



ORDINANCE NO. 28903

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to land use regulations; amending Chapter 13.06 of
2 the Tacoma Municipal Code, relating to Zoning, to support the expanded
3 use of shipping containers for temporary and accessory uses, as part of
4 the 2023 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use
5 Regulatory Code, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

6 WHEREAS the 2023 Annual Amendment to the One Tacoma
7 Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code (“2023 Amendment”)
8 includes the following six applications: (1) an amendment to the Future Land
9 Use Map in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan (“Comprehensive Plan”) for
10 the Mor Furniture site, (2) an amendment to the Land Use Regulatory Code
11 (“Regulatory Code”) pertaining to electric fences, (3) an amendment to the
12 Regulatory Code pertaining to shipping containers, (4) an amendment to the
13 Regulatory Code pertaining to delivery-only retail businesses, (5) an
14 amendment to the Regulatory Code pertaining to commercial zoning, and (6)
15 minor amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Regulatory Code, and
16

17 WHEREAS this ordinance pertains to the proposed amendments to the
18 Regulatory Code to support the expanded use of shipping containers for
19 temporary and accessory uses, and this application was initiated by resolutions
20 passed by the City Council, including Resolution No. 40794 and Substitute
21 Resolution No. 40955, and would allow shipping containers to be used as an
22 accessory structure in C-1 and C-2 Commercial Districts and on residentially-
23 zoned properties that are operating with an approved conditional use permit
24 (such as parks, schools, and churches), and
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26



1 WHEREAS the placement of shipping containers would be subject to
2 certain development standards and, depending on size, may require a building
3 permit, and this proposal would also broaden the potential use of shipping
4 containers as a temporary structure, and
5

6 WHEREAS the Planning Commission (“Commission”) completed its review
7 of the 2023 Amendment through an extensive and inclusive public engagement
8 process, including a public hearing on April 5, 2023, and the Commission
9 forwarded to the City Council, and filed with the City Clerk’s Office, the
10 Commission’s Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report for the 2023
11 Amendment along with a letter of recommendations, both dated May 17, 2023,
12 and
13

14 WHEREAS the report documents the public review and community
15 engagement process and the Commission’s deliberations and decision-making
16 concerning the six applications, and
17

18 WHEREAS the Commission recommended that the City Council adopt the
19 code changes pertaining to the shipping containers application, and the
20 recommendations are consistent with the Growth Management Act, the
21 Comprehensive Plan, Tacoma 2025, and the City’s health, equity and
22 sustainability policy, and
23

24 WHEREAS pursuant to TMC 13.02.070.I.1, the City Council shall hold a
25 public hearing before enacting any proposed amendments to the Comprehensive
26 Plan and the TMC, and the City Council has fulfilled said requirement by



1 conducting a public hearing on June 27, 2023, concerning all six applications for
2 the 2023 Amendment; Now, Therefore,

3 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

4 Section 1. That Chapter 13.06 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, relating to
5 Zoning, is hereby amended by amending Section 13.06.020 entitled "Residential
6 Districts," Section 13.06.030 entitled "Commercial Districts," Section 13.06.080
7 entitled "Special Use Standards," and Section 13.06.100 entitled "Building Design
8 Standards," to read as set forth in the attached Exhibit "A."
9

10 Section 2. That the City Clerk, in consultation with the City Attorney, is
11 authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance, including, but not
12 limited to, the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, ordinance
13 numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any references thereto.
14

15 Passed _____
16

17
18 _____
19 Mayor

20 Attest:
21 _____
22 City Clerk

23 Approved as to form:
24 _____
25 Deputy City Attorney
26



EXHIBIT "A"

CHAPTER 13.06
ZONING

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13.06.020 Residential Districts.

A. Applicability. The following tables compose the land use regulations for all districts of Section 13.06.020.

* * *

G. Accessory building standards.

* * *

9. Except as noted below, commercial shipping and/or storage containers shall not be a permitted type of accessory building in any residential zoning district.

a. Such Shipping and/or storage containers may be allowed as a temporary use, subject to the limitations and standards in Section 13.06.080.P.

b. Shipping and/or storage containers may be allowed on a site with a valid conditional use permit, subject to the following standards:

(1) On sites less than 5 acres, shipping container shall not be located between the building and street right-of-way. On corner lots, this applies to front and side.

(2) On sites less than 5 acres, on corner lots, shipping container shall be setback further than the side wall of the main building.

(3) Shipping containers shall be screened from any Residential District when adjacent to or across street and/or alley from the Residential District. The shipping container must be screened by a minimum 6-foot tall solid wood fence and/or landscaping.

(4) Shipping containers cannot be stacked

(5) Shipping containers must meet, at a minimum, the setbacks of the main building

(6) If any of these standards cannot be met, a shipping container may be located as a Temporary Use for a reduced time and subject to the standards for a Temporary Use. See TMC 13.06.080.P

* * *

13.06.030 Commercial Districts

A. Applicability. The following tables compose the land use regulations for all districts of Section 13.06.030.

* * *

E. District use restrictions.

* * *

4. District use table.

* * *

Footnotes:



1 ~~3. Commercial shipping containers shall not be an allowed type of accessory building in any commercial~~
2 ~~zoning district. Such storage containers may be allowed as a temporary use, subject to the limitations and~~
3 ~~standards in Section 13.06.080.P.~~

4 * * *

5 F. District Development Standards

6 * * * * *

7 3. Setbacks

8 a. Applicability. [See TMC 13.100.A for setbacks applicable to shipping containers.](#)

9 * * *

10 **13.06.080 Special Use Standards**

11 * * *

12 P. Temporary Use.

13 * * *

14 2. Purpose.

15 The Purpose of this section is to allow listed temporary uses which:

- 16 a. Are not contrary to the various purposes of this chapter;
- 17 b. Will not impede the orderly development of the immediate surrounding area, as provided for in the
- 18 Comprehensive Plan and the zoning district in which the area is located; and
- 19 c. Will not endanger the health, safety, or general welfare of adjacent residences or the general public.

20 * * *

21 4. Temporary structure standards.

22 * * *

23 d. Temporary storage.

24 Temporary storage units are transportable units designed and used primarily for temporary storage of
25 building materials, household goods, personal items and other materials for use on a limited basis.
26 Temporary storage can also include storage of food (including the growth of food items). Temporary
storage units, where allowed, shall be subject to the following standards:

(1) Temporary storage units shall be allowed in the following instances:

[\(a\) As part of an active construction project or active moving process; or](#)

[\(b\) In conjunction with a conditional use, to support the conditional use; or](#)

[\(c\) To support an agricultural use, such as growing food. Food shall not be sold from the site.](#)

(2) In residential zoning districts, the maximum duration of temporary storage shall be 180-days in any
two-year period, with up to one 60-day extension allowed at the discretion of Planning and Development
Services.

(3) In commercial, mixed-use or industrial zoning districts, temporary storage units shall be:

[\(a\) removed within 30 days after final inspection of the project; or](#)

[\(b\) if being used in conjunction with a conditional use, a maximum of 180-days in a two-year period,
with up to one 60-day extension allowed at the discretion of Planning and Development Services](#)



1 (4) Temporary storage units shall be placed in the least conspicuous location available to minimize
 2 disturbance to any adjoining properties and shall be located in accordance with all applicable building,
 3 health and fire safety ordinances and regulations. Units shall provide a minimum 5-foot setback from all
 4 exterior property lines and shall not be located within required buffer areas. Units shall not block, impair,
 5 or otherwise unduly inconvenience pedestrian or vehicular traffic patterns, emergency access, access
 6 points to the site, parking lots, or adjacent uses.

7 (5) Such use is of a temporary nature not involving permanent installations, including structures, utilities,
 8 and other improvements, unless such improvements are to be used in conjunction with a permanent
 9 structure, plans for which have been approved by Planning and Development Services. This provision
 10 shall not be construed to prohibit the installation of utilities necessary to serve the temporary use or the
 11 requiring of improvements necessary to eliminate or mitigate nuisances or adverse environmental impacts
 12 resulting from the temporary use.

13 (6) Such temporary building shall not be required to comply with the standard locational, bulk and area
 14 requirements or the design, landscaping, parking and other standards found in Sections 13.06.090.100.

15 (7) Planning and Development Services shall have full discretion to stipulate additional limitations or
 16 conditions on such temporary use to ensure that it does not unduly affect the health, safety, or general
 17 welfare of adjacent properties or residences or the general public.

18 * * *

19 **13.06.100 Building design standards.**

20 A. Commercial District Minimum Design Standards.

21 1. General Applicability. The design standards of this section are required to implement the urban design
 22 goals of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Tacoma. The building design standards apply to all new
 23 development as outlined below, except as follows:

24 * * *

25 [j. Accessory Structure - Shipping containers are exempt from all sections except Subsection 9 below.](#)

26 2. Zoning District Applicability. The following requirements apply to C1, C2, T, and PDB zoning
 districts.

* * *

[9. Accessory Structure - Shipping Container](#)

[a. Shipping Containers are allowed as an accessory structure in all Commercial Districts subject to the standards set forth below:](#)

[\(1\) Shipping container shall not be located between the building and street right-of-way. On corner lots, this applies to front and side.](#)

[\(2\) Shipping container must be setback a minimum of 5 feet from all property lines; AND](#)

[\(3\) When the shipping container is not between the building and street right-of-way, it must be setback further from right-of-way than the wall of building and a minimum of 5 feet, whichever is greater. On corner lots, this applies to front and side.](#)

[\(3\) Shipping containers shall be screened from any Residential District when adjacent to or across an alley from the Residential District. In this case it must be screened by a minimum 6-foot tall solid wood fence and/or landscaping.](#)

[\(4\) Each site is limited to one shipping container.](#)

[\(5\) Shipping containers may not be placed within a shopping center as defined in TMC 13.01.060.S.](#)

[\(6\) See TMC 13.06.080.P for regulations specific to shipping containers as a temporary use.](#)

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