



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Christopher Seaman, Engineer, Tacoma Fire Department
Toryono Green, Fire Chief, Tacoma Fire Department *TL*
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request for Ordinance to amend Chapters 3.02 and 3.10 of the Municipal Code, Fire Prevention Code and Mobile Fueling Operating and Permitting Requirements – January 5, 2021
DATE: December 15, 2020

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance amending Chapters 3.02 and 3.10 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Fire Prevention Code and Mobile Fueling Operating and Permitting Requirements, to adopt the 2018 International Fire Code along with state and local amendments, effective February 1, 2021.
[Chris Seaman, Engineer; Toryono Green, Fire Chief]

BACKGROUND:

This Department’s Recommendation is Based On: The Washington State Building Code Council, at the direction of the state legislature, updates the Washington State Fire Code on a regular cycle. The revised Washington State Fire Code (WSFC) is adopted under the authority of 19.27 RCW as WAC 51-54A and will be effective February 1, 2021. The proposed changes will renumber existing amendments to match the WSFC, increase clarity for developers, reduce conflicts between development codes, and streamline our own ordinance by eliminating amendments that are no longer necessary.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

All people who live, work, or visit Tacoma are impacted by the Fire Prevention Code. The Fire Prevention Code protects residents, visitors, workers, and first responders by establishing the minimum standards for fire and life safety for buildings, sites, and operations within the City. Proposed changes are tracked using a SharePoint list where staff can enter code change proposals. Staff add items to the list based on input from developers, when conflicts are identified, where clarity is needed, and when necessary safety enhancements are discovered. The code change summary forms found in the attachments of this memo are the product of this process and provide more detailed information on code change proposals.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

The Fire Prevention Code establishes the minimum standards for fire and life safety. Those minimums protect all of our residents but have the largest impact on those who are not capable of making a quick escape during an emergency, including our seniors and persons with disabilities.

Livability: Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

The Fire Prevention Code reduces the number of structure fires and where they occur reduce the risk posed to the people inside. Additionally the Fire Prevention Code provides protections to people and the environment from hazardous materials.



ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Make no changes to Title 3.		The City would be in conflict with the WSFC, which would create confusion for developers. On-demand mobile fueling businesses would be unable to operate. There could be undesirable response times to patients in some multifamily and assisted living facilities.
2. Make clerical changes only such as renumbering and changing language to match model code.	The City would not be in conflict with the WSFC.	On-demand mobile fueling businesses would be unable to operate. There could be undesirable response times to patients in some multifamily and assisted living facilities.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

We will know that we are successful if we receive fewer questions about how to interpret our Fire Prevention Code. Staff will continue to document where issues of interpretation and conflicts with other development standards occur and return to Council with recommendations for improvements during the next adoption cycle of the WSFC.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends adoption of the proposed changes to TMC 3.02 and TMC 3.10 with an effective date of February 1, 2021 to coincide with the effective date of WAC 51-54A.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact

ATTACHMENTS:

- Code Change Summary Forms