

STAFF REPORT



Date: October 14, 2025
To: Planning Commission
From: Brad Medrud, Community Development Director

2025 Annual City of Tumwater Comprehensive Plan Amendments Ordinance No. O2025-009

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130 and TMC 18.60.025(A)(2), amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan can only be considered once per calendar year.

On October 18, 2022, the City Council approved Ordinance No. O2022-023, which suspended the Comprehensive Plan Annual Amendment Cycle during the 2025 Comprehensive Plan periodic update, except for City-sponsored amendments. On March 4, 2025, the City Council approved Ordinance No. O2025-004, which extended the suspension of the Comprehensive Plan Annual Amendment Cycle during the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update, except for City-sponsored amendments through December 31, 2025.

The City's annual 2025 Final Docket of Comprehensive Plan amendments includes one City-sponsored Comprehensive Plan amendment: adoption of the 2026 – 2031 Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan Update.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment was reviewed against the criteria found in TMC 18.60.025(B):

1. *Does the amendment conform to the Growth Management Act?*
2. *Is it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies, and related plans?*
3. *Have area conditions changed or are changing to justify a change in land use for the area?*
4. *Is there a need to provide a community-related use not anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan?*

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2026 – 2031 Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan Update

Summary

The proposal is a Comprehensive Plan amendment to update the Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan to reflect current information.

Proposal

Update the Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan to reflect current information.

Proponent

City of Tumwater

Background

The purpose of the update is to address Growth Management Act requirements to update the City's Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan with new data and analysis and confirm implementation actions every two years.

City staff have been working on the update of the Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan for the past two years. The update reflects the changes that have occurred in the City since the Capital Facilities Plan's last update as part of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The Capital Facilities Plan is an Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The City Council placed the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment on the 2025 Long Range Planning Work Program on January 21, 2025. After the City Council approved the work program, staff from the Transportation & Engineering, Water Resources & Sustainability, Parks &

Recreation, and Community Development Departments reviewed the previous Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan to determine what specific amendments were needed to update the Plan.

The Public Works Committee was briefed on the ordinance on September 18, 2025, and the Planning Commission was briefed on the ordinance on September 23, 2025.

Review and Approval Criteria

Comprehensive Plan amendments are subject to the criteria below from TMC 18.60.025(B):

- 1) *All amendments to the comprehensive plan must conform with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A RCW, and all amendments for permanent changes to the comprehensive plan must be submitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106.*

The amendment being considered is in accordance with the City's annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process, as required by RCW 36.70A. If the amendment is approved by the City Council, it will be submitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106.

The amendment meets the goals of the Washington State Growth Management Act as follows:

- 1) **Urban growth.** *Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is intended to support the growth and development of the City as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 2) **Reduce sprawl.** *Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goal as the proposed amendment is intended to reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development and focus future growth in the City as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 3) **Transportation.** *Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled, and are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment supports urban level development in the City that would provide for efficient multimodal transportation systems as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

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- 4) **Housing.** *Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goal as the proposed amendment supports the provision of a range of residential development in the City, including permanently affordable housing as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 5) **Economic development.** *Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goal as the proposed amendment supports development that provides economic development and allows more people to live closer to jobs and services as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 6) **Property rights.** *Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment does not require any taking of private property without compensation.

- 7) **Permits.** *Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is being considered as a part of the City's annual Comprehensive Plan amendment review.

- 8) **Natural resource industries.** *Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment does not affect natural resource industries.

- 9) **Open space and recreation.** *Retain open space and green space, enhance recreational opportunities, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment supports the goals, policies, and actions for open space and recreation as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan

- 10) *Environment.*** *Protect and enhance the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment protects the environment by directing future development towards urban rather than rural areas as outlined in the maps, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

- 11) *Citizen participation and coordination.*** *Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process, including the participation of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.*

City residents and all interested parties, agencies and jurisdictions were notified about the application and the public hearing for the proposal as part of the proposed 2025 Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

- 12) *Public facilities and services.*** *Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is supported by the City's provision of sewer and water service in the urban area.

- 13) *Historic preservation.*** *Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment does not affect historic preservation. As future development occurs, it would need to comply with all the applicable historical or archaeological regulations.

- 14) *Climate change and resiliency.*** *Ensure that the City's Comprehensive Plans and development regulations adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment contains projects that support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

- 15) *Shorelines of the state.*** *For shorelines of the state, the goals and policies of the shoreline management act as set forth in RCW 90.58.020 shall be considered an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.*

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment does not affect the shorelines of the state. As future development occurs, it would need to comply with the City's Shoreline Management Program, as required.

- 2) *Amendments and site-specific rezone applications should be evaluated for internal consistency with the comprehensive plan, and for consistency with the county-wide***

planning policies, related plans, and the comprehensive plan of Thurston County or cities which have common borders with Tumwater.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies.

The applicable goals, policies, and actions of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan that support the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is as follows:

Land Use Element Goal LU-1 states:

Ensure the Land Use Element is implementable and coordinated with all applicable City plans and the plans of other jurisdictions in the Thurston region.

Land Use Element Policy LU-1.10 states:

Coordinate the Land Use Element with the City's Lands for Public Purposes Element and the Capital Facilities Plan.

Land Use Element Policy LU-1.11 states:

Make capital budget decisions consistent with the comprehensive plan in accordance with RCW 36.70A.120 (Reference the City's current six-year Capital Facilities and Transportation Improvement Plans).

Land Use Element Goal LU-2 states:

Ensure development takes place in an orderly and cost-efficient manner in order to best utilize available land and public services, conserve natural resources, protect critical areas, preserve open space, and reduce sprawl.

Land Use Element Policy LU-2.6 states:

Ensure the City's capital budget decisions in the City's current six-year Capital Facilities and Transportation Improvement Plans are coordinated with the Land Use Element, Lands for Public Purpose Element, and Transportation Element.

Land Use Element Goal LU-3 states:

Ensure adequate public services, facilities, and publicly owned utilities are available to proposed and existing development.

Land Use Element Policy LU-3.1 states:

Coordinate development with the City's six-year Capital Facilities Plan.

Land Use Element Action LU-3.1.1 states:

Ensure the Capital Facilities Plan can be implemented through the Land Use Element's projected densities and the direction found in the Lands for Public Purposes Element.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the Land Use Element goals, policies, and actions above.

The applicable goals, policies, and actions of the Lands for Public Purposes Element of the Comprehensive Plan that support the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is as follows:

Lands for Public Purposes Element Goal LPP-1 states:

Provide sufficient and efficient services to Tumwater and the Urban Growth Area.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Policy LPP-1.1 states:

Coordinate with Thurston Regional Planning Council, Thurston County, and other service providers to identify areas of shared need for public facilities.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Policy LPP-1.2 states:

Ensure concurrency with City, County, and Regional plans to provide the most efficient array of services.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Policy LPP-1.3 states:

Follow the requirements of County-Wide Planning Policy V and RCW 36.70A.200 when siting new facilities and improve the process whenever possible.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Goal LPP-2 states:

Make recommendations for improvements in the provision of public services.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Policy LPP-2.1 states:

Support actions to expand and improve Tumwater's multimodal transit network.

Lands for Public Purposes Element Policy LPP-2.5 states:

Support the fulfillment of citizen requests for public facilities in line with the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the Lands for Public Purposes Element goals, policies, and actions above.

- 3) *Whether conditions in the area for which comprehensive plan change/zoning amendment is requested have changed or are changing to such a degree that it is in the public interest to encourage a change in land use for the area.*

The criterion does not apply, because a Comprehensive Plan map amendment and corresponding rezone is not proposed.

- 4) *Whether the proposed comprehensive plan zoning amendment is necessary in order to provide land for a community-related use which was not anticipated at the time of adoption of the comprehensive plan.*

The criterion does not apply.

Staff Conclusions

1. The proposal meets the review and approval criteria found in TMC 18.60.025(B).

2. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goals of the Washington State Growth Management Act.
3. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with Goals LU-1, LU-2, and LU-3, Policies LU-1.10, LU-1.11, LU-2.6, and LU-3.1 and Action LU-3.1.1 of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with Goals LPP-1 and LPP-2 and Policies LPP-1.1, LPP-1.2, LPP-1.3, LPP-2.1, and LPP-2.5 of the Lands for Public Purposes Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Based on the above review and analysis, staff concludes that the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies, the goals of Sustainable Thurston, and the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend approval of the updated Capital Facilities Plan to reflect current information.

Effect of the Proposed Amendment

The proposal amends the Capital Facilities Plan as shown in Appendix 2.1 and Ordinance No. O2025-009.

Staff Contacts

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Public Approval Process

The City Council placed the proposed amendment on the 2025 Long Range Planning Work Program on January 21, 2025.

An Environmental Checklist for a non-project action was prepared on September 11, 2025, under the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW), pursuant to Chapter 197-11 WAC, and a Determination of Non-Significance was issued on September 26, 2025.

The ordinance will be sent to the Washington State Department of Commerce on September 11, 2025, for their required 60-day review before the proposed amendment is adopted, in accordance with RCW 36.70A.106.

The Planning Commission held a briefing on the ordinance on September 23, 2025, and discussed the general government and transportation components of the Capital Facilities Plan. The Planning Commission is expected to hold a public hearing for the proposed amendment on October 28, 2025. Following the public hearing and deliberations, the Planning Commission is expected to make their recommendation on the proposed amendment to the City Council.

The General Government Committee is expected to review the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment in a briefing on November 12, 2025; the City Council is expected to hold a work session to discuss the amendment on November 25, 2025; and the City Council is scheduled to consider the proposed amendment at a meeting on December 2, 2025.

Public Notification

A Notice of Public Hearing for the Planning Commission is expected to be issued on October 17, 2025. The notice will be published as a press release, distributed to interested individuals and entities that have requested such notices, and published in The Olympian.

Staff Conclusions

1. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment meets the review and approval criteria found in TMC 18.60.025(B).
2. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goals of the Washington State Growth Management Act.
3. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the goals of the Land Use Element, the Lands for Public Purposes, and the Transportation Plan of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Based on the above review and analysis, staff concludes that the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment is consistent with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies, and the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment by Ordinance No. O2025-009.