



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

ASSESSMENT REPORT

(Approved by the Planning Commission, January 6, 2016)

The analysis process for the Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code for 2016 (“2016 Annual Amendment”) has begun as of December 2, 2015.

The next step is for the Planning Commission to review and approve of the Assessment Report, pursuant to Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC), Section 13.02.045 Adoption and Amendment Procedures. This Assessment Report, prepared for the Commission’s consideration on January 6, 2016, includes three parts:

- A. Summary of Applications
- B. Assessment
- C. Recommendation

A. Summary of Applications

The 2016 Annual Amendment package includes six applications submitted by the City’s Planning and Development Services Department. A summary of the applications is as follows:

APPLICATION	APPLICANT	PLAN / CODE AMENDMENT	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT
1. Future Land Use Implementation - Phase 1	Planning & Development Services Department (PDS)	Plan & Code Amendment	This will be 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. The first phase will be limited in scope due to the compressed time frame for the 2016 amendments.
2. R-4L District Design Standards	PDS	Code Amendment	Review and amend the development standards for the R-4L 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. Plan and Code Cleanup	PDS	Plan & Code Amendment	The code cleanups include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to TMC 13.06 to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan; • Limited amendments to the Shoreline Master Program TMC 13.10; • Signature Trail connections; • Permit notification; • Nonconforming uses.

APPLICATION	APPLICANT	PLAN / CODE AMENDMENT	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT
4. Wireless Facility Code	PDS	Code Amendment	Evaluate the code in response to recent Federal legislation that identified wireless facilities as an important basic infrastructure and to make sure local jurisdictions don't put these facilities through any unnecessary or punitive processes.
5. Short Term Rental and B&B	PDS	Code Amendment	Evaluate whether there should be limitations on what might be considered a commercial operation in residential zones.
6. Sign Code	PDS	Code Amendment	Evaluate the implications of a recent Supreme Court case from Arizona that might have some effects on how many distinctions can be made in the code. Conduct other clean up actions as necessary.

B. Assessment

The applications were reviewed against the following assessment criteria pursuant to TMC 13.02.045, and the review is summarized in the table that follows:

1. If the amendment request is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review, or quasi-judicial and not properly subject to Commission review;
2. If there have been recent studies of the same area or issue, which may be cause for the Commission to decline further review, or if there are active or planned projects that the amendment request can be incorporated into; and
3. If the amount of analysis necessary is reasonably manageable given the workloads and resources of the Department and the Commission, or if a large-scale study is required, the amendment request may be scaled down, studied in phases, delayed until a future amendment cycle, or declined.

APPLICATION	REVIEW OF APPLICATION AGAINST ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
1. Future Land Use Implementation – Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • The consistency between the Land Use Designations of the Comprehensive Plan and current zoning districts has been recently studied as part of the Comprehensive Plan update and reconciliation of these inconsistencies has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a high priority implementation action. • This proposal is the first of a multi-phase implementation action scaled to fit the current constrained annual amendment timeframe.
2. R-4L Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • This proposal is the first of a multi-phase implementation action scaled to fit the current constrained annual amendment timeframe.

APPLICATION	REVIEW OF APPLICATION AGAINST ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
3. Code Cleanup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • The code cleanups are addressing new issues and topics that have been identified as a result of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan and as identified in recent permitting processes. • The amount of analysis is reasonably manageable.
4. Wireless Facility Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • While the wireless facilities code has been amended as recently as 2014, the proposed 2016 Amendment is in response to recent legislation and therefore, merits inclusion as a stand-alone application. • The amount of analysis is reasonably manageable.
5. Short Term Rental and B&B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • Short term rentals have not recently been reviewed by the Planning Commission. Given recent technological changes that have facilitated a greater ease with which single-family residences may be informally rented on a temporary basis and the likely public interest in the topic, staff recommends treating the topic in a stand-alone application. • The amount of analysis is reasonably manageable.
6. Sign Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendment is legislative and properly subject to Planning Commission review. • The Sign Code was recently amended in 2013, however, the proposed 2016 Amendment is in response to a recent Supreme Court decision and merits review. The project may draw significant public interest and therefore, should be treated as a stand-alone application. • The amount of analysis is reasonably manageable.

C. Recommendation

According to TMC 13.02.045, the Planning Commission will review this assessment and make its decision within 120 days of receiving the applications, as to:

- (a) Whether or not the application is complete, and if not, what information is needed to make it complete;
- (b) Whether or not the scope of the application should be modified, and if so, what alternatives should be considered; and
- (c) Whether or not the application will be considered, and if so, in which amendment cycle. The Planning Commission shall make determinations concerning proposed amendments.

Based on the review of the proposals against the assessment criteria, staff concludes that they are ready for technical analysis without the need to modify the respective scopes of work. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission accept all applications, as submitted, for consideration during the 2016 Annual Amendment cycle.