



City of Tacoma
WASHINGTON

June update from Council Member Joe Bushnell

City of Tacoma Washington sent this bulletin at 06/12/2024 02:43 PM PDT



Dear District 5 residents,

I have a lot to cover in this quarter's newsletter, I appreciate your patience as we get these updates out! We've done a lot this quarter and I have some updates to share including results of our in-district town hall, charter updates and I also have a message to share about my dear personal friend and colleague Council Member Catherine Ushka.

Thank you,
Council Member Joe Bushnell
City of Tacoma, District 5

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Remembering Council Member Catherine Ushka



By now you may have heard the news, but if not, it is with a very heavy heart that I inform you of the passing of my dear friend and colleague, Council Member Catherine Ushka of District 4. Catherine was a champion of the Eastside and South End of Tacoma. While the press releases from the City and other organizations highlight her tremendous legacy, I want to share my personal memories of her.

Catherine and I would often spend hours together, solving the world's problems. I'd bring up ideas, and she'd find a way to poke holes in them. I smile thinking about this because even as she was sinking my thought bubbles, she always managed to patch them up or convince me to let an idea go. Catherine had a unique ability to make me think about how our community could be affected in ways I never considered. She excelled at putting herself in other people's shoes and being actively involved in District 4. Her level of knowledge and engagement was truly inspiring to me.

Catherine's example of what it means to know your people, to stay informed, and to be engaged spoke volumes about her character and passion for our city. We had long planned on doing a bike ride from one end of Pacific Ave to the other, to talk through and see the specific challenges each of us faced along this corridor. Unfortunately, we never did get to complete that ride. District 4 and District 5 share the Pacific Ave Corridor in Tacoma that runs between the South End and Eastside, and it was a project we both looked forward to.

Throughout my life, a series of people have played significant roles in my personal and professional development—teachers, Gunnery Sergeants in the Marine Corps, and friends in the professional realm. These are people I will never forget. Catherine is among them, and she will forever be a dear

friend who has impacted how I see the world, how I interact with others, and how to be part of a team for the greater good.

Thank You for Attending my 2024 Town Hall!



All District 5 residents were invited to my annual town hall for a discussion on how the City is investing in safe and healthy neighborhoods. I provided an update on my work this last year, and took Q&A from the audience on topics like the City's homelessness response, development projects, the environment, and police accountability.

The event included a tabling portion where community members could talk directly with subject matter experts on how the City responds to community issues, and a feedback exercise where community members could help answer questions. Many of the answers to the questions really resonated with me. I wanted to shout out some of the answers to "What does community safety look like to you?" Over half the answers shared the theme of building connections in community, and included comments like:

- "More community events"
- "In my neighborhood, our neighbors are good about watching each other's houses"
- "Knowing my neighbors and knowing local police officers"
- "Seeing children outside having fun and adults making sure they are safe"

There's a lot we can do as a city to make sure everyone feels safe in Tacoma. Thank you to everyone engaged in their community helping to be part of building the connections necessary to make that happen.



Stay in touch! Coffee Chat Series and Other Community Meetings



Coffee with your Council Member

Come have a conversation with Council Member
Joe Bushnell

	Friday, June 21 10:30 AM – Noon South Tacoma Library 3411 South 56th Street Tacoma, WA 98409	Friday, July 19 10:30 AM – Noon Fern Hill Library 765 South 84th Street Tacoma, WA 98444	Friday, August 16 10:30 AM – Noon Sector 4 Substation 400 East 56th Street Tacoma, WA 98404
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I want to hear from you throughout the entire year. If you missed the Town Hall, be sure to visit one of my upcoming coffee chats. I'll be meeting with community on Fridays from 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM on:

- June 21 at the South Tacoma Library (3411 S 56th St, Tacoma, WA 98409)
- July 19 at the Fern Hill Library (765 S 84th St, Tacoma, WA 98444)
- August 16 at the Sector 4 Substation (400 East 56th Street, Tacoma, WA 98404)

I also regularly attend community meetings. I encourage you all to get involved with your neighborhood council or Safe Street group. Learn more about how to get involved with:

- [Safe Streets](#)
- [South Tacoma Neighborhood Council](#)
- [South End Neighborhood Council](#)
- [Eastside Neighborhood Advisory Council of Tacoma](#)

Charter Review Update

2024 is a big year for the City of Tacoma. It's our 10-year City Charter review, and on [May 6](#) the appointed Charter Review Committee completed their critical work of reviewing the City Charter and making recommendations to the City Council for consideration.

I would like to thank every member of the Charter Review Committee for their dedicated work over the last few months. They had over 80 hours of meetings, as well as all the additional hours spent studying and researching potential charter topics.

The next step of this process is for the City Council to review each proposal and consider which recommendations will appear on the ballot in the November 5, 2024, election. As a Council, we've scheduled multiple special Committee of the Whole meetings to discuss this topic and will continue to review each recommendation thoroughly throughout the month of June.

Community Policing

The City Council has prioritized addressing violent crime and the Tacoma Police Department is instituting a [Violent Crime Reduction Plan](#). Violent crime consists of murder, aggravated assault, and robbery. Part of that work includes Problem-Oriented, Place Based Policing (POPBP). POPBP strategies are carefully tailored to address underlying conditions that contribute to recurring problems in crime-prone locations and can be more effective at reducing crime than merely increasing or intensifying traditional police activities. The initial location selected for POPBP is 8810/8820 Hosmer Street. POPBP includes engagement with stakeholders and community members in the area to work towards systemic solutions. This work has already produced improvements, with violent crime down 100% at this location. City-wide, Tacoma witnessed an impressive 18.6% reduction in violent street crime incidents in the latter half of 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. There is more work to be done, but I am heartened to see how dedicated City efforts are making an impact to improve safety and reduce violent crime.

Return of Summer Late Nights for Middle & High School Students



Summer Late Nights is a drop-in program that students can attend as often as they like. Students can drop in at the site nearest their home or the site that's most convenient for the summer. Parents/guardians are encouraged to register their child online on the Compass/Family App.

When: Monday-Friday, 5-10 p.m., June 24-Aug. 30, 2024. The program is closed July 4 and 5.

Where: Schools, community centers and other sites across Tacoma. Students can drop in at the site nearest to their home or the site most convenient to them:

AL DAVIES BOYS & GIRLS CLUB | 1620 S 17th St.
TOPPING REGIONAL HOPE CENTER | 3875 S. 66th St.
EASTSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER | 1721 E. 56th St.
PEOPLE'S CENTER | 1602 MLK Jr. Way
MASON MIDDLE SCHOOL | 3901 N. 28th St.
MEEKER MIDDLE SCHOOL | 4402 Nassau Ave. N.E.
CENTER AT NORPOINT | 4818 Nassau Ave. N.E.
STEWART MIDDLE SCHOOL | 5010 Pacific Ave.
GIAUDRONE MIDDLE SCHOOL | 4902 S. Alaska St.
BAKER MIDDLE SCHOOL | 8001 S. J St.
TRUMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL | 5801 N. 35th St.
MORGAN FAMILY YMCA | 1002 S. Pearl St.

Learn more and register for the program at the [Summer Late Nights website](#).

Tidy-Up Tacoma and Litter Code update

I continue to champion the City's response to litter. I appreciate how our community comes together to do litter clean ups and beautification. However, we need to look for more ways to solve this problem.

Last year we identified a new funding source that we could dedicate specifically to litter programs. The Tidy-Up Tacoma program was funded in 2023 through a 6 percent Solid Waste excise tax. The Tidy-Up Tacoma uses that funding to address the issues of litter and debris in public spaces, maintenance and expansion of the public litter can program, trail maintenance, graffiti mitigation, encampment cleanup, and bill payment assistance. In 2023, Tidy-Up Tacoma removed 4.9 million pounds of garbage from public spaces. In the first quarter of 2024, this program already removed 1,094,260 pounds of garbage from public spaces. Long-term goals include public education and strategic initiatives to reduce overall littering in Tacoma.

This year, I co-sponsored Ordinance 28963, which restructured our penalties for littering. We want to recognize that there are different types of littering with different impacts on our community. I'm glad it's illegal to litter, but I believe littering small amounts of trash is better served as a civil infraction rather than a criminal one. At the same time, there's a big impact when folks dump large items. This ordinance increased the penalty for when folks dump amounts greater than 10 cubic yards. It also adds a definition for "potentially dangerous litter," like things that can start a fire or needles.

Pothole Palooza



Last week, the City's [Street Operations Division](#) was highlighted for Pothole Palooza. I joined one of the Pothole Palooza events to watch and learn about the work at the 7100 block of Tacoma Mall Boulevard.

Crews focused on the maintenance and preservation of arterial roadways, which will have a large impact on the city. This work is planned by our Street Operations as part of the [Tacoma Streets Initiative programs](#), which will continue through the summer.

The community is asked to continue to report potholes by contacting the TacomaFIRST 311 Customer Support Center by dialing 311 within Tacoma city limits or (253) 591-5000 from anywhere else, or visit cityoftacoma.org/TacomaFIRST311.

One Tacoma Public Workshop Events

Join the City for our upcoming “visioning workshop” events to share your ideas about Tacoma’s long-term future and strategic vision take center stage. The public comments and ideas gathered at these workshop events will inform the City’s priorities and shape several long-range planning documents, funding decisions, and strategic programs, including Tacoma’s:

- 10-Year Strategic Plan
- Comprehensive Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Community Safety Action Strategy
- 2025-2026 Biennial Budget
- Participatory Budgeting for District 2

Join us at one of the remaining events:

- **June 15**—Wapato Park Pavilion at 6500 S. Sheridan Ave., 1 – 3 PM
- **June 20**—Bates Technical College Central Campus at 2320 S. 19th St., 6 – 7:30 PM
- **June 27**—Salishan Family Investment Center at 1724 E. 44th St., 6 – 7:30 PM

In Community



In February, I got to meet with the SOTA Robotics Team.



I attended the Cambodian New Year celebration for our seniors at the Korean Women's Association in April.



I joined the Litter Free 253 event. Thank you to all the volunteers who organized litter clean ups and coming out to keep our community clean!



I sponsored a proclamation declaring April 14 to April 20, 2024 as Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Week. Thank you to everyone who attended the pre-proclamation ceremony.



The South Sound Military and Communities Partnership hosted their Elected Officials Council this May. Here I am with Senator Conway and Program Director Bill Adamson.



The Tacoma City Council visited the Glass Museum to produce specialized art to highlight the City of Tacoma's unique culture when traveling for diplomatic reasons. What a great way to showcase Tacoma culture!



The Mayor's new format for her State of the City created space for us to hear directly from community about their concerns. Thank you to everyone who came out and shared your thoughts with us.



I had the opportunity to travel with my colleagues to attend the National League of Cities DC conference, we advocated on behalf of our city with our federal delegation. Here I am with Senator Cantwell. At this meeting we spoke about a myriad of topics including some freight rail issues, public safety support, supply chain issues regarding electric transformers and more.

In Conclusion

Thank you all for keeping up with what's happening! I feel like I'm always on the go, but I feel energized by all the progress we are making in various ways and how we as a community really come together when times get tough. I really appreciate each of you, please do me a favor and give your loved ones a big hug and let them know how much you care about them.

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