

# TACOMAWEEKLY

24 YEARS OF SERVICE BECAUSE COMMUNITY MATTERS

Published in the **Tacoma Weekly** Thursday, 24 October 2013

## OUR VIEW: AT THE BALLOT BOX: TACOMA WEEKLY ENDORSES CANDIDATES, SAYS NO ON PROP 1

Connie Bacon is a proven leader who knows what it takes to boost Tacoma's standing as an international shipping hub. Her dedication to shipping issues and her knowledge of the tasks at hand make her a solid choice for keeping her seat on the Port of Tacoma Commission. Her challenger, Eric Holdeman, has strong ideas that deserve discussion however, but in this case, proven success wins out.

In Tacoma's less-than-exciting City Council races where Mayor Marilyn Strickland and Council member Marty Campbell are running unopposed, the choice is clear in at least one of the challenged races. Victoria Woodards is a much better candidate than her "challenger," long-time gadfly and activist-turned-convict Robert "the Traveler" Hill. His candidacy is a joke that shouldn't receive support let alone serious consideration.

The only serious race to consider on the City Council can be found in District 2 and District 5. District 2 has a choice between appointed incumbent Robert Thoms and long-time community activist and small business advocate Patricia Lecy-Davis, who made the short list for the appointed position when Council member Jake Fey vacated the seat following his election to the State House of Representatives. Both candidates have strong leadership qualities and would be assets to the council for different reasons. Thoms brings process and perspective. Lecy-Davis brings energy and "street cred" for doing things that need doing. With the makeup of the current council, we're pulling for Lecy-Davis to edge out Thoms in the comparison.

In South Tacoma's District 5, Joe Lonergan gets our nod over challenger Olgy Diaz. Lonergan is a true champion of his district, which is often overlooked in citywide issues.

Proposition 1 is tough to call. Tacoma needs to get its roads fixed. No one disputes that. But charging a utility tax, mostly on the backs of people outside the city and industrial businesses, doesn't seem to be the best method.

Streets have long been ignored in the city and it would be prudent for the city's Transportation Improvement District and the Sustainability Task Force to run their course and develop recommendations about such issues before money flows into a street fund to the tune of about \$10 million a year. That being said, bonds don't make much sense either. Neither does an additional car tab fee or a property tax hike. There are no good, immediate answers to Tacoma's long neglected roads, including Proposition 1. That might change after the city develops long-term funding methods and budget projects.

Tacomans are still a bit leery of governments gathering money for one thing and spending it on others. While the city has made great strides to improving its credibility with voters, it isn't there yet.

The city committee processes should run their course, even after two years of researching road-repair options to not only lay all the options out but also build on the new foundation of trust that, quite frankly, still needs to cure before city leaders ask for more trust with tax dollars. On the regional level, surrounding cities recognize Tacoma has had road. But the city's decades of neglect should not be solved at the expense of Tacoma's neighbors. Tacoma's troubles should be solved by Tacomans.