



City of Tacoma  
WASHINGTON

## Questions & Answers from CM Rumbaugh's District 2 Town Hall

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Dear District 2 Residents,

It was wonderful to see so many of you join me for my second annual District 2 Town Hall earlier this month! This year's town hall was in NE Tacoma, where I spoke on how we can make NE Tacoma a thriving, livable community. I've lived in NE Tacoma for 15 years and I love connecting with my neighbors about our community.

You ask such great questions, and these questions help keep me focused on improving the quality of life here in District 2. This e-newsletter highlights some of the most frequent questions I received at the town hall for those who weren't able to attend. Check out the Q&A below.

I will always do my best to stay connected to the entire District 2 community. I alternate where town halls are located each year, and next year I will be returning to the other side of the port to host a town hall in or near downtown Tacoma.

Sincerely,

Sarah Rumbaugh  
District 2 Council Member  
City of Tacoma



Topics in this newsletter:

- [Concerns About Vehicles Speeding in Neighborhoods](#)
- [Addressing Litter and Keeping our Streets Healthy and Clean](#)
- [Increasing Connections – Request for Bike Trail from Northeast Tacoma to Downtown Tacoma](#)
- [Maintaining our Streets and Sidewalks in Northeast Tacoma](#)
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## Concerns About Vehicles Speeding in Neighborhoods

The top question I received at the town hall was about speeding. We all want to feel safe traveling in our neighborhood. Thank you to everyone who raised concerns about speeding and the impacts it has when you're walking, biking, or driving in Northeast Tacoma. I hear you loud and clear.

In 2020, the Tacoma City Council passed Resolution 40559, committing to Vision Zero and the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the City of Tacoma by 2035. Using the [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) as a guide, we are exploring multiple opportunities to improve our transportation system for people driving, walking, rolling, biking, or taking transit, including:

- **Designing** streets that make safe behavior the default.
- Making changes to our **codes and policies**, such as reducing speed limits, adding automated enforcement traffic cameras in key locations, and calming traffic in our neighborhoods, that result in safer roadways for all.
- **Educating** drivers to be safe and respectful of all road users.
- Creating systems for **evaluation** as we make ongoing improvements to our shared roadways.
- Significantly **increasing our investments** in active transportation projects (sidewalks, crossings, bikeways) and ensuring that every transportation project is approached as an

opportunity to improve safety.

The new 20 MPH residential speed limit went into effect January 1, 2023 in support of Tacoma's Vision Zero Action Plan. Yard signs are now available to help raise awareness about the new 20 MPH residential speed limits. As the weather warms up, more people will be walking and biking around our neighborhoods. Placing a sign in your yard will help remind people about Tacoma's new speed limit and encourage drivers to slow down.

Yard signs should be placed along streets classified as "residential" or "local" with a speed limit of 20 MPH. Visit the [Tacoma Speed Limit map](#) to see if the street you live on now has a 20 MPH limit. Yard signs are available for pick-up at the Tacoma FIRST 311 Customer Support Center in the Tacoma Municipal Building (747 Market Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Lobby), Monday – Friday, between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM. They will also be distributed at select City events around Tacoma through the month of July. Contact Carrie Wilhelme at [cwilhelme@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cwilhelme@cityoftacoma.org) if you would like multiple yards signs to pass out in your neighborhood. Yard signs are available in English, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish, Khmer, and Russian.





## Addressing Litter and Keeping our Streets Healthy and Clean

The second most common question was about trash and litter in our community. Tacoma has a proud history of cleaning up our public spaces so that they can be enjoyed by residents and visitors, and community members I connected with at our town hall are passionate about ensuring that Northeast Tacoma has beautiful and healthy public spaces.

Thanks to your ongoing engagement with the City, the City is doing more to clean up litter and debris. The City Council enacted its legislative authority to implement a new local excise tax on solid waste

services to fund and expand existing community cleanup programs, like Tidy-Up Tacoma, that were previously funded with one-time money from the American Rescue Plan Act and other City funds. This local excise tax was passed by City Council as part of the 2023 – 2024 biennial budget. The excise tax is 6% of residential and commercial solid waste bills and it went into effect April 1. On average, a residential customer with a 60-gallon garbage container will see about \$3 per month added to their bill. Customers will see the tax for the first time on their May or June bills depending on billing cycle, as “local excise tax”.

The community plays an important role in determining where and how the City will focus Tidy-Up Tacoma efforts. Residents will be able to:

- Help identify where and how the City should focus Tidy-Up Tacoma efforts
- Share ideas on how to improve existing community cleanup programs like Adopt-a-Spot and Litter Patrol
- Report litter, debris and graffiti issues through Tacoma First 311
- Collaborate with the City on new ways to engage all Tacoma residents in supporting a cleaner city

City staff will have conversations with community organizations and residents to ensure the priorities of underrepresented communities are reflected in Tidy-Up Tacoma efforts as well. Starting this summer, the City will launch in-person and online feedback mechanisms that every Tacoma resident can engage with to share their priorities about how and where the funds can be spent.

Learn more about our Tidy Up Tacoma program at [cityoftacoma.org/tidyup](https://cityoftacoma.org/tidyup). To report trash, dumping, or litter, dial **311**. To call outside of city limits, dial **(253) 591-5000**. TacomaFIRST 311 Customer Support Center resources are also available online at [cityoftacoma.org/tacomafirst311](https://cityoftacoma.org/tacomafirst311). A mobile app is available for download on Apple devices [here](#). To download the 311 app on an Android device, [click here](#).

### **What about litter along our highways?**

Northeast Tacoma faces unique challenges regarding litter. We have to travel over highways to get to and from much of Tacoma. These highways are owned and maintained by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). While the City has a very positive and constructive relationship with WSDOT, we also know they have limited resources for litter clean up and blight removal. The City's staff stay in close contact with WSDOT and try to find ways to collaborate to serve the public.

Just last week, in partnership with WSDOT, the City used its street sweeping trucks to sweep up trash along parts of Highway 509, Highway 705, and both the Stadium Way and Schuster Pkwy exits. WSDOT tries to clean their highways quarterly but, due to damage to their own vehicles, there have been delays. This is an example of the City working to be a good partner in service to our community.

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## **Increasing Connections – Request for Bike Trail from Northeast Tacoma to Downtown Tacoma**

May is bike month and it was wonderful to have so many bikers attend the town hall and advocate for increased connectivity!

Bicycling is an efficient, inexpensive, healthy and fun means of transportation. The City of Tacoma is working towards developing a connected network of bikeways and trails citywide so residents will be

able to travel more comfortably by bicycle from most City destinations. In fact, [the future vision](#) for our bike system includes a protected bike route that connect NE Tacoma to downtown Tacoma. We are not there yet, but I will champion this issue while on the Council.

### How Bikes Shaped Tacoma: Rolling Through History

Did you know May is Historic Preservation Month and Bike Month? The [City of Tacoma's Historic Preservation Office](#) teamed up with the City's Active Transportation Coordinator, Liz Kaster, and Pretty Gritty Tours to create [this video](#) highlighting the history of bicycling in Tacoma.



### Maintaining our Streets and Sidewalks in Northeast Tacoma

A common request I get from the neighborhood is for the City to increase its investment in Tacoma's streets and sidewalks. This public infrastructure improves our quality of life, be it driving to work or the grocery store or walking with children down the side of the street.

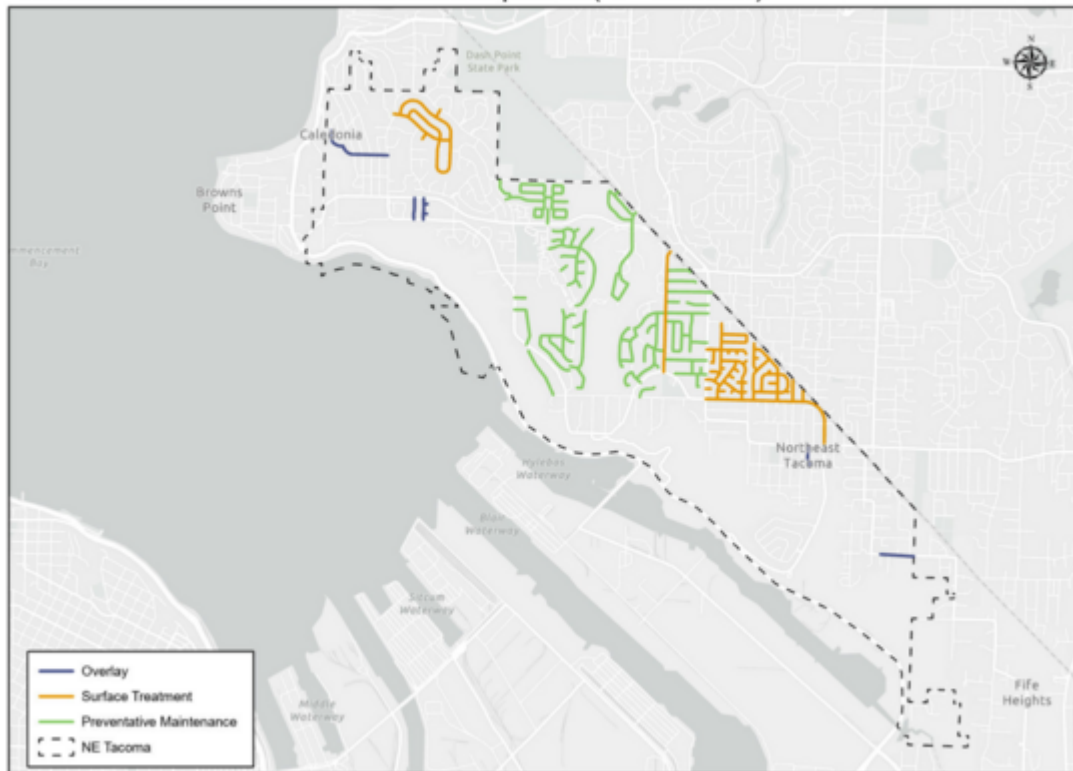
Due to historic development requirements, large portions of Tacoma were developed without sidewalks. Additionally, the City has had limited revenues for investing in streets and sidewalks. This has created a deficit that Tacoma residents like you and I face every day. Since joining the Council, I've talked with my peers and the City Manager about how we overcome this deficit and improve our transportation infrastructure and connectivity.

One of the main tools we have for improving our streets is funding from our Streets Initiative. The most cost-effective work that the City can be doing is keeping serviceable roads in good condition. In Northeast Tacoma, Streets Initiative funds have been used to extend the life of over 31% of Northeast Tacoma streets through things like surface treatment and preventative maintenance.

The current Streets Initiative structure does not fund arterial street improvements or sidewalks. However, these may be considered when the Streets Initiative comes back for a vote. The City is also exploring other funding sources that will allow for critical investments in our neighborhood infrastructure.

Want to learn more? Josh Diekmann, the Interim Public Works Director, and Erik Sloan, the City's Pavement Manager, will be attending the next Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council meeting on May 18 to discuss roadway conditions and funding, and in particular the Streets Initiative and the City's outlook for roadway maintenance work and improvements.

### Tacoma Streets Initiative - Work Completed (NE Tacoma)



## Stay Connected! Attend the Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council Meetings

Stay involved in the Northeast Tacoma community by attending [Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council](#) (NETNC) meetings!

The NETNC holds hybrid meetings at 6 PM on the third Thursday of each month. The next meeting is tomorrow, Thursday, May 18 at 6 PM. In person attendance is always encouraged – it's so wonderful to be able to meet again in person and make those deeper connections!

#### In Person:

Center at Norpoint  
4818 Nassau Ave NE  
Tacoma, WA 98422

#### Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84664633972?pwd=TS9JQW9aSDRhchHhPc2U3QU9lZytoZz09>

Meeting ID: 846 6463 3972

Passcode: 504246



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