



City of Tacoma
WASHINGTON

Quarterly Update from District 5 Council Member Joe Bushnell

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Greetings District 5,

This newsletter highlights what we have accomplished together as a community over the last few months.

The month of April, as many of you may already know, is very special for me. Not only does it signal the start of spring, it is also a time of celebration in observance of the Cambodian New Year. For me, and many others in our local Cambodian community, April is also a time of somber remembrance. In April 1975, Khmer Rouge forces viciously attacked the Cambodian capital city of Phnom Penh and established its rule over Cambodia. As I pause to remember the toll of the Khmer Rouge regime on Cambodia, during which more than 2 million Cambodians were brutally exterminated and others were forced to flee for their lives with little more than the clothes on their backs, I must remind myself that I would not be here today had my mother not been one of the roughly 260,000 who were able to find refuge in the United States.

I am thankful for the Cambodian community we have here in Tacoma. It is such an honor to be able to use my platform as Tacoma's first Cambodian-American Council Member to help share the events that have profoundly shaped our lives. I also appreciate the many Tacoma residents and community leaders who have joined us in solidarity and support, reminding us time and time again that they care and that we are not alone. They share our deep commitment to a brighter future for the city we now call home.

When we think about the future, we must think about our youth and the present-day issues they grapple with. I have redoubled my efforts to connect with our youth around Tacoma, because it is important that they know we care. It would be a long newsletter if I included everything, so here are a few highlights! I participated in three student-led interviews, joined students at Mt. Tahoma High School to listen to them talk about their experiences and perspectives around the issues of community safety and mental health, and served as a guest lecturer at a Political Science 101 class at Tacoma Community College. I will continue to engage with our youth however I can, elevating their concerns

and helping identify solutions to the challenges they face. And, importantly, I will remind them at every turn that we are looking out for them.

This spring, I hope to see you all out and about! If you see me around your neighborhood, please stop and say hello!

Regards,

Joe Bushnell
District 5 Council Member
City of Tacoma

Topics in this newsletter include:

- [Cambodian Community Events](#)
- [Addressing the 'Urban Heat Island' Effect With Trees](#)
- [District 5 Home In Tacoma Open House](#)
- [Speed Limit Reduction - Get free yard signs and help raise awareness!](#)
- [Litter Free 253 Recap](#)
- [Community Events to Attend in District 5 this Weekend!](#)

Cambodian Community Events

The [Asia Pacific Cultural Center](#)'s (APCC) held Tacoma's first ever Khmer New Year event on April 1, 2023. This event was a huge success, as community members across Tacoma enjoyed this family-friendly cultural feast for the senses. Thank you to my colleagues, Council Members Sarah Rumbaugh and Catherine Ushka, for joining me at this event, along with Tacoma Police Department Chief Avery Moore and Officers T. Snyder, K. Braziel and H. Butts.



(In this photo from L-R: APCC Cultural Programs Manager Dareth Pak; TPD Officers T. Snyder, K. Braziel and H. Butts; Pierce County Council Member Jani Hitchen; APCC Executive Director Lua Pritchard; Tacoma Council Members Sarah Rumbaugh, Joe Bushnell and Catherine Ushka; TPD Chief Avery Moore; Pierce County Council Member Marty Campbell; Tacoma Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Commissioner Maurice Lekea; Royal Consulate of Cambodia Consul General Daravuth D. Huoth)



Mayor Victoria Woodards and the City Council declared April 10-17 as Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Week in Tacoma. This is the second year the City Council has joined in observance to remember, honor and pay tribute to the more than 2 million lives lost to genocide during the Khmer Rouge regime. Cambodian community leaders from Tacoma and across our state work tirelessly to reclaim Cambodian culture, which was nearly exterminated by the Khmer Rouge regime, and uplift the Cambodian community through cultural empowerment.

Addressing the ‘Urban Heat Island’ Effect With Trees

Across the United States, climate change has made heat waves hotter and more frequent. Washington state has not escaped this phenomenon. You may have heard the term “urban heat island” before. Urban heat islands occur when certain areas experience much warmer temperatures than other areas nearby. It has to do with the fact that certain areas, like Central and South Tacoma for example, have a higher percentage of impervious surface areas, like roadways and rooftops, and less green spaces.

In Tacoma, our [analysis](#) found that urban heat islands can increase maximum temperatures by as much as 6.2°F above the local baseline. Neighborhoods in Central and South Tacoma may be as much as 14°F hotter than neighborhoods in North Tacoma.

Urban heat islands are hazardous to public health. But there is something we can do about it. Planting trees and adding green spaces can help mitigate the impacts of urban heat islands, while providing

numerous benefits such as air quality improvement and stormwater capture.



District 5 is one of the areas of Tacoma most impacted by the urban heat island effect, and I'm committed to tackling this challenge. The City of Tacoma and its partners [provide free and reduced-cost trees](#) to Tacoma residents. I've worked with community groups to plant trees in lower-opportunity neighborhoods, including the ones we have around 72nd and D streets and Madison Elementary. In April, I joined volunteers from Mt. Tahoma High School and the Tacoma Tree Foundation for a community tree planting event. We taught participating students about the positive effects of trees and how they can plant their own!



I recently had the honor of serving as a guest lecturer at a Political Science 101 class at Tacoma Community College. I spoke about civic engagement in Tacoma around the overlapping issues of climate and racial justice, with a focus on the correlation identified between historic redlining, our tree canopy and the urban heat island effect we have observed in parts of our city.

I shared what the City is doing to help mitigate the very real, very visible impacts of climate change and improve lives, starting with our tree canopy. And I let students know that they have the power to course correct. All they have to do is get involved. I introduced the City's [Equity Index](#), a tool we created to inform local policy development and implementation, and the proposed enhancements to our tree canopy being considered in the City Council's Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee.

Students expressed deep interest in Tacoma's Climate Action Plan, how City Council members work with another, and the actions individuals can take to support Tacoma's broader efforts to tackle what has become one of the most critical global issues in generations.

District 5 Home In Tacoma Open House

We're making progress on Home In Tacoma Phase 2 and are inviting you to join me and City staff for a Home In Tacoma Open House.

The Open House event for Council District 5 will be from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, June 8 at Tacoma Public Library Fern Hill Branch (765 S 84th).

I hope to see you at a meeting in our neighborhood. If you can't make the District 5 event, check the dates below for opportunities in a different Council District to attend. The City will also be offering a virtual meeting.

- District 1: Wednesday, June 7th at Tacoma Public Library Swasey Branch (7001 6th Ave)
- District 2: Thursday, May 25th at Meeker Middle School (4402 Nassau Ave NE)
- District 3: Thursday, June 1st at Tacoma Community House (1314 S L)
- District 4: Monday, May 22nd at Stewart Middle School (5010 Pacific Ave)
- District 5: Thursday, June 8th at Tacoma Public Library Fern Hill Branch (765 S 84th)
- Virtual Meeting: Wednesday, June 14th on Zoom

All meetings will be from 6-8 p.m. and are free and open to all community members, including children and families. Snacks and refreshments will be provided, and you can drop in for as long as you like.

You will have the opportunity to connect with city staff and your City Council representatives to learn more and share thoughts on how Tacoma can get housing growth right. You will also get information about what is being considered in Phase 2, engage on key decisions to be made, and learn how Home In Tacoma relates to housing bills adopted by the Washington State Legislature.

Details and more information about Home in Tacoma and how to provide feedback is available at cityoftacoma.org/homeintacoma.

Speed Limit Reduction - Get free yard signs and help raise awareness!



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, 2nd 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 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.

The new speed limit went into effect January 1, 2023 in support of Tacoma's Vision Zero Action Plan. We know there is a lot more work that needs to happen to make travel on Tacoma's streets safe for all, and that redesign of a street is the best way to change driver behavior. The Vision Zero Action Plan identified the arterial streets and intersections with the highest number of serious crashes, making these streets a main focus for future Vision Zero efforts. To learn more, visit cityoftacoma.org/visionzero.

Litter Free 253 Recap



The fourth annual Litter Free 253 event once again brought Tacoma community members together to celebrate Earth Day with action inspired by the deep love we have for our neighborhoods. Litter Free 253 is a group of volunteers who promote the idea that everyone is needed to help keep Tacoma

clean. This year, City staff estimate that volunteers picked up over 8,000 pounds of trash across Tacoma!

I joined the clean-up crew at South 84th and Hosmer and picked up over 15 bags of litter. Thank you to SENCo Board Member Ralette Churchwell for organizing this crew, and to all the Neighborhood Councils who organize this event each year. Your leadership and enduring devotion to Tacoma are making a difference. I'm proud to call Tacoma home, and to work alongside our neighbors who make this city a great place to live.

Community Events to Attend in District 5 this Weekend!





plant sale

MOUNT TAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL
PLANT CLUB

MAY 6-7 & 13-14
10AM-2PM

VEGGIES
ANNUALS
PERENNIALS
HOUSE PLANTS
HANGING BASKETS

 @MT.TAHOMAGARDENS
 @MT TAHOMA GARDENS

AT THE MT TAHOMA GREENHOUSE BEHIND
THE SCHOOL - DRIVE AROUND TO THE BACK



City of Tacoma
WASHINGTON

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