



News Release

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Lorna Sutton, Community Relations, lsutton@cityoftacoma.org, (253) 573-2768
James Parvey, jparvey@cityoftacoma.org, (253) 591-5272

Tacoma celebrates groundbreaking of Center for Urban Waters April 15

The vision of a marine science research center in Tacoma will take a giant step toward reality when the groundbreaking of the Center for Urban Waters is celebrated Wednesday, April 15, at 10 a.m. The public event will be held on the street adjacent to the building site at 326 E. D St., on the east side of the Thea Foss Waterway.

Congressman Norm Dicks will join City of Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma and Councilmember Connie Ladenburg for the celebration. Other speakers include David Dicks, executive director of the Puget Sound Partnership; Dr. Joel E. Baker, professor and Port of Tacoma Chair in Environmental Science at the University of Washington Tacoma; Jim Waldo, chair of the Urban Waters Board of Directors; and Clare Petrich, east side Foss business owner and Port of Tacoma commissioner.

No on-site parking is available for the event. Shuttles will take guests directly to the celebration from the Tacoma Dome Parking Lot A (every 10 minutes from 9:30-10:20 a.m.) or the Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market St. (every 15 minutes from 9:30-10:15 a.m.).

Details are posted on the Urban Waters web site at www.cityoftacoma.org/urbanwaters, or you can leave a message for more information at (253) 591-5051.

The 51,250-square-foot building will hold labs and offices for the City of Tacoma's Environmental Services staff, research labs for the University of Washington Tacoma, and an office for the Puget Sound Partnership.

For almost a decade, civic leaders have worked to create a research center on the waterfront to tackle the problems affecting urban bay communities through a partnership of community, governmental, industry and educational leaders.

Potential partners held a workshop in 2002 to outline a vision for the center. A board of directors and scientific advisory committee were established the next year.

In addition to creating the research center, the Urban Waters Board of Directors' mission includes fundraising to support the UW Tacoma's marine research program, supporting legislation to support the cleanup of Washington state waters, and supporting community efforts to recruit firms engaged in marine research, marine architecture/engineering and related manufacturing.

In the future, the community partners envision attracting additional marine research in support of the original mission and building a growing community of world-class marine researchers developing solutions to the problems of urban bay communities.

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