



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT (TEXT or MAP) PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

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## **General Information about Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

The following describes the purpose and procedures for amending and updating the Comprehensive Plan. Amendments may involve changes in the written text, policies of the plan, changes to the Future Land Use Map, or to supporting documents. Plan amendments will be reviewed in accordance with Yakima County Code (YCC) Title 16B.10, the Growth Management Act (GMA), County-wide planning policies, **Horizon 2040** goals and policies, applicable city/town comprehensive plans, applicable capital facilities plan, and the official population growth forecasts and allocations.

All requests for plan amendments shall be made in writing. A Pre-Application Meeting is required prior to submittal of a plan amendment application. This meeting gives the applicant(s) and staff the opportunity to ask specific questions related to the proposal to help ensure that the application will be complete when submitted. The forms to schedule a meeting are available online at <https://www.yakimacounty.us/2881/Biennial-Amendment-Forms> or the Yakima County Public Services - Planning Division, First Floor Yakima County Courthouse at 128 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Yakima, WA 98901, Monday through Friday, during business hours between 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, except holidays.

All requests for plan amendments must be made in writing using the official application submittal documents provided by the Yakima County Planning Division. Please see the "Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations Amendment Cycle Bulletin and FAQ's" for a list of the application forms to submit to amend the comprehensive plan. Additional information may be required after the review of your application.

Site-specific Map and Plan Text Applications must be submitted in writing by the last business day of the published deadline date in order to be considered for that year's amendment process.

## **YCC 16B.10.030 Applicability**

- (1) The criteria and requirements of YCC Title 16B.10 will apply to all applications or proposals for changes to the comprehensive plan text, policies, map designations, major rezones or supporting documents unless specifically exempted. The following types of actions may be considered through the process set forth in this Section:
  - (a) Site-specific policy plan map changes including land use (Future Land Use Map) and mineral resources;
  - (b) Plan policy or other text changes;
  - (c) Changes to official controls intended to implement the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.
- (3) Site-specific plan map amendments apply to a limited geographical area controlled either by an individual property owner or all property owners within the designated area.

A proposal which modifies or develops policies yet directly affects relatively few individuals or a limited geographical area is considered a site-specific amendment. Applications for site-specific plan map amendments will be processed if received by the published application deadline date for the current cycle.

## **YCC 16B.10.040 Procedures**

- (1) The Planning Commission may hold a public meeting prior to the amendment cycle to report to the public on progress in implementing the comprehensive plan. At that time, the Planning Commission will accept oral and written public comments and suggestions from an interested party regarding changes needed in the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.
- (4) Site-specific future land use map changes not involving a change to Urban Growth Area boundaries

may be initiated by the property owner(s) or any agent of the owner with proof of agency through a fee-paid application process... All site-specific plan map amendment requests will be docketed for further staff review and consideration by the County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

- (6) Comprehensive Plan [...] text amendments may be proposed by any party, including County staff, at any time to the Administrative Official.
  - (a) All such amendments, except those initiated by Yakima County, must be submitted in accordance with YCC 16B.10.060, Submittal Requirements, using the appropriate forms, but shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission for its docketing consideration at the discretion of the Administrative Official, unless an amendment is requested by the Board of County Commissioners necessary to remain consistent with state requirements.
  - (b) Following the annual meeting of the Planning Commission, the Administrative Official will compile a list of suggested changes and will recommend to the Planning Commission which should be docketed for further consideration during the current amendment cycle, deferred for future research and consideration, or not pursued, each in accordance with his determination in YCC 16B.10.095(6). The Administrative Official shall provide the Board of County Commissioners with the Planning Commission's recommendations regarding deferred items when setting the Planning Division work program for the next budget cycle.
- (7) The Planning Commission shall provide an opportunity for public comment regarding the suggested text changes, and review them to determine whether they should be docketed to receive further review and consideration as part of the current year's amendment cycle. A suggested amendment will not be docketed for further processing if the Planning Commission determines one or more of the following:
  - (a) The suggested amendment would likely cause environmental impacts that have not previously been analyzed or require additional review to determine impacts that cannot be completed within the required time frame.
  - (b) The suggested amendment would require additional analysis to determine capital facilities impacts and amendments that cannot be completed within the required time frame.
  - (c) The suggested amendment would require additional analysis to determine the appropriate land use designation that cannot be completed within the required time frame.
  - (d) The suggested amendment would involve an area that will be part of a sub-area planning process in the next two years.
  - (e) The suggested amendment has been previously reviewed by the Planning Commission or Board of County Commissioners, and circumstances have not substantially changed to support an additional review prior to a general plan update.
  - (f) The suggested amendment clearly violates a provision of the County-wide planning policies, a city comprehensive plan, the Yakima County Comprehensive Plan, [...], the GMA or the SMA such that no further review is necessary or warranted.
  - (g) The suggested amendment is not sufficiently clear or well-defined to merit further review.
  - (h) The comprehensive plan is not the appropriate place to deal with this suggestion.
  - (i) It is not in the public interest to pursue this suggested amendment at this time.
- (8) Either the Board of County Commissioners or the Planning Commission may initiate items for docketing and consideration as part of the biennial plan amendment cycle.
- (9) The decision of the Planning Commission on whether to docket a (proposed) text amendment for additional review is not subject to appeal.
- (10) After the docket is set, the Planning Division shall conduct its review of the docketed plan amendments, including analysis of how the proposed amendment meets the criteria for the existing and proposed designation, as well as environmental review. No amendments shall be docketed after the publication of the notice of public hearing and environmental review. If the Planning Division or SEPA Responsible Official determines that any of the proposed amendments would require review of environmental impacts beyond the analysis in the Environmental Impact Statement for the comprehensive plan, such that additional analysis is required that cannot be

completed within the amendment schedule, the proposed amendment shall be deferred until the next plan amendment cycle, and the Planning Commission and the applicant shall be so notified, in writing. Any unused fee deposit will be returned to the applicant at that time, and a new deposit will be required prior to the January 31 deadline of the following cycle to continue the application process.

SEPA fees for text amendments will be collected immediately after being docketed.

#### **16B.10.070 Timing of Amendments**

- (1) The comprehensive plan shall be amended no more frequently than once every two years as set forth by YCC 16B.10.040(3) and RCW 36.70A.130(2)(a). Applications for site-specific or text amendments to the comprehensive plan must adhere to the time periods and procedures established in this Chapter as described in Section 16B.10.040(3).
- (2) The plan amendment process may be suspended by the Board during a general plan or code update process.
- (3) Pre-application conferences can be held at any time; however, applications for amendments to policy plan map or text [...] will only be accepted before close of business on the last business day in January. Items received after the January deadline will be processed in the next biennial amendment cycle.
- (4) At its March meeting following the January deadline, the Planning Commission will review the suggested plan text changes for docketing and those development regulation text changes recommended by Administrative Official for docketing consideration. When the Planning Commission has completed its review, it will set the docket of proposed amendments.
- (5) The Planning Division shall establish timelines for additional review and consideration by the Planning Commission and Board of Yakima County Commissioners to ensure that the plan amendment process is finished by December 31 of that year.

#### **16B.10.080 Public Process and Notice**

To provide for the opportunity of citizens to suggest and make comments on docketed amendments, the following public notice and outreach provisions shall be completed during each plan [...] amendment process.

- (1) Notice of the plan [...] amendment process deadlines shall be publicized through:
  - (a) A general mailing to interested parties,
  - (b) Posting on the Public Services website,
  - (c) Notice in the County's newspaper of record and other print media as appropriate,
  - (d) Press releases to the media, and
  - (e) Posting of information at the Planning Division and other office areas of the County where interested parties may conduct business.
- (2) Initial notice of submitted applications will be posted on the Yakima County Public Services website and in the Planning Division's offices.
- (3) Site-specific future land use map amendments shall follow the notification procedures of Section 16B.05.030 of this Code.
- (4) Additional public notification may be undertaken by the Planning Division if it determines that it is in the public interest to do so.

#### **16B.10.090 Major Rezones**

Legislative rezones necessary to maintain consistency between the comprehensive plan policy map and the official zoning map shall be completed concurrently with the plan amendment process wherever

appropriate. Major rezones shall not require additional fees or review processes. Rezones completed as part of the plan amendment process shall be reviewed against the criteria as for plan amendments in Section 16B.10.095 of this code, and YCC Section 19.36.040 and must be consistent with the requested plan designation as indicated in Table 19.36-1. [...]