



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Mayor Victoria Woodards and Chief Policy Analyst Bucoda Warren
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution expressing support for the passage of Proposition No. 1 submitted by the City of Tacoma on the April 22, 2025, Special Election ballot, to fund street repair, maintenance, and safety improvements for streets, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements; and encouraging residents to vote "Approved" on Proposition No. 1 on the April 22, 2025, Special Election ballot. - Requested for March 4, 2025.
DATE: February 12, 2025

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A Resolution expressing support for the passage of Proposition No. 1 submitted by the City of Tacoma on the April 22, 2025, Special Election ballot, to fund street repair, maintenance, and safety improvements for streets, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements; and encouraging residents to vote "Approved" on Proposition No. 1 on the April 22, 2025, Special Election ballot. - Requested for March 4, 2025.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Victoria Woodards, Council Members Walker and Hines

BACKGROUND:

At its meeting of December 17, 2024, the Tacoma City Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 41588 authorizing the submission to voters, at an election to be held on April 22, 2025, of a proposition to continue an increased funding level for street repair, maintenance, and safety improvements for streets, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, by levying an additional 2% utility tax on natural gas, electric, and phone utilities effective 2026; increasing the regular property tax levy by \$0.25/\$1,000 of assessed value for a maximum levy rate of \$1.95/\$1,000 of assessed value for collection in 2026; authorizing the 2026 levy amount as the basis to calculate future levies per RCW 84.55. Qualifying seniors and others are exempt per RCW 84.36.381.

In 2015, Tacoma voters passed Propositions No. 3 and A, which set the foundation for the Tacoma Streets Initiative. Proposition No. 3 increased taxes by 1.5% on natural gas, electric, phone companies and property taxes by \$0.20/\$1,000 of assessed value. Proposition A raised the sales tax by one-tenth of one percent. Over the past decade, this initiative has allowed the Public Works Department to complete over \$397 million in critical infrastructure improvements in the City's rights-of-way. As the current funding nears expiration in December 2025, the City Council submitted Tacoma Streets Initiative II to the Auditor's Office for inclusion on the April 2025 ballot.

Tacoma Streets Initiative II is expected to raise \$375 million for street repair, maintenance, and safety improvements for Tacoma streets, including pedestrian and bicycle improvements through an increase in property tax and utility tax. With grant match and additional partnerships, staff anticipates bringing in over \$900 million dollars over the first 15 years. The City will be able to improve 1,100-1,400 arterial lane miles, 250-300 sidewalk miles, 130-170 miles of bike infrastructure, maintain 5,200-6,200 residential blocks, to reduce wear and tear on residents' vehicles and keep freight, cars, and transit moving efficiently over a 15-year performance period, prioritizing accessibility, pedestrian safety, and multimodal connectivity.

RCW 42.17A.555, according to the state Public Disclosure Commission, allows elected boards, councils and commissions to "express a collective decision, or to actually vote upon a motion, proposal, resolution, order, or



ordinance, or to support or oppose a ballot proposition so long as (a) any required notice of the meeting includes the title and number of the ballot proposition, and (b) members of the legislative body, members of the board, council, or commission of the special purpose district, or members of the public are afforded an approximately equal opportunity for the expression of an opposing view.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

Public Works staff have been providing information on the Streets Initiative and plans for Proposition No. 1 through the City webpage and printed and digital materials. Staff have also been meeting regularly with community organizations, Neighborhood Councils, Business Districts, and partners as requested.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

Investments will be made in historically underserved neighborhoods guided by the Tacoma Equity Index through capital projects and residential street improvements. Safety improvements and enhancements will also align with other plans like the City's Vision Zero plan.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the number of Tacoma households that have livable wage jobs within proximity to the city.

Increase the number of infrastructure projects and improvements that support existing and new business developments.

Education: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Demonstrate community support for education by increasing support for school levies and bonds; volunteering and mentoring youth.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s)?

This funding will support safety upgrades and infrastructure improvements necessary to ensure our roads continue to support the City's development. This legislation indicates support for the Proposition and will improve civic engagement by bringing more public support in front of the residents and giving them more reason to trust in the City. Additionally, the project itself creates more jobs close to home and ensures people view the City's Public Works Projects favorably. Additionally, investments will reduce congestion across Tacoma leading to saved time and fewer emissions; Expand safe networks for all, especially on Neighborhood Greenways, whether they walk, bike, use a wheelchair, take transit, or drive; and support workforce development, union jobs, and training focusing on sustainable career pathways for Tacoma and Pierce County.



ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
1.Do not pass resolution	No changes to support levels and visibility of Proposition No. 1.	Less visibility and support for Proposition No. 1, may cause it not to pass, which could delay projects and increased road wear on vehicles and decreased safety enhancements.
2.Pass resolution	Council would endorse voter support of Proposition No. 1, increasing visibility and support	

EVALUATIONS AND FOLLOW UP:

Passage of Proposition No. 1 would indicate success of this resolution. If the Proposition passes, then City staff will begin implementation of projects. Regular updates would be provided to the City Council.

SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend the adoption of this resolution to express support for the City of Tacoma Proposition No. 1 on the April 22, 2025, Special Election ballot.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the City of Tacoma in passing this resolution. If the Proposition passes, then the city will be authorized to collect increased utility taxes and increased property taxes beginning in 2026 for the implementation of Proposition No. 1. If the Proposition fails, staff may need to come to Council with new proposals for maintaining Tacoma’s street network.

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

N/A

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?

N/A

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?

No