

APPLICATION PACKET

Proposed Amendments

to the Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Use Regulatory Code

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

(2023 Annual Amendment)

1. **Review of Background** – Review the Background Information provided. Determine how to compile your application and whether you are required to pay the application fee.
2. **Pre-App Meeting** – A pre-application meeting with the Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) staff before submitting an application is not required, but strongly advised.
3. **Application Form/Fee** – Complete the application form and the required questionnaire on the last two pages. Attach supporting information, if any. If you are required to pay the application fee, please make the check or money order payable to the “City Treasurer”, and make a note on the check: “2023 Amendment Application Fee.”
4. **Submittal** – Please submit the completed packet to PDS via e-mail (preferred), US mail or delivery, as shown below. The application fee, however, must be mailed or delivered.

- **Deadline:** **Friday, April 1, 2022, 5:00 p.m.**
- **E-mail (preferred):** planning@cityoftacoma.org
- **US Mail or Delivery (acceptable for application form but required for application fee):**

Planning Commission
2023 Amendment Application
Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402

For More Information:

- **Contact Staff:** Lihuang Wung, Senior Planner
Planning and Development Services Department
E-mail: lwung@cityoftacoma.org or call: (253) 591-5682
- **Visit Website:** [Plan and Code Amendments](#)

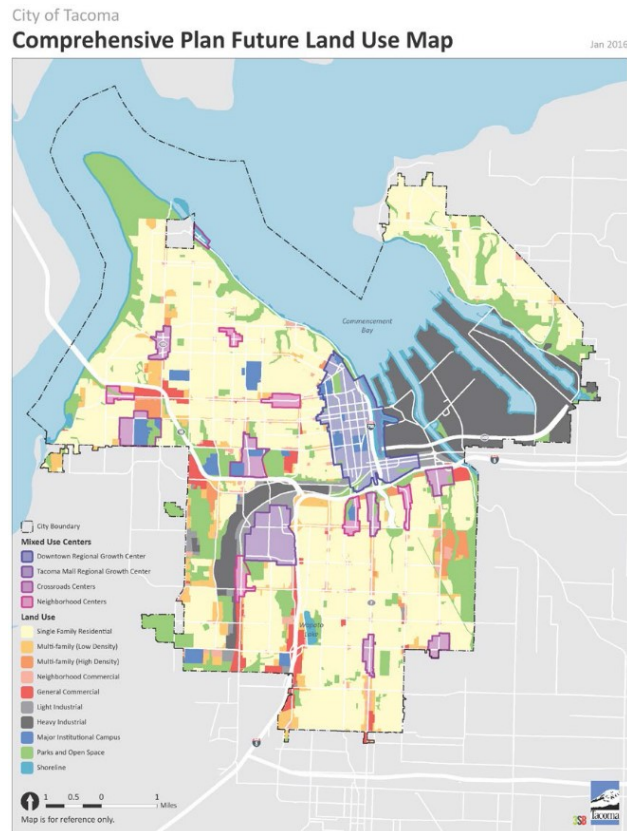


BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Part A – Plan and Code Amendments

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan, *One Tacoma*, guides our community's development over the long term, addresses the entire community and describes how the community's vision for the future is to be achieved. In short, it's a blueprint for the future character of the city. It guides decisions on land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, parks, and the environment. It also sets standards for roads and other infrastructure, identifies how they'll be paid for, and establishes the basis for zoning and development regulations. The plan takes a long-range perspective on topics that address the physical, social, and economic health of the City. Plan guidance is intentionally general, providing broad policy direction. Policy guidance established in the plan will be translated into action through specific implementation programs or regulatory actions developed by the City to fulfill plan direction. A plan is also a living document, adaptable to evolving conditions, and offering a framework for the consideration of policy changes. The *One Tacoma* Plan is available for public review at www.cityoftacoma.org/OneTacoma.



What is the Land Use Regulatory Code?

The Land Use Regulatory Code, or Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, is one of the City's key tools for implementing the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. It governs what can be built, where it can be built, how it can be built, and what processes must be followed to obtain approval to build. It includes regulations on zoning, subdivisions, shorelines, environment, critical areas and historic preservation. For example, the City's zoning regulations specify the areas (zones) in which residential, commercial or industrial uses may take place. In each of these zones, development standards regulate such things as building setbacks, height limits, parking and landscaping. The Tacoma Municipal Code is available for public review at www.cityoftacoma.org/MuniCode.

What are Plan and Code Amendments?

A **plan amendment** is a process through which the City considers changes, additions, and updates to the [One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan](#). A **code amendment** is a process through which the City considers changes, additions, and updates to the [Land Use Regulatory Code](#). The differences between plan and code amendments can be illustrated in the table below:

	Plan Amendment	Code Amendment
Subject Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Use Regulatory Code
Timeline and Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be <u>part of an annual amendment cycle</u>• Generally, City-initiate amendments are adopted in odd years, and privately initiated amendments are adopted in even years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be applied and processed <u>anytime</u>

What is the Purpose of the Amendments?

Periodic review and evaluation are important in order to ensure that the *One Tacoma Plan* and the implementing regulations maintain their effectiveness. The intent of the amendment process is to review all of these changes concurrently, where appropriate, so that the cumulative effects can be considered. According to the State Growth Management Act, local comprehensive plans cannot be amended more than once a year. The City is currently utilizing a two-year cycle for Comprehensive Plan amendments, with City-initiated amendments generally processed in odd-year adoption cycles and private-initiated amendments processed in even-year adoption cycles.

What are the Types of Proposed Amendments?

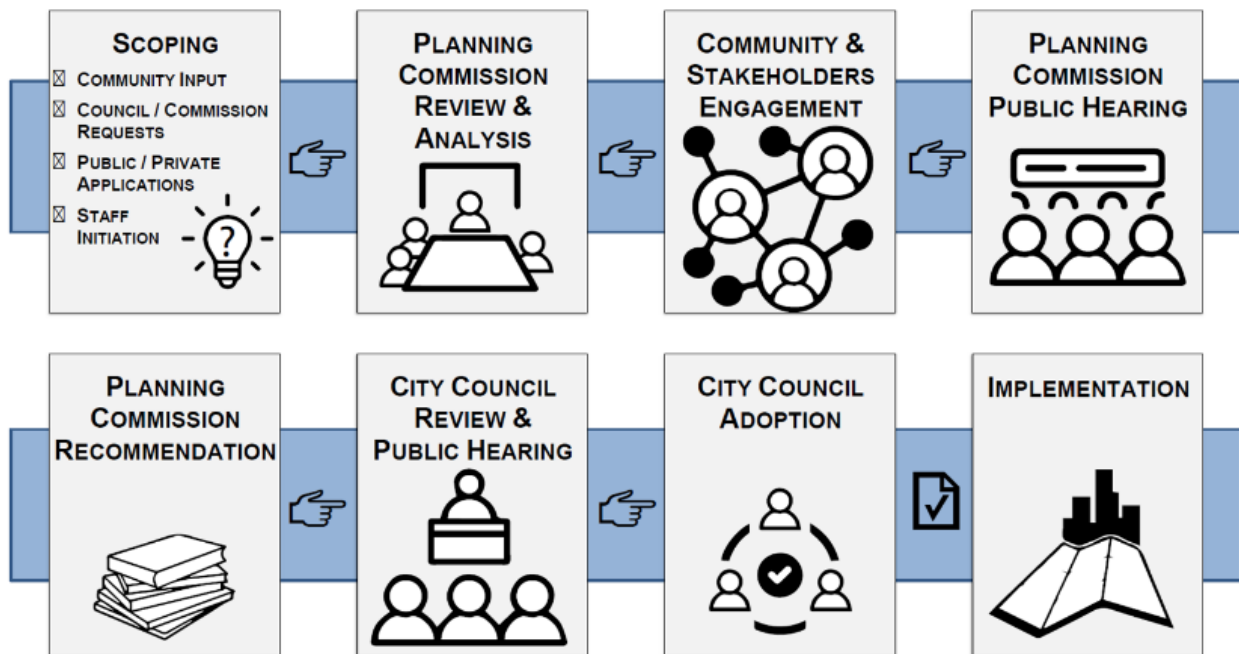
There are five types of proposed amendments:

- **Comprehensive Plan Text Change** – A change or revision of the goals, policies, action strategies, standards, or narrative text of the *One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan*.
- **Regulatory Code Text Change** – A change or revision of development regulations or regulatory procedures placed on or involving development or land use activities within the City, including but not limited to zoning, subdivision, shoreline, environment, and critical areas.
- **Land Use Designation Change** – A legislative action to change the land use designation classification(s) in order to implement and/or maintain the consistency of the *One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan*.
- **Area-wide Zoning Reclassification (or “Rezone”)** – A legislative action to change the zoning classification(s) on an area-wide basis in order to implement and/or maintain the consistency of the Comprehensive Plan. Area-wide zoning reclassifications, unlike site-specific zoning reclassifications, are generally of area-wide significance, usually involving many separate properties under various ownerships.

- **Interim Zoning or Moratorium** – Interim zoning is an immediate change in existing zoning classifications or regulations where new zoning classifications or regulations are temporarily imposed. A moratorium is the suspension of accepting or processing new applications for building, zoning, subdivision, or other types of development in order to preclude development from occurring for a specified period of time, usually while new or revised regulations are being considered.

What is the Amendment Process and Timeline?

Pursuant to the [Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.02.070](#), amendment applications will go through the process outlined below:



- **Application Submittal** –
 - Plan amendment applications must be submitted by the deadline of the appropriate annual amendment cycle, generally April 1st of the year prior to the year of adoption.
 - Code amendment applications can be submitted anytime, and processed depending on staff and Planning Commission capacity.
- **Assessment** – Planning Commission conducts assessment of applications and determine whether the applications will be accepted and moved forward for technical analysis within:
 - 120 days of the close of the application period for plan amendments, or
 - 120 days of receiving an application for code amendments.

- **Analysis and Outreach** – Staff and Planning Commission analyze the applications for their consistency with existing plans and laws, potential benefits and impacts, and whether there are feasible alternatives. Staff also solicit comments, feedback and suggestion from stakeholders, interested entities, and the community.
- **Public Hearing** – Planning Commission conducts a public hearing.
- **Recommendation** – Planning Commission makes recommendations to the City Council.
- **Council Review** – The City Council’s Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee and/or other standing committees review the proposed amendments.
- **Council Review** – City Council conducts a study session and a public hearing.
- **Adoption** – City Council considers 1st and final readings of ordinance(s) to adopt the proposed amendments.
- **Implementation** – Amendments become effective.

Timeline for 2023 Annual Amendment (subject to change)	
Date	Actions
April 1, 2022	Applications due
July 30, 2022	Planning Commission completes initial assessment of applications
July 2022 – March 2023	Planning Commission and Staff conduct analysis of applications
March 2023	Planning Commission public hearing
April 2023	Planning Commission recommendations
May 2023	City Council public hearing
June 2023	City Council adoption

What are the Criteria for Reviewing Proposed Amendments?

Any application for proposed amendments must pass through two stages of review before considered by the City Council for adoption, i.e., Assessment and Analysis.

A. Assessment:

Staff will review the application and provide the Planning Commission with an Assessment Report that includes, at a minimum (per TMC 13.02.070.E.2):

- Whether the amendment request is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review, or quasi-judicial and not properly subject to Commission review;

- (b) Whether there have been recent studies of the same area or issue, which may be cause for the Commission to decline further review, or if there are active or planned projects that the amendment request can be incorporated into;
- (c) A preliminary staff review of the application submittal;
- (d) Identification of other amendment options the Planning Commission could consider in addition to the amendment as proposed by the applicant; and
- (e) Whether the amount of analysis necessary is reasonably manageable given the workloads and resources of the Department and the Commission, or if a large-scale study is required, the amendment request may be scaled down, studied in phases, delayed until a future amendment cycle, or declined.

The Planning Commission will review the Assessment Report and make its decision as to (per TMC 13.02.070.E.3):

- (a) whether or not the application is complete, and if not, what information is needed to make it complete;
- (b) whether or not the scope of the application should be modified, and if so, what alternatives should be considered; and
- (c) whether or not the application will be considered, and if so, in which amendment cycle.

B. Analysis:

After Assessment, each application receiving an affirmative determination from the Planning Commission to move forward will be analyzed by staff. Staff will provide the Commission a staff analysis report, which will include, as appropriate (Per TMC 13.02.070.F.2):

- A staff analysis of the application in accordance with the elements described in 13.02.070.E;
- An analysis of the consistency of the proposed amendment with State, regional and local planning mandates and guidelines;
- An analysis of the amendment options identified in the assessment report; and an assessment of the anticipated impacts of the proposal, including, but not limited to:
- Economic impacts, noise, odor, shading, light and glare impacts, aesthetic impacts, historic impacts, visual impacts, and impacts to environmental health, equity and quality.

Upon completion of the review of staff analysis and public comment received through the public hearing process, the Planning Commission will make a determination as to whether the proposed amendments are consistent with the following criteria (per TMC 13.02.070.H.1):

- (a) Whether the proposed amendment will benefit the City as a whole, will not adversely affect the City's public facilities and services, and bears a reasonable relationship to the public health, safety, and welfare; and
- (b) Whether the proposed amendment conforms to applicable provisions of State statutes, case law, regional policies, and the Comprehensive Plan.

Part B – Submitting Applications

Who May Propose an Amendment?

A proposed amendment may be submitted by any private individual, organization, corporation, partnership, or entity of any kind including any member(s) of the Tacoma City Council or the Tacoma Planning Commission or governmental Commission or Committee, the City Manager, any neighborhood or community council or other neighborhood or special purpose group, department or office, agency, or official of the City of Tacoma, or any other general or special purpose government.

Is There an Application Fee? Is it refundable? Who may be exempted?

Yes, there is an application fee of \$1,400, as authorized by the City Council, per Resolution No. 38588, December 18, 2012. It is intended to help offset part of the cost for processing and analyzing the application. It is non-refundable. The fee does not apply to (1) applications submitted by City of Tacoma general government departments, but does apply to utilities; (2) submissions by Neighborhood Councils or recognized Business Districts if formal written approval is submitted to the City by the duly elected board of Directors; or (3) community groups that are involved in a planning study with the Planning and Development Services Department.

What Should Be Considered When Proposing an Amendment?

- **Is the request consistent with, or will it achieve consistency with, the Comprehensive Plan?**
All proposed amendments must address consistency with the Comprehensive Plan to be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.
- **Why is the proposed amendment needed at this time?**
Applications must clearly articulate that the amendment is needed and warranted and meets the amendment criteria as established in the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.02.070.F. Essentially, proposed amendments should conform to applicable legislative and policy requirements and should not adversely affect the public health, welfare and safety of Tacoma's citizens.
- **Has this issue or area been addressed by the Planning Commission recently?**
If recent review of the area or subject has taken place, the request could be denied. The City generally avoids continual re-examination of the same issue; however, the Planning Commission retains the discretion to revisit any issue or area.
- **Would the request require a full-scale analysis for the Planning Commission?**
If a large-scale study is needed, the Planning Commission may delay the request to a subsequent amendment cycle, due to, among other considerations, workloads, the number of applications submitted, staffing levels, and budgeted resources.

Is Technical Assistance Available for Prospective Applicants?

Pre-application meetings are strongly recommended and can be scheduled with the Planning Services Division staff before submitting an application. Staff is also available to answer questions after you have filed an application. All modifications to your application should be submitted by the application deadline. Additionally, the following resources are available to help you assemble a complete application:

- **One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan** – Review Comprehensive Plan policies and relevant information at: www.cityoftacoma.org/OneTacoma
- **Land Use Regulatory Code** – Review Title 13 Land Use Regulatory Code of the Tacoma Municipal Code at: www.cityoftacoma.org/municode
- **Maps** – Information related to zoning, land use designation, or current land uses, parcel and ownership data can be viewed on interactive maps at: <http://tacomapermits.org/dart-map> and www.cityoftacoma.org/maps

Are Applicants Required to Conduct Community Outreach?

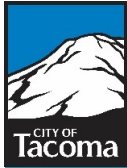
Applicants are strongly encouraged to solicit feedback from as many interested/concerned parties as possible prior to submitting an application. Staff can provide contact information for specific community groups who may be interested in or concerned with your application (e.g., neighborhood councils, business districts and associations, and environmental groups). Encouraged outreach efforts may include but are not limited to:

- Contacting affected and abutting property owners, business owners, and/or renters;
- Speaking with representatives of affected and abutting neighborhood councils, neighborhood business district associations, and/or pertinent organizations;
- Attending and requesting to discuss your proposal at community meetings and functions held by neighborhood councils, neighborhood business districts, and/or local organizations; and
- Convening and facilitating your own community meetings.

Should Applicants Attend Planning Commission Meetings?

The Planning Commission meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 1st floor, Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street. If the meetings are conducted virtually, the Zoom link is <https://www.zoom.us/j/81358095104> (or Dial-in: +1 253 215 8782), with the ID: 813 5809 5104. All meetings are open to the public and applicants may attend. The agenda (posted on the website of [Planning Commission Agendas](#)) usually includes a “Public Comments” segment for the Commission to receive comments on any discussion item on the agenda. Applicants are welcome, but not required, to use this opportunity to address the Commission if their applications are on the agenda. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend and testify at all public hearings during the amendment process.

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APPLICATION

For Office Use Only	Application No.:	
	Date Received:	
	Application Fee: <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,400	
Type(s) of Amendment (Check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Plan Text Change <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use Designation Change <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Zoning or Moratorium <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory Code Text Change <input type="checkbox"/> Area-wide Rezone	
Summary of Proposed Amendment (Limit to 120 words)		
Applicant	Name	
	Affiliation / Title	
	Address City, State, Zip Code	
	E-mail	
	Phone	
Co-Applicant, or Additional Contact (If applicable)	Name	
	Affiliation / Title	
	Address City, State, Zip Code	
	E-mail	
	Phone	
	Relationship to Applicant	
<p>I hereby state that I am the applicant listed above and the foregoing statements and answers made, and all the information and evidence submitted are, in all respects and to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and complete. I understand that submitting this application does not result in automatic acceptance of this application or guarantee its final approval.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>		



Required Questionnaire

The applicant is responsible for providing complete and accurate information in response to the following questions. You may type in the space under each question or provide your answers in text and/or graphic form on separate sheets of paper and reference the question numbers in your answer. List and label all applicable attachments that are included with the application. The Planning Commission and Department staff reserve the right to request additional information as needed. Any modification to the application must be submitted prior to the deadline. A pre-application meeting with staff before submitting an application is strongly advised.

- 1. Project Summary** – Please provide the following information:
 - (a) A description of the proposed amendment, including the amendatory language, if applicable;
 - (b) A description, along with maps if applicable, of the area of applicability and the surrounding areas, including identification of affected parcels, ownership, current land uses, site characteristics, and natural features; and
 - (c) The current and proposed Comprehensive Plan land use designation and zoning classification for the affected area.
- 2. Background** – Please provide appropriate history and context for the proposed amendment, such as prior permits or rezones, concomitant zoning agreements, enforcement actions, or changes in use.
- 3. Policy Review** – Please identify and cite any applicable policies of the Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Use Regulatory Code that provide support for the proposed amendment.
- 4. Objectives** – Please describe how the proposed amendment achieves the following objectives, where applicable:
 - (a) Address inconsistencies or errors in the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations;
 - (b) Respond to changing circumstances, such as growth and development patterns, needs and desires of the community, and the City’s capacity to provide adequate services;
 - (c) Maintain or enhance compatibility with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern; and
 - (d) Enhance the quality of the neighborhood.
- 5. Community Outreach** – Please provide a description of any community outreach that you have conducted, and the response received, with respect to the proposed amendment.
- 6. Supplemental Information** – Please provide supplemental information as you deem appropriate and necessary and/or as may be requested by the Department, which may include, but is not limited to, completion of an environmental checklist, wetland delineation study, visual analysis, or other studies.