



## Planning Director's Interpretation

Public Works Department  
305 NW Pacific Highway  
La Center, WA 98629

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**Site Address:** 210 E 4<sup>th</sup> Street, La Center

**Project Description:** Conversion of Existing TDS Building to New City Hall and Future Tenant Offices

**Date:** March 4, 2021

**Applicant:** City of La Center  
305 NW Pacific Highway  
La Center, WA 98629

The City of La Center (City) purchased the former TDS Telecom building located on parcel 62648000 at the above address on December 4, 2018. The 9,918-square foot, three-story building is located south of the existing City Hall and is accessed from East 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The City's intent is to utilize a 5,897 square-foot portion (approximately 60 percent) of the building as the new City Hall with the remaining portion being vacant, but available for lease to a future office tenant. Nearly the entirety of the building would be office space for City employees or the future office tenant.

The building is located in the Downtown Commercial District (C-1) zone and within the Downtown Overlay District (DT Overlay). La Center Municipal Code (LCMC), Table 18.150.020 specifies that "buildings entirely dedicated to public services such as City Hall, police and fire substations" require a conditional use permit (see Table 18.150.020[17]). Footnote 1 to Table 18.150.020 indicates the director can permit uses not described in the table, but similar to permitted or conditional uses under a Type I process. Buildings *not* used entirely for government services, as is proposed in this case, are not listed in the table. Proposed use of the TDS building as a mix of City Hall offices and office space for a future tenant requires the City issue an interpretation as to whether the use would be permitted or conditional based on similar uses in Table 18.150.020. LCMC 18.20.040(2) also allows the review authority to issue a similar use determination for uses not listed in any zone or district. The City has filed a Type I application requesting the review authority issue a similar use determination. As specified in LCMC 18.20.060, the review authority for the LCDC is the planning director.

The remodel plans for the TDS building call for the main and upper levels to be used for City Hall functions and the lower level would be available for the future office tenant. Uses on each level would include:

- **Upper Level:** The upper level would include City offices for the mayor, public works manager, city engineer, community development manager, and open office areas. Other space on the upper level would include a plan room, closet, mechanical room, restrooms, a coffee/kitchen

area, elevator and stairs. Total area proposed for uses on the upper level would be 2,271 square feet all of which would be used for offices and support areas.

- Main Level: The main level would include City offices for two accountants, the finance manager, and a flex office space available for on-demand use. Other space on the main level would include an employee break room, a conference room, restrooms, storage, a meeting room, lobby, the City Council chambers/multi-purpose meeting room, elevator, and stairs. The City Council chambers/multi-purpose meeting room would have periodic City Council and Planning Commission meetings and also community meetings based on request/demand. City Council meetings would regularly occur twice each month and Planning Commission meetings would occur once per month. Total area proposed for uses on the main level would be 3,858 square feet. Total area dedicated to office and support uses would be 2,901 square feet and total area dedicated to the City Council chambers/multi-purpose meeting room would be 957 square feet.
- Lower level: The lower level would be dedicated to the future office tenant and would include office spaces, restrooms, mechanical room, janitor's closet, electrical room, elevator, and stairs. Total area proposed for uses on the lower level would be 3,636 square feet all of which would be used for offices and support areas.

The proposed uses for the TDS building would be almost entirely for City and future tenant offices and associated support areas (stairs, elevator, employee break room, etc.) totaling 8,808 square feet of the 9,765-square-foot building (90 percent). The City Council chambers/multi-purpose meeting area would be one exception that would not be offices or office support area and would total 957 square feet or 10 percent of the total building.

Since the vast majority of the TDS building would be remodeled to be office and office support space, the planning director finds that the proposed use of the TDS building as City Hall and future tenant offices and support space is most similar to "Services – Professional Office: Professional offices (< 10,000 square feet gross floor area)." The City Council chambers/multipurpose meeting area is most similar to "Services – Membership Organizations: Civic, social, fraternal, charitable, labor and political (< 5,000 square feet)" due to the periodic and on-demand meetings that would occur there and their general frequency as 3-5 times per month. Both similar uses are permitted uses in the C-1 zone in which the TDS building is located.

Based on the foregoing analysis, the planning director determines that the proposed use of the TDS building for City Hall and future tenant offices with a City Council and multi-purpose meeting area is a permitted use in the C-1 zone.

Signed:  Date: April 19 2021  
Ethan Spoo, AICP, Consulting City Planner