

# 2022-2026 Strategic Plan



**TACOMA RAIL**  
TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

# Our Mission

Tacoma Rail's employees work safely to provide reliable and environmentally sound services that are vital to our customers and community.



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# Introduction

I am pleased to present our Tacoma Rail 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan. This Plan is the culmination of months of work among employees, customers, stakeholders, and input from the Port of Tacoma, Northwest Seaport Alliance, Public Utility Board, and local elected officials. Engaging these parties in the development of the proposal allowed every stakeholder an opportunity to offer useful information and ideas. The result is a program that recognizes the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for Tacoma Rail over the next five years and a path to achieving the short and long-term goals we identify in it. Our focus has always been to provide safe, responsive service to our customers and that focus will continue through this project, enabling us to prepare for the future.

Thank you to all who helped us develop this document. Everyone plays an important role in assisting us fulfill our mission and realize our vision to capitalize on the opportunities in this Strategic Plan.

Dale King  
Superintendent



# Quick Facts

- Operates as the Belt Line Division of Tacoma Public Utilities since 1914.
- Regulatory oversight under the jurisdiction of the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as a Class III common carrier short line railroad.
- Supported by ratepayers like the BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, and other commercial customers.
- Operates as a cost-of-service business with service rates covering operating expenses.
- Employs approximately 115 people.
- Maintains about 120 miles of railroad tracks owned by the City of Tacoma.
- Provides freight rail switching services using 18 locomotives to 52 industrial customers.
- Railroads are the most environmentally-friendly method to transport freight. Our industry average is the ability to move one ton of freight about 475 miles on a single gallon of fuel.



An aerial view of the Tacoma Tideflats and Port of Tacoma depicting rail lines.

# Areas of strategic focus and objectives



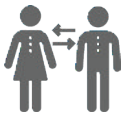
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Employee Relations**

- Develop and implement opportunities to further diversify our workforce.
- Institute measures for a safe and productive work environment where everyone feels valued.



- **Stakeholder Engagement, Customer Service, Reliability and Resiliency**

- Remain engaged with community activities and organizations.
- Strengthen our partnership with the Puyallup Tribe.
- Cultivate relationships with customers to ensure their needs are met.
- Engage in long-term planning to anticipate and mitigate risks to operational readiness and rebound from service interruptions.



- **Financial Stability and Rates**

- Maintain adequate resources to provide safe and reliable freight rail services.
- Ensure rates are competitive and reasonable.
- Establish a volume investment fund as a buffer against volatility in the global economy and interruptions in the multimodal supply chain.





- **Growth and Economic Development**

- Coordinate with the Port of Tacoma and NWSA to attract industries that use our services and increase freight volumes through Tacoma's gateway.
- Work with local and regional economic development organizations to identify ways to grow our business.



- **Environmental Leadership**

- Identify ways to accelerate emission reductions from our locomotives.
- Coordinate with Class I railroad partners to develop our service offerings to support their deployment of alternate fuel locomotives.
- Align with the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy — 2020, and Tacoma Community Climate Action Plan and VISION 2050 objectives.
- Maintain our Oil Spill Contingency Plan and other emergency response programs in collaboration with stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the Western Clean Rail Collaborative, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, and other agencies on climate change initiatives.



- **Government Relations**

- Maintain effective relationships with federal, state, and local officials and agencies.
- Build and strengthen our partnership with the Puyallup Tribe.
- Work with industry trade groups and help enhance safety, environmental leadership, and economic vitality.

