

**Guidelines for Submitting Applications for
Amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan:
Text, Area-Wide Map, and Urban Growth Area Amendments**

Changes to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and associated maps are approved through a legislative process resulting in adoption by the County Council. The process for identifying possible amendments, initiating proposed amendments for legislative consideration, evaluation of amendments, and public review is outlined in Chapter 19C.10 of the Pierce County Code and summarized in this information sheet. Plan amendments are classified as follows:

Text Amendment. A change or revision in the text of the goals, policies, objectives, principles, or standards of the Plan.

Area-Wide Map Amendment. A change or revision to the Comprehensive Plan Generalized Land Use Map that affects an area which is either comprehensive in nature, deals with homogeneous communities, is geographically distinctive, or has unified interest within the County, such as community plan areas. Area-Wide Map Amendments must have area-wide significance and include many separate properties under various ownerships. A single-parcel or single-ownership map change does not meet the criteria for consideration as an Area-Wide Map Amendment.

Urban Growth Area Amendment. A change or revision to the Comprehensive Urban Growth Area (CUGA), or urban growth area (UGA) or urban service area (USA) of any city or town. An amendment to the CUGA or UGA must include a new land use designation for the area under consideration.

Initiation of Proposed Amendments

The County Council, County Executive, or a city or town within Pierce County may initiate an amendment. Initiation indicates that the amendment will receive further consideration. It does not signify approval of the amendment. Here is how the process works:

1. Complete an application form obtained from Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Advance Planning, 2401 South 35th Street, Room 228, Tacoma, WA.
2. If you are requesting the County Executive to initiate an amendment, provide the completed application with your request to PALS, Advance Planning by November 15th of each even-numbered year (e.g., 2002, 2004, etc.), and send a copy to the Pierce County Council. The Executive will then evaluate all the submitted applications and determine which ones he will initiate. You are responsible for checking on the status of your request. In order to be officially initiated by the County Executive, applications for amendments must be submitted to PALS Advance Planning by November 15th.
3. If you are requesting the County Council to initiate an amendment, provide the completed application to the Council with your request by December 1st of each even-numbered year (e.g., 2002, 2004, etc.), and send a copy to PALS, Advance Planning. The County Council will then evaluate all the submitted applications, and after public hearing will determine which ones to initiate. Initiation will occur by official resolution the following February. In order to be officially initiated by the County Council, applications for amendments must be submitted to the Council by December 1st.

4. A city or town in Pierce County may initiate amendments by forwarding a written request with attached completed application to the County Council not later than December 1st of each even-numbered year (e.g., 2002, 2004, etc.), and sending a copy to PALS, Advance Planning. Individuals requesting a city or town to initiate an amendment need to contact the city or town directly to begin that process.

Mailing addresses for the County Council and PALS, Advance Planning are as follows:

Pierce County Council
Room 1046, County City Building
930 Tacoma Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402

Pierce County Planning and Land Services
Advance Planning, Room 228
2401 South 35th Street
Tacoma, WA 98409

Timing of the Amendment Review and Approval Process

Proposed amendments that are initiated by the Executive, County Council, or city or town, will be evaluated and staff reports prepared for the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will conduct public hearings and prepare recommendations for the County Council by July 15th. Land use advisory commissions may also review and make recommendations on initiated amendments affecting the represented community. Subsequently, the County Council will hold public hearings and adopt amendments by the end of October. Adopted Plan amendments will then be implemented by amending the Development Regulations-Zoning and the official Zoning Atlas.

If you have any questions about the process or application forms, please contact the Advance Planning Section of Planning and Land Services at (253) 798-2785.