City of Tacoma **City Council Action Memorandum**

TO: **Hyun Kim, City Manager**
FROM: **Stephen Atkinson, Assistant Division Manager, Planning and Development Services**
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services
COPY: **City Council and City Clerk**
SUBJECT: **Ordinance – Adopting the 2026 Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code Amendments – June 2, 2026**
DATE: **May 18, 2026**

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance adopting the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2026, as recommended by the Planning Commission, on April 1, 2026, including pre-annexation proposed land use designation and zoning district for the subject sites within the McKinley Potential Annexation Area to take effect upon completion of the annexation process, Special Needs Housing and Shelters code amendments, minor code amendments, and State Legislative Code Amendments for Daycare Facilities and Binding Site Plans.

BACKGROUND:

Prepared pursuant to the Growth Management Act, the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2026 (2026 Amendment) include the following four applications: (1) McKinley Pre-Annexation Land Use Designations and Zoning , (2) Special Needs Housing and Shelters, (3) Minor Code Amendments, and (4) State Legislative Code Amendments for Daycare Facilities and Binding Site Plans.

The Planning Commission completed its review of the 2026 Amendment through an extensive and inclusive public engagement process, including a public hearing on March 4, 2026. The Commission recommended on April 1, 2026, that the 2026 Amendment be adopted by the City Council. The Commission also submitted, and filed with the City Clerk's Office, the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report for the 2026 Amendment, April 1, 2026. The report documents the public review and community engagement process and the Commission's deliberations and decision-making concerning the four applications. The Planning Commission Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report, including all background documents, is available for public review at www.tacoma.gov/codeamendments.

Pursuant to Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13.02.045, the City Council shall hold a public hearing before enacting any proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the TMC. The City Council has fulfilled said requirement by conducting a public hearing on May 19, 2026.

Planning Commission Recommendation – McKinley Pre-Annexation Land Use Designation and Zoning
The Planning Commission recommends applying the Low-Scale Residential land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan and the Urban Residential – 1 Zoning (UR-1) District to the properties at 8615, 8717, and 8801 McKinley Avenue East, to take effect upon completion of the annexation process. Upon finalization of the annexation process, the UR-1 Zone would guide the types of use and development that could occur on the properties.

Planning Commission Recommendation – Special Needs Housing and Shelters

The Special Needs Housing and Shelters code amendment was initiated in response to City Council Resolution No. 41311 (adopted in 2023) that directed the Planning Commission to identify appropriate zoning and development standards for siting Enhanced Service Facilities (ESFs), a type of Special Needs Housing, to correct inconsistencies

in the code, and to come into compliance with RCW 35.21.683 that requires local jurisdictions to allow shelters in any zoning district where residential dwellings or hotels are permitted. The Planning Commission proposal includes the following:

1. Permanent Shelters: Allowing permanent shelters in any zoning district where hotels are permitted; require site inspections and operational plans.
2. Temporary Shelters: Code re-organization to make it easier for customers to find the appropriate standards; extend permit expiration and reduce dispersion requirements to reduce barriers to providing these services when needed.
3. Special Needs Housing: Consolidate multiple use classifications into one use category in the zoning table; simplify Conditional Use Permit process; establish bed capacity limits in certain zoning districts.

Planning Commission Recommendation – Minor Code Amendments
The "Minor Plan and Code Amendments" proposes minor revisions to various sections of the TMC (primarily in Title 13 – Land Use Regulatory Code). The intent is to keep information current, address inconsistencies, correct minor errors, increase clarity, and improve provisions that, through implementation of the Plan and administration of the Code, are found to be unclear or not fully meet their intent.

Planning Commission recommends affect the following topics: 1. Definitions and terms, 2. Permitted uses and standards, 3. Urban Residential zoning and design standards, 4. Non-Urban Residential Design Standards, and 5. Other corrections and clarifications.

Planning Commission Recommendation – State Legislative Amendments for Daycare Facilities and Binding Site Plans

The Planning Commission recommendation includes the following proposals:

- Daycare Facilities (required by Senate Bill 5509): The proposal would modify use and development standards to allow Day Care Facilities without a conditional use permit in the UR-1, UR-2 and UR-3 Zones and without a limit on enrollment capacity. The proposal includes a new definition for "daycare facility" that is inclusive of multiple state licensing types.
- Binding Site Plans (required by Senate Bill 5611): This proposal updates the definition of "binding site plan" to be consistent with state law, allows the use of binding site plans for the subdivision of multi-dwelling residential development, and incorporates new intent statements and submittal requirements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on March 4, 2026, to receive oral testimony, and left the hearing record open through March 6, 2026, to accept additional written comments, concerning the 2026 Amendment Package.

Notification for the public hearing was conducted to reach a broad-based audience, through the following efforts:

- **Public Notices –** The notice for the public hearing was mailed on February 5, 2026, to approximately 686 individuals and entities within 2,500 feet of the site associated with the proposed McKinley annexation. Additionally, two public notice signs were placed near the site of the proposed McKinley annexation at least 14 days prior to the public hearing. Notice was also e-mailed to more than 1400 individuals on the Planning Commission's interested parties list that includes the City Council, Neighborhood Councils, area business district associations, the Puyallup Tribal Nation, adjacent jurisdictions, City and State departments, and others.
- **News/Social Media –** The City of Tacoma issued a News Release on February 5, 2026. An online advertisement was placed in The News Tribune on February 13, 2026. A legal notice concerning the Determination of Non-Significance, the public hearing, and the informational meeting was placed in the Tacoma Daily Index on February 13, 2026. An event page for each of the public hearing and the informational meeting was posted on the City's Facebook, starting the week of February 2, 2026.
- **60-Day Notices –** A "Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendment 60 Days Prior to Adoption" was filed with the State Department of Commerce (per RCW 36.70A.106) on February 5, 2026. A similar notice was sent to the Joint Base Lewis-McChord (per RCW 36.70A.530(4) on February 5, 2026, asking for comments within 60 days of receipt of the notice.
- **Tribal Consultation –** A letter was sent to the chairman of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians on February 5, 2026, to formally invite the Tribe's consultation on the 2026 Amendment.

In addition, the City Council conducted a public hearing on May 19, 2026, including additional public notices via direct mailing, press releases, social media, and distribution to interested parties. City staff conducted a public informational meeting on May 9, 2026, to provide information on the proposals to interested community participants.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Proactively establishing zoning and land use designations for these properties prior to annexation is best aligned to the following strategic policy priority:

- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

The Special Needs Housing and Shelters Amendments are best aligned to the following strategic policy priority:

- All Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

These minor code amendments are best aligned to the following strategic policy priority:

- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

The State Legislative Amendments for Daycare Centers and Binding Site Plans are best aligned to the following strategic policy priority:

- All Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

Civic Engagement: The 2026 Amendments are citywide in scope. The overall Equity Index Score is: Moderate Opportunity
Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.
Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Amending the Planning Commission proposal based on the public comment and testimony received during the public hearing and comment period	Can demonstrate responsiveness to community input and enhance trust in government.	Specific amendments are not yet known, so specific impacts cannot be identified.
2. Delaying Final Reading to accommodate further Council deliberations	Ensures adequate time to consider public comment and address Council questions.	Not applicable.
3. Rejecting the proposal	Not applicable.	Likely ends the annexation process. Leaves the TMC inconsistent with new State laws; limits areas where new Special Needs Housing and Shelters can be located and may affect ability to meet community need. Leaves potential errors in the code or code sections that are not appropriately organized or clear to applicants. Would limit ability of daycare service providers to meet community demand for service.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the proposed 2026 amendments.

FISCAL IMPACT:
There is no significant fiscal impact from adopting these code amendments.

ATTACHMENTS:

- **Exhibit A**: McKinley Pre-Annexation Land Use Designations and Zoning
- **Exhibit B**: Special Needs Housing Code Amendments
- **Exhibit C**: Minor Code Amendments
- **Exhibit D**: State Legislative Code Amendments – Daycare Facilities and Binding Site Plans