



# City of SeaTac

## Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedures

*Pursuant to the authority granted by Resolution 97-001, and requirements of SMC 16A.25.040, the Director of the Community and Economic Development Department hereby adopts these procedures to serve as the City of SeaTac's official Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedures.*

### I. Approval

Steve Pilcher, Director  
Department of Community and Economic Development

Date

### II. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycles & Eligibility

RCW 36.70A.130(2) specifies that a City's Comprehensive Plan may be amended "no more frequently than once every year," except under certain circumstances.

- A. City of SeaTac Amendment Cycles: Odd-Numbered Years.** Proposals will only be considered during odd-numbered years, but may be submitted at any time.
- B. Eligibility.** Proposals may be submitted by individuals, property owners, neighboring jurisdictions, Councils, Boards, Commissions or City staff.
- C. Off-Year Exception.** City Council, via a full Council decision, may initiate proposals during even-numbered years. Off-Year Exceptions are only allowed if there is an identified need for the proposed amendment, and necessary resources are available to accomplish the work. See Section VII. Exceptions, for the Off-Year Amendment Process.

### III. Concurrent Development Regulation Amendments & Zone Reclassifications

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan amendment process, the City will also undertake the following:

- A. Development Regulation Amendments:** Proposed changes to development regulations may be compiled and reviewed according to procedures specified in SMC 16A.21.020.
- B. Zone Reclassifications:** In order to preserve consistency between the Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan, zone reclassification processes will be conducted concurrent with proposals to amend Comprehensive Plan map designations as appropriate.

#### **IV. General Amendment Schedule**

The Department will establish anticipated calendar dates at the start of each amendment process which will generally correspond to the following:

##### **STEP 1: APPLICATION SUBMITTAL**

- January: Applications Available
- Jan/Feb: Planning Commission & City Council consideration of City-initiated proposals
- March: Proposal Submission & Fee Deadline (Typical due date is last business day of month)

##### **STEP 2: PRELIMINARY DOCKET COMPILATION & REVIEW**

- May: Staff Analyzes/Compiles Preliminary Docket
- June: Planning Commission Review of Preliminary Docket
- July: Planning Commission Recommendation on Proposals to be Placed on Final Docket

##### **\*STEP 3: ESTABLISHMENT OF FINAL DOCKET**

- July: City Council Reviews Preliminary Docket & PC Recommendation
- July/Aug: City Council Establishes Final Docket

##### **\*STEP 4: FINAL DOCKET REVIEW**

- Aug: Final Docket Supplemental Information
- Aug/Sept: Public Notification of Proposed Comprehensive Plan Map Changes & Rezones
- Aug/Oct: Staff Analysis and State Agency/Environmental (SEPA) Reviews
- Sept/Oct: Planning Commission Review
- Oct/Nov: Planning Commission Public Hearing & Recommendation to City Council

##### **\*STEP 5: CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

- Nov: City Council Reviews Final Docket & Planning Commission Recommendation
- Nov/Dec: City Council Adoption of Amendments & Rezones

\*City Council will likely refer the preliminary and final docket proposals to Committee prior to full Council review and action.

## V. Amendment Process

### STEP 1: SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- A. Submittal of Applications.** Proposals shall be submitted on forms prepared by the Community and Economic Development Department (the “Department”) and include environmental checklists filled in by the applicants.
1. Department staff shall continually review the Comprehensive Plan and identify needed amendments. Department proposals must be submitted per the established deadline.
  2. All proposals shall be docketed (maintained on a list called the “Preliminary Docket”) and available for public review.
- B. Fee Requirements.** Application fees are required for the processes identified below.

<b>Comprehensive Plan Amendments</b> (Concurrent rezone proposal costs included in fee.)	<b>Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application fee</b>
	<b>SEPA Environmental Checklist fee</b>
	<i>If proposal not established as part of Final Docket:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One-half of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application fee will be refunded to the applicant.</li> <li>- All of the SEPA fee will be refunded.</li> </ul>
<b>Development Regulation Amendments</b>	<b>No application fee</b>
	<b>SEPA Environmental Checklist fee</b>

*For specific fee amounts, click the following link: [City’s Fee Schedule.](#)*

- C. Supplemental Information.** Additional information, if any, may be requested by the Department and shall be provided at the expense of the applicant, unless waived by written determination of the Department.
- D. Expansion of the Scope of Proposed Amendments.** After submission of a proposal, the Department may recommend expansion of the scope of any proposed map change based on its effects upon surrounding properties and neighborhoods, land uses, circulation patterns, and future development. The Department may also recommend expanding the scope of proposed text changes based upon impacts on other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- E. Proposals Received After the Proposal Submission Deadline.** Proposals received after the Proposal Submission Deadline, shall be held over for review during the next biennial amendment cycle.

## **STEP 2: PRELIMINARY DOCKET COMPILATION & REVIEW**

- A. Compilation of Preliminary Docket.** The Department shall maintain a list of all proposed amendments called the “Preliminary Docket.” A copy shall be available for public review.
- B. Staff Analysis of Proposals.** The Department shall review the proposals and determine whether any should be deferred or eliminated from consideration under the current amendment cycle.
- C. Staff Recommendation on Deferral or Elimination of Proposals.** Staff may recommend that a proposal be recommended for deferral or elimination if:
  - **Incomplete:** The proposal is incomplete;
  - **Not Meet Preliminary Docket Criteria:** The proposal does not meet the Preliminary Docket Criteria, described in Section V(A), or information is unavailable to determine whether it meets the criteria;
- D. Planning Commission Review/Recommendation on Proposals for Final Docket.** The Planning Commission shall consider the staff recommendations before making a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed elimination or deferral of any proposal from the Final Docket.

## **STEP 3: ESTABLISHMENT OF FINAL DOCKET**

- A. City Council Review/Establishment of Final Docket.** The City Council shall confirm or deny the proposed elimination or deferral of all Preliminary Docket proposals and establish the Final Docket via a Resolution of the full Council.
  - 1. Biennial Capital Facilities Plan Amendments.** The Department shall amend the Final Docket as necessary to include the biennial Capital Facilities Plan.
- B. Notification of Applicants.** Following the City Council’s establishment of the Final Docket, applicants will be notified of the status of their proposals.
  - 1. Eliminated Proposals.** If the proposal was eliminated, applicants will be notified of the decision and the reasons.
  - 2. Final Docket Proposals.** Applicants will be notified if their proposals were confirmed as part of the Final Docket, and may be asked to provide supplemental information for the Final Docket evaluation.
- C. Final Docket Public Review Draft.** Once established, the Department shall maintain a Final Docket of all proposed amendments approved for review by the City Council for consideration, a copy of which shall be kept on file for public review.

#### **STEP 4: FINAL DOCKET REVIEW**

- A. Submittal of Supplemental Information.** Applicants shall submit supplemental information necessary to complete assessment of the policy implications and environmental impacts of the proposed amendment, as required by the Department.
- 1. Submittal Deadline.** Supplemental information must be received by the submittal deadline, which is determined by the Department. Failure to submit the required information by this date may cause the proposed amendment to be eliminated from further consideration by the Planning Commission.
- B. Public Notice for Map Change/Concurrent Rezone Proposals.** For Comprehensive Plan Map change and concurrent rezone proposals, approximately two weeks after the Final Docket is established, the following public notification is required:
- 1. Applicant Installs Notice Board.** Applicants shall post a Notice Board on the subject property/properties. The Department will provide applicant with Notice Board template and installation requirements.
  - 2. Department Mails Notification.** The Department shall send public notice mailings to adjacent property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. The City's database of property owner information shall be the source for the notification mailing lists. At the discretion of the Director, notification requirements may be met through other official public noticing methods.
- C. Staff Analysis of Final Docket/State Environmental (SEPA) Review.**
- 1. Staff Analysis:** Following receipt of any required supplemental information, the Department shall conduct an assessment of the Final Docket which will consider the following:
    - **Sufficient Supplemental Information Provided:** The applicant provided the Department with the requested information in a timely fashion.
    - **Consistency with Final Docket Criteria:** The proposal does not meet the Final Docket Criteria, described in Section V(B), or information is unavailable to determine whether it meets the criteria;
  - 2. State Environmental (SEPA) Review.** In order to ensure a holistic assessment of potential environmental impacts from the proposals, the Department will review the environmental checklists required for each proposed amendment and review the potential environmental impacts of all proposals before issuing a single, composite environmental determination.
  - 3. Staff Report.** The Department shall prepare a written report regarding consistency with the Criteria for Final Docket as described in Section V(B) and provide a recommendation on each proposal.
- D. Planning Commission Review.** The Department shall present the Staff Report findings and recommendations to the Planning Commission.
- E. Public Hearing & Planning Commission Recommendation on Final Docket.**
- 1. Public Hearing.** The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing to consider testimony regarding all the proposals on the Final Docket.
  - 2. Planning Commission Recommendation.** After considering public testimony and the recommendations of the Department, the Planning Commission shall provide recommendations to the City Council.
  - 3. Additional Public Hearing.** The Department shall recommend whether the City Council should hold an additional public hearing to receive additional public testimony as provided in SMC 2.25.030(B).

## **STEP 5: CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

- A. City Council Review & Adoption.** The City Council shall consider the recommendations of the Department and the Planning Commission and take final action on whether to amend the Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Public Notice.** After adoption, public notice shall be as provided in RCW 35A.12.160.
- C. Transmittal of Ordinance.** Also after adoption, the City Clerk shall transmit a complete and accurate copy of the Ordinance, as adopted, to the Washington Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services within ten days after final adoption, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106 and WAC 365-195-620; to the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), pursuant to RCW 36.70A.100 and RCW 36.70A.210. The City Clerk shall also transmit a complete and accurate copy of the Ordinance, as adopted, to the King County Assessor by the ensuing 31<sup>st</sup> day of July, pursuant to RCW 35A.63.260.

## **VI. Criteria for Evaluating Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

- A. Preliminary Docket Criteria.** All proposed amendments shall be evaluated according to the following criteria. Proposals that do not meet the criteria may be eliminated from consideration prior to public notification.
  - 2. For All Changes.**
    - a. *Sufficient City Resources for Review.*** The City has the resources, including staff and budget, necessary to review the proposal.
    - b. *City-Led Process More Appropriate.*** The proposal does not raise policy or land use issues that are more appropriately addressed by on-going or planned City work programs.
    - c. *Regional Policy Consistency.*** The proposal is consistent with requirements of the Growth Management Act, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Multi-County Planning Policies, and King County Countywide Planning Policies.
    - d. *Not in Conflict/Redundant with Comprehensive Plan.*** The proposal is not in conflict with an adopted Comprehensive Plan Policy; is not redundant with, or duplicative of, an adopted Comprehensive Plan Policy; or is not clearly out of character with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - 3. Additional Criteria for Comprehensive Plan Map Changes.**
    - a. *Site Suitability.*** The site affected is physically suited for anticipated development.
    - b. *Sufficient Infrastructure/Public Facilities.*** Adequate public facility capacity to support the proposed land use exists, or can be provided, including sewer, water and roads.
- B. Final Docket Criteria.** All proposed amendments which are included in the Final Docket shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:
  - 1. *Changed Circumstance.*** Circumstances related to the proposal have changed or new information has become available which was not considered when the Comprehensive Plan was last amended.
  - 2. *Comprehensive Plan Consistency.*** The proposal is consistent with all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable City policies and agreements.
  - 3. *Population/Employment Targets.*** The proposal will not prevent the City's adopted population and employment targets from being achieved.

4. **Concurrency.** The proposal will be able to satisfy concurrency requirements for public facilities including transportation and utilities, and does not adversely affect other adopted Level of Service standards.
5. **No Adverse Impacts.** The proposal will not result in development that adversely affects public health, safety and welfare and, as demonstrated from the SEPA environmental review, the proposal will not result in impacts to housing, transportation, capital facilities, utilities, parks or environmental features that cannot be mitigated.
6. **Additional Criteria for Comprehensive Plan Map Changes.** In addition to the above criteria, map change proposals will be evaluated according to the following:
  - a. **Change in Condition.**
    - (1) Conditions have changed since the property was given its present Comprehensive Plan designation so that the current designation is no longer appropriate, or
    - (2) The map change will correct a Comprehensive Plan designation that was inappropriate when established.
  - b. **Anticipated Impacts.** The proposal identifies anticipated impacts of the change, including the geographic area affected and the issues presented by the proposed change.
  - c. **Compatibility with Adjacent Uses.** The proposed amendment will be compatible with nearby uses.

## VII. Exceptions

- A. **Revised Code of Washington.** RCW 36.70A.130(2) specifies that a City's Comprehensive Plan may be amended "no more frequently than once every year," except under certain circumstances. Those circumstances may be summarized as follows:
  1. The initial adoption of a subarea plan;
  2. The adoption or amendment of a shoreline master program;
  3. The amendment of the capital facilities element that occurs concurrently with the adoption or amendment of a city budget;
  4. The adoption of comprehensive plan amendments necessary to enact a planned action; or
  5. Whenever an emergency exists or to resolve an appeal of a comprehensive plan filed with a growth management hearings board or with the court.
- B. **Off-Year Exception Amendment Process.** When City Council initiates a proposal during off-years, the amendment process will be as follows:
  1. **Public Participation (per SMC 16A.25.030).** Planning staff shall establish and broadly disseminate information regarding the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.
  2. **Staff Analysis and Recommendation (per General Comprehensive Plan Procedures).** Planning staff shall analyze and evaluate proposals according to the Final Docket criteria, and prepare a report which includes this evaluation and a recommendation on each proposal.
  3. **Review and Approval Process (per SMC 2.25.030).**
    - a. **SMC 2.25.030(A) Public Hearing Required.** The Department shall ensure that the Planning Commission holds at least one (1) public hearing before adopting any elements, amendments, extensions or additions to the Comprehensive Plan, and the Department shall assist the Planning Commission in scheduling and conducting such public hearings.

- b. **SMC 2.25.030(B) City Council Approval.** The Department shall recommend to the Council, upon transmittal of the Planning Commission's recommendation as to adoption of any elements, amendments, extensions or additions to the Comprehensive Plan or sub-area plan, whether an additional public hearing should be held by the Council.

## **V. Procedure Alteration**

The Community and Economic Development Director is authorized to alter these procedures as necessary pursuant to Resolution 97-0001.