



CITY OF
TUMWATER

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MEETING AGENDA**

**Online via Zoom and In Person at
Tumwater City Hall, Council Chambers,
555 Israel Rd. SW, Tumwater, WA 98501**

**Tuesday, October 14, 2025
6:00 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
- [3.](#) Resolution No. R2025-015 Food System Plan (Community Development Department)
- [4.](#) Ordinance O2025-017 Establishment of the Equity Commission (Executive Department)
- [5.](#) Strategic Plan Discussion – Review Draft (Executive Department)
6. Mayor/City Administrator's Report
7. Adjourn

Meeting Information

The public are welcome to attend in person, by telephone or online via Zoom.

Watch Online

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88493434956?pwd=RjSHo3jV2voRNWnwDmzfxadSbwUfln.1>

Listen by Telephone

Call (253) 215-8782, listen for the prompts and enter the Webinar ID 884 9343 4956 and Passcode 148125.

Public Comment

The public may submit comments by sending an email to council@ci.tumwater.wa.us, no later than 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Comments are submitted directly to the Councilmembers and will not be read individually into the record of the meeting.

Post Meeting

Video of this meeting will be recorded and posted on our City Meeting page: <https://tumwater-wa.municodemeetings.com>.

Accommodations

The City of Tumwater takes pride in ensuring that people with disabilities are able to take part in, and benefit from, the range of public programs, services, and activities offered by the City. To request an accommodation or alternate format of communication, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator directly, call (360) 754-4129 or email ADACoordinator@ci.tumwater.wa.us. For vision or hearing impaired services, please contact the Washington State Relay Services at 7-1-1 or 1-(800)-833-6384.

TO: City Council
 FROM: Dana Bowers, Associate Planner
 DATE: October 14, 2025
 SUBJECT: Resolution No. R2025-015 Food System Plan

1) Recommended Action:

Place Resolution No. R2025-015 on consideration for adoption at the November 3, 2025, City Council meeting.

The resolution was recommended for adoption by the Planning Commission after their September 23, 2025, public hearing.

2) Background:

To address community concerns about food insecurity at the local level, the City Council included the preparation of a Food System Plan in the 2024 and 2025 Long Range Planning Work Program.

City staff have been working with our consultant Rebeca Potasnik to prepare a plan that develops a strategy to promote providing healthy food for all members of the community, reducing food waste, and supporting food production and processing.

The final plan will identify strengths and gaps in the current food system, define goals and policies to direct the work, and create a strategy to support improving local food systems. Implementation will focus on eliminating barriers, addressing gaps in the current system, producing solutions to implement at appropriate scale, and identifying how to maintain and update resource materials with jurisdictional and community partners.

Work on this project has been done with extensive coordination with the Planning Commission and the General Government Committee to ensure that outcomes align with the vision of the community.

The intent of this meeting is to present the Planning Commission's recommendation on the Food Systems Plan, discuss with the City Council, and request the resolution be placed on consideration for the November 3, 2025 City Council meeting.

3) Policy Support:

Strategic Priority: Build a Community Recognized for Quality, Compassion and Humanity.

4) Alternatives:

☐ None

5) Fiscal Notes:

Preparation of the Plan is internally funded. Funding for implementation of the Plan will be a

part of future discussions.

6) Attachments:

- A. Staff Report
- B. Resolution No. R2025-015
- C. Tumwater Food System Plan
- D. Presentation
- E. Public Comments

STAFF REPORT

Date: October 14, 2025
To: City Council
From: Dana Bowers, Associate Planner



Resolution No. R2025-015 Food System Plan

1 – Background

The City Council approved the development of a Food System Plan as part of the 2024 and 2025 Long Range Planning Work Programs. The intent of the Plan is to review the current food landscape in Tumwater and create a strategy to improve outcomes for the community. The City hired Rebeca Potasnik as a consultant to assist with the development of the Plan.

Because the scope of food security is broad, the project focuses on developing strategies that focus on improving outcomes for the following goals:

- How to provide healthy food for all members of the community;
- Reduce food waste; and
- Support local food production and processing.

The Planning Commission was briefed on the Plan on November 26, 2024, and conducted work sessions on February 11, 2025, April 22, 2025, July 8, 2025, and September 9, 2025.

The General Government Committee was briefed on November 13, 2024, March 18, 2025, and May 14, 2025. City Council was briefed July 8, 2025.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the resolution on September 23, 2025, and the Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the plan.

The intent of this work session is to present the Planning Commission's recommendation, gather further feedback from the City Council, and request the resolution be moved forward for council consideration at the November 3, 2025, meeting.

2 – Proposed Goals, Policies, and Opportunities

The Food System Plan provides the current context of the food system network, identifies gaps which lead to inequitable food access, and proposes goals, policies, and opportunities to improve Tumwater's local food system. These goals and policies will guide City Council decisions. Programs and projects proposed in the opportunities section will be considered by the City Council as part of the work plan development process as funding and staff capacity allows.

Seven sectors were selected to provide a comprehensive yet streamlined framework for analyzing the food system in the Community Food Assessment. More information about each sector can be found in the plan. They follow established models from other food system assessments, while being adapted to Tumwater's local context. This structure captures the full cycle of the food system in a way that is relevant for City action and consistent with best practices. Challenges were identified for each of the sectors as a basis to identify needs and create goals for the Plan and are included in Chapter 2. The Food System Plan also identified opportunities to address challenges in Chapter 3.

3 – Public Comments

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 23, 2025. Four people provided written comments on the plan before the hearing and two people were present to testify at the hearing. The in-person remarks are part of the public record and can be heard on the meeting recording. The written comments are provided as appendices to this packet.

4 – Next Steps

A. City Council Review and Approval Process

Staff requests that the City Council place the resolution for consideration at their November 3, 2025, City Council meeting. The Planning Commission has recommended that the City Council approve the resolution. The City Council will need to find that the provisions of the resolution are in the best interest of and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the City.

RESOLUTION NO. R2025-015

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Tumwater, Washington, adopting the 2025 Food System Plan.

WHEREAS, the City of Tumwater believes that access to food is fundamental to community health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, Sustainable Thurston, which was adopted by the Thurston Regional Planning Council in 2013, sets a goal to support local food systems to increase community resilience, health, and economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the Thurston County Countywide Planning Policies support nurturing urban agricultural and food-oriented businesses to build a vital, diverse, and strong local economy, including job opportunities that support community and household resilience, health, and well-being; and

WHEREAS, a goal of Tumwater's Strategic Priorities and Goals 2025 – 2026 is to develop innovative partnerships and strategies with community human and social services organizations to improve service delivery to communities facing barriers, including senior citizens, low-income residents, and others; and

WHEREAS, Tumwater's Comprehensive Plan includes policies and actions that promote access to healthy food, including diverse meal options and fresh produce; and

WHEREAS, the City Council approved 2024 and 2025 long range planning work programs that directed staff to prepare a Tumwater Food System Plan that focused on how to provide healthy food to the community, reduce food waste, support local food processing, eliminate barriers, address gaps in the current system, produce solutions to implement at appropriate scale, and identify how to maintain and update resource materials through jurisdictional and community partners; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission had a briefing on the Plan on November 26, 2024, and work sessions on February 11, 2025, April 22, 2025, and July 8, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the General Government Committee had briefings about the Plan on November 13, 2024, March 18, 2025, and May 14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council had a work session on the Plan on July 8, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission had a work session on the resolution on September 9, 2025, and held a public hearing on September 23, 2025; and

WHEREAS, following the public hearing and deliberations, the Planning Commission recommended adoption of the Plan by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council discussed the Planning Commission's recommendation at a work session on October 14, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the 2025 Food System Plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, supports the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Tumwater, and will benefit the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TUMWATER AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Acceptance. The 2025 Food System Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", is hereby adopted.

Section 2. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this Resolution is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 3. Severability. The provisions of this Resolution are declared separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this Resolution or the invalidity of the application thereof to any person or circumstance, shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the Resolution, or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption and signature as provided by law.

RESOLVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

CITY OF TUMWATER

Debbie Sullivan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melody Valiant, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Karen Kirkpatrick, City Attorney

City of Tumwater

Food System Plan



Power House Ranch produce at Tumwater Farmers Market, photo by Kelly Marie Dawson

Adopted _____, 2025 by Resolution No. 2025-015



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Food System Plan addresses food insecurity at the local level by focusing on how to do the following three things:

1. Provide healthy food for all members of the community.
2. Reduce food waste.
3. Support local food production and processing.

The plan identifies the most impactful activities for Tumwater in addressing core food insecurity issues, eliminating barriers, addressing gaps in the current system, and offering appropriately scaled solutions implemented at the municipal level through collaborations between the City and community partners.

Methodology & Approach

This plan was developed grounded in the principles of equity, sustainability, stability, resiliency, and efficacy.

- Equity. A food system should support food security with an emphasis on those community members that experience the greatest inequities.
- Sustainability. A balance between environmental health, economic profitability, and social equity creates a resilient food system that meets current food needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Stability. All community members should have reliable access to sufficient, safe, culturally appropriate, and nutritious food, even in the face of unexpected challenges.
- Resiliency. The food system should maintain its functionality and continue to provide food security and nutrition under various adverse conditions.
- Efficacy. The audience for the plan is Tumwater, therefore, the objectives and actions in this plan will be the areas where the City can have the most impact.

A Community Food Assessment was conducted to provide an understanding of the current local conditions and identify the most impactful activities for Tumwater in achieving its goals. The assessment examined existing conditions, challenges, and opportunities within Tumwater's food system by engaging with 53 subject matter experts that were interviewed or surveyed. Subject matter experts were chosen to holistically represent Tumwater's current food system including natural, physical/built, political, and social aspects.

Interviews were conducted with guiding questions, allowing conversations to follow different directions depending on the interviewee's perspective. The survey was conducted online. Appendix A contains a complete list of the subject matter experts and Appendix B provides the survey and interview questions.

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The assessment and plan development also included a review of literature spanning municipal and regional planning documents, as well as reports, academic articles, websites, and toolkits related to food systems, land use, and public health. A complete list of materials is provided as Appendix C.

The assessment is organized into seven sector summaries:

1. Land Use & Conservation
2. Processors & Producers
3. Retail & Distribution
4. Waste Reduction & Recovery
5. Access & Security
6. Public Health & Nutrition
7. Education & Workforce

Each sector summary includes Key Challenges, Key Developments, and Current Collaborations & Resources. These seven sectors were selected to provide a comprehensive yet streamlined framework for analyzing the food system. They follow established models from other food system assessments, while being adapted to Tumwater's local context. This structure captures the full cycle of the food system in a way that is relevant for city action and consistent with best practices.

The final section of the plan is organized around Tumwater's three overarching goals and offers policies and opportunities informed by the Community Food Assessment findings.

What is a Food System?

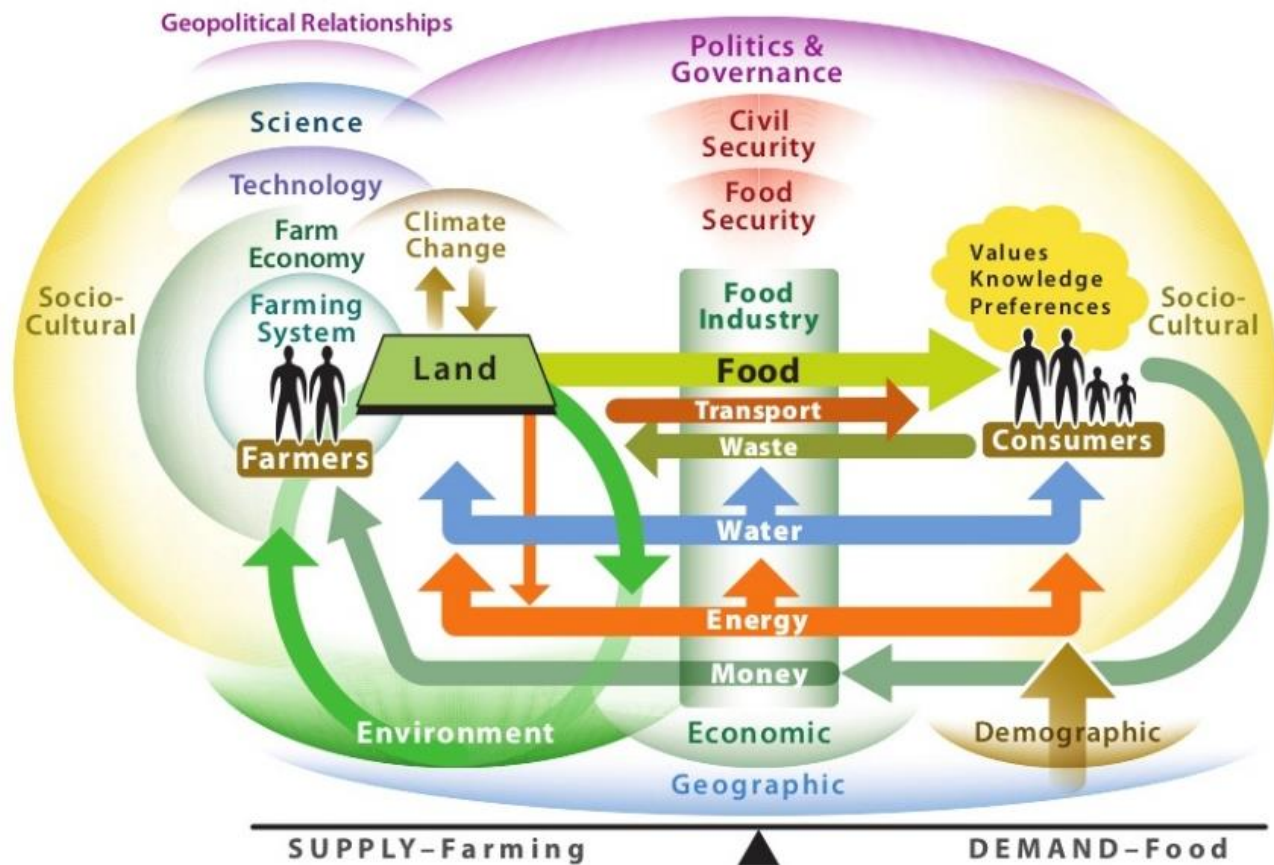
The food system is an interconnected web of inputs, activities, and actors involved in producing, processing, distributing, consuming, and disposing of food. Figure 1 illustrates the complexity and interrelationships within that system. Importantly, our modern food system does not adhere to jurisdictional boundaries, as food moves across cities, counties, states, and countries before it reaches consumers.

In this context, the definition of "local" becomes both important and nuanced. The term can vary widely depending on the entity using it. For example, Tumwater School District's Food Services Department uses a definition aligned with the United States Department of Agriculture, the major funder of school meals. In this instance, "local" means food sourced from anywhere within Washington State. By contrast, farmers markets and food hubs often define "local" more narrowly, based on a handful of surrounding counties. These definitions can be visualized as concentric circles expanding outward, shaped by product availability and the proximity of farms, processors, and producers.

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Figure 1. The Interrelation of Food System Components.



Source: Future of Food and Farming, UK Government, designed by shiftN

Recognizing the need for a strong and resilient food system, Tumwater has incorporated discussion of the local food system into elements of its 2025 Comprehensive Plan update. The inclusion of a Climate Element—new as of December 2024—demonstrates a commitment to sustainability through greenhouse gas reduction and climate resilience strategies. These are essential for ensuring the long-term health and stability of both local and regional food systems. The Conservation Element will emphasize community collaboration to improve access to healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate, and sustainably produced food, ensuring that all community members can reliably access nutritious food.

Recent History of Regional Collaboration

A resilient food system requires regional collaboration. Shared planning, infrastructure, and partnerships help Tumwater and community organizations make a greater impact, especially for those most affected by food insecurity. Over the past 18 years, efforts across Thurston County have brought together diverse partners with goals to build a food system that is equitable, sustainable, stable, and resilient.

Community Food Summit (2011): In 2007, local nonprofits—including Garden-Raised Bounty (GRuB), Thurston County Food Bank, Sustainable South Sound, Left Foot Organics, and the Gleaners Coalition—

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joined with The Evergreen State College and area farmers to launch the Hunger Free Thurston County Coalition and Food Bank Growers Network. These efforts culminated in the 2011 Community Food Summit, a two-day event that presented findings from a regional food assessment and launched working groups that laid the foundation for future collaboration. Out of this event grew the Thurston Thrives Food Action Team, the Thurston Asset Building Coalition Food Hub, and the Sustainable Thurston Food System Council.

Thurston Asset Building Coalition Food Hub (2012): The Thurston Asset Building Coalition formed a Food Hub to strengthen the local food economy, increase access to healthy food, and promote environmental stewardship. It connected multi-sector partners to support economic stability for low-income households.

Thurston Thrives Food Action Team (2013): Launched by Thurston County Public Health & Social Services, Thurston Thrives used a collective impact model to address public health. The Food Action Team focused on food, nutrition, equity, and health, and developed a Strategy Map presented to the County Board of Health in 2013.

Sustainable Thurston Food System Council (2011–2014): As part of the Sustainable Thurston planning process, the Thurston Regional Planning Council convened a Local Food Systems Panel to inform its regional sustainability plan. Their 2012 White Paper built on recommendations from the Community Food Summit and led to the creation of the Sustainable Thurston Plan in 2014. The Thurston Food System Council emerged from this process as a grassroots body tasked with advancing the plan's food goals, though it lacked dedicated funding or staffing.

South Sound Food System Network (2016–present): To reduce duplication and align efforts, the Thurston Asset Building Coalition Food Hub, Thurston Thrives Food Action Team, and the Thurston Food System Council merged to form the South Sound Food System Network in 2016. Early leadership included GRuB, Thurston Economic Development Council, Washington Department of Health, and Senior Services for South Sound, with participation from over 30 organizations. South Sound Food System Network is currently staffed through Thurston Asset Building Coalition with state support, though funding is uncertain after June 2025. Recently, the Network has experienced lower participation and a narrower focus on food security rather than broader system goals.

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2. SECTOR SUMMARIES

Land Use & Conservation

Tumwater is situated on land traditionally stewarded by Indigenous peoples through active management of oak and camas prairies—among the most biodiverse and culturally significant ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest. These prairies, shaped by generations of human-ecological relationships, support a wide array of food and medicinal plants such as camas, bracken fern rhizomes, hazelnuts, berries, and acorns from Garry oak trees. Seasonal camas harvests are not only vital food-gathering events but also moments of cultural connection. Intentional fire has been used to maintain prairie landscapes and sustain habitats for grazing animals like deer and elk. Today, between two to three percent of these unique ecosystems remain.

Land use decisions directly influence the foundations of a healthy and resilient food system. In Tumwater, land is under increasing pressure from the competing needs of housing, commercial and industrial growth, and environmental conservation. These decisions affect the availability of space for local food production, and the preservation of vital ecological and cultural resources.

Key Developments

- Regenerative agriculture contributes to climate solutions by drawing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and sequestering it in the soil.
- From 2012 to 2022, Thurston County lost 27% of its farmland—shrinking from 76,638 acres to 55,943 acres—and 17% of its farms.
- Walkable urban environments and localized food supply chains enhance resilience by improving equitable access to fresh foods, reducing emissions, and supporting local economies.

Key Challenges

- Housing markets favor single family developments, increasing the value of land with access to utilities in urban growth areas and driving the pressure for development.
- High farmland costs in the region create barriers for new and beginning farmers.
- The Growth Management Act prioritizes dense development in urban areas to protect rural area, which does not always readily accommodate food production in urban zones.
- Tumwater must continually navigate tensions between competing urban land use needs for housing, industrial and commercial development, conservation, and agriculture.

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Current Collaborations & Resources

- The **Community Farm Land Trust** preserves farmland through community ownership models, long-term leases, and conservation easements, ensuring long-term affordability and land access for farmers in the South Puget Sound.
- The **Thurston Conservation District** supports landowners with technical assistance and conservation planning that promotes soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat.
- The **Natural Resources Conservation Service** provides financial and technical support through programs like Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program (EQUIP) helping local landowners implement conservation practices that build climate resilience and support sustainable agriculture.

Processors & Producers

The people and businesses who grow, forage, raise, and process food in and around Tumwater are the foundation of the local food system. The makeup of producers in Tumwater area includes small-scale farmers, ranchers, food processors, urban farmers, foragers, and community gardeners. Their efforts contribute to food access, economic resilience, and environmental sustainability. Despite operating at different scales, many processors and producers face similar challenges and opportunities as they work to feed the community.

In 2010, the Tumwater City Council amended urban agriculture regulations (Ordinance O2010-029), making it easier for residents to raise and sell food within city limits. Chickens, rabbits, bees, are allowed on most lots. Miniature livestock are allowed on residential lots over 5,000 square feet and larger animals are permitted on parcels over two acres within city limits.

Tumwater's 2019 Economic Development Plan highlighted the importance of expanding the craft food and beverage sector in Goal #5. This goal emphasizes not just brewing and distilling, but also the need to strengthen connections across the supply chain—from growers and processors to markets and manufacturers.

Key Developments

- Tumwater is home to two major developments supporting craft food and beverage production: the **Craft District** on Capitol Boulevard and the **Warehouse District** on Old Highway 99. The Craft District, part of a state-funded Innovation Partnership Zone, includes Heritage Distilling, South Puget Sound Community College's Craft Brewing and Distilling Program, and retail outlets. The Warehouse District features local businesses like Matchless Brewing, Triceratops Brewing, Spud's Produce Market, and 8 Arms Bakery.
- The **Southwest Washington Regional Agricultural Business & Innovation Park** in Tenino is beginning to open its first phase. Focused on value-added agriculture, the Ag Park supports food-related manufacturing, processing, storage, and packaging. Project partners include the Thurston

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Economic Development Council, City of Tenino, and Dragonwheel Investment Group with support from Washington State University Extension, Port of Olympia, Northwest Agricultural Business Center, and Thurston County.

- **Colvin Ranch** is establishing a USDA-certified meat processing facility at the Ag Park, addressing a longstanding bottleneck for local livestock producers. Once operational, the facility will serve regional ranchers with a planned capacity of up to 100 animals per week, enhancing the regional meat supply chain, improving local food access, and reducing the environmental impact associated with long-distance animal transport.
- The Tumwater School District operated a small farm at Tumwater's Isabella Bush Park through a program for high school students called **FRESH (Farm Rooted Education for Sustainability & Health)**. Tumwater provides the farmland, a barn, and water at no cost to the school district. Since 2020, FRESH has produced over 13,000 pounds of food for seniors, low-income students' families, and the Thurston County Food Bank. As of this writing, the program is scheduled to end in July 2025 due to the school district's budget cuts.

Key Challenges

- High farmland costs limit access for new and beginning farmers.
- Access to affordable water remains a significant barrier for urban farms and gardens.
- Tariffs may increase the cost or reduce availability of critical farming inputs.
- Agricultural employers report difficulty hiring and retaining workers.
- Small-scale farmers often lack access to subsidies, which are typically tied to acreage or production volume, and time-intensive application processes often outweigh the benefit.
- Many processors and producers lack access to affordable cold storage, which limits the ability to scale or diversify their operations.

Current Collaborations & Resources

- Tumwater currently has one **community garden** with 20 plots, located at Tumwater United Methodist Church. The **Parks and Recreation Department** has a grant program to provide funding to support the expansion of community gardens in Tumwater.
- **Northwest Agriculture Business Center** provides technical assistance to agricultural businesses, including farms and food businesses in Thurston County.
- **Native Grown & Gathered** offers marketing and technical support to Native American food producers and businesses.
- **Our Community Kitchen** and **LOC-OLY Grown**, two commercial kitchens on Olympia's west side, support small-scale food entrepreneurs with prep stations, equipment, and cold/dry storage. Our Community Kitchen also offers group purchasing opportunities.

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- Access to farmland and farmland loss are high-priority issues for Thurston Conservation District, which has worked county-wide since 2014 with the **South Sound FarmLink** program and since 2023, in Olympia with the **Farm My Yard** program. Innovative urban agriculture options similar to Farm My Yard may serve Tumwater's needs for increased urban food production.
- In addition to technical assistance for landowners, the **Thurston Conservation District** offers community garden support to governments, public agencies, organizations, and individuals through the **Community Garden Support Network**.

Retail & Distribution

Retail and distribution are essential for strengthening Tumwater's local food economy and improving access to fresh, locally produced food. The City's focus on cultivating a strong craft food and beverage sector aligns with broader economic and land use goals. Tumwater's 2019 Economic Development Plan includes fostering community-oriented retail, especially grocery-anchored centers (Goal #8), and supporting the full craft food and beverage supply chain (Goal #5), from growers to markets.

Key Developments

- Food hubs connect small and mid-sized producers with institutional and retail buyers by aggregating, distributing, and marketing local products. These services help farms access stable markets, like schools, grocery stores, and food banks, while streamlining local sourcing for buyers. The region now has two food hubs: Southwest Washington Food Hub and South Sound Fresh.
- The Warehouse and Craft Districts provide retail and distribution space for local food and beverage producers.

Key Challenges

- Food costs have increased, and fresh local food is harder to access.
- The Tumwater Farmers Market is under-resourced, with limited operation and an outdated web presence.
- Federal programs like Farm to School face funding uncertainties.
- Cold storage capacity remains limited across the distribution network.
- Direct-to-consumer retailers, such as farmers markets, food hubs, and farms, face barriers to accepting electronic benefit transfer (EBT), including administrative burdens and technology costs.

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Current Collaborations & Resources

- The **Tumwater Farmers Market** operates June–September 2nd and 4th Sundays, at Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School (11 AM–3 PM).
- The **Community Farm Land Trust** publishes the ***Fresh from the Farm Guide***, a free printed and electronic regional farm map and directory connecting consumers with farms, community supported agriculture (CSAs), markets, and food banks in a four-county region.
- **Farm to School**, a federal program implemented by the Washington State Department of Agriculture and regional partners, supports local food sourcing and garden-based learning. Tumwater School District does not currently participate.
- **Harbor Wholesale**, located in Lacey, is the largest independent food distributor on the West Coast. While not solely focused on local producers, its extensive warehousing, cold storage, and logistics infrastructure plays a key role in regional food distribution and could offer opportunities for partnership or logistical support to local processors and suppliers.
- **South Sound Fresh** serves Thurston and Mason Counties from its Olympia location. It works with over 50 producers and offers an online marketplace for consumers.
- The **Southwest Washington Food Hub**, a program of the Southwest Washington Growers Co-op, supports more than 30 producers in a six-county region.

Waste Reduction & Recovery

Reducing food waste offers numerous benefits.

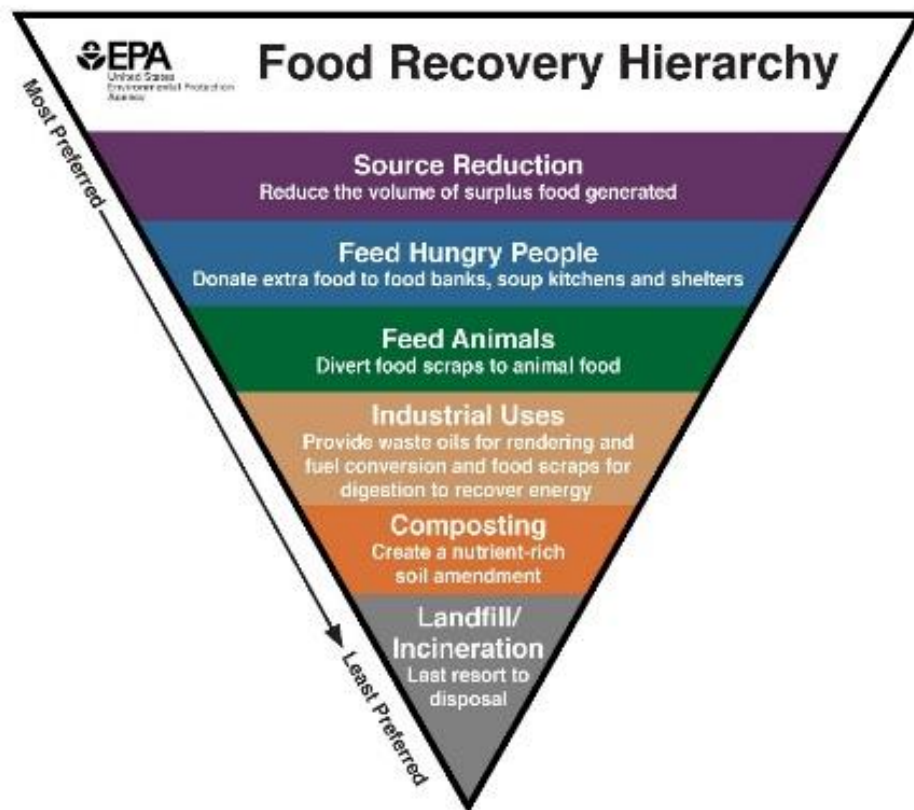
1. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction. Diverting food from landfills reduces methane production.
2. Resource Conservation. Preventing food waste conserves the water, energy, and labor used in production.
3. Economic Savings. Households and businesses reduce costs associated with food production, transport, and disposal.
4. Improved Food Security. Surplus food can be redirected to those in need.
5. Soil Health. Composting food waste reduces landfill reliance and enriches soil through nutrient recycling.

The food recovery hierarchy prioritizes waste reduction strategies with landfill as the last resort.

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Figure 2: Food Recovery Hierarchy



Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency

Key Developments

- Washington's Organics Management Law (2022) mandates phased-in organic waste separation for businesses as part of the state's climate strategy:
 - 2024: Applies to businesses generating 8+ yards/week of food or yard waste
 - 2025: Threshold lowers to 4+ yards/week
 - 2026: Applies to businesses generating 96+ gallons/week

Key Challenges

- Enforcement of the Organics Management Law relies on self-reporting, with no immediate penalties for non-compliance.
- Leadership changes have slowed regional coordination on food waste diversion and rescue initiatives.
- Inadequate cold storage capacity limits food rescue operations.
- Edible food is often discarded due to cost or logistical barriers when supply chains fail.

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- Packaging contamination prevents some food waste from being composted.
- Short meal periods in K–12 schools lead to uneaten food and higher waste.
- Food diversion in schools often depends on individual staff initiatives rather than system-wide practices.
- Most Tumwater schools rely on reheating and serving pre-prepared meals which produce more packaging waste than scratch cooking.

Current Collaborations & Resources

- **LeMay Pacific Disposal** is Tumwater’s primary hauler, partnering with **Brady Trucking** and **Silver Springs Organics** for composting.
- The **Solid Waste Advisory Committee**, which includes a Tumwater representative from the City Council, advises Thurston County’s five-year Solid Waste Management Plan.
- **Thurston Conservation District** offers technical support for composting and other food waste reduction education.
- The **Thurston County Food Bank** rescues surplus food from retailers and restaurants and operates a gleaning program to harvest excess crops from local farms.
- The **Use Food Well Washington Plan**, created under state law (RCW 70A.205.715), outlines 30 recommendations to reduce food waste and its impacts.
- The **Washington Center for Sustainable Food Management**, launched in 2024, supports statewide food waste diversion and coordinates efforts under the Use Food Well plan.

Access & Security

Food security means reliable, consistent access to enough nutritious, culturally appropriate food to lead healthy, active lives without relying on emergency food or coping strategies like skipping meals or scavenging. *Food insecurity* arises when that access is limited due to insufficient resources, availability, or social barriers.

The latest Washington State Food Security Survey conducted August to October 2024 shows that food insecurity remains high among low-income households and those relying on food assistance. Groceries and housing were the most frequently cited financial hardships, with protein-rich and perishable foods such as meat, eggs, and fresh produce being the hardest to afford. The expiration of pandemic-era support programs, combined with rising food costs, has worsened financial strain.

In 2023, 14 percent of Tumwater residents received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. This federal program delivered through Electronic Benefit Transfer cards provides about \$187 per month per person in 2025, approximately \$6.16 per day. Benefits are based on the assumption that households spend 30 percent of their net income on food, and the program fills the gap between that

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amount and the United States Department of Agriculture's low-cost Thrifty Food Plan. While the federal government covers benefit costs, states share administrative costs.

Washington State's Market Match program offers additional incentives for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, and Senior Nutrition participants when they buy fresh produce at participating markets and stores.

The Thurston County Food Bank does not have a walk-in location in Tumwater, but its main warehouse is in Tumwater near the Interstate 5 and State Route 101 interchange. Thurston County Food Bank operates five satellite pantries in Tumwater. Some satellites use a shopping model where patrons choose their grocery items, and some use a drive-through model where patrons receive a pre-packaged assortment of groceries.

- South Puget Sound Community College (shopping model)
- Mt. View Church (drive-through)
- North Star Church of God (shopping)
- Tumwater United Methodist Church (drive-through)
- Tumwater Senior Center (shopping)

Clients receive 25–35 pounds of food per visit including shelf-stable items, protein, dairy, deli, and produce. Thurston County Food Bank also offers mobile programs like United States Department of Agriculture-funded senior boxes, home delivery, food rescue, local purchasing, and gleaning.

Figure 3. Food Sources by Value and Weight.



Source: Thurston County Food Bank.

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Key Developments

- SNAP's benefit formula assumes 30% of net income goes toward food, but high housing and living costs often reduce actual food spending.
- Thurston County Food Bank 's demand is growing faster than the local population.
- Mutual aid models, like Little Free Pantries, expanded during the pandemic and continued to operate.
- Shifting federal policy priorities have introduced uncertainty around future food security funding.

Key Challenges

- Rising food prices strain household budgets and food access.
- Awareness of available resources and programs is low.
- Culturally appropriate food options are limited.
- Donations from large food companies may include highly processed or near-expired items, which do not always meet nutritional or cultural needs.
- Regional food assistance efforts lack coordination.
- Thurston County Food Bank patrons in Tumwater report needing more staples like milk, eggs, and fresh produce.
- Limited hours, days, and locations of assistance programs can be barriers.
- Many small farms and markets face administrative and technical barriers to accepting Electronic Benefit Transfer, limiting access for individuals who rely exclusively on federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

Current Collaborations & Resources

- The **Old Town Center** provides weekday lunches for seniors at no cost or suggested donation, now prepared by **Senior Services of South Sound**. Participation increased following a federal grant. The center also hosts a monthly Thurston County Food Bank food distribution serving 30–40 seniors, with demand rising post-pandemic.
- The **Tumwater Senior Council** provides a monthly lunch at Tumwater Historical Park from March through October each year.
- The **Food Source Foundation** supports mutual aid efforts in Tumwater, including **Souper Sunday – Tumwater**, a community-based food sharing initiative launched via Facebook in April 2025.
- **Senior Services for South Sound** operates the federally funded Senior Nutrition Program. The program serves 2,500 clients annually with hot and frozen meals, including 400 **Meals on Wheels**

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participants. Meals are tailored to health needs and prioritize local sourcing. Tumwater is a program partner.

- The **Olympia Kiwanis Club** runs three gardens producing over 20,000 pounds of donated food annually for Thurston County Food Bank.
- **Garden-Raised Bounty (GRuB)** installs free backyard gardens for low-income households and offers continued support via workshops, a seed library, and peer learning.
- **Little Free Pantries**, modeled on book-sharing libraries via a community cupboard, offer self-serve access to food and personal care items in several Tumwater locations, including Mountain View Church, Western Plaza Mobile Home Park, and an expanded version on Hoadly Loop that incorporates a pop-up tent.
- **Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia (CIELO)** hosts monthly food distributions in high demand—often running out of food within an hour—underscoring ongoing unmet community needs.
- **Catholic Community Services** operates **The Community Kitchen** in downtown Olympia, serving lunch and dinner meals Monday through Saturday throughout the year.
- The **Union Gospel Mission** in downtown Olympia offers three meals daily Monday through Friday, one meal on Saturday, and two meals on Sunday year-round.

Public Health & Nutrition

Nutrition is a key component of preventive public health and contributes to healthier communities. Unfortunately, many people have limited knowledge about nutrition, cooking skills, seasonal eating, accessing or preparing fresh foods, and incentive and assistance programs. Lack of adequate food can affect physical and mental health. Children who grow up in homes without enough food are at an increased risk of illness and experiencing academic and psychosocial problems. Nutritional deficiencies and family stress both contribute to these outcomes.

The Tumwater School District serves approximately 3,800 lunches and 1,500 breakfasts each school day. During the summer months, it continues to provide meals, serving around 250 students daily at designated school sites. In the 2023–2024 school year, the district received \$177 per student in combined federal and state meal funding, with 97% of that funding coming from federal sources. For the 2025–2026 fiscal year, 33.24% of students are eligible for the Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program, an increase of 3.5% from the previous year.

Key Developments

- The Tumwater School District has experienced a 30% rise in food costs over four years. Federal reimbursements have not kept pace, and the state’s contribution varies based on the share of students eligible for subsidized meals. The district must cover any shortfalls.

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- In the past 15–20 years, school kitchens have been redesigned with smaller spaces and limited equipment, shifting meal service away from scratch cooking. Today, most Tumwater schools rely on reheating and serving pre-prepared meals due to infrastructure and staffing constraints.

Key Challenges

- The Tumwater School District lacks a central kitchen; each school handles its own food preparation and storage. Infrastructure limitations in individual school kitchens constrain their ability to incorporate fresh, locally sourced foods.
- Meal programs often struggle to integrate donated or rescued food while meeting nutrition standards.
- Rising food prices make it harder for people with low incomes to afford fresh, nutrient-dense, local foods.
- Language barriers limit access to nutritional information, food sources, and program details.
- Many processed foods contain increasingly high levels of sugar and sodium, which can negatively impact health and condition people's taste preferences to crave more salt and sugar in their diets.

Current Collaborations & Resources

- **SNAP-Ed**, the educational arm of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), provides nutrition education and budgeting tools through partners like the Thurston County Food Bank and WSU Extension.
- **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program** supports pregnant and postpartum parents and young children with nutrition education, healthy foods, breastfeeding support, and referrals. The program is managed by the Washington State Department of Health and receives federal funding.
- Community organizations like **GRuB** and the **Olympia Food Co-op** offer free and low-cost classes and workshops on nutrition, cooking, gardening, foraging, and preparing wild foods and medicines.

Education & Workforce

Education and workforce development are essential to building a resilient and inclusive local food system. Tumwater's 2019 Economic Development Plan prioritizes growing the craft food and beverage sector by developing a Center of Excellence in partnership with local education providers. This initiative supports producers, manufacturers, and markets while creating training and career pathways. The Plan also encourages recruiting educational institutions to strengthen Tumwater's economic base and

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community vitality. Together, these goals lay the groundwork for food system education that supports local business, community health, and economic opportunity.

Key Developments

- K–12 education can proactively support food security and food literacy. School gardens and greenhouses at local schools in Tumwater teach environmental stewardship, food origins, and seasonal eating. These programs help reduce food waste and foster appreciation for the local food economy.
- Teaching cooking and food preservation builds self-sufficiency and improves access to nutritious, affordable food.
- Workplace wellness programs, like those offered through the Southwest Washington Food Hub of which Tumwater has participated, connect workplaces to fresh, locally grown foods and family farms to improve employee health and wellbeing and support the regional food system.

Key Challenges

- School gardens often lack stable funding and rely on volunteers, including non-staff community members.
- Youth lack exposure to local, seasonal foods in school cafeterias. The Tumwater School District's lack of a central kitchen limits scratch cooking, food preparation flexibility, and the ability to process and store local ingredients, contributing to reliance on heat-and-serve meals and restricting nutrition quality. These challenges are compounded by a federal reimbursement rate that has not kept pace with rising food costs.
- Regional farm employers face persistent labor shortages caused by seasonal work, low wages, and a lack of qualified or interested applicants.

Current Collaborations & Resources

- **Pacific Mountain Region Agriculture Workforce Development Asset Inventory** is a living document maintained by Washington State University (WSU) Thurston County Extension, detailing resources for agricultural workforce development—spanning training, capital, infrastructure, and education from K–12 to nonprofit providers.
- **QUEST (Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy & Training)** a regional partnership led by Thurston Economic Development Council, WSU Extension, GRuB, and others—created a report in 2024 focused on strengthening the agricultural workforce through business engagement, community outreach, and employment training. The partnership is no longer active, although follow-up from the report is still in process.
- **South Puget Sound Community College** is an award-winning, top community college which offers food, beverage arts, and hospitality programs in culinary arts, baking and pastry, and craft brewing/distilling.

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- The **Evergreen State College's Organic Farm** operates as a learning laboratory for their agriculture program.
- **New Market Skills Center**, located in Tumwater, provides high school technical training across 12 districts, including a Culinary Arts Program with an operating deli.
- **ASHHO Cultural Community Center**, located in Tumwater, hosts a paid, 12-week culinary and hospitality job training program.
- **FRESH (Farm Rooted Education for Sustainability & Health)** is a GRuB-inspired, hands-on program that operates a small farm at the Tumwater's Isabella Bush Park for Tumwater High School students, especially those facing adversity. Tumwater provides the farmland, barn, and water at no cost. Students earn credit and gain job skills through farm and classroom work. Since 2020, FRESH has produced over 13,000 pounds of food for seniors, low-income students' families, and the Thurston County Food Bank. As of this writing, the program is scheduled to end in July 2025 due to Tumwater School District budget cuts.
- **Enterprise for Equity, Thurston Economic Development Council**, and the **Thurston Chamber of Commerce** offer business development resources for aspiring and existing food system entrepreneurs.
- **Garden-Raised Bounty (GRuB)** is a non-profit with a small urban farm located on Olympia's west side, serving all of Thurston County and beyond. They work at the intersection of food, education, and health systems. GRuB provides career pathways and education in agriculture and wild foods and medicines for youth, veterans, educators, people with low incomes, and Black and Indigenous communities.

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3. FOOD SYSTEM GOALS & OPPORTUNITIES

This section presents the heart of the Tumwater Food System Plan: a set of goals, policies, and actionable opportunities designed to strengthen Tumwater’s food system in alignment with community values and identified needs. Informed by input from subject matter experts, review of relevant plans and policies, and best practices from across the region, these recommendations are grounded in the realities of what Tumwater can influence, lead, or support. While the preceding Community Food Assessment outlines the current conditions and key challenges, this section offers a path forward to be accomplished over the next 20 years in parallel with the Comprehensive Plan.

Each goal is supported by a set of policies that reflect Tumwater’s potential roles. Under each policy, a series of opportunities is identified. These are not mandates, but potential actions Tumwater could consider over time, depending on available resources, partnerships, and evolving community needs.

The structure of this section is intended to support flexible implementation. Some opportunities may be short-term and low-cost, while others may require longer timelines, inter-agency collaboration, or new funding mechanisms. Together, they offer a community-shaped framework to guide the Tumwater’s future planning, investment, and decision-making related to creating a food system grounded in the principles of equity, sustainability, stability, resiliency, and efficacy.

Goal 1: Provide access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all members of the community.

Access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food is a foundational element of a resilient, healthy community. In Tumwater, food access is shaped by factors such as household income, proximity to stores or markets, housing stability, access to transportation, and awareness of information and available services. Goal 1 identifies opportunities to reduce barriers to food access and strengthen food assistance and networks. Tumwater’s role in this work focuses on coordination, communication, and supportive policy to ensure that everyone, particularly the most vulnerable residents, can reliably access healthy food, and that all Tumwater neighborhoods are included in future improvements to the local food environment.

Policies and Opportunities

- 1.1 Expand access to healthy, culturally relevant, and affordable food from both local and non-local sources across all neighborhoods.**
 - 1.1.1 Partner with the Thurston County Food Bank to establish a satellite brick-and-mortar food bank in Tumwater near the new Tumwater Community Center.
 - 1.1.2 Work with regional partners to make free and subsidized community garden plots available citywide and prioritize funding for low-income households.
 - 1.1.3 Support farmers to become certified to accept EBT/SNAP benefits from customers.

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- 1.1.4 Work with interest groups to identify and address barriers to consistent scheduling to support increased weekly operations of the Tumwater Farmers Market during its core season and explore off-season openings.
 - 1.1.5 Use Tumwater’s communication channels to increase access to and visibility of food assistance programs (e.g., food banks/pantries, SNAP, Market Match, SUN Bucks) and to promote food bank satellite locations and donations.
 - 1.1.6 Continue to support food access through senior meal programs, city-sponsored events, and youth programs where allowable, and prioritize the inclusion of fresh, seasonal, and culturally relevant local foods, particularly in services benefiting low-income or vulnerable populations.
- 1.2 Enhance public education and outreach related to the local food system.**
- 1.2.1 Integrate food, gardening, and nutrition learning opportunities into city sponsored programming with incentives to participate, such as classes offered through the Department of Parks and Recreation and at community events.
 - 1.2.2 Promote partner led, community-based initiatives such as cooking classes, gardening workshops, and nutrition education tailored to underserved populations.
 - 1.2.3 Continue to support funding for Tumwater school garden maintenance and education.
- 1.3 Increase opportunities for individual and community self-reliance.**
- 1.3.1 Engage with Thurston Conservation District to support community garden expansion, GIS studies for urban agriculture land identification, soil testing, and code review.
 - 1.3.2 Expand partnerships for edible landscaping and urban fruit and nut tree planting in public spaces including parks and along pedestrian corridors with scheduled community care and harvest days.
 - 1.3.3 Build relationships with homeowner associations to better understand their needs and to provide support and remove barriers that would allow home food gardens and climate-resilient landscaping which conserves water for food production.
- 1.4 Ensure supportive infrastructure, zoning, and land use policies.**
- 1.4.1 Encourage walkable and bikeable neighborhoods with access to fresh food outlets, including farmers markets and grocery stores to reduce food deserts.
 - 1.4.2 Support siting the Tumwater Farmers Market near a community gathering area.
 - 1.4.3 Explore including food access as a design consideration for new developments including access to food retailers and spaces for urban agriculture/community gardens.

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- 1.4.4 Explore opportunities to allow temporary or pop-up food distribution sites (e.g., food share hubs, mutual aid stands, gleaning events) through clear guidelines and permitting processes that balance flexibility with neighborhood and safety considerations.
- 1.4.5 Develop and maintain a GIS map of free food pantries, neighborhood-based food distribution sites, food bank satellites, and other free food distribution sites to support coordination, identify service gaps, and improve visibility for those seeking food assistance.

1.5 Strengthen regional food system collaboration.

- 1.5.1 Advocate for regional funding and coordinate cross-jurisdictional planning, investments, and grant applications for shared infrastructure.
- 1.5.2 Improve emergency preparedness and climate resilience by collaborating with Thurston County Emergency Management to integrate food security into disaster preparedness plans including identification of nearest non-impacted supply chains and ensuring food storage, recovery, and redistribution plans are part of emergency response frameworks.
- 1.5.3 Improve emergency preparedness and climate resilience by developing and coordinating policies and staffing models for rapid response food systems during future crises, including sourcing, safety, and volunteer mobilization.
- 1.5.4 Support existing pop-up food distribution efforts as part of community emergency response capacity.
- 1.5.5 Assess cold storage needs and explore opportunities to expand infrastructure such as shared-use refrigeration at community centers, food hubs, or partner facilities—while supporting efforts to increase capacity and ensure reliable access during emergencies.
- 1.5.6 Map existing food production, storage, and distribution resources within Tumwater to support internal planning and emergency response coordination.
- 1.5.7 Improve emergency preparedness and climate resilience by supporting increased financial resources for community-led organizations working to enhance food security in Tumwater and the surrounding region.

Goal 2: Reduce food waste.

In 2021, the Washington State Department of Ecology released the Use Food Well Washington Plan, a statewide strategy identifying 30 prioritized actions to prevent food waste, rescue surplus food, and recycle food scraps. Tumwater's Food System Plan draws inspiration from this framework and aligns with many of its core objectives, particularly those that local subject matter experts brought forward that mirrored these state level goals and are relevant to local government roles. This alignment

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positions Tumwater to engage with regional and state partners in coordinated food waste reduction efforts and may strengthen future opportunities for collaborative funding or pilot programs.

Policies and Opportunities

2.1 Prevent food waste at all stages of the food system.

- 2.1.1 Support local schools to reduce food waste by providing a minimum of 20 minutes of seated lunch time, which improves nutrition and reduces plate waste.
- 2.1.2 Partner with Thurston County Public Works and food assistance organizations to reduce edible food waste at transfer stations by creating clear donation guidance and outreach for truckers and other supply chain actors, addressing common barriers like time pressure, lack of information, and logistical challenges.
- 2.1.3 Collaborate with regional partners to develop and distribute customized educational materials and mailers to residents and businesses focused on source reduction.
- 2.1.4 Promote food waste reduction among local businesses through campaigns that highlight cost savings, environmental benefits, and compliance with Washington's commercial organics recycling requirements—while encouraging participation from businesses of all sizes, including those not subject to the mandate.

2.2 Partner with Thurston County to increase community-wide food waste education and engagement.

- 2.2.1 Participate in and promote Food Waste Prevention Week and related events at the Tumwater and regional level.
- 2.2.2 Offer community compost giveaways and food waste education events through the Department of Parks and Recreation and other community programs.
- 2.2.3 Create and promote engaging social media campaigns and signage to inform the public about food waste prevention best practices and available composting programs.
- 2.2.4 Include food waste prevention as a component of relevant grant funding criteria such as neighborhood matching grants.
- 2.2.5 Offer workshops on food storage, preservation, and meal planning to help individuals and businesses reduce food waste.

2.3 Expand food recovery and redistribution systems.

- 2.3.1 Ensure composting systems are used at all Tumwater public facilities and programs.
- 2.3.2 Partner with Thurston County Public Works to educate businesses and residents on proper composting practices to reduce contamination and increase participation.

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- 2.3.3 Reinvigorate regional food rescue initiatives by identifying historic and resident-led models and new opportunities.
- 2.3.4 Support the creation of a regional, centralized database or platform to connect food waste producers with organizations that can redistribute food to those in need.

Goal 3: Support local food processing and production.

Local food producers and processors are critical to building a sustainable, resilient regional food system. Supporting this sector strengthens food security, drives local economic development, reduces reliance on long supply chains, and supports climate adaptation. However, small-scale producers and processors face barriers such as limited land access, zoning and permitting challenges, infrastructure gaps, and unstable market access. This goal identifies solutions where Tumwater has influence to help create the conditions that allow local food enterprises to thrive and enhance the economic viability of the local food system.

Policies and Opportunities**3.1 Reduce barriers and provide incentives for local growers and processors.**

- 3.1.1 Collaborate with local, regional, and state partners, such as those involved in the Craft and Warehouse districts, to support and promote opportunities for local producers to access and expand markets.
- 3.1.2 Explore partnerships to improve access to land, water, and infrastructure for food producers by supporting shared-use models, facilitating connections to underutilized land, and leveraging programs such as land leases and technical assistance.
- 3.1.3 Review existing land use regulations to identify barriers that disproportionately limit food production opportunities for low-income households and those on smaller lots.
- 3.1.4 Support water access and explore potential rate reductions for urban agriculture, community gardens, and school gardens such as stormwater fee waivers, fire hydrant access, and subsidized or waived system development charges—recognizing their role in strengthening food security, fostering education and community resilience, supporting local economies, and contributing to emergency preparedness.
- 3.1.5 Facilitate networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities among local growers, processors, and market operators to strengthen community connections and business viability.
- 3.1.6 Explore ways to support local direct-to-consumer programs, such as bakery shares (subscription-based access to baked goods) and produce pickup sites, to diversify market options for producers and consumers.

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- 3.1.7 Develop a comprehensive toolkit for aspiring and current local food producers, including farmstands, community gardens, p-patches, and backyard poultry—detailing permit requirements, best practices, available resources, and contacts for technical assistance.
- 3.1.8 Explore opportunities to connect culinary entrepreneurship and food system innovation with arts and cultural events and technology funding streams, including vertical farming and agritourism.
- 3.2 Support access to land for local food production by historically underserved and aspiring farmers, and coordinate with partners to conserve agriculturally viable lands in appropriate areas.**
 - 3.2.1 Partner with the Community Farm Land Trust and Thurston County to explore mechanisms such as urban growth area swaps and farmland easements for conserving high-value agricultural land adjacent to Tumwater’s Urban Growth Area, while supporting farmland transitions to new farmers.
 - 3.2.2 Promote and expand access to food production on suitable underutilized private and public or quasi-public lands within city limits by supporting programs such as those offered by community-based organizations, where feasible, and consistent with land use and environmental constraints.
 - 3.2.3 Consider reviewing and amending development regulations to allow small-scale farm stands, including in residential neighborhoods, to support local growers and increase access to fresh food.
 - 3.2.4 Map locations where city-owned or managed resources (e.g., land, water access, infrastructure) are currently used for food production. Use this data to inform land use planning, resource allocation, and future urban agriculture initiatives.
- 3.3 Strengthen local food system infrastructure.**
 - 3.3.1 Support regional partnerships to develop shared-use food infrastructure, such as processing, cold storage, and commercial kitchen facilities, by leveraging city assets and pursuing state, federal, and philanthropic funding opportunities. Evaluate the feasibility of repurposing existing sites in Tumwater, including underutilized or public facilities, where appropriate.
 - 3.3.2 Explore strategic investments and partnerships with food hubs to expand regional aggregation and distribution capacity that supports small- and mid-scale producers and improves food access.
- 3.4 Promote local food purchasing and community engagement.**
 - 3.4.1 Educate and engage the community on the value of local food by coordinating public education efforts highlighting the health, environmental, and economic benefits of

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local food systems, including the role of regenerative agriculture in climate resilience and carbon sequestration.

- 3.4.2 Educate and engage the community on the value of local food by celebrating local food and producers through storytelling, city-sponsored events, informational signage, and communications platforms—focusing on systems and practices rather than promoting specific businesses.
- 3.4.3 Raise awareness of the broader impacts of food choices by educating residents about the social, environmental, and economic costs of industrial food systems and the value of local purchasing. Strategies may include community events such as a local food or film festival, themed messaging on city social media and newsletters, and interactive booths at public gatherings like the Tumwater Farmers Market or Arbor Day celebrations, for example.
- 3.4.4 Strengthen local markets and values-aligned public purchasing by identifying existing barriers and exploring mechanisms and partnerships to support the Tumwater Farmers Market’s scale and sustainability, such as operational funding, expanded schedules, improved signage, and vendor subsidies.
- 3.4.5 Strengthen local markets through support of local food hubs by educating and engaging the community with the model and providing distribution sites on city-owned property.
- 3.4.6 Consider local policy options, such as permit fee reductions, for food producers operating at small scale or using conservation practices.
- 3.4.7 Assess opportunities to align City purchasing practices where applicable with values-based criteria such as local sourcing, environmental sustainability, and equity. Where Tumwater’s procurement is limited, promote public awareness of these values through communications and support similar efforts by partner agencies, when feasible.
- 3.4.8 Encourage farm-to-table connections by collaborating with regional food system partners to support initiatives that help local restaurants, bakeries, caterers, and butchers to access regional ingredients. This may include promotional campaigns, networking events, or technical assistance.

3.5 Increase local food production capacity.

- 3.5.1 Foster workforce development and support new farmers by continuing to support educational activities through the Tumwater School District, including the Tumwater FRESH Program at Isabella Bush Park, alongside partnerships with New Market Skills Center and South Puget Sound Community College to build a skilled food and agriculture workforce.

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- 3.5.2 Explore partnerships to foster workforce development and encourage new farmers by supporting Thurston Conservation District's FarmLink and Farm My Yard programs and creating pathways for new farmers to access land, training, and technical support.
- 3.5.3 Foster workforce development and support new farmers by supporting community-based organizations and existing commercial kitchens, such as Enterprise for Equity, ASHHO, and Our Community Kitchen, to offer business incubation and mentorship opportunities for beginning food processors and producers.
- 3.5.4 Promote the economic viability of small-scale farming by supporting efforts to make small-scale and urban farming financially sustainable by exploring ways to reduce regulatory barriers, promoting cooperative models, connecting growers with local markets and procurement opportunities, and exploring access to business support services, microgrants, and relevant state or federal funding.
- 3.5.5 Promote the economic viability of small-scale farming by encouraging creative models such as agritourism, culinary arts partnerships, and vertical farming that align with local zoning and community values.

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LIMITATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUED WORK

Tumwater's decision to develop a Food System Plan reflects growing awareness of the importance of local food systems to public health, economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and community well-being. This Plan provides a strong starting point for advancing these goals.

However, the scope of this work was necessarily constrained by a modest budget and a limited timeline. The methodology was intentionally designed to align with these parameters, including a targeted number of subject matter expert interviews and a streamlined review of existing planning documents and research. More expansive engagement, particularly with additional food system stakeholders and communities most impacted by food insecurity, would provide valuable insights that were beyond the current project's scope.

The community needs assessment offers a non-exhaustive inventory of existing conditions, programs, and partnerships. Given the rapidly shifting political landscape at the federal level and constrained state and federal budgets, policies impacting local food systems are in active flux. As such, some elements of this assessment may become outdated quickly, and opportunities identified in this Plan may require adjustment as conditions continue to evolve.

Similarly, the Goals, Policies, and Opportunities outlined in this Plan reflect what could be developed and vetted within the available resources. A more comprehensive set of opportunities could be proposed with additional time, staffing, and sustained community input. Many other jurisdictions that have engaged in food system planning have done so over the course of multiple years and often benefit from the involvement of standing bodies such as regional food policy councils or interdepartmental task forces.

The scope of this planning effort also called for the inclusion of key performance indicators and a method for maintaining and updating resource materials. While some suggested metrics and monitoring approaches are implied in the Goals, Policies, and Opportunities, this Plan does not yet offer a fully developed key performance indicators framework or system for resource tracking. These are important next steps that will require additional input and coordination from Tumwater staff and partners. Establishing shared accountability structures, such as a cross-departmental team or regional advisory group, could help define appropriate performance measures, develop a reporting mechanism, and determine how updates to resource materials are collected and shared over time.

As Tumwater continues this important work, it is recommended that the City consider this Plan a foundational document and explore mechanisms to support ongoing learning, refinement, and implementation, such as establishing a stakeholder advisory group, commissioning deeper analyses of key issue areas, and engaging in broader public input processes. Regional collaboration may also support alignment, resource sharing, and long-term impact across jurisdictions.

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APPENDIX A – SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Aherlow Kasjaka	Thurston Asset Building Coalition
Alyssa Jones Wood	City of Tumwater, Water Resources & Sustainability
Amanda Musser	WSU Extension Thurston County SNAP-Ed
Amanda Romero	Thurston County Public Works
Anita de Boer	Tunawerth LLC
Annie Salafsky	WSU Extension Thurston County, Southwest Washington Growers Cooperative
Bob Gibson	Tumwater School District, Food Services
Carissa Miller	Withywindle Valley Farm
Cathy Visser	True for You Nutrition, LLC.
Chris Hyde	The Food Source Foundation
Christine Ciancetta	WA State Department of Health
Cristian Salazar	Centro Integral Educativo de Olympia (CIELO)
Daniel Amodeo-Chavez	United Way of Thurston County
Deborah Williams	Tumwater Community Garden
Diane Torres	Centro Integral Educativo de Olympia (CIELO)
Hope Springer	Thurston County Public Works
Jake Yancey	Tracking Y Ranch
Jaspar Quinton	Catholic Community Services
Jen Ownbey	8 Arms Bakery
Jennifer Colvin	Colvin Ranch
Jennifer Crain	Slow Food Greater Olympia
Judy Jones	Thurston County Food Bank
Katie Rains	Washington State Dept of Agriculture
Kim Gaffi	Consultant, co-founder GRuB
Kristen Maring	Tumwater High School, FRESH
Kyle Taylor Lucas	Tenants United at Western Plaza Mobile Home Park & Urban Indians Northwest
LeeAnn Perry	Little Free Pantry
Loretta Seppanen	Slow Food Greater Olympia and Community Farm Land Trust member
Mackenzie McCall	Farmer, South Sound Food System Network, formerly with Thurston County Food Bank
Maegan Cote	Mt. View Church
Maggie Brown	Thurston County Public Works
Margaret Garrett	Educational Service District 101
Marilyn Sitaker	WSU Thurston County Extension, Southwest Washington Food Hub
Megumi Sugihara	Everyone's Food Sovereignty Alliance
Meredith Arseneau	Educational Service District 113
Michaela Winkley	Thurston County Food Bank
Mitch Lewis	Summit Farms, Tumwater Farmers' Market
Morgan Hartline	Washington State Dept of Health

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Nora White	Thurston Conservation District
Peter Epperson	Retired, formerly with regional public and nonprofit service organizations
Peter Guttchen	Formerly with Thurston County Public Works, WA Dept of Ecology
Rebekah Graham	Thurston County Food Bank
Robby Rutledge	Rutledge Family Farm
Senior Council	City of Tumwater, Old Town Center
Shawn Crimmins	City of Tumwater, Fire Department
Shelly Willis	Family Education & Support Services (FESS)
Stephanie Penland	Senior Services of South Sound
Theresa Kimball	Wild Fun Farm
Tina Sharp	Thurston Economic Development Council
Tina Wagner	Thurston Conservation District
TJ Johnson	Urban Futures Farm, Thurston Conservation District
Todd Anderson	City of Tumwater, Parks & Recreation
Treacy Kreger	Vern's Foods, Our Community Kitchen, South Sound Fresh

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APPENDIX B – SURVEY & INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**Survey Instrument**

These questions were set up as text boxes in an online survey tool. Any question could be skipped.

1. How would you describe your role in our local food system (for example: grower, distributor, processor, retailer, advocate, member of a community organization, chef, educator, waste manager, policymaker, etc.)? Please include your title and the name of your business or organization if applicable.
2. What do you think is the biggest challenge people face when trying to get local, nutritious food?
3. What unmet needs, challenges, or barriers do you see in your role or in your sector of the local food system?
4. What new issues or changes are happening in your part of the food system?
5. How do things like prices, demand, or outside markets affect your part of the food system?
6. In your view, how has climate change or climate change mitigation impacted the work you do in the food system?
7. How do you or your sector of the food system approach food-related waste?
8. How does food-related waste management impact your part of the food system?
9. What opportunities or ideas do you see for improving the way food is grown, shared, eaten, or disposed of in our area?
10. Do you currently collaborate with other organizations or individuals in the local food system? If yes, please list and/or describe these collaborations.
11. Do you feel there are any current policies or practices in Tumwater that make it easier or harder to have a strong local food system? If so, please describe.
12. What new policies or practices could Tumwater implement to support a better local food system?
13. Have you seen any great ideas or successful programs in other places that you think could work here in Tumwater?
14. Is there anything else you would like us to know about Tumwater's food system or your experiences/ideas?

DRAFT Tumwater Food System Plan

August 29, 2025

Interview Questions

These questions were used as a general framework to guide conversations.

1. When you think about our local food system, what comes to mind?
2. How would you describe your role in the local food system?
3. What is the biggest barrier to accessing local, nutritious food?
4. What are some emerging issues in your sector of the food system?
5. What unmet needs, challenges, or barriers do you see in your sector of the food system?
6. How is your sector impacted by external market forces?
7. How is your sector impacted by climate change?
8. How has your sector been affected by waste management practices?
9. What are the biggest upcoming or current opportunities for improving our local food system that you know about?
10. What policies or practices are currently in place in Tumwater that hinder a thriving local food system from your sector's perspective?
11. What policies or practices could we enact in Tumwater to support a thriving local food system from your sector's perspective?
12. Are there any best practices you have seen in other places you would like to see replicated in Tumwater?
13. Is there anyone else you think I should speak to?

DRAFT Tumwater Food System Plan

August 29, 2025

APPENDIX C – REFERENCES

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DRAFT Tumwater Food System Plan

August 29, 2025

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Food System Plan

Resolution No. 2025-015

City Council Work Session – October 14, 2025



Scope of the Resolution

Adopt the Food System Plan to implement goals, policies and opportunities that will support access to fresh, nutritious, culturally appropriate foods for all community members, reductions in food waste, and local food processing and production



Food Access

- Increase support for and opportunities to partner with local agencies and business to increase food access
- Use existing communications tools to promote food access programs and resources
- Provide expanded programs and opportunities for people to grow their own food
- Work together to provide greater resiliency as economic pressures increase and during emergencies



Food Waste

- Work with all levels of the food system to reduce food waste
- Support partnerships for food recovery
- Use existing communications tools to prevent food waste
- Develop programs and partners to redistribute food



Food Production and Processing

- Support and explore incentives for urban scale farming
- Develop partnerships to use existing resources that would support food production and processing
- Explore ways to promote local food purchases
- Promote and support local culinary arts as a part of building a vibrant, diverse economy



Planning Commission Recommendation

- Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 23, 2025, and recommended that the City Council adopt the resolution and Food System Plan



Next Steps

- Staff recommends that the resolution be placed on the consideration calendar for the November 3, 2025, City Council meeting



Food System Plan Public Hearing

Comment Log

September 23, 2025

ID	Date	Name	Organization or Business	Summary	Response
01	9/18/2025	Jennifer Colvin	Colvin Ranch	Supports adoption of the plan.	Staff forwarded comments to Planning Commission and City Council.
02	9/18/2025	Rita Robison		Does not support protecting agriculture land inside city limits.	Staff forwarded comments to Planning Commission and City Council.
03	9/19/2025	Rachel Friedman	Community Farm Land Trust	Supports adoption of the plan	Staff forwarded comments to Planning Commission and City Council.
04	9/23/2025	John Ficker	Thurston County Food Bank	Supports adoption of the plan.	Staff forwarded comments to Planning Commission and City Council.

From: [Brad Medrud](#)
To: [Dana Bowers](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on the Tumwater Food System Plan
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:44:57 PM

FYI

Brad Medrud, AICP | Community Development Department Director
City of Tumwater Community Development

-----Original Message-----

From: Kelly Wallace <KWallace@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:44 PM
To: Brad Medrud <BMedrud@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: FW: Comments on the Tumwater Food System Plan

-----Original Message-----

From: Jennifer Colvin <jennifer@colvinranch.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 1:43 PM
To: CDD DGroup <cdddgroup@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Cc: rebecca.potasnik@gmail.com
Subject: Comments on the Tumwater Food System Plan

Tumwater Planning Commission Members:

Thank you for taking the time to consider how Tumwater can best support the community by encouraging better access to fresh, local food. There are many good policies and opportunities outlined in the food system plan. I would also encourage you to consider how to support Tumwater schools in purchasing local food from local producers. This can be an important source of revenue for smaller food producers in the region. ESD 113 provides support and assistance to schools who are interested in purchasing local food, and WSDA offers Farm-to-School purchasing grants to support local purchasing as well. When schools buy fresh, local food directly from farmers, it helps strengthen local food system as a whole and creates connections between kids, the food they eat, and farmers.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Colvin
Owner, Colvin Ranch
(360) 339-8465

From: [Brad Medrud](#)
To: [Dana Bowers](#)
Subject: FW: Why Agricultural Lands Don't Belong in Urban Growth Areas
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 7:52:59 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

FYI

Brad Medrud, AICP | Community Development Department Director
 City of Tumwater Community Development

From: Brittaney McClanahan <BMcClanahan@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 7:52 AM
To: Rita Robison <robisonrita58@gmail.com>
Cc: Lisa Parks <LParks@ci.tumwater.wa.us>; Brad Medrud <BMedrud@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: RE: Why Agricultural Lands Don't Belong in Urban Growth Areas

Good morning, Rita,
 Thank you for your email—it was received by our Councilmembers.
 Have a great day!

All Councilmembers were bcc'd in this email response.



Brittaney McClanahan
Executive Assistant

City of Tumwater
 555 Israel Road SW | Tumwater, WA 98501
 O 360-754-4120 | M 360-810-0218
bmccclanahan@ci.tumwater.wa.us | www.ci.tumwater.wa.us

From: Rita Robison <robisonrita58@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 12:56 AM
To: Council <Council@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: Why Agricultural Lands Don't Belong in Urban Growth Areas

The Jolt reported the city council is considering a food plan. Included in the article was this paragraph: "Some of the challenges with food production include high farmland costs, urban growth area rules being incompatible with agriculture, access to affordable water, limited cold storage capacity and difficulty hiring farm workers."

This statement shows a lack of understanding of the Growth Management Act. Urban growth areas are designated for urban growth that's why agricultural lands aren't included in them. When urban growth goes into urban growth areas, rural areas can be protected and resource lands, agricultural lands and forests, can be conserved.

Please continue GMA policies to densify the city and urban growth area to protect rural areas and conserve resource lands.

Rita R. Robison, AICP
robisonrita58@gmail.com

360-754-9651

From: [Brad Medrud](#)
To: [Dana Bowers](#)
Subject: FW: Public Comment on Draft City of Tumwater Food System Plan - Resolution No. R2025-015
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 8:00:45 AM

FYI

Brad Medrud, AICP | Community Development Department Director
 City of Tumwater Community Development

From: Kerri Kinnaird <kkinnaird@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2025 7:57 AM
To: Brad Medrud <BMedrud@ci.tumwater.wa.us>; Erika Stone <ESTone@ci.tumwater.wa.us>; Dana Bowers <DBowers@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: FW: Public Comment on Draft City of Tumwater Food System Plan - Resolution No. R2025-015

From: Rachel Friedman (Chair) <rachel@communityfarmlandtrust.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 5:59 PM
To: CDD DGroup <cdddgroup@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: Public Comment on Draft City of Tumwater Food System Plan - Resolution No. R2025-015

To Whom it May Concern: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Food System Plan for the City of Tumwater. These comments are being submitted for inclusion in the record for Resolution No. R2025-015 – Food System Plan.

The Community Farm Land Trust (CFLT) (<https://www.communityfarmlandtrust.org/>), a local non-profit, serving Thurston county for over 25 years, supports the adoption of the City of Tumwater Draft Food System Plan. The mission of the CFLT is to promote vibrant local food and farming systems through community supported farmland preservation strategies, educational outreach, and partnerships that increase opportunities for farms and farmers to flourish. As such we support abundant, productive, sustainable local farmland providing healthy food for our community and contributing to a vibrant, viable farm economy.

The Draft Food System Plan contains two elements: providing healthy food for all members of the community; and supporting local food production and processing which align closely with the mission, vision and goals of the CFLT. While CFLT supports all of the draft goals, in particular, CFLT strongly supports Goal 3: Support Local Food Processors and Production. In order to improve access to local, healthy food, the following proposed policies and opportunities should be adopted and implemented:

3.1.2 Explore partnerships to improve access to land, water, and infrastructure for food producers by supporting shared-use models, facilitating connections to underutilized private or public land, and leveraging programs such as land leases and technical assistance;

3.1.3 Review existing land use regulations to identify barriers that disproportionately limit food production opportunities for low-income households and those on smaller lots;

3.1.4 Support water access and explore potential rate reductions for urban agriculture, community gardens, and school gardens such as stormwater fee waivers, fire hydrant access, and subsidized or waived system development charges—recognizing their role in strengthening food security, fostering education and community resilience, supporting local economies, and contributing to emergency preparedness.

In addition, the CFLT would be happy to engage with the City of Tumwater to overcome the historic inability of underserved and aspiring farmers to access agriculturally viable land. CFLT supports adoption and implementation of the partnerships of the following proposed policies and opportunities:

3.2.1 Partner with the Community Farm Land Trust and Thurston County to explore mechanisms such as urban growth area swaps and farmland easements for conserving high-value agricultural land adjacent to Tumwater's Urban Growth Area, while supporting farmland transitions to new farmers and those from communities facing barriers.

The CFLT produces an annual guide entitled Fresh From the Farm Guide (FFFG) (https://www.communityfarmlandtrust.org/fresh_from_the_farm_guide.html) as part of our mission to support local food and agriculture. This is a free, educational resource for underserved populations and residents from our entire region to learn where to find local, affordable, fresh and healthy foods through CSAs, farm stands, farmers markets, food banks, as well as nutritional incentive and matching programs available in our four county region of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, and Thurston Counties. In 2025 we printed and distributed 15,000 free copies. We are able to keep this as a free resource to our community through grants, sponsorships, advertisements and fundraising campaigns that help to pay for distribution and printing costs. The FFFG lists approximately 125 farms in Thurston County. This resource should be recognized for the support of draft policy 3.4 Promote local food purchasing and community engagement.

Lastly, the CFLT is involved in preserving agricultural land through fee simple acquisition. We work deliberately to provide affordable and sustainable agricultural working lands to beginning farmers through long-term, heritable land leases. Policy 3.5 Increase local food production capacity should be adopted and implemented. The CFLT strongly supports the economic viability of small-scale farming by supporting efforts to make small-scale and urban farming financially sustainable by exploring ways to reduce regulatory barriers, promoting cooperative models, connecting growers with local markets and procurement opportunities, and exploring access to business support services, microgrants, and relevant state or federal funding. We would be happy to engage on this topic.

Sincerely,

Rachel Friedman

Chair, Community Farm Land Trust

communityfarmlandtrust.org

Consider a donation to the Community Farm Land Trust.

A donation today, preserves farmland for tomorrow.

<https://bit.ly/Donate2CFLT>

From: [John Ficker](#)
To: [Dana Bowers](#)
Cc: [Brad Medrud](#)
Subject: RE: Food System Public Hearing
Date: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 4:25:15 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Thank you Dana, that captures the conversation well!

All the best,

John Ficker

Executive Director

360.352.8597 ext. 102 | tcfb.org



From: Dana Bowers <DBowers@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2025 4:11 PM
To: John Ficker <Johnf@tcfb.org>
Cc: Brad Medrud <BMedrud@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Subject: Food System Public Hearing

Hi John,

Thank you for your phone call this afternoon and comments regarding the Food System Plan Public Hearing taking place tonight, September 23, 2025. I'm glad to relay your comments and have summarized them below for your review.

Thurston County Food Bank:

- Supports the adoption of Tumwater's Food System Plan.
- Acknowledges that all facts regarding the Thurston County Food Bank are correct except that the SNAP Ed Program will discontinue as of October 1, 2025 following cuts to Federal Funding on July 1, 2025.
- expects higher demand and fewer resources in the future due to funding and food donation reductions.
- Wants to express interest in partnering with Tumwater to implement the plan.

Please feel free to correct anything that is doesn't capture your comments.

Thank you!



Dana Bowers (she, her)

Associate Planner

City of Tumwater, Community Development Department

555 Israel Road SW | Tumwater, WA 98501

(360) 754-3842

dbowers@ci.tumwater.wa.us | www.ci.tumwater.wa.us

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TO: City Council
 FROM: Kelly Adams, Assistant City Administrator
 DATE: October 14, 2025
 SUBJECT: Ordinance O2025-017 Establishment of the Equity Commission

1) Recommended Action:

Recognizing the City Council's preference not to take action at Work Sessions, staff would welcome concurrence at tonight's meeting to place Ordinance No. O2025-017, Establishment of an Equity Commission on the October 21, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting consideration calendar.

2) Background:

Staff and Council Members regularly receive requests to address issues affecting underrepresented groups in response to national, regional, and local events. Community concerns also include barriers to programs, public services, and information. The establishment of an advisory board to the City Council would provide an inclusive community engagement pathway to better understand the problems facing Tumwater and contribute to creative solutions.

The purpose of the proposed Tumwater Equity Commission would be to identify and promote activities related to city services and facilities that foster a more welcoming community. As an advisory commission to the City Council, the commission would also be available to research and provide recommendations to the City Council to improve local government practices and policies, as requested from time to time. Additionally, having an Equity Commission would help enhance participation from underrepresented community members and address existing gaps and barriers that may prevent full engagement in city governance and public policy matters.

The proposed Equity Commission includes seven general members. All members may reside in the City of Tumwater and one member may reside in the Tumwater Urban Growth Area. The Assistant City Administrator will staff the Commission.

3) Policy Support:

This effort aligns with the intent of **TMC 2.64 Tumwater participation – Thurston Council on Cultural Diversity and Human Rights**; an advisory group that is no longer available.

Tumwater's values of PEOPLE: People, Environment, Opportunity, Partnership, Learning, and Excellence.

Refine and sustain a great organization: Review plans, policies, and documents for potentially racist and biased language.

4) Alternatives:

☐ n/a

5) Fiscal Notes:

Staff time will be allocated to this effort.

6) Attachments:

A. Draft Ordinance O2025-017 Establishment of the Tumwater Equity Commission

ORDINANCE NO. O2025-017

AN ORDINANCE of the City Council of the City of Tumwater, Washington, adding a new chapter 2.60 to the Tumwater Municipal Code, establishing an Equity Commission to identify and address challenges of inequity through policy improvement, inclusive activities, and educational partnerships.

WHEREAS, the historical memory of Tumwater begins with Coast Salish peoples, whose descendants are members of the tribes now known as the Nisqually, the Squaxin Island, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, and the Cowlitz who gathered shellfish and frequented the inlets and prairies of Puget Sound since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the first Euro-American colony of New Market thrived due to the generosity and hospitality of black pioneer George Bush, who together with wife Isabella, provided support and welcome to immigrants and community members while also facing the challenges of racism and conflict in 19th century America; and

WHEREAS, in the years after New Market became Tumwater, German immigrant Leopold Schmidt and his family invested a lifetime of labor and innovation in the Olympia Brewing Company, a major employer in the region and cultural touchstone for the country; and

WHEREAS, the success of individuals does not indicate that the efforts to address and repair the deeply rooted systemic inequities in the United States and Tumwater are complete. The Tumwater City Council acknowledges that significant work remains to be done and that members of the Tumwater community continue to experience varying levels of systemic oppression and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the City Council values above all else PEOPLE – defined as People, Environment, Opportunity, Partnership, Learning, and Excellence; and

WHEREAS, the City Council respects the diverse people that make up the social fabric of our community and strives to be inclusive of all people regardless of age, race, color, ability, gender, religion, sexual identity, or national origin. Tumwater welcomes all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
TUMWATER, STATE OF WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. A new chapter 2.60, Equity Commission, is hereby added to Title 2 of the Tumwater Municipal Code to read as follows:

2.60.010 Creation

There is hereby created an Equity Commission which shall perform all of the duties and shall have all of the authority hereinafter set out.

2.60.020 Purpose

The commission's purpose is to identify and promote activities related to city services and facilities that foster a more welcoming community. It aims to enhance participation from underrepresented community members and address existing gaps and barriers that may prevent full engagement in city governance and public policy. The commission will provide recommendations to the City Council to improve local government practices and policies.

2.60.030 Membership – Terms

A. The commission shall consist of seven general members who reside in the city of Tumwater. One general member may reside in Tumwater's urban growth area. Commissioners shall be appointed by the mayor, which appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the city council. The members shall be selected without respect to political affiliations.

B. The original appointment of members to the Equity Commission shall be as follows: three for two years, four for three years. Thereafter, appointments shall be made for a three-year term. Vacancies shall be filled by the mayor for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

C. A simple majority of the currently appointed membership of the Equity Commission shall constitute a quorum.

D. The commission members shall not receive any salary or other compensation for services rendered on the commission.

E. Vacancies occurring otherwise than through the expiration of terms shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

F. Members may be removed from the commission prior to the expiration of their term of office by the mayor, pursuant to Tumwater Municipal Code 2.54.

2.60.040 Organization – Records

A. The commission shall select its own chairperson from within its membership and may create such other offices and adopt all rules as it may deem necessary for the orderly conduct of its business.

B. An accurate record shall be kept of the proceedings of all meetings. These records shall be public and a copy thereof shall be transmitted to the city clerk after each meeting.

2.60.050 Commission duties and responsibilities

The commission shall have the power and it shall be its duty, subject to such rules and regulations as may from time to time be prescribed by ordinance, to:

1. Provide awareness and feedback to the Mayor and City Council on issues of inequity in City facilities and services; and
2. Identify existing gaps and barriers which could prevent full participation in government and public policy; and
3. Seek greater participation from underrepresented community members in city activities, including events, governance, and public policy.

Section 2. Corrections. The City Clerk and codifiers of this ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers and any references thereto.

Section 3. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this ordinance is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 4. Severability. The provisions of this ordinance are declared separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance or the invalidity of the application

thereof to any person or circumstance, shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the ordinance, or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days after passage, approval and publication as provided by law.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 20__.

CITY OF TUMWATER

Debbie Sullivan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melody Valiant, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Karen Kirkpatrick, City Attorney

Published:_____

Effective Date:_____

TO: City Council
FROM: Lisa Parks, City Administrator
DATE: October 14, 2025
SUBJECT: Strategic Plan Discussion – Review Draft

1) Recommended Action:

This is a review and discussion item, only.

2) Background:

This is a continuation of the review of the draft Tumwater Strategic Plan 2026 – 2032. This session will include a review of the updates that have been generated based on Council Members' input as well as the initial review of draft Focus Area 2026 Annual Work Plans.

3) Policy Support:

Refine and sustain a great organization.

4) Alternatives:

N/A

5) Fiscal Notes:

N/A

6) Attachments:

A: Revised Preliminary Draft Strategic Plan

Tumwater Strategic Plan

2026 - 2032

DRAFT

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Health and Safety	X
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Welcome

Dear Reader,

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nullam iaculis massa ipsum, at congue leo maximus at. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Mauris faucibus quam mattis velit scelerisque aliquam. Sed eu porttitor turpis. Donec laoreet lorem eget enim placerat, et placerat nisi lobortis. Integer tempus mi leo, a suscipit dui efficitur eget. Donec eget ultrices massa. Nulla feugiat varius mauris, at eleifend felis dictum sed. Sed finibus nunc ut porta tristique. Cras eu luctus sem.

Vivamus vehicula faucibus ipsum, in accumsan libero tincidunt eu. Vestibulum lacus lacus, posuere eu pellentesque nec, mollis ut nulla. Sed faucibus sit amet lacus eget gravida. Praesent tempus dolor ac dictum maximus. Suspendisse potenti. Nunc sagittis luctus lacus vitae cursus. Phasellus hendrerit, urna sit amet elementum ultrices, enim elit gravida nibh, vel venenatis turpis quam vel tellus. Cras eleifend dictum nisi, et gravida lorem ultricies non. Vestibulum congue, ex non auctor lacinia, mi mi sagittis urna, sed egestas nisl justo nec tortor.

Debbie Sullivan, Mayor
Leatta Dahlhoff, Mayor Pro Tem
Angela Jefferson, Councilmember
Joan Cathey, Councilmember
Eileen Swarthout, Councilmember
Michael Althausen, Councilmember
Peter Agabi, Councilmember
Kelly Von Holtz, Councilmember

Acknowledgements

City Council

Debbie Sullivan, Mayor
Leatta Dahlhoff, Mayor Pro Tem
Angela Jefferson, Councilmember
Joan Cathey, Councilmember
Eileen Swarthout, Councilmember
Michael Althaus, Councilmember
Peter Agabi, Councilmember
Kelly Von Holtz, Councilmember

Management Team

Lisa Parks, City Administrator
Kelly Adams, Assistant City Administrator
Chuck Denney, Parks and Recreation Director
Brandon Hicks, Transportation and Engineering Director
Brian Hurley, Fire Chief
Karen Kirkpatrick, City Attorney
Jay Mason, Police Chief
Brittaney McClanahan, Executive Assistant
Brad Medrud, Community Development Director
Troy Niemeyer, Finance Director
Dan Smith, Water Resources and Sustainability Director
Michelle Sutherland, Human Resource Director
Jason Wettstein, Communications Director

Consultant

Amy Leneker, The Leneker Team

Introduction

This strategic plan shares guidance and direction from the Council to City staff, as they work to implement and provide services and infrastructure. It helps prioritize efforts, and creates transparency, particularly where there are on-going needs and challenges at the same time there are constraints on city resources. Based on previous priorities and goals, and on community input received through various, recent outreach efforts, the Council has developed this strategic plan.



The strategic plan centers on six focus areas, which are broad topic areas determined by the City Council to be a priority for Tumwater:

- Vibrant, Livable, and Inclusive Community
- Environmental Stewardship
- Community Mobility
- Health and Safety
- Growth and Development
- Tumwater Excellence

Each focus area includes a goal statement as well as a variety of prioritized **action items** to guide staff's development of **annual work plans**.

Glossary of Terms

Below are key terms used within the Strategic Plan.

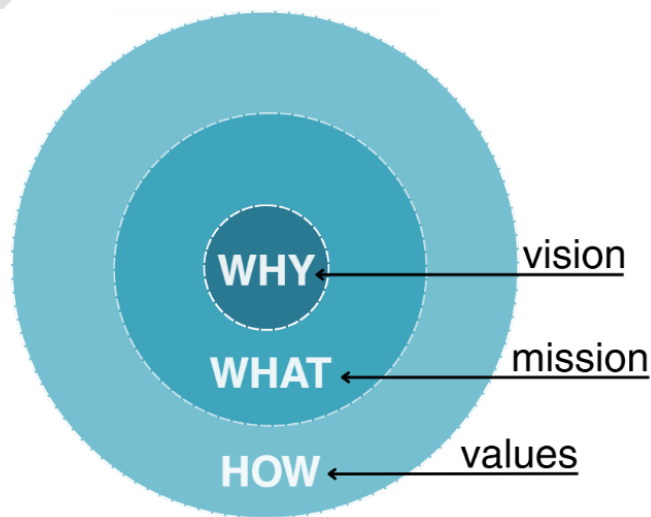
Vision: A statement of what we would like the community to be, long-term. This overarching vision articulates a shared community future.

Mission: A brief summary of the City's purpose, helping guide our actions and decisions aimed at effectively and responsibly serving our community.

Values: The fundamental beliefs and core principles that guide our purpose and direction.

Focus Area: Broad subject areas that help to organize and communicate how we concentrate our time, energy and resources to help achieve the City's overall Vision and Mission.

Focus Area Goal Statement: A brief, outcome-focused statement of the results the City aims to achieve, over time, for a particular Focus Area.



Action Items: The general tasks or activities identified to support progress on the Focus Area Goal Statements.

Annual Work Plans: An outline of specific tasks or activities, organized by **Focus Areas**, that will be undertaken and reported to Council on an annual basis to support progress on specific Action Items.

Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

Existing: Tumwater of the future will be people-oriented and highly livable, with a strong economy, dynamic places, vibrant neighborhoods, a healthy natural environment, diverse and engaged residents, and living connection to its history.

Proposed: Tumwater is a thriving, inclusive and people-centered city where a resilient economy, vibrant neighborhoods, and a healthy natural environment foster deep community connection, civic pride, and a shared commitment to honoring our history while shaping a dynamic tomorrow.

Mission

Existing: In active partnership with our community, we provide courageous leadership and essential municipal services to cultivate a prosperous economy, a healthy natural environment, vibrant neighborhoods, and a supportive social fabric.

Proposed: We work in partnership with our community to provide essential services, protect our environment, grow our economy, and to support a connected, inclusive social fabric where everyone belongs.

Values

People

Existing: We respect the diverse people that make up the social fabric of our community and strive to be inclusive of all people. We value and seek to strengthen our vibrant neighborhoods, that are cornerstones of civic life and community identity. As we pursue our goals and the long-term sustainability of the City organization, we value the contributions and diversity of our staff, support their continued personal and professional growth, and act to retain their expertise for the good of the community.

Proposed: We embrace the diversity of **people** in our community and strive to ensure everyone feels valued and included. We recognize the vital contributions of our staff and

foster a supportive environment that promotes growth, celebrates achievements, and retains talent to serve our community with excellence.

Environment

Existing: We act to preserve and enhance the natural environment and the social fabric of our community.

Proposed: We strive to safeguard and enhance our community's natural **environment** and social fabric.

Opportunity

Existing: We seize opportunities to improve our community's social, environmental, and economic well-being. We endeavor to realize positive opportunities in adverse situations and periods of change.

Proposed: We pursue **opportunities** to enhance social, environmental, and economic well-being, and remain committed to achieving positive outcomes—even in challenging times.

Partnership

Existing: We work collaboratively with residents, businesses, and community organizations. We also actively partner with other jurisdictions to address regional, state, and even broader issues.

Proposed: We work in **partnership** with residents, businesses, community organizations, and governments to address challenges and advance shared goals.

Learning

Existing: We are a learning organization which strives to benefit from past experience, foresight, and innovation to seek new ways to enhance the community and improve City operations and services.

Proposed: We **learn** from experience, embrace innovation, and seek new ways to enhance City services and strengthen our community.

Excellence

Existing: We strive for excellence and integrity in providing City services. By providing quality services, being responsible and efficient stewards of public resources, and empowering employees to achieve excellence, we continue to build public trust and encourage civic involvement. We know that excellence does not have to come at the price of our sense of community or our small city character.

Proposed: We deliver City services with **excellence**, integrity, and efficiency — empowering staff, stewarding public resources, and fostering civic trust while preserving our small-city character.

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Implementation Framework

Roles and Responsibilities

One of the City's primary goals in undertaking this strategic planning effort is to identify the Council's priorities, providing guidance for future decision-making, particularly as our community grows and changes. This deliberate, ongoing process for decision-making relies on clearly defined roles and responsibilities:

Community members express their level of satisfaction with the community and the City's delivery of outcomes anticipated by the Strategic Plan.

City Council sets policy direction and approves the Strategic Plan, including the annually updated Work Plans and the biennial budget.

City staff manages implementation by developing and proposing the detailed tasks in the annual Work Plans, within the context of the biennial budget; carrying out the work plan tasks and evaluating and regularly reporting on progress made to implement the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan Prioritization Criteria

While all of the work identified in the Strategic Plan is important, it cannot be completed all at once. These criteria will be used to help prioritize the relative favorability of a particular action item, when the work will occur, and what resources need to be allocated.

Overall Criteria

1. How does this advance the City's vision, mission, values, Comprehensive Plan?
2. Will this **enhance** an existing program/service and/or will it provide a new benefit not currently available?
3. What are the potential **consequences** – positive or negative – of inaction at this time?
4. What is the total **resource** commitment for this?
5. How is this a Tumwater community **priority**?

Strategic Plan Schedule

The City develops the Strategic Plan with a six-year, forward-looking perspective that is then coordinated with, and implemented by, the City's biennial budget development process. It is anticipated that modifications to the Strategic Plan during this six-year timeframe will be relatively small and incorporated as needed, and a more comprehensive update of the Strategic Plan will occur on a six-year cycle.

To ensure the Strategic Plan remains nimble and relevant to the community's needs and the Council's priorities, anticipated modifications will be accomplished on a recurring schedule. In even-numbered years, a new biennial budget is drafted and adopted. In odd-numbered years, Council will review and update the Focus Area Action Items. Every year, staff will provide updated Focus Area Work Plans to guide their work and to report to Council on the progress toward implementation and completion of Focus Area Action Items.

New Opportunity Process

Because new and emergent issues and opportunities are likely to arise, the City Council recognizes there needs to be a process to address more urgent actions that may come up outside of the recurring schedule described above. These new opportunities should be few in number and important to address immediately but must be weighed against the ability to deliver the already identified and prioritized Action Items and Annual Work Plans.

Focus Areas (Overview)

FOCUS AREA	GOAL STATEMENT
Vibrant, Livable, and Inclusive Community	Build a community recognized for quality, compassion, and humanity.
Environmental Stewardship	Be a leader in environmental health and sustainability.
Community Mobility	Create and maintain a transportation system safe for all modes of travel.
Health & Safety	Provide and sustain quality public safety services.
Growth & Development	Pursue and support targeted community and economic development.
Tumwater Excellence	Refine and sustain a great organization.

[PHOTO HERE]

Focus Area: Vibrant, Livable, and Inclusive Community

GOAL STATEMENT: Build a community recognized for quality, compassion, and humanity.

[PHOTO HERE]

ACTION ITEMS	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Continue implementation of Tumwater Metropolitan Parks District (TMPD) initiatives.	Parks and Recreation Transportation and Engineering
Increase affordable housing in Tumwater, including permanent and supportive housing.	Community Development
Develop partnerships and strategies to improve municipal service delivery to people in need.	Executive
Promote equity and inclusion within the Tumwater Community.	Executive

Focus Area: Environmental Stewardship

GOAL STATEMENT: Be a leader in environmental health and sustainability.

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ACTION ITEMS	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Conserve and protect Tumwater’s water resources.	Water Resources and Sustainability
Implement and promote environmentally sustainable practices in the community.	Water Resources and Sustainability
Implement the Urban Forestry Plan.	Water Resources and Sustainability
Implement the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.	Water Resources and Sustainability

Focus Area: Community Mobility

GOAL STATEMENT: Create and maintain a transportation system that is safe for all modes of travel.

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ACTION ITEMS	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Provide a safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system.	Transportation and Engineering
Continue improving the maintenance of the transportation system.	Transportation and Engineering
Implement Capitol Boulevard plan.	Transportation and Engineering/Community Development
Improve maintenance and interconnectivity of a bicycle and pedestrian system.	Transportation and Engineering
Implement Brewery District plan.	Transportation and Engineering/Community Development
Develop a citywide trail system.	Transportation and Engineering
Explore opportunities to extend multimodal transportation facilities to areas of the City outside the urban core.	Transportation and Engineering

Focus Area: Health and Safety

GOAL STATEMENT: Provide and sustain quality public safety services.

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ACTION ITEMS	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Develop initiatives to address growing emergency service demands.	Police Fire
Build existing law enforcement staff capacity to meet current core service delivery demands.	Police
Evaluate and promote City programs to reduce risk to life and property.	Fire
Explore and implement partnerships to improve efficiency of emergency service delivery.	Fire Police
Review options for regionalization of fire/emergency services.	Fire
Transition to proactive code enforcement.	Police/Community Development

Focus Area: Growth and Development

GOAL STATEMENT: Pursue and support targeted community and economic development.

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ACTION ITEMS	LEAD DEPARTMENT
Complete and implement the Habitat Conservation Plan.	Community Development
Leverage brownfield revitalization opportunities.	Executive
Update and implement the City’s Economic Development Plan.	Executive
Attract, retain, and grow Tumwater businesses.	Executive
Promote tourism in Tumwater.	Executive

Focus Area: Tumwater Excellence

GOAL STATEMENT: Refine and sustain a great organization.

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ACTION ITEMS	LEAD
Attract, retain, and promote a talented and diverse workforce.	Administrative Services Department
Be good stewards of public funds by following sustainable financial strategies.	Finance
Support an environment of continuous learning and improvement for staff and Council.	Administrative Services Department
Attract, retain, and support volunteer board members and commissioners.	Executive
Create a dynamic organizational culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.	Administrative Services Department

Appendices

Prioritization Criteria

Legislative/Policy Prioritization Criteria: Focus Area Action Items

Overall Criteria:

1. How does this advance the City's vision, mission, values, and Comprehensive Plan?
2. Will this enhance an existing program/service and/or will it provide a new benefit not currently available?
3. What are the potential consequences – positive or negative – of inaction at this time?
4. What is the total resource commitment for this?
5. Why is this a Tumwater community priority?

New Opportunity Criteria:

1. Will other City projects/programs/initiatives be delayed or eliminated because of this new item, and if so, is the delay/elimination acceptable?
2. How is this needed to address a threat to public health, safety, and welfare?
3. Does the City have sufficient capacity and/or resources to support this?
4. What should be the City's role in this?

Technical Prioritization Criteria: Focus Area Work Plans

1. Is this consistent with the City's vision, mission, and values?
2. Is this consistent with the Comprehensive Plan(s)?
3. Does this advance an adopted plan or policy or an existing objective?
4. Does this protect public health, safety and welfare?
5. Is this required to comply with a legal mandate?
6. Does this contribute to the community's tax base and/or directly generate revenue?
7. Does the City have sufficient staffing resources to support this?
8. Is funding available for implementation/construction?
9. Does this have a clearly identified source of revenue to support ongoing maintenance and operation?
10. Will existing City projects/programs/initiatives be delayed or eliminated because of this new item?
11. What are the consequences of that displacement decision?
12. Are there consequences of inaction?
13. Are there strong benefits of action?

14. How much control or influence over the intended outcome do we have?
15. Will this enhance what is already offered and/or provide a new benefit that is not currently available?
16. Does the City have existing skills/abilities/expertise to address this issue?
17. Is any other entity, private or public, better positioned to undertake this?
18. Does this result in benefits to the natural environment?
19. Does this result in negative impacts to the natural environment?
20. Are there acceptable mitigation measures available to address potential impacts to the natural environment?

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2026 Focus Area Work Plans

Focus Area: Vibrant, Livable, and Inclusive Community

Goal Statement: *Build a community recognized for quality, compassion, and humanity.*

Action Item: Continue implementation of Tumwater Metropolitan Parks District (TMPD) initiatives.

- Complete the Community Center design and permitting (Parks and Recreation)
- Expand the Tumwater Arts program to define and form an Arts Commission (Parks and Recreation)
- Expand the Community Garden program at Isabella Bush Park (Parks and Recreation)
- Address deferred parks maintenance (Parks and Recreation)
- Complete Trail's End Park design and permitting (Parks and Recreation/Transportation and Engineering)

Action Item: Increase affordable housing in Tumwater, including permanent and supportive housing.

- Complete the low-income housing and homelessness programs evaluation (Community Development)
- Complete review/update of Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program (Community Development)

Action Item: Develop partnerships and strategies to improve municipal service delivery to people in need.

- Evaluate ability to expand FD CARES program to include one FTE (Fire)
- Review and update water shut-off policies (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Continue review of available utility lifeline program expansion opportunities (Finance)
- Identify relevant stakeholders who can further sustainable, climate-adapted, and equitable food distribution in Tumwater (Community Development)
- Explore opportunities for the community to provide and engage in local and sustainable food production and consumption (Community Development)
- Identify process improvements to reduce applicant barriers in the Tumwater Community Human Services grant program (Executive)

- Manage 2026 Community Development Block Grant Tumwater allocation process (Community Development)

Action Item: Promote equity and inclusion within the Tumwater community.

- Work with the new Equity Commission to develop an initial work plan, including a strong community engagement process (Executive)
- Implement the equity mapping program (Executive)
- Communicate with Tribal governments to strengthen partnerships, share information, and promote opportunities (Executive)

Focus Area: Environmental Stewardship

Goal Statement: *Be a leader in environmental health and sustainability.*

Action Item: Conserve and protect Tumwater's water resources.

- Septic-to-Sewer program funding and promotion (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Wellhead protection program report (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Support water reuse opportunities (Water Resources and Sustainability)

Action Item: Implement and promote environmentally sustainable practices in the community.

- Lead partnership with Stream Team (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Community outreach events on environmental sustainability (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Implement Urban Forestry Management Plan (Water Resources and Sustainability)

Action Item: Implement the Urban Forestry Management plan.

- Implement actions from the Urban Forestry Management Plan (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Complete maintenance work plan for historic Meeker Davis Garry Oak Tree (Water Resources and Sustainability)

Action Item: Implement the Thurston Climate Mitigation plan.

- City Facility Decarbonization (Water Resources and Sustainability)

- City Facility and Infrastructure Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Integration of ecosystem services and environmental justice for City actions (Water Resources and Sustainability)
- Actively participate in the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative (Water Resources and Sustainability)

Focus Area: Health and Safety

Goal Statement: *Provide and sustain quality public safety services.*

Action Item: Develop initiatives to address growing emergency service demands.

- Continue implementation of Body Worn Camera program (Police)
- Research camera system, present options (Police)
- Continue implementation of the Law Enforcement Records Management System (Police)
- Develop a “Standard of Cover” document for resource deployment to include future fire station location analysis (Fire)

Action Item: Build existing law enforcement staff capacity to meet current core service delivery demands.

- Per the TPD Strategic Growth Plan, add seven officers to meet growing demand for new and enhanced services (Police)

Action Item: Explore and implement partnerships to improve efficiency of emergency service delivery.

- Implement crisis response program in partnership with Olympic Health and Recovery Services (Fire)
- Explore expanded fire training partnership with Olympia Fire Department and other regional partners (Fire)
- Evaluate TPD participation in a regionalized SWAT program and develop recommendation (Police)
- Expand the FD Cares program (Fire)

Action Item: Evaluate and promote City programs to reduce risk to life and property.

- Conduct Community Risk Assessment to identify and prioritize local risks and make recommendations to reduce occurrence and impact (Fire)
- Improve social media presence to inform community (Police)
- Continue School Resource Officer program (Police)
- Complete HB 1400 training standards in 2026 (required by 2028) (Police)

Action Item: Review options for regionalization of fire/emergency services.

- Review and update the 2019 Fire Regionalization Study (Fire)

Action Item: Transition to proactive code enforcement.

- Prioritize legacy enforcement sites (Police and Community Development)
- Develop work plans and cost estimates for each legacy enforcement site (Police and Community Development)

Focus Area: Community Mobility

Goal Statement: *Create and maintain a transportation system safe for all modes of travel.*

Action Item: Provide a safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system.

- Adopt transportation impact fee program (Transportation Engineering)
- Implement the Transportation element of Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Engineering)
- Complete design of Mottman Road improvements (Transportation Engineering)
- Begin construction on Tyee Drive Extension, Tumwater Boulevard to Prine Drive (Transportation Engineering)

Action Item: Continue improving the maintenance of the transportation system.

- Continue progress on Transportation Benefit District project items (Transportation Engineering)
- Complete planning and begin design of 2027 Pavement Maintenance and Multimodal Improvements project (Transportation Engineering)

Action Item: Implement Capitol Boulevard Corridor Plan.

- Continue acquisition planning for former WSDOT Headquarters site (Executive)

- Continue Right of Way progress on X Street before potential loss of funding (Transportation Engineering)

Action Item: Improve maintenance and interconnectivity of a bicycle and pedestrian system.

- Continue evaluation of new funding sources for the sidewalk program (Transportation Engineering)
- Continue implementation of the ADA Transition Plan (Transportation Engineering)
- Multiple Capital Facilities Project items accomplishing the goal of separate deliverables (Transportation Engineering)
- Complete construction of 2nd Ave Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements (Transportation Engineering)
- Complete Right of Way for X Street Roundabout (Transportation Engineering)

Item: Implement Brewery District Plan.

- Continue Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement process (Executive)

Action Items: Develop a citywide trail system.

- Complete design of the full Deschutes Valley Trail (Transportation Engineering)
- Construct portion C of the Deschutes Valley Trail or lose funding (Transportation Engineering)

Action Items: Explore opportunities to extend multimodal transportation facilities to areas of the city outside the urban core.

- Pavement management system for opportunities for lane reconfiguration for pedestrians and bicyclists (Transportation Engineering)

Focus Area: Growth and Development

Goal Statement: *Pursue and support targeted growth and economic development.*

Action Item: Complete and implement the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

- Complete public HCP to start the NEPA/SEPA review process (Community Development)

- Start work on the processes that need to be in place when the HCP is adopted (Community Development)
- Continue acquisition efforts for conservation land and easement purchases (Community Development)

Action Item: Leverage brownfield revitalization opportunities

- Continue the Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement process for the brewery area redevelopment (Executive)
- Continue the Environmental Protection Agency Community Wide Assessment Grant progress (Executive)
- Complete progress on the Department of Ecology Integrated Planning Grant work tasks (Executive)
- Publish Opportunity Sites Inventory online to share information about redevelopment opportunities (Executive)

Action Item: Update and implement the city's Economic Development Plan.

- Complete the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan (Executive and Community Development)
- Provide quarterly reports on Economic Development conditions in Tumwater (Executive)

Action Item: Attract, retain, and grow Tumwater businesses.

- Identify and partner with local and regional organizations, such as the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce (TCOC) and the Thurston Economic Development Council (Executive)
- Publish improved online outreach and resources for business site selectors (Executive)
- Utilize Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) quarterly reports and other regional data sources (Executive)
- Improve permitting processes for development and construction (Community Development)

Action Item: Promote tourism in Tumwater.

- Expand promotion of the Tumwater Craft movement (Executive)
- Participate in the development and distribution of Visitor and Convention Bureau materials (Executive)

- Partner with the Olympia Tumwater Foundation to promote Tumwater's historic properties (Executive)
- Reduce barriers for applicants to the lodging tax grant program (Executive)

Focus Area: Tumwater Excellence

Goal Statement: *Refine and sustain a great organization.*

Action Item: Attract, retain, and promote a talented and diverse workforce.

- Develop engaging strategies to improve participation in the Employee Wellness Program (Administrative Services)
- Conduct annual compensation and classification audits to identify and address pay disparities and ensure internal equity across demographic groups.
- Design a welcoming onboarding program that integrates new hires into the organizational culture (Administrative Services)
- Redesign recruitment materials and outreach strategies as an “Employer of Choice” to attract diverse talent to include partnering with community organizations, military transition programs, minority-serving institutions, and professional associations (Administrative Services)
- Continue to implement structured interview protocols and diverse hiring panels to reduce bias, ensure consistency, and align candidate evaluation with core competencies (Administrative Services)

Action Item: Be good stewards of public funds by following sustainable financial strategies.

- Complete and publish the 10 year financial planning tool from EcoNW (Finance)
- Plan, present, and publish the biennial budget for 2027-2028 (Finance)
- Present regular financial reports to Budget and Finance Committee (Finance)

Action Item: Support an environment of continuous learning and improvement, including council.

- Develop and implement the Niche Academy framework that aligns with organizational goals, workforce competencies, and employee growth pathways, including both mandatory training and aspirational learning (Administrative Services)

- Develop a structured leadership development program for supervisors and emerging leaders focused on emotional intelligence, equity-centered management, and effective coaching practices (Administrative Services)
- Develop competency-based training and development plan frameworks that support continuous learning, leadership readiness, and equitable access to advancement opportunities (Administrative Services)

Action Item: Attract, retain, and support volunteer board members and commissioners.

- Study stipends for boards and commissions (Executive)
- Update policies, procedures, and charters for all boards and commissions (Executive)
- Schedule cross jurisdictional events and meetings (Executive)
- Complete onboarding and training program for new appointed and elected officials (Executive)

Action Item: Create a dynamic culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

- Review plans, policies, and documents for potentially racist and biased language (Administrative Services)
- Deliver annual training for all managers and supervisors on equitable decision-making, cultural competence, and psychological safety (Administrative Services)
- Conduct a DEIB lens review of personnel and operating policies to identify and remove systemic barriers (Administrative Services)
- Expand outreach to underrepresented groups through community partnerships, inclusive job postings, and implicit bias training for hiring managers (Administrative Services)

New Opportunities Process

(MORE INFORMATION TO COME, BASED ON 9/20 RETREAT)

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