

# Site Rezones

## WHEN TO APPLY FOR A SITE REZONE

In instances when a type of use is not allowed in a particular zoning district, a customer may apply for a site rezone to accommodate a particular use. The rezone process allows the applicant some flexibility within the zoning code, but also allows the City to place conditions on a project that can safeguard against possible negative impacts of the proposed development.

The two most common site rezones occur when a business is proposed on a residentially zoned site or to upzone a commercially zoned site to allow for a more intensive commercial or industrial use.

## RESPONSE TO CRITERIA

Applicants must describe how the rezone request meets each criterion for approval, per TMC 1305.030.C. The applicant is responsible for addressing the criteria as completely as possible, providing details and important background information.

- The change of zoning classification is generally consistent with its land use intensity designation and the Comprehensive Plan.
  - Contact a Planner to help determine a property's land use intensity by calling 253-591-5030.
  - The Comprehensive Plan is available online: <http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning>
- Substantial changes in conditions have occurred affecting the use and development of the property that would indicate the requested change of zoning is appropriate.
- If it is established that a rezone is required to directly meet the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, it is unnecessary to demonstrate changed conditions supporting the requested rezone.
- The change is consistent with the district establishment statement for the zoning classification being requested.
- The change of the zoning classification will not result in a substantial change to an area-wide rezone action taken by the City Council in the two years preceding the filing of the rezone application.
- The change of zoning classification bears a substantial relationship to public health, safety, morals, or general welfare.

## SEPA DETERMINATION

A SEPA Determination is required for all rezone requests. (See [SEPA Tip Sheet](#))

## LIMITATIONS ON REZONES

### Downtown Districts

The boundaries of the Downtown Districts (DCC, DMU, DR, and WR) can only be modified through an area-wide rezone (not through an individual customer application).

### Mixed-Use Centers

The boundaries of Mixed-Use Districts (NCX, CCX, UCX, UCX-TD, RCX, CIX, NRX, URX, and HMX) can only be modified through an area-wide rezone (not through an individual customer application).

### Overlays

The boundaries of view-sensitive, groundwater protection, manufacturing/industrial centers, and historic and conservation overlay districts can only be modified through an area-wide rezone (not through an individual customer application).

## AREA-WIDE RECLASSIFICATIONS

Area-wide rezones adopted by the City Council supersede any previous site or area-wide rezones. Therefore, conditions of approval associated with previously approved rezones would no longer apply when the site is later included in an area-wide rezone.

Area-wide rezones are managed by the Long-Range Planning Division of the Planning and Development Services Department. For information on area-wide rezones, please contact the Long-Range Planning Division at 253-591-5030.

## SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

**All application materials must be submitted in electronic PDF format on compact disc (CD) or online at TacomaPermits.org. See [Electronic File Standards Tip Sheet](#).**

- Pre-application meeting
- Application for Land Use Permit, completed and signed
- SEPA - Environmental checklist, completed and signed
- Site plan to scale
- Floor plan(s) to scale
- Building elevations to scale (exterior view of all sides)
- Written response to rezone criteria
- Application fees (Rezone application fee and SEPA Determination fee)



*Note: This Tip Sheet does not substitute for codes and regulations.*

*The applicant is responsible for compliance with all codes and regulations, whether or not described in this document.*

**More information: City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services | [www.tacomapermits.org](http://www.tacomapermits.org) (253) 591-5030**

To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please call 253-591-5030 (voice).

TTY or STS users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.

# Site Rezones

**PROCESS AND TIMELINE\*** - Timeline is approximate and does not account for any holds placed on the project.

Scoping and pre-application meetings are required to apply for a site rezone.  
**Pre-application meetings can be requested online via [TacomaPermits.org](http://TacomaPermits.org)**  
See [Pre-application Meeting Requests Tip Sheet](#).

Day 1: Site rezone application materials and fees are submitted at the pre-application meeting. If staff determines that the application is complete for review, a public hearing can be scheduled. Public Hearings are generally scheduled to occur two months after the submittal date.
Day 7: A Complete Application letter is mailed confirming the date of the Public Hearing and the applicant is directed to pick-up the property information sign(s) to post at the site. The property information sign(s) must remain posted on-site until the final decision is issued.
Day 14: A public notice, including instructions for viewing the submitted application materials on-line, is transmitted to internal City departments and external agencies and is mailed to neighbors within 400 feet of the property in the form of a yellow postcard. Public comments for a site rezone may be submitted until the closing of the public hearing. Interested parties may also testify in person at the Public Hearing. A deadline is provided in the public notice for written comments on the Environmental Checklist. The applicant is given a chance to provide a written response to all comments.
Day 50: A SEPA Determination is issued based on the application materials and information provided in the Environmental Checklist. The SEPA Determination may be appealed by the applicant or an aggrieved party with standing. An appeal of the SEPA Determination will be heard by the Hearing Examiner at the Public Hearing.
Day 80: The assigned planner provides a staff report to the Hearing Examiner and applicant. The staff report will include a summary of the SEPA appeal, if one is filed.
Day 90: The Public Hearing is held.
Day 120: The Hearing Examiner will issue a recommendation to the City Council within 30 days following the Public Hearing. The recommendation is issued and mailed to the applicant and any neighbors who have provided comments.
Day 134: An appeal may be made to the City Council within 14 days after the recommendation is issued. If no appeal is filed within this time, the recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for the final decision. Provided no appeal is filed, building permits can be submitted any time after the close of the appeal period. Building permits will not be issued, however, until the entire site rezone process is complete.
<b>If no appeals are filed, the process continues as described below.</b>
Day 140: The Hearing Examiner's recommendation is presented to the City Council for its first reading of the rezone ordinance. If the City Council passes the first reading of the rezone ordinance, an appeal of its decision may be made to the WA State Superior Court within 21 days after the City Council's first reading.
Day 160: After the first reading of the rezone ordinance is passed, a Concomitant Zoning Agreement (CZA) is mailed to the applicant and property owner for review and signature. The CZA is a legal agreement stating that the property owner will abide by the conditions under which the rezone is to be approved. The CZA must be signed and property owner's signature must be notarized. Staff will record the CZA with the Pierce County's Recorder's Office and coordinate the City Council's second reading of the rezone ordinance. The City Council is obligated to approve the rezone application at the second reading if the property owner has signed the CZA and demonstrates compliance with the conditions of approval.
Day 180: The rezone is effective 10 days after the ordinance is published.

## APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

- Tacoma Municipal Code Section: [13.05 - Land Use Permit Procedures, 13.05.030.C - Application for rezoning of property, 13.06 - Zoning, 13.12 - Environmental Code](#)
- Tacoma Municipal Code Section: [2.02 - Building Code](#)



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