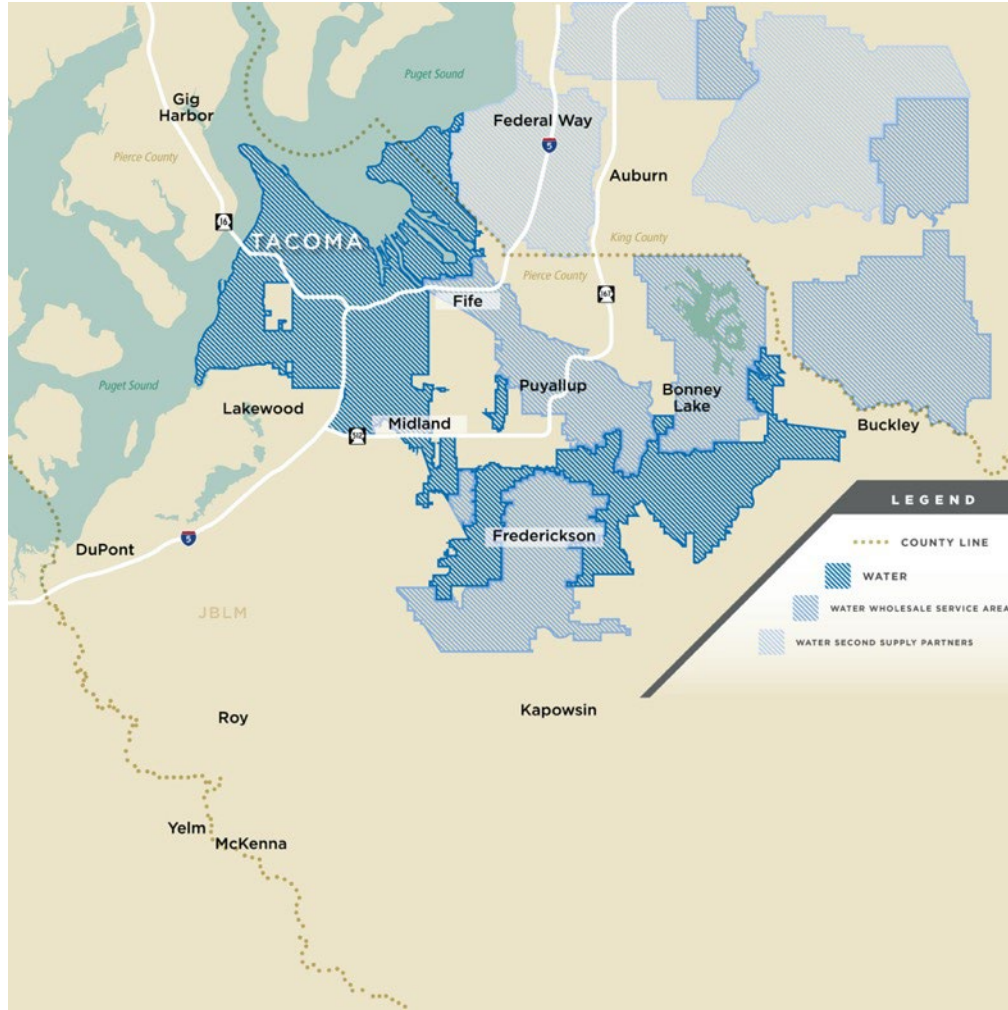


*Serving our customers*

# An Equity Journey Begins

Rochelle Gandour-Rood, Michael Washington, Jolene Gibson

# Service Area



- **108,075 total customer accounts**
- **People served:**
  - **Directly served: 377,759**
  - Wholesale: 322,290
  - Partner areas: 240,927
- **Water Sources:**
  - Green River is >95%
  - Local wells provide <5%
- **Diverse urban and rural communities**

# Employees

- **Vision:**

- To be an exceptional community resource empowering employees to deliver life-sustaining value.



- **Values**

- Safety
- Customer-driven
- Employee-invested
- Stewardship
- Adaptable

- **285 Employees**

- Maintenance & Construction
- Planning & Engineering
- Source Water & Treatment Operations
- Business Services
- Customer & Employee Experience

City of Tacoma

## Organizational Anti-Racist Transformation



**We are all Transforming Tacoma. Whether your work focuses on our people, customers, assets, services – our focus on transforming Tacoma into an anti-racist city connects us all.**

As we move forward, we center the voices of those most impacted by systemic racism and continue to follow the lead of our community through Heal the Heart of Tacoma. We also look within to become more anti-racist in everything we do at the City. To accomplish this, we are all expected to be guided by this vision, mission, and values framework for Anti-Racist Systems Transformation:

# Tacoma Water Equity Committee

- Established in **2021**
- Currently has **17 members**
- **2 peer co-chairs**
- **Monthly meetings**
- **Project working groups**



# Equity Committee Vision & Goals

**We envision an anti-racist utility where diverse leadership, inclusive practices, and equitable outcomes empower us all to deliver life-sustaining value to our community.**

## **Our macro goals:**

Tacoma Water has diverse leadership that ensures equitable experiences.

Tacoma Water has inclusive practices informed by those closest to the pain that ensure equitable outcomes.



# What do we mean?

Tacoma Water has diverse leadership that ensures equitable experiences.

- **What do we mean by diverse leadership?** Leaders at all levels of the organization reflect and value the racial, gender, and ability, diversity of our community and will shift to formal and informal decision-making processes that distribute power throughout the organization, so that leadership is more dispersed.
- **What do we mean by equitable experiences?** People are free to bring their full selves, rewards are commensurate with effort, and everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

# What do we mean?

Tacoma Water has inclusive practices informed by those closest to the pain that ensure equitable outcomes.

- **What do we mean by inclusive practices?** Members of our organization create an environment of belonging in which we are transparent, welcome feedback, honor differences, communicate directly with those most impacted by decisions, and commit to recognizing and correcting biases.
- **What do we mean by equitable outcomes?** When race, gender, and ability status no longer predict outcomes.



# Micro Goals

## Identified 23 micro goals

- 7 currently prioritized for 2022-2024
  - Equity training for supervisors
  - Lunch and learns for everyone
  - Language access tools for customer-facing staff
  - Defining our measurable outcomes
  - Leadership training for anyone
  - Stay interviews
  - Convene BIPOC and women/non-binary employees
- Working groups
  - Led by a WEC member
  - Start with scope
  - Involve stakeholders from across the organization
- Open to revisit and change
- And other small projects, reviews, and consultations all the while.



## Two summits held in December 2022:

- BIPOC employees
- Women & non-binary employees

## Discuss experiences and

## Answer questions:

- What is keeping you here?
- What is pushing you away?
- What support do you need to stay?



Follow-up this spring, to determine next steps.

Solutions will come from those closest to the pain.

# 2023 . . . and beyond

- Continue **micro goal** work
  - Lunch and learns
  - Equity training for supervisors
  - Summits and support for employees
- Launch 1-2 new **micro goals**
  - Language access tools for customer-facing staff
  - Define measurable equity outcomes
- Co-chair election
- Continue **recruiting new members** (ongoing)
- Continue review, consultation, small projects as requested
- Better **alignment with other city department** equity committees
- Former members remain equity champions!



# Questions?

