



Property Maintenance & Enforcement Modernization Update

City of Tacoma | Planning & Development Services
Regulatory Compliance
Community Vitality and Safety Committee
March 12, 2026

1



AGENDA



Background

Technology Modernization: Accela & SeeClickFix

Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) vs. International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC)

Regional Experience: IPMC in Washington

Enforcement in other Washington Cities

Council Direction Requested - Enforcement Posture

Enforcement Example - Chronic Exterior Maintenance Violation

Next Steps

2

2

BACKGROUND



- Code Compliance transferred to Planning & Development Services (PDS) (January 2025)
- Staff updated Community Vitality and Safety Committee (CVS) on code adoption and process improvements (April 2025)
- Aligning Code Compliance workflows within PDS (post-transfer)
- Began multi-phase Accela integration
- Initiated 311 collaboration to improve complaint intake language and routing
- Completed crosswalk of Tacoma standards with IPMC

3

3

TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION: ACCELA & SEECLICKFIX



Staff is actively transitioning Code Compliance case management to the Accela platform in partnership with the Information Technology Department.

Complete:

- Phase 1: Record creation in Accela
- Violation categories standardized for consistency
- Case record structure improved for reporting

In Process:

- Migration of enforcement workflows into Accela
- SeeClickFix and Accela automation (case creation + updates)
- Automated status updates, improved customer-facing case clarity (less follow-up, fewer misroutes)

4

4

TMC vs. IPMC



Existing TMC

- Point-based building classification
- Separate Building (Title 2) & Nuisance (Title 8) codes
- Procedural, hearing-driven escalation
- Locally customized framework

IPMC Standards

- Condition-based property maintenance standards
- Integrated building + nuisance-type conditions
- Clear unsafe / unfit authority
- Nationally recognized model code
- Defined maintenance thresholds

Why This Matters for Tacoma

- Shifts enforcement from “process-driven” to “condition-driven”
- Creates clearer minimum expectations for property upkeep
- Provides a more predictable and transparent standard for both residents and staff

5

5

REGIONAL EXPERIENCE: IPMC IN WASHINGTON



Cities Reviewed: Federal Way, Lynnwood, Oak Harbor

Observed Structural Shifts

- Consolidated property maintenance standards into a single framework
- Condition-based thresholds replacing point-based classification systems
- Administrative enforcement authority embedded within maintenance code

What Has Not Changed

- Appeal pathways retained
- Local amendment authority preserved
- Enforcement posture determined by local policy

Observed Operational Effects

- Clearer maintenance expectations for property owners
- More direct enforcement pathway
- Reduced reliance on multi-step procedural escalation

Implication for Tacoma

IPMC provides the framework; enforcement intensity and penalties remain a policy choice.

6

6

ENFORCEMENT IN OTHER WASHINGTON CITIES



Enforcement Step	Federal Way	Lynnwood	Oak Harbor
First Contact with Property Owner	Written notice explaining the violation and what must be fixed	Written notice identifying the issue and required corrections	Courtesy notice asking owner to correct the issue within 10 days
If the Problem Continues	Daily penalties may begin after the correction deadline passes (variable)	Daily fines escalate from about \$100 to \$500 per day until fixed	Violation treated as a civil infraction (up to \$250 per day)
Repeat or Ongoing Violations	Each day the issue continues can count as a separate violation	Penalties automatically increase each day until resolved	Each day the violation continues counts as another offense
Final Enforcement Tools	City may correct the problem and bill the property owner	City can continue penalties and pursue enforcement orders through the courts	Continued refusal to comply may lead to court enforcement

7

7

COUNCIL DIRECTION REQUESTED – ENFORCEMENT POSTURE



Voluntary Compliance Framework

- Option A – Maintain voluntary notice-first model
- Option B – Shorten compliance windows for defined violations
- Option C – Earlier formal enforcement triggers

Penalty Structure (Authorized under Uniform Enforcement Code)

Current practice: monthly penalties; authority exists up to \$10,000 per day under TMC 1.82.

- Option A – Maintain monthly penalty model
- Option B – Monthly → daily penalties after defined noncompliance period
- Option C – Earlier use of daily penalties for repeat or chronic violations

Repeat-Offender Escalation

- Option A – Parcel-based repeat tracking
- Option B – Cross-parcel owner tracking
- Option C – Automatic enhanced enforcement after defined threshold

PDS will return with policy models reflecting Council direction.

8

8

ENFORCEMENT EXAMPLE – CHRONIC EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE VIOLATION

Chronic Exterior Maintenance Violation

Current Practice

- Notice issued
- Standard compliance timeline
- Monthly penalties if unresolved

Moderate Approach

- Shortened compliance window
- Escalating monthly penalties
- Transition to daily penalties after defined noncompliance period

Strong Approach

- Earlier formal enforcement trigger
- Reduced voluntary window
- Daily penalties utilized sooner

9

9

NEXT STEPS

Spring 2026

- Return to CVS with draft enforcement models reflecting Council direction

Study Session

- Review ordinance structure and enforcement approach

Summer 2026

- Formal Council consideration and adoption

Remainder of 2026

- Code finalization and internal alignment
- Staff training and operational updates
- Public education and outreach
- Accela phase continuation

10

10

