



Tacoma Rail Strategic Plan Update

Five Years of Progress. Five Years Ahead.

October 28, 2026

TACOMA RAIL
TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

2021–2026: Five Years of Progress



Six focus areas identified in the last plan, now unified under three strategic objectives.



Employee Experience

Built a stronger workforce through a new apprenticeship program, an Equity Committee, quarterly Town Halls and a dedicated Employee Portal.



Customer Experience

Modernized railcar management, deepened partnerships with BNSF, Union Pacific and the Puyallup Tribe, and grew community engagement.



Operational Excellence

Secured \$20M+ in grant funding, modernized rail management systems and GPS tracking, and advanced locomotive Tier-4 repowers.



Employee Experience



2021–2026 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Developed a Conductor Trainee Program, approvals for implementation obtained in 2026
- ✓ Established a Rail-specific Equity Committee
- ✓ Reconstituted the Safety Committee and launched quarterly Town Hall Meetings
- ✓ Expanded leadership site visits and direct employee communications
- ✓ Rolled out Microsoft Intune access and a new Employee Portal to access Division-specific information

LOOKING AHEAD: 2027–2031

OBJECTIVE

Foster a safe and respectful environment to build trust and shared accountability.

INITIATIVE

Develop enhanced training opportunities through shared ownership to support a strong talent pipeline and ensure business continuity.



Customer Experience



2021–2026 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Transitioned to a new railcar management system in 2024
- ✓ Strengthened relationships with the Puyallup Tribe, NWSA, BNSF and Union Pacific
- ✓ Created a trifold informational brochure intended to educate partners about Rail's history and forward-thinking capabilities.
- ✓ Sustained strong community engagement — Boys & Girls Clubs, TPU Academy, Tacoma School District CTE, Women in Trades
- ✓ Continued leadership roles with the Transportation Club of Tacoma, Tacoma Propeller Club, TCC Foundation Board, and ASLRRA

LOOKING AHEAD: 2027–2031

OBJECTIVE

Continue delivering responsive, reliable service that strengthens partnerships, supports regional economic activity and sustainable growth.

INITIATIVE

Proactively engage with our customers and partners to enhance mutual understanding of our businesses.



Operational Excellence



2021–2026 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Established the Volume Investment Fund in 2023 and amended Rail's rate policy in 2024 to include maximum cash on hand threshold
- ✓ Secured \$20M+ in grant funding for various locomotive modernization and track projects
- ✓ Operated extended-length trains up to 10,000 feet and launched BNSF auto-rack deliveries direct to main line
- ✓ Replaced a 30-year-old railcar inventory system with Cedar AI's Automated Rail Management System (ARMS)
- ✓ Conducted a base-line Asset Management maturity assessment in 2026

LOOKING AHEAD: 2027–2031

OBJECTIVE

Strengthen organizational performance and resilience through modernization and efficiencies.

INITIATIVE

Continue locomotive modernizations and solicit feedback on facility needs.

2027–2031 Strategic Plan



Employee Experience

Foster a safe and respectful environment to build trust and shared accountability.

Develop enhanced training opportunities through shared ownership to support a strong talent pipeline and ensure business continuity.



Customer Experience

Continue delivering responsive, reliable service that strengthens partnerships, supports regional economic activity and sustainable growth.

Proactively engage with our customers and partners to enhance mutual understanding of our businesses.



Operational Excellence

Strengthen organizational performance and resilience through modernization and efficiencies.

Continue locomotive modernizations and solicit feedback on facility needs.

Business & Growth Opportunities

- Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), Seafood and Import Auto Business
 - Partnership with Puyallup Tribal Enterprises, Tahoma Global Logistics, Saxum Development Company, Mammoth Seafood and Glovis America
 - Waste Connections and Union Pacific Railroad to Boardman, OR
 - \$280M Seafood Processing Plant in Port of Tacoma
 - Import Auto Business – Anticipated volume increase to 350,00 VINs in 2027
- Port of Tacoma Marine Terminal Investments: Washington United Terminal \$135M, Husky Terminal \$105M: Equipment and Facility Improvements

Questions?

