Introduction
Chapter 38 of the Monterey City Code is commonly referred to as the Zoning Ordinance. Its purpose is to establish specific zoning districts, as well as the development and land use standards that go along with each district. These districts are typically displayed on the Zoning Map. A person may apply to amend either the Zoning Map or the Zoning Ordinance at any time. Either action requires consideration by the Planning Commission and approval of the City Council. The Planning Commission or City Council may also initiate a Zoning Ordinance or Zoning Map amendment at any time.

Consideration
If the proposed Zoning Map amendment is site-specific, meaning that it only refers to one property, the application will be considered in light of the surrounding zoning district. The amendment should be an extension of an existing zoning district or a logical formation of a new district. The zoning of an individual property to accommodate one specific owner or one specific project is considered “spot zoning” and is prohibited.

Any amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will impact properties Citywide with the same zone designation. For example, an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that allows a commercial land use in a district where it is not currently permitted would apply to that entire district, even if the intent of the amendment is to enable that use on one particular site. Changing the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate just one property is also considered spot zoning. As such, Zoning Ordinance amendments must be universally appropriate and in the entire City’s best interest.

Environmental Review
The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that the City review all projects for their potential impact on the environment. The required level of review and accompanying reports vary greatly by the type of project, its location, and other criteria. While some projects may be exempt from formal environmental review, others may require extensive study and the production of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Following a cursory review of an application, City staff will notify the applicant of the level of environmental review that will be required. Depending on the level of review required, an applicant may be asked for various technical studies such as traffic reports, archaeology reports, arborist reports, storm water plans, etc. Or, you may be asked for more specific information on the plans to clarify, reveal, or eliminate a potential environment impact.

Findings
In its recommendation to the City Council, the Planning Commission must include a clear and substantive finding. This finding is as follows:

1. The proposed zoning regulation or zoning map amendment is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.

Fees (see current fee schedule)
- Text or Map Amendments – General Plan/Area Plan/Specific Plan/Zoning Ordinance
SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

Every application must include both an Application Form and Plans.
The specific requirements are described below.¹

1. PROJECT APPLICATION FORM
   - Available online at:

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
   - Electronic copy of plans in PDF form
     - Use a minimum 1/8"=1’ scale for Site Plans and 1/4” = 1’ scale for all others.

3. EXPLANATION OF REQUEST
   - Description of current and proposed uses of the property
   - Explain the relationship of the proposed map or ordinance amendment to the General Plan and the effect on adjacent uses.
   - Explain any other purpose for the zoning map or ordinance amendment.

4. TECHNICAL REPORTS as needed to evaluate the proposed amendment

If you have any questions regarding the above submittal requirements,
please contact the Planning Division at (831) 646-3885.

¹ At the discretion of the Community Development Director or designee, submittal of any checklist items may be waived if the project can be sufficiently described and considered without such information. Please inquire prior to submittal of an application.