1.1 INTRODUCTION

Metro Parks Tacoma (MPT or “District”) is a nationally accredited and award-winning Park District located in Tacoma, Washington. The system is comprised of many different park facilities that offer residents a variety of recreational opportunities. From waterfront access to local neighborhood parks to large regional facilities and attractions, the MPT system is both a local community asset and regional destination. Currently, the MPT system includes, but is not limited to:

- 80 park and recreation properties
- 2,960 total park acres
- 81 trail miles
- 8.2 miles of publicly accessible beach and shoreline
- 46 playgrounds
- 10 spraygrounds
- 5 community centers
- 5 pools (three outdoor and two indoors)
- Unique attractions such as Point Defiance Park, Point Defiance Marina Complex, Tacoma Nature Center, Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium, Fort Nisqually Living History Museum, and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

In order to maintain its high degree of service provision and outstanding community reputation, MPT maintains a planning framework that ensures cutting edge best practices. As such, the District has developed a series of planning initiatives, as denoted on the chart below. The MPT Strategic Plan instructs operations and the overall agency strategic action plan for a six-year period. Therefore, this Strategic Master Plan document aims to provide overarching strategies (and associated tactics) to propel the District forward while laying the groundwork for future plan consolidation efforts that will streamline the various MPT planning processes.
Good parks, open space and community program services contribute to economic development by fostering financial and community benefits. Environmentally, parks provide green infrastructure and help manage climate change. Socially, parks and programming revitalize communities, create safer neighborhoods to help children learn and grow, improve public and environmental health, and support smart growth. Culturally, open space and program services can nurture a sense of place in the community, and provide equitable opportunities to engage the public of diverse backgrounds.

1.2 CORE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Under MPT’s strategic planning efforts, the District utilizes the Mission-Led Comprehensive Program Plan (MLCPP), which provides program-driven direction to help allocate resources based on demand, need, and community priorities. The MLCPP provides the foundation for recreation services, level of service for parks and facilities, and capital investment based on mission-critical areas. It is meant to guide and support additional business planning and development in alignment with this Strategic Master Plan. The District focuses on the following mission-led areas:

- **Active Living & Community Wellness**
- **Culture & Heritage**
- **Nature & Environment**
1.3 MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

1.3.1 MISSION
“Creating healthy opportunities to play, learn and grow.”

1.3.2 VISION
“Metro Parks Tacoma envisions a vibrant, active and engaged community.”

1.3.3 VALUES

- **Innovation.** MPT will seek and support innovative and creative ways to deal with issues and trends in our community and the organization. We (all MPT staff members) will embrace change and encourage flexibility so that the District can benefit from new and unique opportunities.

- **Excellence.** MPT will strive for excellence, providing exceptional parks, facilities, programs and customer service.

- **Equity.** MPT will provide parks, facilities and program services in a just, fair and equitable manner, so that residents from all neighborhoods and of diverse backgrounds can access MPT’s parks and program services in a non-discriminatory manner.

- **Inclusiveness.** MPT strives to provide accessible, affordable, accommodating and welcoming parks and program services to diverse residents and regional visitors regardless of age, ability, race, ethnicity and income level. We commit to respect and honor the diversity of people, ideas and cultures within the organization and the community.

- **Sustainability.** MPT shares United Nations’ understanding of sustainability to mean “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. MPT believes that all decisions will have long-term and regional impacts on the environment, society, culture and economy. We commit to practicing sustainability by considering a full range of defined impacts in order to make balanced and responsible decisions.

- **Accountability.** MPT will be responsive, transparent and accountable to the people we serve. We will carry out our mission in a manner that builds public trust. MPT will engage the public and make decisions in an open and candid manner responsive to the changing needs of the diverse community.

- **Safety.** MPT will provide safe and inviting parks, recreation facilities and program services for social interaction, learning and enjoyment.

- **Fun.** MPT recognizes the importance of play in the lives of all residents regardless of age. MPT will build our community on a foundation of fun!
1.4 GREEN VISION 2030

Five years ago, MPT developed a previous version of their Strategic Master Plan called Green Vision 2030. This document has helped elevate the Strategic Planning effort because of the way it succinctly provided direction and guided MPT over the last five years by providing the following goals:

1. Foster active lifestyles to support a healthy community
2. Foster appreciation and stewardship of wildlife and natural resources
3. Foster appreciation of culture and heritage
4. Be an accountable and responsive agency that contributes to a sustainable and livable city

The Green Vision 2030 plan was also carried forward a suggested a radius level of service (LOS) for different components of the system as first stated in the 2006 Strategic Parks and Program Services Plan. For example, a suggested service radius to a Neighborhood Park (3/4 mile) and Community Park (1.5 miles) were outlined to assist MPT with understanding spatial gaps and/or barriers within the system for park access.

Most importantly, the Green Vision 2030 plan introduced the idea of moving toward a performance measure-driven agency. Performance measures, or key performance indicators (KPIs), are metrics used to measure and evaluate the success of implementing goals or strategies. Having good goals or strategies is important but they are only as effective as the degree in which they can be measured, or evaluated to be deemed “successful.” They also allow the District to manage from an offensive position instead of a defensive one. This updated plan refines this concept by defining five district wide measures that inform progress and aptitude in distinct areas of the District’s operations.