



**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Kristi Lynett, Sustainability Officer, Environmental Services  
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**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Ordinance – Amending TMC Title 2.02 Building Code – December 3, 2019  
**DATE:** November 8, 2019

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**SUMMARY:**

An ordinance amending Chapter 2.02 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Building Code, by adding Section 2.02.136 entitled “Amendment to IBC Chapter 4 – by deletion and replacement of the WA State amendment Section 427 – Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure,” to incorporate new provisions that merge Land Use and Building Codes related to electric vehicle charging infrastructure and readiness and coincide with the State of Washington’s adoption of changes to state building codes.

**STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:**

Updating the building code with needed changes will make permit approvals more effective and improve future access to electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in new commercial buildings, which will support the following City Council’s strategic policies:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.
- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.

**BACKGROUND:**

The transportation sector accounts for 71 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in Tacoma. As of October 2019, there were 1,400 EVs registered in Tacoma. It is predicted that EVs will account for 14 percent of the U.S. market by 2025. Access to convenient charging is critical for supporting this growth locally, especially at commercial and multifamily locations. In addition, the state legislature has passed a house bill to increase existing EV requirements that must be adopted by the state into building codes by July 1, 2021. The Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) needs to be updated to support these efforts.

Currently, code requirements for EV charging are enforced through both the Land Use Code and Building Code. Building Code requirements are from State Building Code Council amendments to the International Building Code and only apply to new construction buildings. Land Use Code provisions were adopted in 2016 and apply to both new construction and substantial remodels.

The proposed code changes were presented to the Board of Building Appeals on October 29, 2019, and received their recommendation for approval. The proposed code changes were also presented to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee on November 6, 2019, and received their recommendation to forward to the full City Council.

**ISSUE:**

Environmental Services (ES) and Planning and Development Services (PDS) staff identified building code amendments related to EV charging that could increase the effectiveness of TMC Chapter 2.02.



Proposed changes included the following:

- Incorporating Land Use Code related to EV infrastructure into the Building Code;
- Applying provisions of EV charging infrastructure to the construction of new buildings, and building additions that require 10 or more new or additional parking spaces;
- Expanding EV readiness requirements from five percent of parking spaces to 10 percent of parking spaces for all occupancy group/use classifications, except for Group R-2 Multifamily which will expand from five percent to 20 percent; and
- Requiring identification of EV dedicated circuits in the service panel or subpanel directory for both installed and future infrastructure.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The City Council could choose to not adopt the proposed code changes. The existing Land Use Code provisions and Building Code provisions related to EV charging would continue to be enforced in their existing form.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

ES and PDS staff recommend adopting the proposed ordinance changes to TMC Title 2.02 Building Code.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.