



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

PLANNING MANAGER'S LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY
RE: 2016 ANNUAL AMENDMENT

April 11, 2016

Dear Community Members:

I would like to invite you to attend and provide comments at the following functions concerning the "2016 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code":

Community Informational Sessions

Wednesday, April 27, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Planning Commission Public Hearing

Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 5:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

As many of you know, every year the City considers amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code through a single, consolidated package, which we refer to as the "Annual Amendment." The 2016 Annual Amendment Package includes the following five subjects:

1. Future Land Use Implementation
2. Multifamily Design Standards
3. Wireless Communication Facilities
4. Short-Term Rentals
5. Code Cleanup

The Tacoma Planning Commission has recently completed the initial technical analysis of the 2016 Annual Amendment Package and would like you to weigh in on the proposals before they make a recommendation to the City Council. Here are just a few ways how you can get involved:

- Visit the Planning Division's website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning, and click on "2016 Annual Amendment" (or click on any other link to review various exciting projects);
- E-mail us at planning@cityoftacoma.org or call us at (253) 591-5531;
- Attend the Community Informational Sessions on April 27 to learn more about the 2016 Annual Amendment package and provide comments;
- Testify at the Planning Commission's public hearing on May 4, 2016;
- Provide written comments by 5:00 p.m., Friday, May 13, 2016, via:
 - ✓ E-mail to planning@cityoftacoma.org;
 - ✓ Fax to (253) 591-5433; or
 - ✓ Letter to Planning Commission, 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, WA 98402;
- Request a meeting with staff. We can meet you at City Hall, or would be happy to come to your meetings to provide a short briefing and solicit your comments, concerns and suggestions; or

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- Get on the Planning Commission's E-mail Distribution List to receive the Commission's meeting agendas twice a month and other announcements.

Attached for your review is the **2016 Annual Amendment Summary** that includes an overview of the amendment package, the project timeline, and a summary for each of the five subjects. The complete text of the proposed amendments and the corresponding staff analysis reports, as well as the environmental review are compiled into a larger volume, the Public Review Document, which is posted at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (and linked to "2016 Annual Amendment").

We in the Planning Division appreciate your active involvement in this important work. We look forward to your continued support and shared efforts to realize the City of Tacoma's vision and our goal to guide community growth and development in a manner that protects environmental resources, enhances quality of life, promotes distinctive neighborhoods and a vibrant downtown, and involves citizens in the decisions that affect us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. Boudet', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BRIAN BOUDET, MANAGER
Planning Services Division

Enclosure

c: Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services Department
Chris Beale, Chair, Tacoma Planning Commission



2016 ANNUAL AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

April 6, 2016

Amendment Package

The Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2016 (or the “2016 Annual Amendment Package”) include the following five subjects:

APPLICATION	PLAN / CODE AMENDMENT	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT
1. Future Land Use Implementation-Phase 1	Plan & Code Amendment	Implement phase 1 of a multi-year effort to implement the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan by evaluating inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning map and to rectify the inconsistencies.
2. Multifamily District Design Standards	Code Amendment	Review and amend the development standards for the multifamily residential zoning districts to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies pertaining to street and pedestrian orientation, connectivity, building design, site layout, and off-site transitions.
3. Wireless Communication Facilities	Code Amendment	Evaluate the code in response to recent Federal legislation that identified wireless facilities as important basic infrastructure and to make sure local jurisdictions don't put these facilities through any unnecessary or punitive processes.
4. Short Term Rentals	Code Amendment	Establish development regulations for Short-Term Rentals, which includes bed-and-breakfasts.
5. Code Cleanup	Code Amendment	Minor code amendments to improve consistency with and better implement the intent of the Comprehensive Plan. This year, the code cleanups are proposed for Tacoma Municipal Code, Title 1: Administration and Personnel, Chapter 13.05: Land Use Permit Procedures, Chapter 13.06: Zoning, and Chapter 13.10: Shoreline Master Program.

Project Schedule

The 2015 Annual Amendment process began in July 2014 and is expected to be completed by December 2015. The schedule of the project is as follows (dates after August 19 subject to change):

Date	Actions
November 4, 2015	Planning Commission review of Planning Work Program for 2016-2017, including the 2016 Annual Amendment Package
December 9, 2015	Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee review of Planning Work Program for 2016-2017
January – June 2016	Public Outreach (including community workshops, meetings with Neighborhood Councils and stakeholders, and correspondence and online communications)
January 6, 2016	Planning Commission review and approval of the Assessment Report that contains scope of work, key issues, and schedule
February – April 2016	Planning Commission review of various proposed amendments
February 24, 2016	Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee review
April 6, 2016	Planning Commission releasing proposal package for public review and setting a public hearing date
April 26, 2016	City Council Study Session – Review 2016 Annual Amendment Package prior to Planning Commission’s public hearing
April 27, 2016	Community Informational Session
May 4, 2016	Planning Commission Public Hearing (keeping the hearing record open through May 13 to accept written comments)
May 11, 2016	Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee review
May 18, 2016	Planning Commission review public comments and consideration of modifications to the proposal
June 1, 2016	Planning Commission recommendations to the City Council
June 8, 2016	Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee review Planning Commission’s recommendations
June 21, 2016	City Council Study Session and Public Hearing
June 22, 2016	Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee review of Council hearing comments and making a recommendation
June 28, 2016	City Council First Reading of adopting ordinances
July 12, 2016	City Council Final Reading of adopting ordinances
July 31, 2016	Effective Date of adopted amendments

Summaries of Proposals

Summaries of the five subjects are provided on the following pages. The full text and the environmental review associated with the proposals, as well as other pertinent background information are compiled in the Public Review Document, prepared for the Planning Commission’s public hearing on May 4, 2016. The document can be viewed at the office of the Planning and Development Services Department (747 Market Street, Room 345), or online at:

www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (and click on “2016 Annual Amendment”).

**1.
Future Land Use
Implementation**

The purpose of this amendment is to implement the goals and policies of the One Tacoma Plan through appropriate area-wide rezones consistent with the Future Land Use Map and Land Use Designations; to rectify inconsistencies between the One Tacoma Plan and implementing zoning districts and between zoning districts and existing uses; to support the development of compact, complete and connected neighborhoods with a variety of housing choices in close proximity to schools, parks, transit, and other amenities; to support the continued development of the mixed-use center trade areas to stimulate new customer activity and new economic development opportunities.

Proposal

Area-wide rezones are proposed for the following study areas:

1. Nob Hill, South Downtown
2. McKinley Police Substation in the McKinley Neighborhood Center
3. N 33rd and Pearl St.
4. North of Tacoma Community College to 6th Ave
5. S Alaska and 72nd St.
6. South Tacoma Industrial Zones
7. Cheney Stadium and Foss High School

Future Land Use Map Amendments are proposed for the following study areas:

1. Franke Tobey Jones, on N Vassault St.
2. N 33rd and Pearl St.

Outreach

In January the Planning Division Manager sent a letter to the Neighborhood Councils, the Planning Commission distribution list, and other interested parties regarding the 2016 Annual Amendment and other ongoing Planning Division project.

In early February, staff provided a second round of public notification vis-a-vis pamphlets mailed to approximately 1300 residents within or in close proximity to areas proposed for potential rezone during this Annual Amendment process. The pamphlets also provided information on all of the annual amendments being considered this year. Further notification of the annual amendments and Planning Commission meeting agenda materials are sent to neighborhood councils, business districts and other stakeholders.

Planning Commission's Review

The Planning Commission reviewed the subject on March 2 and April 6, 2016. The Commission authorized the distribution of the proposed amendments for public review on April 6, 2016.

**2.
Multi-family Design
Standards**

The intent of the proposed amendments is to implement the broad goals and policies of the One Tacoma Plan and to ensure that new multi-family residential development in all districts supports the following design principles, derived from the goals and policies of the Plan:

1. Promote high quality and durable materials and design;
2. Promote the human scale and orient towards the pedestrian;
3. Enhance the legibility of the public and private realms;
4. Respect the context of the site and patterns of Tacoma’s neighborhoods;
5. Encourage a sense of community through interaction;
6. Integrate nature into everyday life and respond to the natural characteristics of the City;
7. Promote creative expression through design and the interaction of public and private spaces.

Proposal

The proposed amendments (Exhibit A) would update building and site design standards of TMC 13.06 for residential zoning districts broadly and for multi-family residential development specifically. This application would establish designated pedestrian streets in all districts and amend requirements for:

- Front lot setbacks;
- Building coverage;
- Usable yard space;
- Tree canopy;
- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation;
- Parking location and design;
- Mass reduction;
- Roofline standards;
- Transparency;
- Façade surface standards;
- Pedestrian standards; and
- Fencing and utility screening.

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Planning Commission’s Review

The Planning Commission reviewed the subject on March 2 and April 6, 2016. The Commission authorized the distribution of the proposed amendments for public review on April 6, 2016.

**3.
Wireless Communication
Facilities**

Evaluate the code in response to recent Federal legislation that identified wireless facilities as important basic infrastructure and to make sure local jurisdictions don't put these facilities through any unnecessary or punitive processes.

Proposal

The proposal would amend the development regulations pertaining to wireless communication facilities as set forth in the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC), Section 13.06.545 Wireless Communication Facilities and relevant terms as contained in Section 13.06.700 Definitions and Illustrations. Revisions include incorporating the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) new rules adopted in October 2014 pertaining to "substantial changes", providing additional measures to further reduce visual impacts, and clarifying and improving code language. The proposal is also intended to meet the community's goals for urban design and aesthetics concerning wireless communication facilities.

Outreach

A summary of the 2016 Annual Amendment Package, including a description of this proposal, was included in the *Planning Manager's Letter to the Community* that was distributed to community members in January 2016 to solicit inquiries or early comments from the community.

Planning Commission's Review

The Planning Commission reviewed and authorized the distribution of the proposed amendments for public review on March 16, 2016.

4. Short-Term Rentals

Establish development regulations for Short-Term Rentals, which includes bed-and-breakfasts.

Proposal

The proposal would establish development regulations pertaining to short-term rentals by amending the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC), Chapter 13.06 Zoning. Specifically, the proposal would establish a basic regulatory framework that defines “Short-Term Rental” and where it would be allowed; requires a conditional use permit for allowing a short-term rental where it may be otherwise prohibited, for exempting owner-occupancy requirement, and/or for allowing accessory activities on the premise (such as wedding, retirement parties, and corporate events); requires registration and inspections of the rental units; and addresses nonconforming uses.

The goals and intents for the proposal are to acknowledge and track the growing peer-to-peer short-term rental market, proactively address potential impacts (especially concerning life-safety, liability and residential neighborhood character) of this rapidly emerging sharing economy, and set the stage for a boarder policy discussion and a more coordinated regulatory update that includes zoning, tax and licensing, nuisance code, and administration and enforcement program components.

Outreach

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Planning Commission’s Review

The Planning Commission reviewed and authorized the distribution of the proposed amendments for public review on April 6, 2016.

5. Code Cleanup

The intent of the proposed amendment is to improve consistency between the Tacoma Municipal Code and the Comprehensive Plan, fully implement the recommendations of the 2015 Best Available Science review in Tacoma Municipal Code 13.10 Shoreline Master Program, to correct errors in the code, and to implement changes to the nonconforming use standards to better implement policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Proposal

The proposed amendments involve general text corrections to various sections of the Tacoma Municipal Code. These minor amendments are intended to address inconsistencies, correct minor errors, and improve provisions that, through administration and application of the Land Use Regulatory Code, are found to be unclear or not fully meeting their intent.

Proposed amendments include:

- Amending names and typologies in the zoning code to be consistent with terminology in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Fixing outdated references in the Conditional Use Criteria;
- Updating the definition of mobile home/trailer courts;
- Proposing a conditional use permit and criteria for expansion of non-conforming uses;
- Updating the Shoreline Master Program, TMC 13.10, to address outdated references and to incorporate the new Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife wetland rating system, to be consistent with the Best Available Science.

Outreach

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