



# 2024 Year-End Financial Position

| Fund               |                | 2024 Plan           | 2024 Actuals         | % Variance |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 4200 – Solid Waste | <b>Revenue</b> | <b>(89,690,053)</b> | <b>(99,902,758)</b>  | <b>11%</b> |
|                    | <b>Expense</b> | <b>101,081,108</b>  | <b>99,869,761</b>    | <b>1%</b>  |
|                    | Operating      | 82,316,695          | 84,010,049           | -2%        |
|                    | Capital        | 18,764,413          | 15,859,711           | 15%        |
| 4300 - Wastewater  | <b>Revenue</b> | <b>(96,015,434)</b> | <b>(109,610,388)</b> | <b>14%</b> |
|                    | <b>Expense</b> | <b>132,879,427</b>  | <b>112,051,433</b>   | <b>16%</b> |
|                    | Operating      | 92,408,924          | 92,231,240           | <1%        |
|                    | Capital        | 40,470,503          | 19,820,193           | 51%        |
| 4301 – Stormwater  | <b>Revenue</b> | <b>(45,736,242)</b> | <b>(59,527,603)</b>  | <b>30%</b> |
|                    | <b>Expense</b> | <b>88,750,060</b>   | <b>54,946,162</b>    | <b>38%</b> |
|                    | Operating      | 45,920,864          | 39,414,421           | 14%        |
|                    | Capital        | 42,829,196          | 15,531,741           | 64%        |

# 2025 Financial Forecast



## 2025-2026 Six-Year Revenue Plan

| Year | Solid Waste | Wastewater | Stormwater |
|------|-------------|------------|------------|
| 2025 | 5.5%        | 7%         | 8%         |
| 2026 | 5.5%        | 7%         | 8%         |
| 2027 | 5%          | 6%         | 7.5%       |
| 2028 | 5%          | 6%         | 7.5%       |
| 2029 | 4.5%        | 6%         | 7%         |
| 2030 | 4.5%        | 6%         | 7%         |





# Planning for Beyond 2025

- Operating cost increases
  - Labor
  - Internal costs
  - Regulatory requirements
- Capital cost increases
  - Regulatory requirements
  - System development charges (Growth)
  - Long-term Asset Management Plan (Status Quo)
- Council priorities



# “Communication and Engagement”

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- Communication is about **sending messages**.
- Engagement is about **building relationships and getting feedback**.

For us, this means **building trust** and fostering **meaningful relationships** with the community by sharing **timely, transparent information** and **encouraging active participation** in shaping ES programs and services.



# Here's what we can help with:

- Community Engagement Support (focus groups, relationship building, in-person conversations with community groups, etc.)
- EnviroTalk Newsletter Publication
- eBoard Submissions
- Event Promotion or Participation
- Graphic Design Services
- Internal Communication (internal staff email, SharePoint update, etc.)
- Photo or Video Production
- Press Releases or Media Advisories
- Printed Material (postcard, poster, flyer, letter, etc.)
- Social Media Posts
- TV Tacoma Appearances
- Translation and/or Language Access Services
- Website Update or Creation



# We have a plan to:

- Ensure communication and engagement activities are **aligned with ES priorities and values.**
- Create **consistent and clear messages,** helping us effectively reach our key audiences.



# Plan Goals and Objectives

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**Goal 1:** Increase community awareness of ES programs and services.

**Goal 2:** Demonstrate the value of ratepayer dollars to healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound.

**Goal 3:** Improve internal communications to align with department efforts and priorities.



# Example 1:

## Beyond the Bin Events

### Example Communication and Engagement Strategies:

- Press release with event details
- Printed flyers and posters
- TV Tacoma appearances
- Fostering community partnerships
- Event hosting and participation

**Outcome:** Robust participation in Beyond the Bin collection events, leading to higher landfill diversion rates of reusable or repurposed items, in service of ES sustainability goals.





# Example 3: Street Sweeping

## Example Communication and Engagement Strategies:

- Print postcards and utility bill inserts
- Updated GIS-powered website
- Social media videos
- Alignment with “If it Hits the Ground” campaign

**Outcome:** Ensures transparency, reduces community disruption by setting clear expectations, and builds trust through proactive communication and opportunities for resident feedback.



# Example 2:

## Capital Projects

### Example Communication and Engagement Strategies:

- Templated mailers sent to impacted audiences
- Dedicated project webpage with timely updates
- Open houses or virtual Q&A sessions
- Social media posts informing about progress

**Outcome:** Increased community awareness and understanding of the project's benefits and value, with proactive communication addressing potential community disruptions.



# In Conclusion...



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**Ensure Alignment and Consistency:** Ensure consistent messaging aligned with ES mission and values.

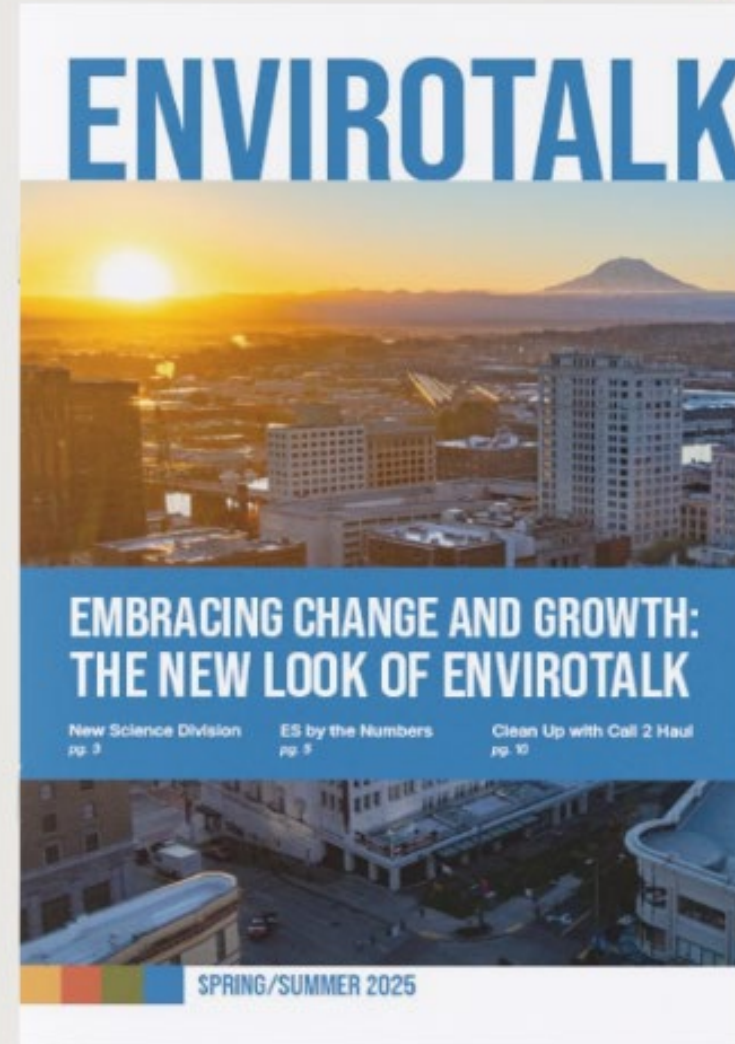
**Foster Proactive Communication:** Anticipate community and ratepayer needs and respond swiftly to emerging issues.

**Build Trust and Engagement:** With transparent and meaningful communication, we can build trust with ratepayers and strengthen community relationships.

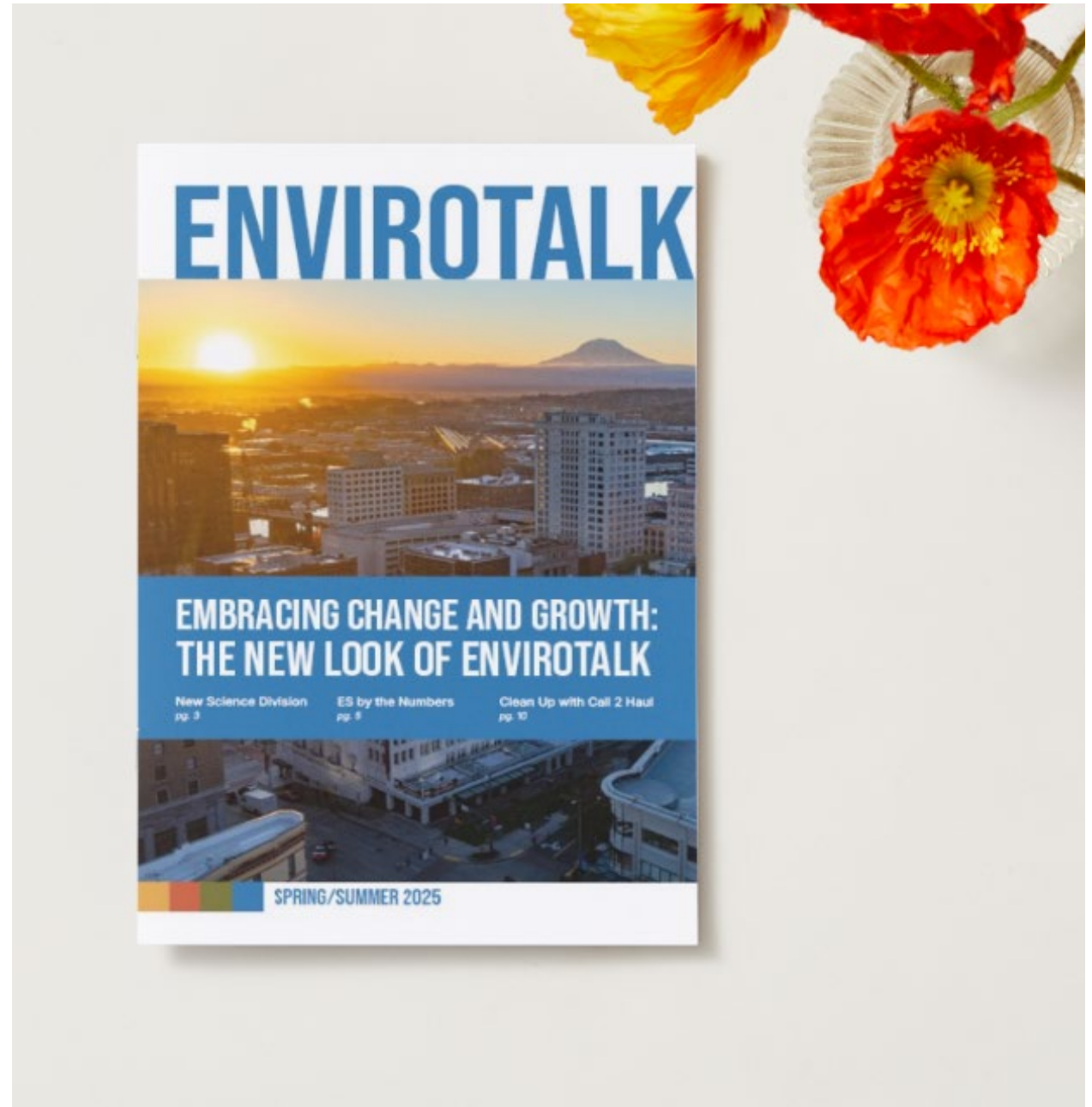
**Improve Internal Communication:** Foster collaboration and open communication, ensuring all staff are informed and aligned with department goals.

# EnviroTalk Updates

- EnviroTalk is getting a makeover!
- This will help us with:
  - Cost savings
  - Shortened production timelines
  - Including more timely information
- Future opportunities:
  - Options for digital subscription
  - Broader audiences (multifamily?)
- New look will launch in mid-April









## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The City of Tacoma's Environmental Services Department is working to better serve our community and ratepayers. Our commitment to creating healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound – leaving a better Tacoma for all – remains at the heart of everything we do. This refreshed edition of EnviroTalk reflects our dedication to clear, effective communication and keeping our community informed and engaged.

In 2025, we are embracing significant changes, including the search for a new Director to lead Environmental Services. Throughout this transition, our commitment to enhancing the quality of life in Tacoma and protecting our natural resources remains unwavering.

We are also excited to announce the formation of a new Science Division, aimed at strengthening our data-driven approach to reliable service delivery and environmental stewardship. This division will enhance our decision-making process, support innovative solutions, and help us address complex operational and environmental challenges. By prioritizing science and data, we are ensuring that our actions today contribute to a healthier, more sustainable Tacoma for future generations.

As we navigate these changes, our focus remains on serving our community with transparency, innovation, and dedication. Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey M. Smyth, P.E.  
Interim Director, Environmental Services Department

## NEW SCIENCE DIVISION ENHANCES ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Environmental Services is excited to announce the formation of a new Science Division, designed to enhance our commitment to science-driven solutions, environmental stewardship, and regulatory compliance.

This new division will bring together several key teams, including the Environmental Services Laboratory, Environmental Programs, Environmental Compliance, and Urban Forestry. By uniting these groups, we aim to strengthen our ability to support scientific research, evidence-based decision-making, and environmental innovation.

The creation of the Science Division will position Tacoma as a regional leader in environmental science and policy, allowing us to better address complex environmental challenges and protect the health of our community and natural resources. Recruitment for a Science Division Manager will begin in mid-to-late spring 2025. This role is not a newly funded position but a repurposing of an existing vacant role, ensuring a thoughtful and efficient transition.

We are excited about the possibilities this new division will bring and look forward to serving Tacoma with our expertise and dedication.







**ENVIROTALK**

**EMBRACING CHANGE AND GROWTH:  
THE NEW LOOK OF ENVIROTALK**

Clean Up with Coal 2 Hour  
pg. 10

New Science Division  
ES by the Numbers  
pg. 8

SPRING/SUMMER



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

**HOBBS, SOLID WASTE COLLECTOR/DRIVER**



**A Little About JP**  
Even after a dedicated 17 years of service to Environmental Services, JP continues to find new ways to improve and refine his work every day. Operating equipment and working independently are what he enjoys. Operating equipment and working independently are what he enjoys. Operating equipment and working independently are what he enjoys. Operating equipment and working independently are what he enjoys. Operating equipment and working independently are what he enjoys.

**Favorite Tacoma Spot:**  
Before it closed this year, Burger Ranch was JP's favorite local spot - not just for the great food, but because it was his first ever job, a tradition shared with his siblings.

**Life Outside of Work:**  
When he's not behind the wheel, JP loves camping and traveling with his family, embracing the great outdoors and creating lasting memories.

Thank you, JP, for all you do to serve our community!

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

**3,542,840 POUNDS**

In 2024, the Tidy-Tri Tacoma program collected an impressive 3,542,840 pounds of trash, helping to create cleaner, healthier neighborhoods. By addressing litter and engaging the community, the program contributes to a more beautiful and inviting Tacoma, ensuring a safer environment for all those who live, work, and play in Tacoma.

**3,000 GALLONS**

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**416,333 CALLS**

Last year, our Environmental Services Customer Service Team helped an impressive number of customers with every call, assisting customers with every request. Our team's dedication to providing exceptional customer service ensured that each call was treated with care and professionalism.

**747 TREES**

In 2024, the Community Tree Program, in partnership with Tacoma Tree Foundation, distributed 747 trees in its second year, distributed 747 trees in Tacoma, with 75% planted in low-income neighborhoods. By prioritizing our most vulnerable neighborhoods, the Community Tree Program is helping to grow greener, healthier neighborhoods throughout Tacoma.

# Grease Interceptor Educational Flyer

- Ordinance No. 29015 passed January 28, 2025
- Developed draft flyer working with ES Communications staff.
  - Collected feedback from Council Members
  - Finalized flyer & uploaded to [website](#) February 24, 2025
- Next steps
  - Print & mail to real-estate professionals



**City of Tacoma**  
**Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Program**  
Requirements for Food Service Establishments

All Food Service Establishments (FSEs) in Tacoma must have proper grease protection to prevent fats, oils, and grease (FOG) from entering Tacoma's sewer system.

Before purchasing, leasing, or taking over a commercial property that was, is, or will be used as an FSE, prospective operators should contact Tacoma Permits or Tacoma's FOG Program to determine if the site has up-to-code grease protection or what additional measures may be required for their specific business model.

**Key Considerations for Food Service Establishments (FSEs):**

- Previous FSE Locations May Not Meet Current Requirements:** A site that previously operated as an FSE may require upgrades to comply with current grease protection standards.
- Grease Device Requirements Vary by Business Model:** The required grease device size depends on factors such as the type of FSE, seating capacity, third-party delivery services, catering, commissaries, and other services offered.
- Change of Ownership Triggers Compliance Updates:** When ownership of an existing FSE changes, the new owner must ensure the site's grease protection meets current codes.
- Remodeling May Require Additional Grease Protection:** Any renovations or remodels to an existing FSE may necessitate installing or upgrading grease protection.
- Menu or Equipment Changes Can Impact Requirements:** Updating menu offerings or kitchen equipment to meet health regulations may also require additional grease protection.
- Plumbing Modifications Require Permits and Potential Upgrades:** Any changes to an FSE's plumbing system require a permit from Tacoma Permits and may involve upgrading grease protection.