

PROJECT ACTION MEMO

Port of Tacoma Commission



Item No: 6B
Meeting Date: 4/21/26

DATE: April 7, 2026
TO: Port of Tacoma Commission
FROM: Eric Johnson, Executive Director
Sponsor: Jason Jordan, Sr. Director Environmental & Planning Services
Project Manager: Melisa Kegans, Environmental Project Manager
SUBJECT: Parcel 1A Tote USTs Site Closure Investigation (Project ID 102048)

A. ACTION REQUESTED

Request project authorization in the amount of \$480,000 for work associated with environmental investigation at Parcel 1A, Project ID 102048.

Strategic Plan Initiative:

EL-1: Remediate contaminated Port properties in a manner that ensures protection of human health and the environment while enabling economic development.

B. SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this project is to complete environmental investigation to address outstanding Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) requirements related to former underground storage tanks at Parcel 1A. The investigation will support regulatory decision-making, advance the site toward potential closure, and reduce long-term environmental and financial risk to the Port.

C. BACKGROUND

Historically, the Port of Tacoma (Port) and the previous property owner have conducted underground storage tank (UST) removals, environmental site assessments, and monitoring activities at the site for multiple confirmed and suspected USTs, including Port-owned, tenant-owned, Navy-related, and USTs of unknown ownership. The USTs, while removed, do not meet current health department closure requirements. As such, the Port currently pays the Tacoma–Pierce County Public Health Department (TPCHD) an annual permit fee of \$2,900 for the Tote property USTs.

The work to date on the Port’s Tote property has been managed under the Legacy UST remediation program, which covers all Port Parcels with UST sites in the Tacoma Tideflats. Over the past 15+ years, staff with consulting support have worked to close out multiple USTs on various Port properties. Historical program costs are approximately \$900K.

In recent years, to improve efficiency and accelerate progress, Port staff have worked with TPCHD and Ecology to close out the simpler sites first. Since 2018, the Port has received NFAs on five UST sites. At this point in time, only more complex UST sites remain within the Port's Legacy UST remediation program.

Under the Port's Legacy UST remediation program, staff with consulting support have developed a UST closure strategy for the Tote property. The Port is pursuing a Parcel-wide No Further Action Determination decision from Ecology for the property. Between 2019 and 2020, all historical environmental documents were compiled and evaluated to develop a Remedial Investigation and Remedial Action Plan for the property. This plan called for additional soil borings, installation of monitoring wells, and identified the cleanup plan as future monitored natural attenuation. The plan was submitted to Ecology in January 2021 along with an application for Ecology's Voluntary Cleanup Program. In July 2021, Ecology determined that additional site characterization was required prior to remedy selection. In response to Ecology's comments, the Port initiated a focused data gaps investigation, including preparation and submittal of a Draft Investigation Plan in June 2022, and subsequent revisions addressing Ecology comments received in February 2023.

The investigation work plan organizes the work into three stages to improve efficiency, align with contractor availability, and allow the Port to move forward quickly. Stage 1 involves drilling borings, collecting soil and groundwater samples, and confirming removal of the former Wax Tank; Stage 2 includes additional porewater sampling and redevelopment and sampling of existing wells; and Stage 3 consists of installing new monitoring wells and collecting soil and groundwater samples. The results of this investigation may lead to either closure recommendation, long-term groundwater monitoring, or additional remedial actions at individual USTs.

Since finalization of the Investigation Plan, the Port has pursued external grant funding to offset investigation costs. The site is not eligible for EPA Brownfield funding and was not awarded Ecology remedial action grant funding. To stay within Ecology's Voluntary Cleanup Program, Ecology is requiring the Port to proceed with implementation of the Investigation Plan without external funding.

D. PROJECT DETAILS

Scope of Project:

- Implement the Investigation Work Plan for former USTs at Parcel 1A
- Prepare and submit a report documenting investigation results and closure recommendations to Ecology for review.
- Respond to Ecology comments and requests for additional information, if required.
- Coordinate with Ecology and TPCHD to determine appropriate next actions, including potential remedial alternatives or regulatory closure pathways.
- Return to the Commission, if needed, to request authorization for follow-on cleanup, remediation, or site closeout activities.

Schedule:

- Conduct Investigation Field Work: 2Q – 3Q 2026
- Develop Report: 4Q 2026
- Submit Final Report to Ecology: 2027

E. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Estimated Cost of Project

The total project cost including all stages is estimated at \$480,000.

Estimated Cost for This Request

The total estimated cost of the implementation for this project is \$480,000. If the cost of this estimate is anticipated to exceed the authorized amount, additional Commission authorization will be requested.

Estimated Sales Tax

The total estimated sales tax to be paid to local and state governments for this project is \$5,000.

Cost Details

Item	This Request	Total Previous Requests	Total Request	Total Project Cost	Cost to Date	Remaining Cost
TOTAL	\$480,000	\$ 0	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$ 0	\$ 480,000

Source of Funds

The 2026–2030 Capital Investment Plan (CIP) currently allocates \$405,000 to MID 096219. That program MID will be closed, and this new project ID will be created. While Project ID 102048 currently unbudgeted, the CIP will be updated accordingly when all costs to complete the project are further defined.

Financial Impact

Project costs will be expensed as incurred.

F. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Alternative 1) Do nothing.

Alternative 2) Complete the investigation to determine appropriate remedial actions and regulatory closure pathways.

Alternative 2 is the recommended course.

G. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS/REVIEW**

Permitting: The work is within the shoreline management area and is covered by the Port's Comprehensive Mitigated Maintenance Program environmental permits.

Remediation: The property is enrolled in the Ecology VCP program. Removal of contamination associated with USTs is an improvement to the environment.

Stormwater: Stormwater Best Management Practices will be implemented during soil disturbance activities.

Air Quality: No Impact.

H. **NEXT STEPS**

Complete environmental investigation at Parcel 1A and make recommendations towards Site Closure.