

Code Streamlining 2012 Land Use Regulations

**Proposed Regulatory Code Amendments for Infill
Development and Reuse of Existing Buildings**

**Prepared for
Planning Commission Public Hearing
July 18, 2012**

Community and Economic Development Department
Long-Range Planning Division
747 Market Street, Room 1036
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www.cityoftacoma.org/planning

Tacoma



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

CODE STREAMLINING 2012 – PROPOSED REVISIONS TO LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Planning Commission is considering revisions to the City’s zoning regulations relative to infill development and the reuse of existing buildings. The Commission is holding a public hearing to obtain community feedback on these potential code changes.

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, July 18, 2012 5:00 pm City Council Chambers
Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 1st Floor

WHAT IS BEING CONSIDERED?

The Code changes being considered by the Planning Commission are intended to allow greater flexibility for infill development and the reuse of existing buildings. The proposed changes include increased thresholds for environmental review, expanded allowances for “live-work” and “work-live” uses in the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts, and the addition of a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts. The changes being proposed would amend three chapters of Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code: Chapter 13.06 Zoning, 13.06A Downtown, and 13.12 Environmental.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING?

The Planning Commission is seeking public comment on these potential code changes. You received this notice because you, or a group you belong to, has been identified as a potentially interested party.

WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Additional information, including the complete text of the proposed amendments, associated maps, and other background information, is available from the Community and Economic Development Department at the address to the right, and on the Planning Division website:

www.cityoftacoma.org/planning

(click on “Code Streamlining 2012”)

HOW DO I PROVIDE COMMENTS TO THE COMMISSION?

You can testify at the hearing or provide written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, July 20, 2012** using the return address on this card or by facsimile at (253) 591-2002 or via e-mail at planning@cityoftacoma.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The City has made a preliminary determination that this proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment and has issued a preliminary Determination of Environmental Non-Significance (DNS) after review of a completed environmental checklist, copies of which are available upon request. Comments on the preliminary determination must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 20, 2012. The City may reconsider or modify the preliminary determination in light of timely comments. The preliminary determination will become final on July 27, 2012, unless modified.

If you have additional questions please contact Noah Yacker at **(253) 591-5371**.



To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 591-5505. TTY or STS users please dial 711 to connect to WA Relay Services.



PLANNING COMMISSION
747 MARKET STREET – ROOM 1036
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Land Use Regulatory Code Amendment *Code Streamlining 2012*

STAFF REPORT

Applicant:	City of Tacoma, Community & Economic Development Dept.
Contact:	Ian Munce, Long-Range Planning Division
Type of Amendment:	Regulatory Code Text Changes
Current Land Use Intensity:	Various
Current Area Zoning:	Various
Size of Area:	Not Applicable
Location:	City-wide
Neighborhood Council area:	City-wide
Proposed Amendment:	Three amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code to reduce barriers in the reuse of existing commercial buildings.

General Description of the Proposed Amendment:

The proposed amendment involves amending the Land Use Regulatory Code in three parts: expanding the “home occupation” use in the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts to include Live-Work/Work-Live regulations; adopting increased thresholds for Environmental (SEPA) review; and, adding a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts outside of the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts. The proposed changes in this amendment will help to reduce barriers to infill development and reuse of existing commercial buildings by broadening the existing home-occupation standards, exempting smaller scale development from environmental review, and expanding parking exemptions for existing buildings.

A general summary of the proposed amendments is as follows:

Changes to Chapter 13.06 Zoning, including:

Section 13.06.300 – Mixed-Use Center Districts

- Adding new Live-Work and Work-Live standards

Section 13.06.510 – Off-Street Parking and Storage Areas

- Adding a parking exemption for Commercial Districts, which consist of T, C-1, C-2, HM, and PDB Districts, that will exempt a change of use in an existing building from providing additional parking (See Exhibit C-3).

Changes to Chapter 13.06A – Downtown Tacoma

Section 13.06A.050 – Additional Use Regulations

- Adding new Live-Work and Work-Live standards

Changes to Chapter 13.12 – Environmental Code

Section 13.12.801 – Flexible Thresholds for Categorical Exemptions

- Increasing the flexible thresholds in TMC 13.12.310 to align with recently passed State Legislation (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6406).

Project Background:

These amendments are being brought forward as part of an effort to make the reuse of existing buildings in the City less difficult. This is seen as a way to improve blighted areas within the City's commercial centers by reducing barriers to the reuse of buildings that might otherwise lay vacant for long periods of time. The desired result would be increased activity and vibrancy in areas that have been underutilized and neglected in the past.

Applicable Provisions of the Growth Management Act:

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that development regulations shall be consistent with and implement the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendments are designed to reduce barriers in the reuse of existing buildings while improving consistency and compatibility between the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

Applicable Policies of the City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan:

The City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan contains multiple policies in its Generalized Land Use Element, Historic Element, and Downtown Elements that support the proposed amendments.

Urban Growth Tiers

Tacoma is anticipated to continue to serve as the primary focal point for urban growth in Pierce County. Encouraging and directing this growth appropriately can be achieved through incentives, which is well-expressed in LU-GUGT-1.

LU-GUGT-1 Encourage Development

Provide incentives to encourage development and redevelopment of lands consistent with the time frames of designated growth tiers.

Mixed-Use

This section of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element expresses a desire to have a diverse mix of uses within buildings and to use different techniques, such as reducing parking, to achieve this variety.

LU-MU-3 Mixed-use Development

Encourage integration of different land uses within the same building or site in order to maximize efficient land use, foster a variety of developments, and support multimodal mobility.

LU-MU-4 Development Bonuses and Incentives

Provide a range of development incentives and bonuses in order to encourage specific types of development as well as public benefits. Incentives may include reduced parking requirements, fee waivers, height increases, density bonuses, property tax exemptions, capital improvements, and other techniques.

Downtown Tacoma Center

These policies support increased activity in the Downtown Tacoma Center, by encouraging diverse uses and the preserving historic assets.

LU-MUDTC-1 Maximize Development

Encourage maximum development of the downtown with diverse types of uses and facilities such as major financial, professional, office, cultural, retail and high density residential developments, giving the City of Tacoma a recognizable focal point that has continuous, vigorous use and affords maximum safety and convenience.

LU-MUDTC-2 Preservation of Historical, Cultural and Scenic Resources

Recognize the abundance and prominence of historical, cultural, and scenic resources within downtown and preserve these unique assets.

Mixed-Use Urban Center

The Mixed-Use Urban Center policy LU-MUUC-8 promotes an enhanced mix of complementary land uses, including employment, services and amenities for residents living near or in the center.

LU-MUUC-8 Mix of Uses

Promote an enhanced mix of complementary land uses in urban centers that promotes pedestrian activity and provides housing, employment, services, and amenities to persons living and/or working in the center or nearby.

Mixed-Use Community Centers

Mixed-Use Community Centers policy LU-MUCC-3 includes consideration of development variety relating to the desired balance between residential and commercial uses.

LU-MUCC-2 Variety of Development

Build on existing assets and strongly direct housing and other types of non-commercial development into community centers in order to diversify and achieve a balance of uses with existing commercial and institutional development.

Mixed-Use Neighborhood Centers

Policy LU-MUNC-3 provides general support for the idea of adaptive reuse and context-sensitive development that is apparently compatible. By encouraging innovative development, this policy offers support to reconsider how buildings and spaces can be best used.

LU-MUNC-3 Build on Existing Assets and Character

Build on existing assets and historic character of centers by preserving key features that establish a unique sense of place. Encourage innovative development and compatibility with surrounding residential areas through the use of buffers, public spaces, and building design.

Commercial Development Location and Activity

The policies of the Commercial Development Location and Activity section support locating residential and commercial uses near one another and also within the same building. This type of collocation serves both the commercial and residential uses.

LU-CDLA-9 Commercial Uses within Residential High-Rise

Encourage commercial development that provides convenience goods to be situated within mid and high-rise residential structures in order to serve the needs of the persons within.

LU-CDLA-13 Residential Development within Commercial Areas

Encourage the development of residential uses within and near commercial areas, particularly within mixed-use centers.

Urban Growth Areas

The policies of the Urban Growth Areas section promotes locating growth within Tacoma's Urban Growth Area as a method to discourage sprawl. This type of growth can only be realized if there are incentives in place that invite wanted growth in appropriate areas.

LU-UGA-6 Growth and Development

Promote growth and development within Tacoma's urban growth area that is consistent with the City's adopted policies, the *County-wide Planning Policies for Pierce County*, and *Vision 2040* in order to discourage sprawl, direct higher intensity and density uses into designated centers, and support enhanced public transit.

Historic Preservation

The policies of the Historic Preservation Element support the active use and reuse of existing buildings with historic significance.

Policy HP-6 Encourage active use of historic resources.

The preservation program should focus on keeping a building in active service and in accommodating compatible alterations. Change that retains the significance of a property is to be accepted and expected. Note that there are, of course, exceptions for special landmarks and historic building museums.

Action HP-6A Promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.

Regulations and incentives should encourage the re-use of historic structures so they remain part of economically vibrant neighborhoods and areas.

Strategies include:

- Promoting tax incentives, loans and grant programs to encourage the adaptive reuse of historic structures to meet community and market needs.
- Revising zoning regulations and the building code when needed to ensure that they support the re-use of historic structures.

Policy HP-11 Capitalize on and promote historic resources in community planning efforts.

Action HP-11C Use historic assets to guide development in Mixed-Use Centers.

Historic assets should help guide development and redevelopment in the City's designated Mixed-Use Centers. Preservation incentives that are currently included in zoning standards for Mixed-Use Centers should be promoted to encourage re-use of historic buildings.

Policy HP-33 Enhance regulatory incentives to encourage preservation and conservation.

Action HP-33B Promote the use of Mixed-Use Center and Downtown zoning incentives for preservation projects.

Promote zoning incentives such as height bonuses for preservation projects in Mixed-Use Centers and parking waivers for existing buildings Downtown and in Mixed-Use Centers. In conclusion, the proposed amendments are supported by the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Generalized Land Use Element.

Downtown Element

The policies of the Downtown Element promote the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings downtown. The policies also support providing a variety of housing options that will accommodate different demographics.

2.2F Historic Preservation

The collection of remaining historic buildings downtown should be championed as one of Tacoma's key strategic assets. The preservation of historic buildings should be supported through a range of City-led initiatives and public/private projects as catalysts for downtown revitalization.

Policy

2.2F.A The City should continue to enrich and expand programs to encourage adaptive re-use and preservation of, and design compatibility with, downtown historic buildings, with the intent of creating environments of distinctive character and quality.

2.3B Expand Downtown Housing Choice

Goal

Housing for all incomes is located within walking distance to employment centers and planned on existing and planned high capacity transit routes.

Policy

2.3B.A The Downtown should stress mixed-income housing solutions where affordable units are integrated with market rate units to achieve a balanced neighborhood.

2.3B.B The downtown provides a range of housing types from low to high-rise and provides housing opportunities for various groups including youth, single adults, couples, families, seniors, people with special needs, artists and others.

Amendment Criteria:

Applications for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code are subject to review based on the adoption and amendment procedures and the review criteria contained in TMC 13.02.045.G. Proposed amendments are required to be consistent with or achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and meet at least one of the ten review criteria to be considered by the Planning Commission. The following section provides a review of each of these criteria with respect to the proposal. Each of the criteria is provided, followed by staff analysis of the criterion as it relates to this proposal.

1. There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan or regulatory code provisions.

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

2. Circumstances related to the proposed amendment have significantly changed, or a lack of change in circumstances has occurred since the area or issue was last considered by the Planning Commission.

Staff Analysis: The State Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6406 which amends the state's environmental and natural resources laws, including the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The purpose of the bill is to streamline regulatory processes and to modernize the SEPA review to take into account growth management and evolving development regulations. The bill does several things, including directing Department of Ecology to revise SEPA thresholds and applicability by the end of 2012, with additional changes to occur in 2013. Among those changes, DOE is directed to raise the thresholds for SEPA review for new construction. Under Resolution Number 38499, adopted June 12, 2012, the City Council adopted the higher thresholds allowed under SEPA for the period that this amendment is under public review.

3. The needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment.

Staff Analysis: Within the City's commercial areas, there are existing buildings, or portions of existing buildings, that are vacant or underused. These are often buildings or spaces that were constructed to accommodate a specific use and the conversion or blending of uses in those spaces is often problematic due to code constraints or hurdles. The proposed amendments provide a reasonable flexibility in how those spaces can be used, while also recognizing that the reuse of existing buildings helps reach the City's sustainability goals. Furthermore, commercial areas flourish when there is activity, particularly when there is a mix of residential and commercial uses. Ultimately, the proposed amendments to home occupation and parking standards provide more opportunity in filling vacant buildings and changing uses in occupied buildings.

4. The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern.

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 5. Growth and development, as envisioned in the Plan, is occurring faster, slower, or is failing to materialize.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 6. The capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 7. Plan objectives are not being met as specified, and/or the assumptions upon which the plan is based are found to be invalid.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 8. Transportation and and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 9. For proposed amendments to land use intensity or zoning classification, substantial similarities of conditions and characteristics can be demonstrated on abutting properties that warrant a change in land use intensity or zoning classification.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 10. A question of consistency exists between the Comprehensive Plan and its elements and RCW 36.70A, the County-wide Planning Policies for Pierce County, Multi-County Planning Policies, or development regulations.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends forwarding the draft Land Use Regulatory Code clarifications and refinements for public review, comment, and further evaluation of the proposed alternatives based on public input prior to finalizing a recommendation to the City Council.

Exhibits:

- A-1. Draft Code Amendments – Live-Work and Work Live
- B-1. Draft Code Amendments – SEPA
- B-2. SEPA Resolution Number 38499
- C-1. Draft Code Amendments – Parking Exemption
- C-2. Map for Parking Exemption
- C-3. Parking Table



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DRAFT LAND USE REGULATORY CODE CHANGES June 20, 2012

Note: These amendments show all of the changes to existing Land Use regulations. The sections included are only those portions of the code that are associated with these amendments. New text is underlined and text that has been deleted is shown as ~~striketrough~~.

Chapter 13.06.300 – Mixed-Use Center Districts

13.06.300 – Land Use Requirements

Chapter 13.06A – Downtown Tacoma

13.06A.050 – Additional Use Regulations

* * *

13.06.300 – Land Use Requirements

D. Land use requirements.

3. District Use Table

Home occupation	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Home occupations shall be allowed in all X-Districts pursuant to the standards found in Section 13.06.100.E <u>and 13.06A.050</u> .
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* * *

13.06A.050 Additional Use Regulations

* * *

D. Live-Work

1. Purpose and Intent: The purpose of this Section is to assist with the revitalization of Downtown Tacoma and the City's other Mixed-Use Centers and with the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan by facilitating additional economic activity in conjunction with residential uses. This will help to reduce vacant space as well as preserve Downtown's architectural and cultural past and

encourage the development of a live/work and residential community Downtown, thus creating a more balanced ratio between housing and jobs in the region's primary employment center. This revitalization will also facilitate the development of a "24-hour city" and encourage mixed commercial and residential uses in order to improve air quality and reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled by locating residents, jobs, hotels and transit services near each other. Adding a home occupation does not trigger change of use requirements under the City's land-use codes.

a. All legal residential uses in Downtown and the other mixed-use centers may as a matter of right add a home occupation pursuant to TMC 13.06.100 E without being subject to the limitation in TMC 13.06.100 E(6) that no employees outside the members of the family residing on the premises be involved in the home occupation.

b. No additional parking spaces need be added.

c. Up to 10% of new floor area may be added for the purposes of creating living or working space without triggering a change in use.

d. Non-conforming floor area, setbacks, and height are "grandparented in", meaning that a variance is not required.

e. Mezzanine spaces may be added so long as they do not exceed one third the size of the floor below.

E. Work-Live

1. Purpose and Intent: The purpose of this Section is to assist with the revitalization of Downtown Tacoma and the City's other Mixed-Use Centers and with the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan by facilitating the conversion of older, economically distressed, or historically significant buildings to work/live units. This will help to reduce vacant space as well as preserve Downtown's architectural and cultural past and encourage the development of a work/live and residential community Downtown, thus creating a more balanced ratio between housing and jobs in the region's primary employment center. This revitalization will also facilitate the development of a "24-hour city" and encourage mixed commercial and residential uses in order to improve air quality and reduce vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled by locating residents, jobs, hotels and transit services near each other. Adding a minor residential component to an existing or historic building does not trigger change of use requirements under the City's Land-use codes.

a. A work/live unit is a combined living and work unit that includes a kitchen and a bathroom. The residential portion of the unit, including the sleeping area, kitchen, bathroom, and closet areas, occupies no more than 33 percent of the total floor area of the legal non-residential use, and the living space is not separated from the work space. It must be located with Downtown or the other mixed-use centers

b. The requirements for the "occupation-home" use permit are as follows:

- i. The residential use must be clearly incidental and subordinate to the work space use
- ii. "Occupation-home" use shall not generate nuisances to any greater extent than what is usually experienced in the surrounding zone
- iii. The Land Use Administrator may attach additional conditions to the occupation-home use permits to ensure that the criteria set forth above are met

c. For the purposes of this chapter, a historic building is defined as follows:

Any building or structure that is listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places; or designated as a City Landmark under Chapter 13.07 of the Tacoma Municipal Code; or certified as a contributing resource within a National Register or Tacoma Register historic district; or with an opinion or certification that the property is eligible to be listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places either individually or as a contributing building to a historic district by the State Historic Preservation Officer, or with an opinion from the Tacoma Historic Preservation Officer that the property appears to meet the criteria for designation as a local landmark listed in Chapter 13.07 of the Tacoma Municipal Code.

d. No additional parking spaces need be added.

e. Up to 10% of new floor area may be added for the purposes of creating living or working space without triggering a change in use.

f. Non-conforming floor area, setbacks, and height are "grandparented in", meaning that a variance is not required.

g. Mezzanine spaces may be added so long as they do not exceed one third the size of the floor below.

h. New roof structures shall not be considered as adding new floor area or to trigger change of use requirements; such structures shall not be used for living or working quarters but must be used solely for accessory uses or open space.

i. Adding an "occupation-home" use is not subject to density requirements in the underlying zone.



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Chapter 13.12 – Environmental Code

13.12.300 – Purpose of this part and adoption by reference

13.12.310 – Flexible threshold for categorical exemptions

* * *

13.12.300 Purpose of this part and adoption by reference.

This section sets forth the proposed actions which are exempt from SEPA threshold determination and EIS requirements. Certain exemptions apply only to certain state agencies. In addition, the City has the authority to adopt certain flexible thresholds for proposals. This section describes those thresholds. It also incorporates the following sections of the *Washington Administrative Code* by reference:

197-11-800	Categorical exemptions.
197-11-810	Exemptions and none -exemptions applicable to specific state agencies.
197-11-820	Department of licensing.
197-11-825	Department of labor and industries.
197-11-830	Department of natural resources.
197-11-835	Department of fisheries.
197-11-840	Department of game.
197-11-845	Department of social and health services.
197-11-850	Department of agriculture.
197-11-855	Department of ecology.
197-11-860	Department of transportation.
197-11-865	Utilities and transportation commission.
197-11-870	Department of commerce and economic development.
197-11-875	Other agencies.
197-11-890	Petitioning DOE to change exemptions.

* * *

13.12.310 Flexible thresholds for categorical exemptions.

The City of Tacoma establishes the following exempt levels for minor new construction as allowed under WAC 197-11-800(1)(c), and RCW 43.21C.410 except when the action is undertaken wholly or partly on lands covered by water and the action requires a development permit under Chapter 13.11 of this title.

- A. The construction or location of any residential structure of ~~four or less~~ twenty or fewer dwelling units;
- B. The construction of a barn, loafing shed, farm equipment storage building, produce storage or packing structure, or similar agricultural structure, covering ~~10,000~~ 30,000 square feet or less, and to be used only by the property owner or his or her agent in the conduct of farming the property. This exemption shall not apply to feed lots;
- C. The construction of an office, school, commercial, recreational, service, or storage building with 12,000 square feet or less of gross floor area, and with associated parking facilities designed for no more than ~~20~~ 40 automobiles;
- D. The demolition of an office, school, commercial, recreational, service, or storage building with 12,000 square feet or less of gross floor area;
- E. The construction of a parking lot designed for no more than ~~20~~ 40 automobiles;

**RESOLUTION NO. 38499**

1 A RESOLUTION relating to environmental policy; directing City staff to use the
2 highest levels of categorical exemptions under the State Environmental
3 Policy Act, pursuant to the authorization granted to cities with the
4 passage of 2ESSB 6406 by the Washington State Legislature.

5 WHEREAS, in spring 2012, the Washington State Legislature passed
6 and Governor Gregoire signed the Second Engrossed Substitute Senate
7 Bill 6406 ("2ESSB 6406"), which amends the state's environmental and natural
8 resources laws, including the State Environmental Policy Act ("SEPA"), and

9 WHEREAS SEPA establishes thresholds at which certain development
10 projects are exempt from environmental review, and individual jurisdictions may
11 adopt flexible thresholds at the local level in order to raise those thresholds, and

12 WHEREAS 2ESSB 6406 directs the Department of Ecology ("DOE") to
13 revise various SEPA thresholds and applicability by the end of 2012, which
14 includes raising the SEPA review threshold for new construction, and

15 WHEREAS 2ESSB 6406 authorizes cities and counties to use the
16 maximum threshold levels for review until DOE completes its work, and

17 WHEREAS the City, in Section 13.12.310 of the Tacoma Municipal Code
18 ("TMC"), entitled "Flexible thresholds for categorical exemptions," has already
19 adopted the maximum thresholds under SEPA regulations for commercial and
20 institutional buildings, and for landfill and excavation, and

21 WHEREAS TMC 13.12.310 uses the minimum thresholds permitted
22 under SEPA regulations for dwelling units and parking, currently granting
23 exemptions only to residential structures of four or fewer dwelling units, parking
24
25
26



1 facilities associated with buildings designed for no more than 20 automobiles,
2 and parking lots designed for no more than 20 automobiles, and

3 WHEREAS, pursuant to 2ESSB 6406, the City may use the maximum
4 thresholds of 20 dwelling units and 40 parking spaces, respectively, to grant
5 exemptions, which will: (1) streamline the City's building and SEPA review
6 processes; (2) allow City staff to focus greater attention on a smaller number of
7 projects in need of review; (3) be well received by private business and
8 development interests in the City; and (4) enhance economic development, and
9

10 WHEREAS said maximum thresholds will be used on an interim basis
11 while DOE completes its review, and during that same time City staff will work
12 with the Planning Commission and the public to review TMC 13.12.310 and adopt
13 changes thereto through the standard legislative process, and
14

15 WHEREAS the City Council finds that, during said interim period, existing
16 City regulations will adequately address the impacts created by residential
17 projects that qualify for exemptions under the raised thresholds; Now, Therefore,
18

19 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

20 That the proper officers of the City are hereby directed to use the
21 maximum thresholds of 20 dwelling units and 40 parking spaces for categorical
22 exemptions available under Second Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6406, for
23
24
25
26



1 the purposes hereinabove enumerated, a copy of which will be on file in the
2 office of the City Clerk.

3
4 Adopted _____

5
6 _____
Mayor

7 Attest:
8 _____
9 City Clerk

10 Approved as to form:
11 _____
12 Deputy City Attorney

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Code Streamling 2012

DRAFT LAND USE REGULATORY CODE CHANGES June 20, 2012

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Chapter 13.06 - Zoning

13.06.510 – Off-Street Parking and Storage Areas

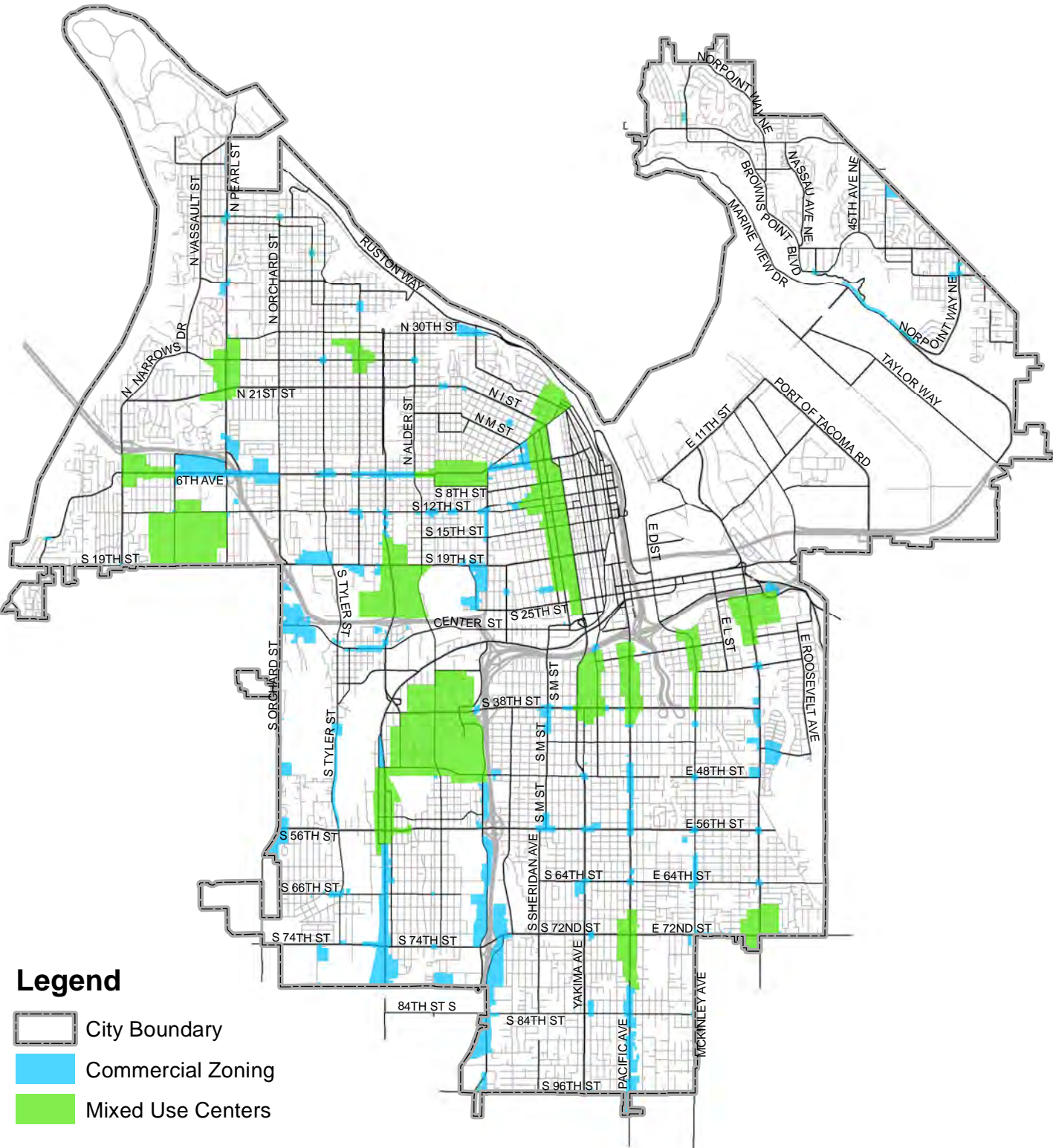
13.06.510 Off-street parking and storage areas.

A. Purpose. To ensure the safe and adequate flow of traffic in public right-of-way, it is deemed in the interest of the public health, safety, and general welfare that off-street parking areas be required as a necessary part of the development and use of land, and to ensure that required parking areas are designed to perform in a safe and efficient manner. Additionally, to minimize impacts to adjacent uses from areas used for storage of vehicles and other materials, specific design and development standards for such areas are provided in Subsection D.

* * *

f. In Commercial Districts (T, C-1, C-2, HM, and PDB), no additional parking shall be required for a change of use in a structure that existed prior to XXX, 2012. Existing parking that is above and beyond the current requirements may be removed, provided that the quantity of parking is not reduced below the current requirements for the use on the site. New development, including additions, shall provide parking as required.

* * *



PARKING STANDARDS FOR NEW AND EXISTING BUILDINGS

	Definition of an Existing Building	Parking Required for a Change of Use in an Existing Building	Parking for an Existing Building can Be Removed	Parking Required for a New Building
Reduced Parking Area (RPA) in Downtown Districts	Not Applicable	No	Yes	No
Downtown Districts Outside Of the RPA	Built prior to 2000	No	Yes	Yes – Applies to buildings constructed after 2000
Mixed-Use Districts – Core Streets	Built prior to the establishment of the X-District (commonly 1996)	No	Yes	No
Mixed-Use Districts – Non-Core Streets	Built prior to the establishment of the X-District (commonly 1996)	No	Yes	Yes – Applies to buildings constructed after the establishment of the District
Commercial Districts	Proposed – Pre 2012~	Proposed – No~	No (unless it is surplus parking)	Yes
Residential and Industrial Districts	Built prior to 1953	No	No (unless it is surplus parking)	Yes

~ Proposed change under Code Streamline 2012

Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance and Environmental Checklist



Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

City of Tacoma Code Streamlining 2012

SEPA File Number: SEP2012-40000183621

TO: All Departments and Agencies with Jurisdiction

SUBJECT: Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

In accordance with WAC 197-11-340, a copy of the Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance for the project described below is transmitted:

Applicant: City of Tacoma
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5389

Proposal:

The proposed Code Streamlining updates would amend three chapters of Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code: Chapter 13.06 Zoning, 13.06A Downtown, and 13.12 Environmental. The proposed amendments are intended to allow greater flexibility in the reuse of existing buildings and include an increase in the thresholds for environmental review, an expansion of the existing home occupation use to include “live-work” and “work-live” in the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts, and the addition of a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts.

Copies of the complete text of the proposed revisions are available from the Community and Economic Development Department at the below address and may also be viewed and downloaded at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (click on “Code Streamlining”).

Location: City of Tacoma

Lead Agency: City of Tacoma

City Contact: Noah Yacker
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5371

The lead agency for this proposal has made a preliminary determination that this project does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2) (c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public upon request. This Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). **Comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on July 20, 2012. The Responsible Official will reconsider the DNS based on timely comments and may retain, modify, or, if**

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significant adverse impacts are likely, withdraw the DNS. Unless modified by the City, this determination will become final on July 27, 2012.

There is no administrative appeal for this determination. Appeals must be filed in conjunction with appeals of the adopted amendments to the Growth Management Hearings Board; appeals shall be taken in accordance with procedures and limitations set forth in RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 242-02. In addition to Growth Management Hearings Board requirements, a copy of the appeal shall be filed with the Community and Economic Development Department, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington 98402.

The Puyallup Tribe is notified that this initiates the consultation process.

Responsible Official: Martha Anderson
Position/Title: Interim Director, Community and Economic Development Department

Signature:



SEPA Officer Signature:



Issue Date: **June 28, 2012**
Comment Deadline: **July 20, 2012, 5:00 p.m.**

NOTE: The issuance of this Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance does not constitute project approval. Future project applicants must comply with all other applicable requirements of the City of Tacoma and other agencies with jurisdiction prior to receiving development permits.

- c: Tacoma Community and Economic Development Department, Reuben McKnight, Shirley Schultz
Metro Parks, Doug Fraser, 4702 South 19th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
Nature and Environment Advisory Council, Terry Larson, 808 North Ainsworth Ave., Tacoma, WA 98403
Port of Tacoma, Jason Jordan, P.O. Box 1837, Tacoma, WA 98401
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Steve Van Slyke, SEPA Review, 1904 3rd Ave – Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98101
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Bill Sullivan, Natural Resources Director, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, David Duenos, Building Official, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Brandon Reynon, Tribal Historian, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Jeffrey Thomas, TFW Program Director, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Peter Mill, Director of Planning Department, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Lisa A. Brautigam, Environmental Attorney, 3009 Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Russ Ladley, Tribal Attorney, 3009 Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Shawn Villegas, 3009 Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Andrew Stroebel, Land Use Manager, 3009 Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Sherrilyn Reed, EH-3128 – 3629 South D St., Tacoma, WA 98418
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Brad Harp, EH-3128 – 3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418
Tacoma Public School District #10, Sam Bell, 3223 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409
Department of Transportation, Dale Severson, P.O. Box 474400, Olympia, WA 98504

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WDOE, via email only to sepaunit@ecy.wa.gov

File: Building and Land Use Services

Environmental Checklist

*Changes to the land use regulations
of the Tacoma Municipal Code to allow flexibility
in the reuse of existing buildings*

SEPA FILE NUMBER: SEP2012-40000183621

Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793
253-591-5393

June 2012

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: Code Streamlining 2012

2. Name of applicant:

City of Tacoma
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Noah Yacker, Associate Planner (contact)
City of Tacoma
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
Voice: (253) 591-5371
Fax: (253) 591-2002
E-mail: nyacker@cityoftacoma.org

4. Date checklist prepared:

June 26, 2012

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Tacoma
Community and Economic
Development Department

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

This environmental checklist addresses a programmatic action to amend the City of Tacoma's Land Use Regulatory Code to allow greater flexibility in the reuse of existing buildings and includes an increase in the thresholds for environmental review (as set forth in TMC Chapter 13.12.300), the expansion of the existing home occupation use to include "live-work" and "work-live" in the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts (as set forth in TMC Chapter 13.06A), and the addition of a parking exemption for existing buildings in Commercial Districts (as set forth in TMC Chapter 13.06.510). This approach is currently scheduled to be effective as of September 25, 2012. The general background and schedule to date:

April-June 2012:	Initial public outreach
May-July 2012:	Planning Commission process
July 18, 2012:	Planning Commission Public Hearing
August 15, 2012:	Planning Commission makes recommendation to City Council
August-September:	City Council review of Commission's recommendations
August, 2012:	City Council public hearing

September, 2012: City Council considers adoption of the proposed amendments

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

These code amendments are part of a larger effort to streamline the Land Use Regulatory Code to provide increased opportunities for infill development and the reuse of existing buildings. Specifically, the proposed changes to the SEPA thresholds are related to changes that are occurring at the State level in an effort to update SEPA regulations.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

- SEP2012-40000176242 Annual Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Regulatory Code
- SEP2011-40000167412 Updating the Off-Street Parking Requirements for New Development in Downtown to Improve Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

This proposal is a citywide action and would be applicable to all development activities once it is effective.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The proposed amendments of the Land Use Regulatory Code will be reviewed and may be adopted by City Council ordinance. Future development and land use applications citywide will be subject to the amended regulations.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The proposed amendments involve adding and revising Regulatory Code text. These amendments intend to provide clear land use regulations for infill development and add flexibility for the reuse of existing buildings.

A general summary of the proposed amendments is as follows:

Changes to Chapter 13.06 Zoning, including:

Section 13.06.300 – Mixed-Use Center Districts

- Adding new Live-Work and Work-Live standards

Section 13.06.510 – Off-Street Parking and Storage Areas

- Adding a parking exemption for Commercial Districts – T, C-1, C-2, HM, and PDB Districts, that will exempt a change of use in an existing building from providing additional parking.

Changes to Chapter 13.06A – Downtown Tacoma

Section 13.06A.050 – Additional Use Regulations

- Adding new Live-Work and Work-Live standards to this Section.

Changes to Chapter 13.12 – Environmental Code

Section 13.12.801 – Flexible Thresholds for Categorical Exemptions

- Increasing the flexible thresholds in TMC 13.12.310 for dwelling units, parking spaces, and agricultural buildings.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

The proposed code amendments to Chapter 13.12 would apply citywide. Whereas the proposed amendments for live-work and work-live would apply in the Downtown and Mixed-Use Districts and the proposed parking exemption would apply in Commercial Districts outside of those Districts.

13. Assessor Parcel Number:

There are numerous parcels in the City of Tacoma.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

- a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:**

The proposed amendments are a non-project action and affect properties throughout the City of Tacoma. The responses provided from this point forward imply city-wide applicability, unless otherwise specified.

Topography within the city is widely varied, ranging from large flat areas to areas of significant steep slope. Overall, the city can be described as hilly and/or rolling.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

The highest point in the City is Indian Hill in NE Tacoma (Orca, Galleon, & Tower Drive) at 552 feet. The lowest point is sea level (Puget Sound). The steepest areas are the bluffs that are adjacent to the Narrows and Commencement Bay. There are areas within the City which contain slopes that exceed 100%.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

The soils in Tacoma consist of gravel, sand, clay, silt, peat, and muck. There are no known areas of prime farmland or agricultural soils.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

Tacoma is designated as a Zone 3 Seismic Hazard Zone, as is the entire Puget Sound region. This designation is based on life safety and the potential for property damage as a result of seismic activity. Zone 1 includes those areas that are least likely and Zone 4 includes those that are most likely to experience injury and/or building damage as a result of a seismic event. The City's geologically hazardous areas are generally mapped in the Environmental Policy Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

No grading or filling is proposed by this non-project action. Site-specific impacts of any filling or grading will be assessed as part of the review of future development proposal(s).

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

The proposed code amendments are a non-project action. Erosion controls based on the City's adopted stormwater manual and development codes will be made a requirement by the City at the time of permit approval and construction. Specific impacts will be assessed at project development stage.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

The proposed code amendments are a non-project action. Calculations of impervious surfaces would be prepared and evaluated at the time of development application review.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

The proposed code amendments are a non-project action. Future development proposals will be required to meet the grading and erosion control requirements of the City of Tacoma at the time of development.

2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Impacts will be evaluated at the project development stage. Future development may result in localized increases in air pollution due to construction activity and vehicular traffic. However, adding flexibility to locate commercial uses closer to residential uses could result in reduced vehicle emissions.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

A portion of Tacoma has been designated as non-attainment for PM 2.5 (particulate matter) under EPA standards and a State Implementation Plan (SIP) is being developed to address the non-attainment designation. Future development proposals will be evaluated to determine and mitigate any impacts and will need to comply with the SIP.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

Impacts will be evaluated at the project development stage.

3. Water

a. Surface:

1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

Most of Tacoma is on a peninsula surrounded on the west by portions of Puget Sound, including the Narrows, and on the east by Commencement Bay. Additionally, there are several lakes, numerous streams and rivers such as the Puyallup River, Swan Creek, Puget Creek, and Hylebos Creek; and, a significant number of seasonal and perennial streams and wetlands.

2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

- 3) **Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

- 4) **Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

- 5) **Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

The 100-year flood plain within the city includes the following areas: Puyallup River; an area of the Tideflats near SR-509 and Portland Avenue; an area of the Tideflats near Taylor Way, Alexander Avenue and SR-509; the creek area east of Portland Avenue between I-5 and S. 56th Street; the Larchmont Playground area near S. 84th Street and Pacific Avenue; the area near S. 84th and S. Hosmer Streets; the Wapato Lake area near S. 72nd Street and Sheridan Avenue; the Flett Creek area near South Tacoma Way and S. 74th Street; the China Lake Park area near S. 19th Street and SR-16; and, the Titlow Park area near 6th Avenue and the BNSF railroad tracks.

- 6) **Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Drainage impacts will be evaluated at the time of development review of site-specific proposals. Existing federal, state and local laws are expected to mitigate potential impacts. Any project related impacts will be mitigated in accordance with City ordinances and the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

b. Ground:

- 1) **Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Specific impacts will be assessed at the project development stage.

- 2) **Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals . . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses**

to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Sanitary waste would be discharged into the City's sanitary sewer system. Projects developed under the proposal will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding discharge of waste material.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. The storm drainage system impacts from development proposals that occur will be evaluated at the time of development proposal(s). Mitigation may be required in accordance with City regulations, including the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

- 3) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

No, the proposal is a non-project action. City sanitary sewer hook-up would be required at the time of future development proposals. Stormwater runoff would need to comply with City regulations, including the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any.

City ordinances require hook-up to sewer and any proposed development will be required to ensure that stormwater discharge will meet the City's stormwater requirements found in the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*, including applicable Department of Ecology Best Management Practices (BMPs).

4. Plants

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

☒ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

☒ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

☒ shrubs

☒ grass

☒ pasture

☐ crop or grain

☒ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

_____ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

 x other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. No specific removal of plants is planned. Impacts will be reviewed at the development proposal stage.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. A site specific review would be conducted at the development proposal stage.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. A site specific review would be conducted at the development proposal stage.

5. Animals

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

birds: hawk, heron, bald eagle, songbirds, **other:** seagulls, crows,
 pigeons
mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: squirrel, raccoon, opossum,
 rodents, dogs, cats
fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

The proposal is a non-project action. Commencement Bay and its waterways (e.g., Thea Foss Waterway) support several types of salmon species and occasional visits by Southern Resident Orcas. Both the Orca and Chinook salmon are listed as endangered species under the Endangered Species Act.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The City of Tacoma is within the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. Migrating species of geese and ducks can be found in Wapato Lake, other lakes, ponds, wetlands, and waterways of Tacoma, as well as the Puyallup River. Juvenile salmon migrate along the shorelines of Commencement Bay, the Puyallup River, and Port waterways. Adult salmon, including listed Puget Sound Chinook, and Bull trout migrate along the shorelines and within Commencement Bay to the Puyallup River, port waterways, Hylebos Creek, Puget Creek, Wapato Creek, and Leach Creek.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any.

Development proposals would be reviewed for compliance with City ordinances including the Critical Areas Protection Ordinance. A Habitat Zone map is established in the Environmental Policy Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Also, wetlands and streams of local significance are established in the Tacoma Municipal Code and the Environmental Policy Element. The intent is to use the habitat zone maps and wetlands and streams of local significance to focus on those undeveloped areas which are also providing high habitat function and value.

6. Energy and natural resources

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Energy demand of future development will be typical of urban buildings.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. A site specific review would be conducted at the development proposal stage.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Specific impacts will be assessed at the project development stage.

7. Environmental health

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

The proposal is a non-project action. Specific hazards will be assessed at the project development stage. At project development, all requirements of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and Washington Department of Ecology (and if applicable, the Environmental Protection Agency, if the site is located within the Ruston/North Tacoma Superfund Study Area) will be complied with. In addition, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will provide general requirements regarding development of the site that shall be met by the applicant for future development proposals.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None. The proposal is a non-project action.

2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Existing federal, state, and local laws are expected to mitigate potential environmental health hazards from site-specific developments that would occur under the proposed revised regulations. In addition, SEPA allows the City to attach mitigation measures at the time of a development proposal, if needed.

b. Noise

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

The predominant sources of noise in Tacoma are vehicular traffic and aircraft over flights. Noise is also present in the industrial areas of the city and adjacent to the mainline train tracks.

2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any.

None anticipated. Any noise impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

8. Land and shoreline use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

The proposal is a non-project action applicable citywide. The City of Tacoma is the site of a broad range of residential, commercial, industrial, shoreline, open space and other land uses typical of an urban setting in the Puget Sound region.

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Portions of the city have been used for agricultural purposes in the past but there are no indications of recent agricultural uses and there are no significant commercial agricultural uses currently operating in the city.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

The proposal is a non-project action applicable citywide. The City of Tacoma contains too many structures to reasonably count.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

The proposal is a non-project action and is applicable city-wide.

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

The proposal is a non-project action and is applicable city-wide.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The proposal is a non-project action and is applicable city-wide. The shoreline master program designates areas 200 feet landward of the ordinary high watermark as within various shoreline environment classifications (e.g. 'urban', 'natural', and 'conservancy') and within specific shoreline zoning districts, S-1 to S-14.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

The proposal is a non-project action and is applicable city-wide. Specific impacts to critical areas associated with development will be evaluated at the project review and approval stage.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Does not apply since this proposal is not applicable to buildings. No specific measures are needed or proposed at this time.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any.**

The proposed code amendments have been reviewed for consistency with other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The Growth Management Act requirements exist to help ensure consistency among the *Comprehensive Plan* elements and to ensure that implementing regulations are consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. These code amendments are intended to implement the policy direction of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**

Does not apply. This proposal is a non-project action.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**

Does not apply. This proposal is a non-project action.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any.**

Does not apply. This proposal is a non-project action.

10. Aesthetics

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. View impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Aesthetic impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

11. Light and glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Light and glare impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Light and glare impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Light and glare impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action. Future impacts will be addressed at the development project proposal stage and mitigation will be required by existing City ordinances that regulate light and glare hazards, if needed.

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

Various recreational opportunities exist throughout the city, including parks, trails, playfields, shorelines, and cultural facilities. These are described in the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any.**

Does not apply. The proposal is a non-project action.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**

Citywide, there are over 1,100 sites, structures, properties and buildings listed on the national, state, and Tacoma Registers of Historic Places as either individual properties or within one of Tacoma's six historic and conservation districts. Approximately 130 of the properties are individually listed. The Old City Hall District is listed on the national, state and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 60 individual properties (approximately 47 buildings). The Union Station District is listed on the national, state and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 51 individual properties (approximately 32 buildings). The Union Station Conservation District is listed on the Tacoma register of historic places and contains approximately 70 individual properties (approximately 50 buildings). The Salmon Beach Historic District is listed on the state historic register.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.**

Landmark buildings in downtown Tacoma depict the history of the city from the 1880s to the present. Architectural surveys conducted between 1981 and the present have identified approximately 1,600 properties that are potentially eligible for listing. The area in which the City of Tacoma is located also has many locations of ethnographic, scientific, and cultural importance. Archaeological site records for the Tacoma area are maintained by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any.**

The proposal is a non-project action. No impacts are anticipated to historic resources. The City of Tacoma is a Certified Local Government that maintains an active Landmarks Preservation Commission and professional historic preservation staff, maintains a historic preservation code that governs the treatment of historic properties, and provides public access and educational outreach. The City actively updates its architectural survey data. Local and federal tax incentives for historic preservation are available for building renovations and preservation. Designated buildings and properties within designated local districts are subject to design approval for exterior modifications by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Officer serves as a consulting party for Section 106 review and SEPA review.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

The proposal is a non-project action that would not directly affect the existing roadway system. Within the City of Tacoma there are over 15 major north-south arterials and over 17 east-west arterials that provide access throughout the City of Tacoma. These arterials provide primary access to a complete grid of minor arterials and local access roadways as well as to major regional freeways including two

interstate freeways (i.e., I-5 and I-705) and four State routes (i.e., SR-509, SR-16, SR-167, and SR-7).

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

The proposal is a non-project action that is applicable city-wide. Within the City of Tacoma, local and regional transit services are available citywide, through Pierce Transit and Sound Transit. Pierce Transit provides local bus service throughout the city and between Tacoma and Lakewood, Parkland, Steilacoom, Puyallup, Sumner, Buckley, Bonney Lake, Federal Way, SeaTac International Airport, Auburn, Olympia, and Seattle. Within the City of Tacoma, there are five transit centers, including Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Mall, Downtown Tacoma, Tacoma Dome Station, and 72nd & Portland. Sound Transit's Regional Express, Link Light Rail, and Sounder Commuter Rail also operate in Tacoma.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?**

The proposed amendments are non-project actions and do not include the construction or removal of parking. The need for and location of parking to serve future individual development proposals will be addressed during the project review and approval stage.

The proposed parking exemption for existing buildings in commercial districts would remove the requirement for additional parking when the use of a building is changed.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

The proposed amendments are non-project actions and no new roads, streets or improvements to existing roads or streets would be constructed as part of the proposed action. Specific impacts and improvement requirements will be evaluated at the project development stage.

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

The proposed amendments are non-project actions that will not affect water, rail, or air transportation. Future impacts by specific project actions will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

The proposal is a non-project action and would not generate new trips.

g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any.

The proposed amendments are non-project actions and will not generate transportation impacts. Traffic impact studies may be required depending on the size and scope of a particular development proposal. Specific impacts and mitigation will be addresses at the project development stage.

15. Public services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

Proposals are non-project actions. Specific impacts will be assessed at the project stage.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

Proposals are non-project actions. Specific impacts will be assessed at the project stage.

16. Utilities

- a. Underline utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.**


Most of the affected parcels are served by all of the above services or can be connected at the time of development.

- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.**

Proposals are non-project actions. Specific utility services will be identified and evaluated at the time of future development application review.

SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: 
Noah Yacker
Associate Planner
City of Tacoma

Date: June 27, 2012

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces are not likely to increase discharges, emissions, toxins, or noise. Dwelling units, regardless of number, are low-impact uses and typically do not create such hazards to the environment. Parking areas are generally for passenger cars, which must meet emission standards.

The proposed changes to the home occupation standards are not likely to increase discharges, emissions, toxins, or noise. The live-work/work-live uses will allow for better use of existing buildings where discharges, emissions, toxins, or noise already exist.

The proposed changes to the parking standards are not likely to increase discharges, emissions, toxins, or noise. The expansion of parking exemptions for existing buildings will reduce the number of new parking stalls required in the city.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

All projects will continue to be reviewed for compliance with the City's surface water management plan to minimize discharge to water and to ensure water quantity and quality are within adopted standards.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, are not likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

Regardless of SEPA procedural requirements, all projects within critical areas, critical area buffers, or shorelines must be reviewed according to the City's Critical Area Ordinance and/or Shoreline Master Program. These regulations include review for habitat and species protection, including mitigation and habitat management plans where appropriate.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as

well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, are not likely to affect energy or natural resources.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

All new dwelling units are required to meet current state and local codes for energy conservation. The proposed parking exemption for existing buildings complements local parking ordinances, which have incentives for alternative modes of transportation (e.g., bike parking credits) and electric vehicles.

- 4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, flood plains, or prime farmlands?**

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, are not likely to affect sensitive areas. There are no wilderness areas (or similar) within the City's jurisdiction. Local ordinances address critical areas and historic resources. Cultural resources are identified through the Usual & Accustomed Area of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians; typically these areas are not available for residential development, as they are primarily industrially zoned and/or already developed.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

Wildlife habitat, wetlands, and flood plains are regulated under specific sections of Tacoma Municipal Code regardless of SEPA procedural requirements. Historic sites of note are listed and regulated per the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance.

- 5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?**

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, are not likely to affect land use. Any proposed development would have to comply with existing codes and policies for zoning, density, landscaping, design, etc.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

Land use and shoreline impacts would be minimal. The proposed changes would improve compatibility with existing plans.

- 6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?**

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, are not likely to affect transportation demands. Any effects of increasing the thresholds are expected to be minimal, if any.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

The City's Traffic Engineer will continue to review proposed projects for traffic (including pedestrian) safety.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

Proposed changes to the SEPA Flexible Thresholds for dwelling units and parking spaces, as well as the proposed changes to home occupation and parking standards, will not conflict with other laws. The increase in SEPA thresholds is specifically allowed under WAC197-11-800(1)(c).