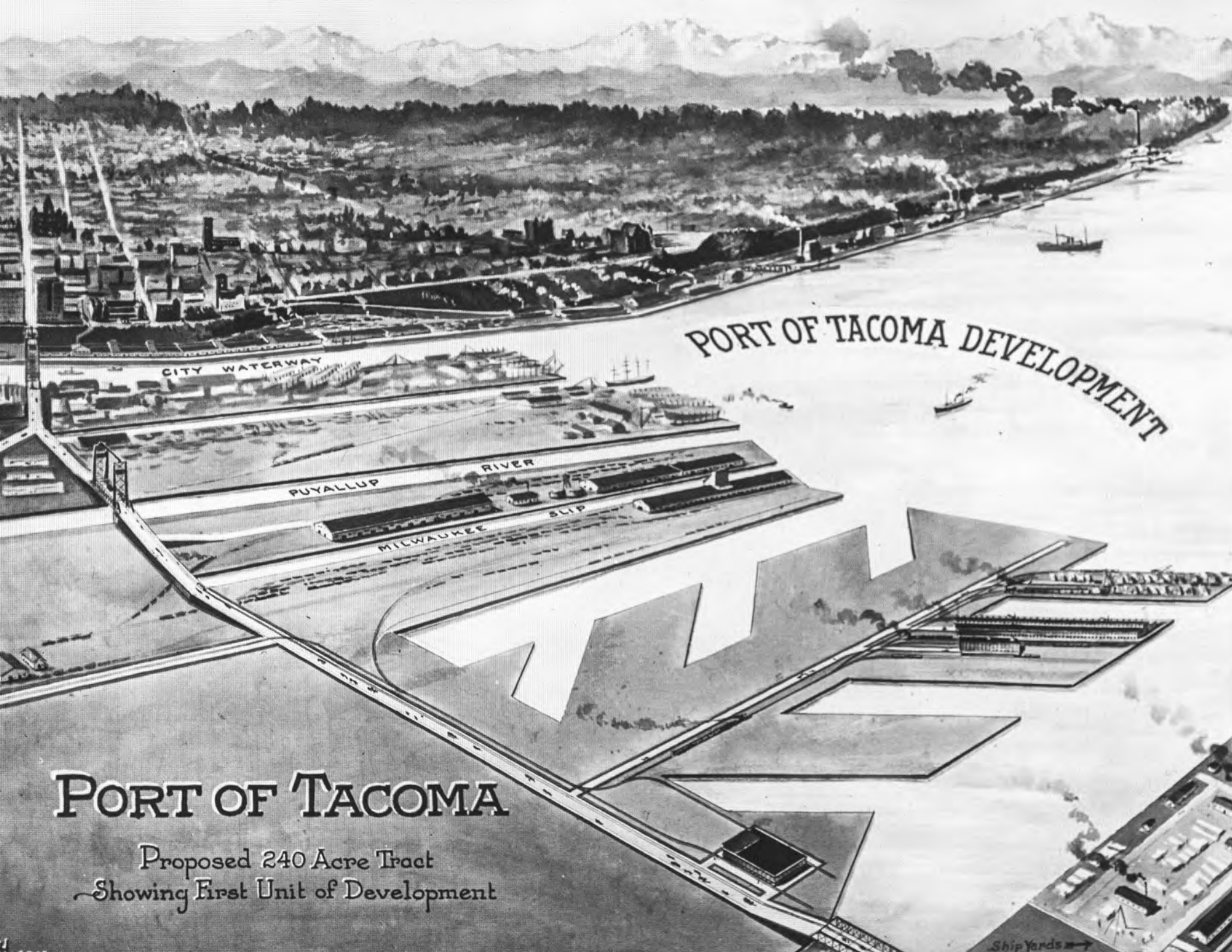
**24** social media posts highlighting progress on the Strategic Plan

**3** Port staff workshops

**7** updates at Port all-staff meetings







PORT OF TACOMA DEVELOPMENT

# PORT OF TACOMA

Proposed 240 Acre Tract  
Showing First Unit of Development

Ship Yards →









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