



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Stephen Atkinson, Principal Planner, Planning and Development Services
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Ordinance – Adopting Minor Plan Amendments – June 10, 2025
DATE: May 27, 2025

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance amending various chapters and sections in Title 13 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Land Use Code, to improve clarity, address errors, keep information current, and ensure consistency with other laws and regulations, as part of the proposed amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code for 2025, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

BACKGROUND:

The 2025 Annual Amendment to the Land Use Regulatory Code (2025 Minor Amendments), as recommended by the Planning Commission and revised by City Council, includes 23 amendments that are intended to maintain consistency with state and local laws, correct minor errors, address inconsistencies, keep information current, and clarify and improve provisions that, through implementation of the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan (Plan) and the Land Use Regulatory Code (Code), are found to be unclear or not fully meeting their intent. Amendments include those that standardize Code enforcement, update Pedestrian Street designations, expand split zoning applicability, add and amend definitions, clarify applicability of regulations, address inconsistencies with Washington State law, and modify electrified fence standards.

The Planning Commission completed its review of the 2025 Amendment through an extensive and inclusive public engagement process, including a public hearing on March 5, 2025. The Commission forwarded to the City Council, and filed with the City Clerk's Office, the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report for the 2025 Amendment along with a letter of recommendations, both dated April 23, 2025. The report documents the public review and community engagement process and the Commission's deliberations and decision-making concerning 24 minor amendment items. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council adopt 22 of the 24 minor amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) that were considered. The Commission's recommendations are consistent with the Growth Management Act, the One Tacoma Plan, Tacoma 2025, and the City's health, equity and sustainability policy. On May 13, 2025, the City Council scheduled a public hearing concerning the 2025 Minor Amendments, as recommended by the Planning Commission, with the addition of an amendment to electrified fence standards.

Pursuant to TMC 13.02.070.I.1, the City Council shall hold a public hearing before enacting any proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and TMC. The City Council has fulfilled said requirement by conducting a public hearing on June 3, 2025, concerning the 2025 Minor Amendments.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The City Council public hearing provided an opportunity for concerned citizens to weigh in, and the City Council to engage with the community, on the 2025 Minor Amendments. In advance of the public hearing, staff reached out to identified stakeholders (e.g., Neighborhood Councils, civic organizations, neighboring jurisdictions, Puyallup Tribe, Joint Base Lewis McCord, and business and property owners near the various project sites), maintained a project website, and posted notices on the project website, newspapers, and social media.



2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

The review process for the 2025 Minor Amendments, including the Planning Commission's and City Council's public hearings, provided an equal opportunity for all residents with diverse background and interests to learn about and provide comments on the proposed amendments contained therein.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score*: High Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

The application of minor plan and code amendments includes amendments brought forward by planning staff based on the feedback and suggestions made by customers and staff. Adoption of these amendments would increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma, and adds greater clarity to the plan and code.

The public hearing provided an opportunity for all residents with diverse backgrounds and interests to provide comments for the City Council's use in making decisions on various proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code that will have long-term affects to the community.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Reject the proposal	N/A	Needed updates and corrections to the TMC are not implemented.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

If the legislation is adopted, staff will work with the City Clerk's Office to codify amendments to the TMC.

Furthermore, staff routinely evaluate the effectiveness of land use regulations and consider amendments on an annual basis to improve the effectiveness of the Land Use Regulatory Code.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt the amendments as proposed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with adopting the amendments as proposed.