



City of Tacoma
W A S H I N G T O N

May 2022 E-Newsletter Update - City of Tacoma District 5

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Greetings, District 5 residents!

This is the second of my planned quarterly updates to you all. In these last few months, I have been to a whirlwind of meetings, events, and discussions out in our community with neighbors and businesses. I helped spotlight outstanding individuals for their significant volunteer contributions to our community, participated in the Ukrainian Prayer event, a Habitat for Humanity build in the South End, a Fred Meyer employee recognition event, and so much more. Additionally, I have had the honor of representing your interests in the halls of Congress in Washington, D.C.!

Please continue to reach out to me with your thoughts, ideas and concerns, and also let me know about the great things happening in your neighborhood at jbushnell2@cityoftacoma.org or (253) 591-5113.

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

Topics in this newsletter include:

- [Making Tacoma a Safer City for Everyone](#)
- [Tacoma Police Department Crime Reduction Plan](#)
- [Connecting With Hosmer Businesses and Residents](#)
- [Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Week Proclamation](#)
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Making Tacoma a Safer City for Everyone

The top concerns I hear from everyone relate to public safety. While the definition of what it means to be “safe” has yet to be fully defined by our community, we can all agree that we want Tacoma to feel safe for *all*.

I understand and empathize with concerns shared by residents and businesses regarding the future of policing as it relates to public safety in Tacoma including: what we’re doing to address rates of violent crime, police staffing levels and response times, and police interactions with community members and, in particular, Black community members and other community members of color, and our approach to homelessness. I also track this issue very closely and review weekly updates on crime statistics in the district.

Police departments across the country have seen an unprecedented number of officers leaving the profession or retiring over the last year, and a pool of new candidates that continues to shrink, effectively losing many more officers than expected, with an inability to replace them. Tacoma is not immune to these national trends.

The Council has recently made big investments in our police department to work towards addressing our staffing challenges. This has included investing in recruitment efforts, bonuses to attract lateral officers, and finding efficiencies in our hiring practices to shorten the hiring timeline for these positions. We have also launched a new website that I encourage you to share with anyone you think might be interested in joining the Tacoma Police Department: [ReflectAndProtect.org](https://www.reflectandprotect.org).

Making Tacoma a safer city for everyone requires the ongoing engagement and support of community members like you. Here are a few things you can do to help make a difference:

- [Report crimes](#). You can report a crime currently in progress by calling 911, or a past crime by calling the Non-Emergency Line at (253) 287-4455.
- [Get to know your Community Liaison Officer](#) (CLO). Tacoma has an exceptional team of community liaison officers who help connect our Tacoma Police Department with the neighborhoods they serve. If you have safety concerns in your neighborhood, reach out to a CLO to find out how you can work with the City to address them.
- Join your local [Safe Streets Group](#) or [Neighborhood Council](#). When we work with our neighbors to resolve issues and build community through neighborhood improvement projects, it empowers us and helps deter neighborhood crime.

Tacoma Police Department Crime Reduction Plan

On April 19, Tacoma Police Chief Avery Moore [presented his plans to the City Council](#) to develop a strategic plan for the reduction of crime. This work is critical to making Tacoma safer for everyone.

A small number of individuals disproportionately commit crime. The most prolific 10% of offenders account for about 40% of this crime. Violent crime is not random or evenly distributed in urban areas, but is highly concentrated in a small number of street segments. The plan will focus resources on these segments and the individuals responsible for the majority of the violence, and detail the strategies and tactics tailored to address the problem.

The approach will involve our community, City departments, and other stakeholders.

The Tacoma Police Department will be working with experienced criminologists from the University of Texas, San Antonio to develop and evaluate strategies, as they provide ongoing consultation to the City on its violence reduction efforts.

The strategy will be evidence-based and focus the response to:

1. Be problem-driven based on empirical analysis
2. Incorporate previously discussed “prerequisites for success”
3. Have measurable outcomes for success

The Tacoma Police Department will NOT employ race-based tactics like over-policing, “stop and frisk” or “zero tolerance” policing.

Development of the plan will continue through summer when it will be presented to Council. I will update you in a future e-newsletter on what comes next.

Connecting With Hosmer Businesses and Residents

Like many of you, I am very concerned about the level of crime in our Hosmer area. This is an area with a lot of potential that should feel safe and welcoming for our residents, provide a commercial environment where our businesses can thrive, and become a destination of choice for visitors. I am deeply invested in finding ways to make this vision a reality.

To begin this work, I invited the Police Chief, City Manager, and Mayor Victoria Woodards to join me in visiting Hosmer area businesses so they could gain a deeper level of insight into our community’s concerns. This is just the first step among many to come, as we work to create lasting solutions that revitalize the area.



(L-R) Deputy Chief Ed Wade, Sweet Rice Owner Robert Saysana, Council Member Joe Bushnell, Chief Avery Moore, Mayor Victoria Woodards, City Manager Elizabeth Pauli during our Hosmer business walking tour



Site Manager Joe Perva with Aspen Court explaining the work they are doing on-site for those transitioning into permanent housing

Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Week Proclamation



On April 12, the Mayor and City Council declared April 10 – 16 as Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Week in Tacoma and urged all across our city to join in this observance. As a city, we came together to remember, honor and pay tribute to the over 2 million lives lost to the Khmer Rouge Regime during the Cambodian Genocide, and to bless our community.

This proclamation is very personal for me. My mother is Cambodian. She fled the Cambodian Genocide and came to the United States with nothing but the shirt on her back, and my older brother and sister in tow. To be the first elected official of Cambodian heritage in the state of Washington today is a great honor for me, and my mother's sacrifices exist in the halls of my mind not as a mere footnote but as the somber chapter that, down the line, opened this new one for me.

While I am proud to serve you today as your Council Member, I continue to reflect with great humility on the grave reality that the culture I treasure so deeply was nearly exterminated by the Khmer Rouge Regime. As I work with other Cambodian community leaders from Tacoma and across our state to reclaim this culture and sense of cultural empowerment for future generations, it continues to weigh heavily on my mind that over half of our Cambodian population has experienced varying degrees of post-traumatic stress disorder or other forms of mental health issues brought forth by the atrocities they have endured. Reflecting on this heartbreaking reality, as well as the ultimate sacrifice of those whose lives were stamped out by the Khmer Rouge Regime, I believe this proclamation to be a small but important step towards healing and cultural celebration for the Cambodian-American community.

Permitting Process for Bridge BNSF Warehouse Project (LU21-0125)

Another topic I hear frequently from constituents about is the permitting process for [the Bridge BNSF Warehouse Project \(LU21-0125\)](#).

As your Council Member, I am committed to reviewing the City's zoning and its impacts on all our neighborhoods, especially neighborhoods in District 5. Although any changes I propose can only impact future development and permits, I do still appreciate hearing all of your concerns about this particular project because it helps me understand what I should work on to ensure the future of Tacoma matches the needs of our residents.

The City is required to consider the permit application in accordance with the Zoning Code, Critical Areas Code and all other development codes. The project is legally "vested" in the current regulations via complete land use permits, and future moratoria or land use ordinance changes will not affect it.

The City must consider probable significant impacts in accordance with the SEPA regulations. Environmental impacts identified by the SEPA review will be assessed for mitigation or project modification to meet requirements.

- The proposal is an allowed use in the M-2 Heavy Industrial District, as set forth in TMC 13.06.060. The intended use is light industrial or warehousing.
- The site is also located in the South Tacoma Manufacturing/Industrial Overlay District, per TMC 13.06.070.B, and the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District, per TMC 13.06.070.D. Uses prohibited in either of those overlays will not be allowed on this site.
- A critical area development permit is required because the development proposes to impact portions of the stream buffer on the site, while restoring the remaining critical area and creating additional new wetland area. All work is reviewed in compliance with TMC 13.11, Critical Areas.
- No permit decisions have been made regarding the proposal. As part of public noticing, the City has made a preliminary determination that a SEPA Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance

(MDNS) is probable, and that a full environmental impact statement will not be required, subject to review and commenting by the public and agencies with expertise.

- For land use permits, the decision is made administratively by the Director of Planning and Development Services, per TMC 13.05 Land Use Permits and Procedures. The decision is not made by the City Council or the Planning Commission.
- Appeals to the decision can be filed with the City of Tacoma Hearing Examiner.
- Following the critical area permitting and SEPA environmental review, the applicant will be required to apply for development permits including site development, work order (work in the right-of-way), and building.

The City administered a lengthy public comment process to allow for community voices to be heard and considered during the review of this permit application. A notice of decision will be sent to all original notice recipients and anyone who commented on the proposal once review is complete.

Conclusion

If you've read this far, thank you so much! As always, please share this newsletter with others in District 5, and encourage them to subscribe. And please try to attend our local Safe Streets and Neighborhood Council group meetings, as I do my best to regularly attend those as well to hear from you!

[South Tacoma Neighborhood Council](#)

[South End Neighborhood Council](#)

[Eastside Neighborhood Advisory Council of Tacoma \(ENACT\)](#)

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