



City of Tacoma

747 Market Street, Room 345,
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5577

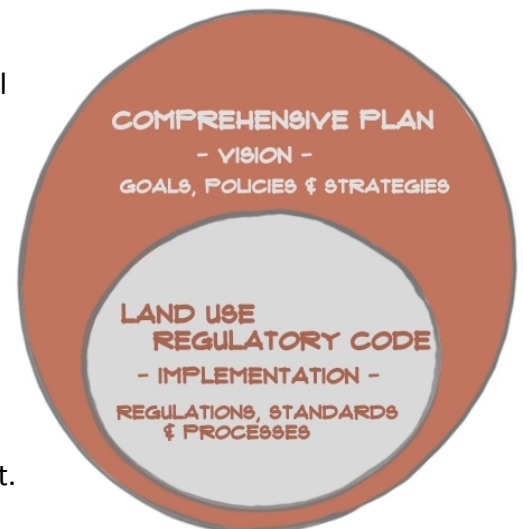
Comprehensive Plan & Land Use Regulatory Code Amendment Process

What is the Annual Amendment?

The Annual Amendment is the primary process through which the City considers changes, additions, and updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code. Periodic review and evaluation are important in order to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan and the implementing regulations maintain their effectiveness. The intent of the Annual Amendment is to review all of these changes simultaneously so that the cumulative effects can be considered.

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan is the City's official statement concerning its vision for future growth and development. It identifies goals, policies, and strategies for maintaining the health, welfare, and quality of life of Tacoma's residents. The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of numerous individual elements, including elements addressing land use, neighborhoods, housing, transportation, cultural resources, recreation and open space, capital facilities, downtown, and the environment.



What is the Land Use Regulatory Code?

The Land Use Regulatory 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.

Who may propose an amendment?

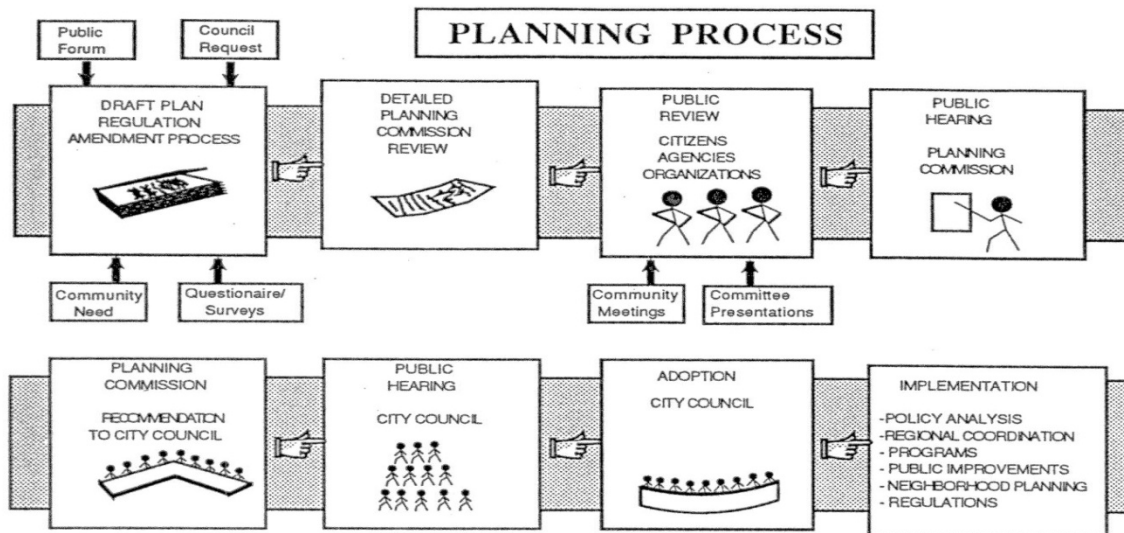
A proposed amendment may be submitted by any private individual, organization, corporation, partnership, or entity of any kind.

What is the application deadline and fee?

The deadline to submit applications for the 2013 Annual Amendment is **Friday, June 29, 2012, 5:00 p.m.** The Application fee is **\$1,200.**

What is the process for the Annual Amendment?

Applications are submitted to the Community and Economic Development Department. After the submittal deadline, all of the applications are forwarded to the Planning Commission for their assessment. The Commission then decides which applications should move forward as part of that year's Annual Amendment package. Those applications then receive detailed review and analysis by staff and the Planning Commission and input is solicited from the community. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing before making its final recommendations to the City Council. The City Council then holds another public hearing before making a final decision on the applications.



What is the timeline for the Annual Amendment?

The tentative schedule for the 2013 Annual Amendment is:

June 29, 2012	Deadline to submit applications for 2013 Annual Amendment
July – Oct 2012	Planning Commission reviews applications for completeness and determines if proposed amendments meet requirements and are appropriate; the Commission may suggest alternative proposals concerning the proposed amendment or modify the scope of the amendment
July 2012 – February 2013	Staff and Planning Commission review each application, potential benefits and impacts, alternatives, consistency with existing plans and laws, etc.
February 2013	Planning Commission authorizes proposed amendments for public review and sets a public hearing date
March 2013	Planning Commission conducts a public hearing
April 2013	Planning Commission makes recommendations to City Council
May 2013	City Council conducts a public hearing
June 2013	City Council considers adoption of amendments
August 1, 2013	Changes take effect

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Types of Proposed Amendments:

The Planning Commission considers Comprehensive Plan amendments annually pursuant to the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.02.045 – *Adoption and Amendment Procedures*. The 5 types of amendments are:

- **Comprehensive Plan Text Change**
A change or revision of the goals, policies, objectives, principles, standards, or narrative text of the 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 Intensity Change**
A legislative action to change the land use intensity classification(s) in order to implement and/or maintain the consistency of the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Area-wide 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 generally the refusal to accept or process new applications for building, zoning, subdivision, or other types of development to preclude development from occurring for a specified period of time, usually while new or revised regulations are being considered.

What should be considered when proposing an amendment?

- **Is the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or will 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 at least one of the amendment criteria described on Page 6. Applicants also should demonstrate that the proposed amendment does 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 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 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.

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.

Application Fee – Is it refundable? Who may be exempted?

The \$1,200 application fee is authorized by City Council Resolution No. 36447, adopted on March 18, 2005. 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 Community and Economic Development Department.

Is technical assistance available?

Pre-application meetings are strongly recommended and can be scheduled with Long-Range Planning 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:

- **Comprehensive Plan**

Review Comprehensive Plan policies and relevant information at:

www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (Click on “Comprehensive Plan”)

- **Land Use Regulatory Code**

Review Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code at:

www.cityoftacoma.org/municode

- **Maps**

Information related to zoning, land use intensity, or current land uses can be viewed on interactive maps on the City’s web site at:

www.cityoftacoma.org/govme

Parcel and ownership data can be obtained from the Pierce County Assessor’s office or from their web site at:

www.piercecountywa.org/atr

Are applicants required to conduct community outreach?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to solicit feedback from as many interested parties as possible prior to submitting an application. Staff can provide contact information for specific community groups who may be interested in your application (e.g., neighborhood councils, business districts and associations, and environmental groups).

Encouraged outreach includes:

- Contacting affected and abutting property owners and/or renters;

- Speaking with affected and abutting neighborhood councils;
- Attending community meetings to discuss your proposal such as those held by neighborhood groups, neighborhood business districts, and local organizations; and
- Facilitating your own community meeting.

Should applicants attend Planning Commission meetings?

The Planning Commission meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 4:00 p.m. in Room 16 of the Tacoma Municipal Building North Annex, 728 St. Helens Avenue. All meetings are open to the public and applicants may attend. However, applicants will not have an opportunity to directly address the Planning Commission until the public hearing or unless requested by the Commission. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend and testify at all public hearings during the amendment process.

What are the Planning Commission’s criteria for amendments?

Please refer to the following excerpt from the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.02.045.G:

- G. Amendment criteria. Beyond being consistent or achieving consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, proposed amendments must meet at least one of the following criteria to be considered by the Planning Commission:
1. There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan or regulatory code provisions;
 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;
 3. The needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment;
 4. The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern;
 5. Growth and development, as envisioned in the Plan, is occurring faster, slower, or is failing to materialize;
 6. The capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased;
 7. Plan objectives are not being met as specified, and/or the assumptions upon which the Plan is based are found to be invalid;
 8. Transportation and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected;
 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; or
 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.

For more information, please contact:

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 Community and Economic Development Department
 Long-Range Planning Division
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 (253) 591-5682
lwung@cityoftacoma.org



Application

To Amend The Comprehensive Plan or Land Use Regulatory Code

Application No.:

#2013 – _____

Date Received:

Year of Amendment	2013	
Application Deadline	Friday, June 29, 2012, 5:00 p.m.	
Application Fee	\$1,200	
Application Assistance	See attached <i>Guidelines for Submitting Applications</i>	
Type of Amendment (Check all that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Plan Text Change (answer Questions 1 – 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory Code Text Change (answer Questions 1 – 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use Intensity Change (answer Questions 1 – 12) <input type="checkbox"/> Area-wide Rezone (answer Questions 1 – 12) <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Zoning or Moratorium (answer Questions 1 – 12)	
Summary of Proposed Amendment (Limit to 100 words)		
Applicant	Name	
	Affiliation / Title	
	Address City/State/Zip Code	
	E-mail	
	Phone / Fax	Phone _____ Fax _____
Contact (if not Applicant)	Name	
	Affiliation / Title	
	Address City/State/Zip Code	
	E-mail	
	Phone / Fax	Phone _____ Fax _____
	Relationship to Applicant	

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.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

REQUIRED QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer Questions 1–6 if submitting an application for Comprehensive Plan Text Change or Regulatory Code Text Change.

Answer Questions 1–12 if submitting an application for Land Use Intensity Change, Area-wide Rezone, or Interim Zoning or Moratorium.

1. Describe the proposed amendment.
 2. Why is the amendment needed and being proposed?
 3. Please identify applicable Comprehensive Plan intents and policies and describe how each is consistent with and/or supports the requested amendment? Include applicable sections from the Neighborhood Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
 4. Has the proposed amendment been reviewed by the Planning Commission as part of a previous proposal? If so, what circumstances related to the proposed amendment significantly have changed (consistent with Assessment Criteria TMC 13.02.045F), or what needs of the City have changed to support an amendment at this time?
 5. Describe any community outreach you have conducted and the community response to the requested amendment. Attach any letter of support or written community response if applicable.
 - a. When and how did you conduct outreach? What was the response?
 - b. When and how did you contact affected and abutting property owners? What was the response?
 6. If submitting text changes to the Comprehensive Plan or Regulatory Code, attach the existing language and proposed amendatory language.
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7. Describe the current land uses of site and surrounding area including site characteristics. (Example: residential, commercial, industrial, vacant land, slope, vegetation, wildlife, wetland)
 8. Describe how the amendment is compatible with existing and planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern?
 9. What is the current Land Use Intensity as shown on the most recently adopted Generalized Land Use Plan Map? What is the desired Land Use Intensity? (Example: Single-Family, Low, Medium, or High)
 10. What is the current zoning classification? What is the desired zoning classification? (Example: R-2 One Family Dwelling District; C-2 Commercial)
 11. What is the applicant's interest in the property affected by the proposed intensity or zoning change? Describe any plans for future activity related to or connected with this site (i.e., rezone). If you are not the owner, submit proof that the property owners have been notified and are aware of the application.
 12. Attach a map of the affected area, showing all parcels and parcel numbers, ownership, street names, and site boundaries.