

# Affordable Housing & Transportation

## YOUR ADVOCACY CHEAT-SHEET FOR TACOMA-PIERCE COUNTY

### Location Efficiency & Affordability

In 2018, the City of Tacoma adopted an Affordable Housing Action Strategy to address the major gaps in housing availability that contribute to homelessness and other economic and environmental issues. While this plan laid out important steps forward, it was void of any legitimate consideration of transportation.

Transportation is the second-largest expense for families nationwide, but it is the single largest barrier to escaping poverty, according to 2015 Harvard University study.<sup>10</sup> If the housing stock grows without consideration of transportation accessibility, the City will only further burden our most vulnerable community members who rely on walking, biking, and transit.

In the Puget Sound, housing and transportation consume nearly 50% of the average household's income. Only 4% of neighborhoods are considered location-efficient, close to jobs and services.<sup>11</sup>

The inclusion of location efficiency, as it relates to transportation, must be incorporated into any housing affordability policy.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/07/upshot/transportation-emerges-as-crucial-to-escaping-poverty.html>

<sup>11</sup> H + T Affordability Index, <https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>



#### What is *Location Efficiency*?

The term *location efficiency* was coined by John Holtzclaw in 1994 in the context of Location Efficient Mortgages<sup>1</sup>. Their research measured the reductions in automobile use and household transportation costs that resulted from different neighborhood assets.

Location-efficient communities are dense and vibrant, with walkable streets, access to transit, proximity to jobs, mixed land uses, and concentrations of retail and services<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://locationefficiency.cnt.org/>

### Holding the City of Tacoma Accountable



The City's Health Equity Policy states that City policies are to be developed through thorough and meaningful analysis to ensure they have positive health effects on the community.

With new transit projects there is serious risk of displacement for current residents, and we must ensure the people who need transit the most can remain in their neighborhoods.



In the Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan, the City committed to making all neighborhoods sustainable and healthy and to reducing the percentage of households spending more than 45% on housing and transportation combined.



DOTG Advocacy Philosophies and Priorities: To advance the equity of all users of our local and regional transportation system, and specifically employees, students, and residents in downtown Tacoma. In accordance with our mission and vision, we aim to support measures which:

- Increase ease, efficiency, and accessibility
- Increase safety
- Increase connectivity
- Reflect the "green transportation hierarchy"
- Reinforce a compact, urban core

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*On the go!*



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