



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services *PAH*
COPY: Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee; Kurtis D. Kingsolver, P.E.;
Rebecca Boydson; Nick Anderson
PRESENTER: Terry Forslund, Planning and Development Services
SUBJECT: Building Code Updates – Tacoma Municipal Code 2.02
DATE: May 22, 2019

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Request for Ordinance

SUMMARY:

On May 22, 2019, Planning and Development Services (PDS) staff will review four proposed building code amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) Chapter 2.02. The City reviewed the TMC Chapter 2.02 as part of the review of state building code changes that will be incorporating mass timber provisions from the 2021 International Building Codes. There were no changes needed to the TMC related to the new state provisions, however PDS staff used this code change cycle as an opportunity to improve other provisions that would make the code more effective.

BACKGROUND:

PDS staff reviewed the proposed changes to the Washington State building codes for any necessary changes in the City's building code. TMC Chapter 2.02 automatically adopts these state provisions as part of the state's adoption, and there were no additional changes required to effectively adopt the state's provisions. However, PDS staff identified other provisions that could increase the effectiveness of the TMC. Most of the proposed changes relate to requests for alternate means approvals from the provisions of the state building codes, or where there may be increased costs where clarification of a code requirement should be incorporated.

Proposed changes related to past alternate means approvals include allowing for locked elevator lobbies where there are appropriate safety measures in place, the option to use "tap ahead of the main" for standby power, and allowing an additional story for Type IIIA construction. A proposed code change for the number of facilities required for single-occupant unisex restrooms clarifies the code requirement.

PDS staff reviewed the proposed code changes with the City's Board of Building Appeals on May 6, 2019, and the Board recommended approval of the proposed changes.

ISSUE:

PDS staff identified other building code amendments that could increase the effectiveness of TMC Chapter 2.02. The amendments cannot be made without a recommendation from this Committee to forward the proposed building code amendments to the full City Council for consideration.

ALTERNATIVES:

This Committee could choose to not recommend the proposed changes to the full City Council.



FISCAL IMPACT:

The code change proposals mostly address alternate means requests that have been submitted on more than one occasion by owners or developers wishing to deviate from the code requirements. These requests are submitted by an owner or developer in order to make a project more technically feasible to construct, and therefore would have a lower cost of construction. The clarification for the number of single-occupant unisex restrooms could potentially increase the cost of construction if they assumed they did not need to provide the code required number of fixtures.

RECOMMENDATION:

PDS staff recommends forwarding the proposed building code amendments to TMC Chapter 2.02 to the full City Council for consideration.