

CITY OF TACOMA – ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NO. ESD25-001

FROM: Geoffrey M. Smyth, P.E., Interim Director,
Environmental Services Department

RE: City of Tacoma 2021 Side Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Availability Manual
– Shared Side Sewers

DATE: *February 3, 2025*

A. Authority. The Director is authorized pursuant to TMC 12.08A.040 to promulgate, implement, amend, supplement, and enforce, such policies, procedures, requirements, and manuals, and to issue such guidance, as are reasonable and necessary to implement and ensure compliance with TMC Chapters 12.08A, 12.08B, 12.08C and 12.08D. Such policies, procedures, guidance, requirements, and manuals shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of TMC Chapters 12.08A, 12.08B, 12.08C and 12.08D, the City’s pretreatment program, the City’s wastewater NPDES permits, the City’s municipal stormwater permit, the City’s Stormwater Management Program policies and procedures, the SWMM, and applicable federal and state laws and regulations. This executive directive promulgates and implements the policy as set forth at Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.


B. Purpose. The purpose of this executive directive is to authorize the use of shared sewers.

C. Findings. The Director finds that promulgation and implementation of this executive directive is in the best interest of the City and is consistent with TMC Chapter 12.08B.150, the provisions of the 2021 City of Tacoma Side Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Manual, and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Pursuant to TMC 12.08A.040, the Director has determined and implements, the following Environmental Services mitigation requirements, effective as of the 1st day of February, 2025 (Effective Date).

The requirement is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Approved:

Signed by:


Geoffrey M. Smyth, P.E.
Interim Director, Environmental Services

EXHIBIT A

Chapter 3 – Side Sewer Construction Requirements – Section 3.6

In response to the adoption of City of Tacoma Ordinance Number 28986 – Home in Tacoma Phase 2, Environmental Services is updating Section 3.6 and Section 3.2.A of the 2021 Side Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Availability Manual as follows.

Section 3.6 currently states:

3.6 SHARED SIDE SEWER CONNECTIONS

New shared side sewer connections are only permitted between two or more buildings that are under common ownership and are located on the same parcel. A property owner may combine tax parcels into one parcel in order to share side sewers. In the event the parcel is divided and buildings will be separated onto individual parcels, the shared side sewer shall be reconstructed such that each new parcel has a separate side sewer connection to the public sewer.

A. Separating Existing Shared Side Sewers

If a property owner utilizing a shared side sewer system is required to perform a repair, that property owner shall disconnect from the shared side sewer and construct a new separate connection to the public sewer.

The City may permit repairs on existing side sewers on a case by case basis if an exception is requested per Section 1.1. Additional information may be required from property owners to determine possible options.

A side sewer easement agreement or other proof of consent to access and maintain the side sewer is required for an existing shared side sewers that remain in service. This agreement or proof of consent shall be recorded to title at the Pierce County Auditor's Office. Confirmation of the recorded document shall be submitted to the City before any permits to allow repair on a shared side sewer will be permitted. City-issued permits do not give authority to work on another's property.

B. Exceptions

Condominiums which have individual parcels for each unit, or have the potential to be platted into individual parcels for each unit, shall have separate side sewer connections for each unit to the public sewer. If the condominiums are restricted by building codes and other shared utilities from ever platting into individual parcels per each unit, a shared side sewer connection to the public sewer may be permitted for all units within one building.

This Directive replaces the language of Section 3.6 as follows.

New shared side sewer connections may be permitted, under limited circumstances, if parties enter into a Shared Side Sewer Maintenance Agreement and Access Easement and the use of a shared side sewer is approved by the City of Tacoma Environmental Services, or designee.

The Shared Side Sewer Maintenance Agreement and Access Easement shall:

- *Be a perpetual mutual easement allowing access to all shared portions of the side sewer;*
- *Have provisions for mutual maintenance;*
- *Be signed (with notarization) by all property owners served by the shared side sewer; and*
- *Be recorded with the Pierce County's Auditor's Office.*

Existing Shared Side Sewers

If an existing side sewer needs repair, considerations to keep the shared portion shall be determined by the City of Tacoma Environmental Services, or designee. Parties shall enter into a Shared Side Sewer Maintenance Agreement and Access Easement, and the shared portion shall meet the sizing criteria. If Environmental Services, or designee, does not approve the use of the shared side sewer, the owner shall disconnect from the shared side sewer and construct a new separate connection to the City system.

Careful consideration should be given before proposing the use of shared side sewers. Shared side sewers are subject to additional maintenance concerns as they are receiving wastewater from multiple units who may not be aware that certain items should not be flushed or disposed in the wastewater system – one person's misuse of the system can affect multiple units. Multiple connections from a single property are allowed provided the distance between connections can be maintained. The use of multiple connections may be a more efficient and economical solution as connections of side sewers 8" and greater require that connections to the City system be made at a maintenance hole – if a maintenance hole does not exist, the applicant is responsible to install a maintenance hole designed per the City of Tacoma Design Manual at their expense. Installation of a maintenance hole on the City system also requires additional permitting through a Work Order Process.

Section 3.2A currently states:

A. Pipe Size

Side sewers shall be a minimum of 6 inches in diameter for commercial properties and 4 inches in diameter for residential properties or designed in accordance with Uniform Plumbing Code Section 717.0 based on the number

and type of plumbing fixtures within the building. The side sewer pipe size shall be equal to or greater than the size of the building drain. Downsizing of pipes in the direction of flow is not permitted.

This Directive replaces the language of Section 3.2A as follows:

A. Pipe Size

All side sewers shall be designed in accordance with the Uniform Plumbing Code and Criteria for Sewage Works based on the number and type of plumbing fixtures within the building with minimum pipe size as shown below. The side sewer shall be equal to or greater than the size of the building drain. Downsizing of pipes in the direction of flow is not permitted.

The following table provides the Minimum Pipe Size based upon property/structure type.

Property/Structure Type	Minimum Side Sewer Diameter
<i>Residential Structures – Individual Non-Shared Portions Only</i>	<i>4”</i>
<i>Residential Structures – Shared Portions - Up to 6 Units (May be Multiple Structures)*</i>	<i>6”</i>
<i>Residential Structures – Shared Portions – More than 6 Units*</i>	<i>8”</i>
<i>Multi-Family – Non-Shared and Shared Portions</i>	<i>6”</i>
<i>Commercial/Industrial – Non-Shared and Shared Portions</i>	<i>6”</i>

**No more than 6 residential units may share a side sewer that is smaller than 8” in diameter except multi-family structures.*

Calculations to determine required pipe capacity must be provided for the following scenarios. Calculations must be prepared by a Washington State Licensed Professional Engineer and submitted to the City for review.

- Commercial/industrial properties.*
- Multi-family properties*
- Residential structures which cumulatively total 6 units or more (may be multiple structures)*

Side sewers greater than 6” in diameter shall:

- be designed by a Washington State Professional Engineer,*
- provide sufficient easement and access,*
- Be designed pr the City of Tacoma Design Manual,*
- have the full design approved by Environmental Services.*

Final approval of pipe size proposed shall be made by Environmental Services.