



Trolley Times

North Slope Historic District Inc. Feb. 2021
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It's Easy to Join Tacoma's Urban Forestry Program

By Deborah Cade

After I lost the trees in my planting strip to a high windstorm, I had a hard time deciding what to plant in their place. In spring, I wanted to add to the flowering plum trees along North M Street. But in fall, I loved the fall colors and wanted to plant maples. I got the best of spring and fall with flowering cherry trees, with *pink blooms in the spring and red leaves in the fall*. Better yet, I was able to benefit from a City of Tacoma program that provides a financial contribution toward the cost of new trees.



Think pink for this flowering cherry tree.

The City of Tacoma's Urban Forestry Program plans to increase the City's tree canopy by up to 30 percent by 2030. In order to encourage homeowners to participate in achieving this, the plan includes the **City's Tree Coupon program**, which provides a coupon for **\$30 off each tree, for up to three trees** purchased at participating local nurseries.

The coupons can be requested on the program's website, cityoftacoma.org/treecoupon. The last day to redeem the coupons this year is March 31, 2021, and they are limited to one per household. The Tree Coupon website lists the local nurseries that participate in this program.

Trees provide benefits in addition to improving the appearance of neighborhoods. By shading homes, they lessen the need for cooling and reduce energy use. By taking up stormwater, they reduce the load on the stormwater system. To provide these benefits, the trees purchased with the tree coupons must be those that will be at least 15 feet tall at maturity. They can be planted either on the planting strip or elsewhere on a property.

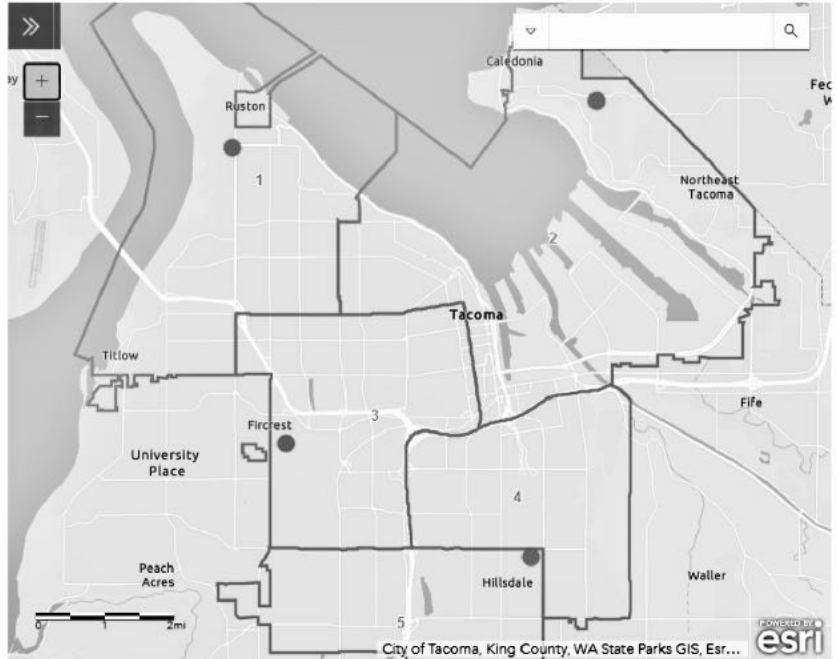
TACOMA CHANGES GLASS PICKUP FOR RECYCLING

By Preston Peck, City of Tacoma, Environmental Services

Tacoma has switched to **glass drop-off** locations. Multiple drop-off locations opened on January 4th throughout the city, which can be seen on the map. The new glass containers are purple, and the City worked with local artists to design Tacoma-centric artwork that is wrapped on the containers.

This transition to a drop-off collection methodology means that glass will no longer be picked up curbside.

Switching to a drop off system has multiple advantages including cost efficiency, environmental benefit, and safety. Switching from curbside glass collection methodology to a drop-off system will save the City about \$500,000, annually.



Currently, there is about a 25% setout rate for curbside glass collection, which means that **only about 25% of customers, on a given route, on a given day, set out their curbside glass collection bin.** This is quite inefficient for our operations and collections to send out multiple glass collections trucks around Tacoma every day.

Switching to drop off locations also will increase safety. Unlike for mixed recycling, glass collections staff must manually pickup and dump every glass bin into the truck. This repetitive motion can increase the risk of on the job injuries to the staff, and has indeed been a top source of injury for staff.

In terms of environmental benefits, the new drop-off location system is comparable to the residential curbside system, with some additional benefits. The curbside glass recycling program requires three to four trucks to collect glass, but under this new model, glass will be hauled by one truck per day to Seattle. Residents are encouraged to drop off glass at the locations while they are doing other errands, to reduce carbon emissions.

Some locations will also collect other items, such as cardboard and scrap metal. All sites will collect household batteries as well. For any other questions check **TacomaRecycles.org** or call (253) 502-2100 for a complete listing of current locations, hours, and what is collected at each site.

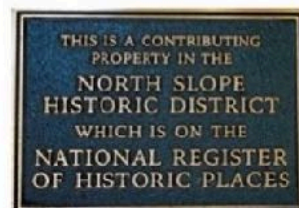
Preston Peck
City of Tacoma, Environmental Services Phone: (253) 593-7707
Email: ppeck@cityoftacoma.org

FOR SALE NSHD BRONZE PLAQUE

Want a Plaque for Your House?

If you would like a bronze plaque to mark your house as part of the NSHD National Register of Historic Places, the NSHD, Inc. Board has them for sale. Plaques are 5 x 7 and cost \$80 each.

253-779-0160 or klmay@centurylink.net



BRIDGING THE GULCHES

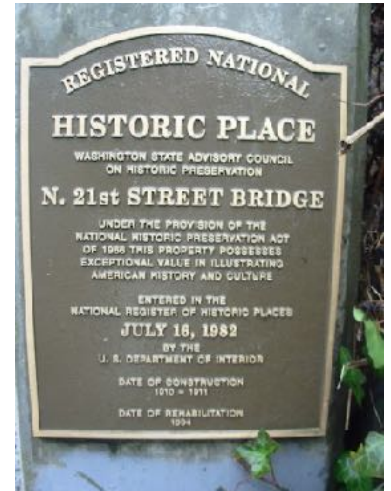
Taken from Section 8 of Buckley's Addition National Register Nomination

By 1888, it was clear to the Tacoma land speculator Allen C. Mason, that bridges were needed over the gulches that bisected the land west of downtown in several key places. Specifically, Mr. Mason wanted bridges over Buckley's Gulch, where North 21st St. dead-ended, as well as at Yakima St. Garfield Gulch on Tacoma Avenue, at about North 6th St. was also a problem. Mason needed to open up routes to the west of the downtown area so buyers could be enticed to purchase his large land holdings west of downtown. Roads were being graded and improved, but the large gulches were an obstacle to development. And, the city was slow to act.

The gulch didn't help development in Buckley's Addition either, which was just getting started in the area between North 21st St. and North 8th, and from Steele St. to Pine. North Steele and North Prospect were accessible from North 21st, but beyond there the streets which ended at North 21st could only go west. Luckily, there were routes into Buckley's Addition from the 6th Avenue trolley line, and from the trolley line from North K St along North 12th.

But these routes did not solve Mason's need for easier ways into what is now the Proctor neighborhood, which was to the north and west of both Buckley and Garfield gulches.

So Allen Mason decided to build two wooden bridges over Buckley's Gulch at North I St. and at North Yakima St. himself - and then give them to the City. Mason figured to recoup the cost of the bridges as his lands west of the bridges sold.



He was right. His lots sold quickly when the wooden bridges were built. So did the lots in the north end of Buckley's Addition and along North 21st; the Bates Store was built, for instance, in 1904, on the corner of North 21st and Oakes St. When the trolley tracks were laid and the cars running on North I St/North 21st St, Buckley's

Addition lots and Mason's large holdings further west had easy access to routes south to downtown. People could also ride to the west, as well as to the northwest to the new Point Defiance Park, just recently donated to the City by the military in 1888. Mobility via trolley spurred residential development.

Allen Mason's wooden bridges over Buckley's Gulch was replaced by new concrete bridges in 1910; these were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

But, at Tacoma Avenue, Garfield Gulch was filled, rather than bridged.



FROM THE ARCHIVES . . .

Taken from the National Register of Historic Places, NSHD Nomination

The home at 423 North Sheridan Avenue was built in 1895 for William C. Davie. He was born in Wisconsin and came to Tacoma in 1893.

Before arriving in Tacoma, Davie worked as a railroad contractor. While the railroad was under construction to the Puget Sound, he was the purchasing agent for the Northern Pacific Railroad, covering the Dakotas and Montana.

Once in Tacoma, Davie began working for the Tacoma Fir Door Co., and then later operated the Chehalis River Lumber Co. He was considered one of the pioneer lumbermen of Tacoma.

After his retirement in 1895 Davie took up residence in Steilacoom.

Interestingly, the house built for Davis was the first residential job that the later-prominent Tacoma architect A. J. Russell received when he opened up his practice here in Tacoma. Russell estimated that the home would cost \$1600 to build.



423 N Sheridan 12/2020

"A house comes with responsibilities, and a historic house comes with more responsibilities. We are only the caretakers of these houses, which were here before we owned them and which will be here after we are gone. They contain the wood from the old-growth forests, they are monuments to the skill of those who labored to build them, they represent our cultural heritage."

— Jane Powell



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LIVING IN THE NORTH SLOPE

By Kathryn Longwell, Past Landmarks Preservation Commissioner

Edited from *THE TROLLEY TIMES*, JUNE 2008

Congratulations! You own a home in a unique neighborhood. Not only is the North Slope Historic District a city, state, and national historic district, it is also one of the largest residential historic districts west of the Mississippi. You enjoy such perks as prestige and higher property values as a result of residing in the NSHD.

With perks, however, come some responsibilities. *You are a steward of an historic structure.* The NSHD wouldn't be an historic district if homeowners were replacing original siding with aluminum, original windows with the wrong style, or tearing off original porches to add decks. These are a few examples of why we have a design review process through the Landmarks Commission. The focus is on preserving our existing historic homes.

As a homeowner in a historic district, you give up some of your individual rights for the collective good of the community.

Creation of the NSHD was a grassroots effort by the residents who live here, not something imposed upon us by the City of Tacoma. Our residents fought long and hard, and put in countless hours of documenting, testifying, meeting, and working the political process to get our historic status and historic zoning, too.

It has been my experience as a Landmarks commissioner that retroactive applications are always a result of neighbors reporting violations. Thus, it seems that most of us would like to preserve the original historic fabric of our homes even though it may restrict what individuals are allowed to do to the exterior of their houses.

As homeowners who benefit from living in a historic district, let's protect the historic materials we have left in our community - the original things make it such a special place. You can start by reviewing the NSHD design guidelines available on the district's web page, on the front page: **tacomanorthslope.org**.

Lots of New Owners in NSHD

Our neighborhood has had an unusual - for us - influx of new home owners in the last five years. Isaac Schaeffer, of OneRealtyGroupTurnkey, looked up the number of sales from the Multiple Listing Service, and the number is **234, nearly 40 just in 2020.**

If you live near one of these new people, please make them welcome to the neighborhood! If you *are* a new neighbor, welcome to you, too. We need informed owners who can participate in neighborhood activities and attend our quarterly meetings - when we can have meetings again

So, we have **new owners - or old ones**, who *might* need to learn about the history of the neighborhood, and about the Historic District's guidelines for doing exterior work. Here are several places to start:

- Historic Preservation Office:
Lauren Hoogkamer,
(253) 591-5254 lhoogkamer@ci.tacoma.wa.us
- NSHD, Inc.'s website: tacomanorthslope.org
- NSHD, Inc.'s website question link:
news@tacomanorthslope.org
- Any NSHD, Inc. Board Member, phone numbers in NSHD, Inc.'s Board of Directors box in the newsletter.

Julie Turner, Editor

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TacomaNorthSlope.org the NSHD web page

TROLLEY TIMES. The NSHD newsletter, published Feb., May, Aug., and Nov.

The current edition can always be found at:

<https://goo.gl/5sdbHq>

North Slope NEWS. Sign up on NSHD web page, and have items of general NSHD news, events, and the on-line *Trolley Times* sent to you.

Send your questions, comments and remarks to **news@TacomaNorthSlope.org**

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UNIT BLOCKS ARE FUN FOR KIDS

Jay Turner

A unit block is a wooden toy block for children. Not just any block, but a wooden block of fixed size with mathematical properties that requires precision manufacturing. These standardized unit blocks, often called kindergarten blocks or building blocks, are common in the better preschools and kindergartens. You may have seen them in the Immanuel Church basement where we have our meetings.



A unit block is 5.5" long, 2.75" wide, and 1.375" thick, a very precise 1:2:4 ratio. Larger pieces include the double at 11" and quadruple at 22" thus expanding the ratio. Smaller sizes are 1/2 unit blocks making squares and columns.

Caroline Pratt was an educator in New York City in the early 1900s. She had an educational philosophy that was derived from direct observation of children, that emphasized learning through play, self-directed planning and problem-solving. Wooden blocks became a part of her program and Pratt is credited with designing the first set of unit blocks in 1943.

Community Playthings got its start by building unit blocks for Pratt's school. They are still making blocks and other wooden products 75 years later. They decided to build a quality product capable of



Read more about unit blocks and what to buy.

<https://tinyurl.com/w96wu2v>

withstanding the demands of group play and to sell directly to teachers and schools. Community Playthings are still doing business by direct mail service.

Caroline Pratt noted the stages of development with unit blocks.

- Stage 1: Blocks are carried by younger children, but not used for construction.
- Stage 2: Building begins with children mostly making rows with similarly shaped and sized blocks on the floor or attempting to stack the blocks vertically.
- Stage 3: Children begin making bridges using two blocks to support a third, which reflects understanding of spatial relationships.
- Stage 4: Children learn to place blocks to make enclosures of different sizes and shapes.
- Stage 5: More imaginative structures are built often using their understanding of symmetry.
- Stage 6: The naming of structures introduces dramatic play and their block play becomes artistic.
- Stage 7: Children engage in symbolic play as blocks are used to represent things they know, such as cars, airplanes, houses, and cities, as well as to stimulate dramatic play activities.



We Need TROLLEY Sponsors!

The NSHD's newsletter, *The Trolley Times*, is a quarterly publication, funded entirely by nearby companies, but we are currently lacking two sponsors. In return for a year's **sponsorship of \$220**, the company may have space for a 1/4-page ad for their business. The ad cost can be deducted from their taxes, since NSHD, Inc. is a 501-C-3 organization. We need two more sponsors to fully fund the newsletter.

Do any of you who know of a company that might like to advertise quarterly to about 900 readers? If you do, please ccontact the editor, telling of their interest in sponsorship. We have also had, in recent months, several instances of individual donations to the newsletter account, which are greatly appreciated. In fact, individual residents of NSHD are welcome as yearly sponsors, too; they can also deduct the donation from their taxes.

Julie Turner, Editor 253-383-2329 news@tacomanorthslope.org

Remember to Vote for Community Center at Cushman Station

The Covid-19 virus has slowed the City's public workshop schedule for taking input on the use of the old Tacoma Power and Electric Co. buildings at North 21st, between Adams and Washington Streets.

To keep up with developments in deciding the use of these two buildings, and to speak up for them to becoming of public use as a Community Center, don't forget to check in with the North End Neighborhood Council website:

cushmancommons.org Click the sign-up button at the bottom of the right side of the page for updates.

There is currently no place to write in support of using the Cushman Center for public gatherings. So, keep clicking the button for updates! When asked to comment, please write in to use for a North End Community Center, to be called "Cushman Commons."

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