

**APPLICATION
FOR TEXT AMENDMENT
TO PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A Text Amendment is a proposed change or revision to the policies of the Comprehensive Plan text.

Applications will not be accepted in the following community plan areas as they are currently under an update process:

- Frederickson Community Plan
- Mid-County Community Plan
- Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan
- South Hill Community Plan

Please refer to the [Community Plans update webpage](#).

NOTE: An application must be completed for all proposed amendments, whether initiated by the County Council, County Executive, or a city or town with jurisdiction in Pierce County. No application is considered officially initiated until: 1) the Executive forwards the application to the County Council for inclusion in the Council resolution initiating amendments; 2) a city or town forwards the application to the County Council for inclusion in the Council resolution initiating amendments; or 3) the County Council includes the application in the resolution initiating amendments. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the completed application and to check on the status of the request. If you want a city or town to initiate an amendment, you need to work directly with the city or town. See the handout [Guidelines for Submitting Applications for Amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan](#) for additional information.

The deadline to submit an application is 4:00 p.m., **July 31, 2020**. Complete all the blanks in this application form. A letter or report in lieu of this application will not be accepted. However, reports, photos or other materials may be submitted to support your application.

A \$3,000.00 fee for each Comprehensive Plan amendment is required. Whether a request to initiate an amendment is made to the County Executive or County Council, a non-refundable submittal fee of \$500.00 is required at time of application. If the Council approves to initiate the amendment, the remaining \$2,500.00 fee shall be required within ten (10) working days after the amendment is initiated by the County Council. If an applicant fails to pay the required fee, staff will be unable to proceed with the review of an application(s), and this will result in the expiration and cancellation of an application(s).

For additional information, contact Pierce County Planning and Public Works, Long Range Planning Division, by phone at (253) 798-3736 or by email at Jessica.Nappi@piercecountywa.gov.

Applicant: Master Builders Association of Pierce County
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DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT:

1. General description of proposal:

This amendment would update the density calculation from a net formula to a simple gross formula in urban residential areas. This change would apply the density range in the comprehensive plan to the entire site rather than applying it only to the area that is left over after deducting features such as roads, wetlands and so on. Lots size standards remain unchanged. Because residential zones include a requirement that subdivisions comply with both the minimum density and the maximum density, calculating density using Gross Site Area will achieve the following: predictability, simplicity, flexibility, and better infill potential. These points are elaborated upon on the "additional page" portion of the application

2. Write text as it currently appears in the Comprehensive Plan (include element/chapter and Pierce County Code citation):

(Urban Residential/Page 2-29) GOAL LU-26: The allowable number of dwelling units within individual urban development proposals shall be calculated using net developable acreage.

LU-26.1: In determining net developable acreage, deductions shall be made for roads and environmentally constrained lands.

3. Write proposed amendment (if new, indicate the proposed location by specifying the document, page number, and location on the page):

GOAL LU-26: The allowable number of dwelling units within individual urban development proposals shall be calculated using gross developable acreage.

STRIKE THE ENTIRE FOLLOWING SUBGOAL:

LU-26.1: In determining net developable acreage, deductions shall be made for roads and environmentally constrained lands.

4. Why is the text amendment needed and being proposed?

By adopting this amendment, land in the Urban Growth Area can be used more efficiently, maximizing the developable acreage available within the UGA, resulting in more efficient use of public utility infrastructure, reducing lot development costs and furthering efforts for attainable housing in Pierce County (all of which advance regional goals). For example, in areas within the County that have sewer, to accomplish the urban densities, we should be obtaining 6 units per acre. Current realized density is closer to 4.5 units per acre due to policies like Gross vs Net calculations. The math required for such calculations that needs to continually be updated through the platting process adds unneeded complexity and time with no benefit provided to the public and contributes to the high cost of housing. The current net density calculations penalize available lands, even those without critical areas. This proposed change will not affect the amount, calculation, or the size of critical areas OR the protections of those lands.

Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Additional Page

Gross Density Calculation Benefits (elaborated):

Predictability- Gross density calculations will ensure that feasibility analysis, property transactions, and pre-application meetings will all be based on the same understanding of the lot potential. Furthermore, because many permits, utility connections, and impact fees are based on the number of lots created, it will be easier to understand upfront costs.

Simplicity- It will be far easier for the applicant and Pierce County Staff to understand the subdivision potential when using gross density calculations. The gross density calculation is a figure that is a known quantity from the beginning whereas net density calculations are not fully understood until well into the design process (as roads, critical areas, etc. are subtracted out).

Flexibility- Applicants and Pierce County can exercise greater creativity in designing lot and road layouts when working around wetlands, steep slopes, storm water ponds, and other constraints that exist on lots.

Better Infill Potential - One of the foundational goals of the Growth Management Act is to encourage growth within Urban Growth Areas as a means to reduce sprawl in surrounding farm, forest, and open space areas. Net density calculations have reduced lot potential in various urban zones.