



**Skamania County**  
**Community Development Department**  
 Building/Fire Marshal • Environmental Health • Planning  
 Skamania County Courthouse Annex  
 Post Office Box 1009  
 Stevenson, Washington 98648  
 Phone: 509-427-3900 Inspection Line: 509-427-3922

**SUBDIVISION APPLICATION  
 INTAKE CHECKLIST**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Staff will review the application and check for completeness before accepting any application. Review will not begin on your proposal until all of the required information listed below has been submitted.

STAFF      APPLICANT

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Subdivision Application.</b> A completed application signed by the property owner and a \$1400 non-refundable fee (payable to Skamania County Treasurer). Please note there will be a \$700 non-refundable fee charged for a subdivision drawing re-review due to an applicant's changes to the map. This fee will be charged for each re-review. The final plat fee is \$550. Fees are subject to change by resolution of the County Commissioners. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Land Division - OSS Application</b> and non-refundable associated fee.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Land Division - Water Application</b> (if applicable) and non-refundable \$595 fee. A water availability study completed by a Washington State Licensed Hydrogeologist may be submitted in lieu of the Land Division – Water application.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Plat Map.</b> Two copies of the subdivision map from your surveyor illustrating the proposed development, including lot lines, dimensions, lot size, all access roads and easements, water sources and existing features on and near the property. See map requirements in SCC 17.24.050.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Drainage Report.</b> See SCC 17.24.050(C).   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Critical Areas Review Application and Report.</b> Required if there are critical areas within the boundaries of the subdivision. See SCC Title 19.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Title Report.</b> A "Subdivision Guarantee" or "Short Plat Certificate" from any title company for the specific property in the subdivision application. If it is an amended subdivision, a "Subdivision Guarantee" or "Short Plat Certificate" for each parcel created in the original subdivision is required. <i>These reports from the title company must be less than two months old at the time the subdivision records.</i>                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>SEPA Checklist and non-refundable \$400 fee.</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Certification that the applicant/owner has read and understands the Hearing Examiner process.</b>  |

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
Reviewed By:	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date:

# Subdivision Application

(Please complete application in ink)

<b>APPLICANT:</b>		E-mail:
Address:		Phone:
<b>PROPERTY OWNER:</b>		E-mail:
Address:		Phone:
<b>PROPOSED SUBDIVISION NAME:</b>		
<b>PROPERTY LOCATION:</b>		
Tax Lot/Parcel #		Total acres:
Number of Proposed Lots:		Zoning:
<b>PROPOSED WATER SOURCE:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New Individual Well	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing Individual Well
<input type="checkbox"/> New Community Water System (Serving up to 6 lots)	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing Community Water System (Serving up to 6 lots)	<input type="checkbox"/> Skamania County PUD
<input type="checkbox"/> Home Valley Water System	<input type="checkbox"/> Mill-A Water System	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<b>PROPOSED SEWAGE TREATMENT METHOD:</b>		
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b> (Provide a summary of your proposal, proposed use of lots, etc.)		
<b>APPLICANT SIGNATURE(S):</b>		Date:
<b>OWNER SIGNATURE(S)*:</b>		Date:
<i>*Signature of the property owner(s) authorizes the Community Development Department and other Agency personnel reasonable access to the site in order to evaluate the application. Please notify Staff if you would like to request notification prior to any site visits.</i>		
<b>FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</b>		
Date received:		
Date complete:		
File #:		
Notes:		



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## SUBDIVISION APPLICATION & INFORMATIONAL PACKET

### WHAT IS A SUBDIVISION?

A subdivision is a division of land into five or more individual lots. Divisions of four or fewer lots should be approved through the short plat process. Minimum lot size is determined by the zoning classification and water and on-site septic requirements.

### WHAT IS THE APPROVAL PROCESS?

Submit a **complete** subdivision application, along with the required Land Division Water and Septic Applications, Drainage Report, and SEPA checklist. Some projects will also require a Critical Areas Review. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Once the application is considered complete, the following will take place:

- All subdivisions require a State Environmental Policy Act Checklist (SEPA) review, which is the first step in the Subdivision review process. A SEPA threshold determination will be issued by this department to adjacent property owners, local and state agencies, and published in the newspaper which includes all environmental factors for the project and any report requirements that must be completed before the Subdivision map review may begin.
- A Notice of Subdivision/Public Hearing Application is issued to all adjacent property owners and local and state agencies. During this time, the Environmental Health Specialist, Planner, and County Engineer will review the maps and any other related applications. Staff will review the proposal and prepare a staff report and recommendation for the Skamania County Hearing Examiner.
- A public hearing date is set before the Skamania County Hearing Examiner and the applicant will be notified of the date, time and place of the hearing. When the hearing occurs, the applicant or representative must be present at the hearing for the petition to be heard and is required to give testimony to the Hearing Examiner.
- The Hearing Examiner will issue a decision within 10 business days of the close of the record, which could be approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the preliminary plat.
- Applicants have five years to complete any conditions of approval or improvements prior to submitting the final plat for approval. Final plat requires approval by the Board of County Commissioners at a public meeting. Once the Board has approved and signed the final plat, it is recorded with the Auditor's Office.

### WATER AND ON-SITE SEPTIC REQUIREMENTS

- Water: All proposed lots must have a completed and approved water source prior to subdivision recording. The Land Division – Water application, which must come in as part of the subdivision packet, is used for this process. Water will be reviewed at the time of complete application determination and any outstanding requirements will be included in the preliminary plat approval.
  - A water availability study completed by a Washington State Licensed Hydrogeologist may be submitted in lieu of the Land Division – Water application. This report must be submitted at the time of your subdivision application.
- On-Site Septic: All proposed lots must have approved soil test holes dug and evaluated prior to subdivision recording. The Land Division – On-site Septic application, which must come in as part of the

subdivision packet, is used for this process. On-site septic will be reviewed at the time of complete application determination and any outstanding requirements will be included in the preliminary plat approval.

### **HOW WILL CRITICAL AREAS REGULATIONS AFFECT MY SUBDIVISION?**

There are different requirements for developing in or near each type of critical area. The following information is not intended as a substitute for all the requirements in the county's critical area regulations in Title 19.

- **Wetlands:** Wetlands are protected by buffers, undisturbed areas of native vegetation where development is prohibited. If your project is located within 300 ft. of a wetland then you will need to obtain a wetland delineation or wetland letter and show that your project is located outside any required wetland buffers or that there is sufficient buildable area outside wetland buffers. Buffer widths range in size based on the wetland category (see SCC 19.03.040(C)): Category I: 50 ft. to 300 ft., Category II: 100 ft., Category III: 50 ft., Category IV: 25 ft.
- **Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas:** CARAs are areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water. Some developments will require the submission of a hydrogeological report showing that the development will not degrade groundwater sources. Residential development is generally exempted from these requirements.
- **Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas:** These include both riparian habitats (such as streams) and non-riparian habitats (such as deer wintering range). If your development is located within one of these areas, then a critical areas review will be required to ensure that your proposal will not negatively affect a habitat area. Streams are protected by buffers, determined by the type of stream: Type F: 100 ft., Type Np: 50 ft., Type Ns: 25 ft. As with wetlands, you will need to show that your project is located outside any required buffers or that there is sufficient buildable area outside any stream buffers. Road and utility crossings must comply with the development standards in SCC 19.05.040(C)(10).
- **Frequently Flooded Areas:** All development within the 100-year floodplain shall comply with standards established in Washington Administrative Code 173-158 for construction within a floodplain or floodway in addition to complying with the development standards identified in SCC 15.18.
- **Geologically Hazardous Areas:**
  - Erosion Hazards: Erosion control plan required.
  - Landslide Hazards: Geotechnical assessment or report required to establish buffers, buildable areas with a plat, or additional mitigations.
  - Seismic Hazards: Development must conform to seismic code.
  - Volcanic Hazards: Evacuation and emergency management plan required.
- **Density Transfer for Subdivisions:** If your property includes critical areas, you may transfer density for residential uses from lands containing critical areas. In order to accommodate the density transfer, the county may allow reductions in setbacks and lot dimensions and sizes. The critical area will need to be permanently protected as undeveloped land. See SCC 19.01.080(D)(7).

### **MINIMUM LOT SIZE**

Minimum lot sizes and dimensions must comply with the requirements of the zone in which the subdivision is located. Lot size averaging may be used to satisfy the minimum lot size. The individual lots in a subdivision are considered in compliance with minimum lot size requirements if the average area of all the lots in the plat meets the minimum requirement for the zone. See SCC 17.36.030.

### **PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to schedule a pre-application conference, which includes meeting with a Planner, an Environmental Health Specialist, and the County Engineer. Each department representative will discuss their requirements for subdivision completion, and answer any questions the applicant may have. It is helpful to bring a proposed project layout and to have your surveyor attend the meeting.

**SURVEYORS:**

Disclaimer: This list is not a recommendation of any person or firm listed. This list is only provided as a service to the public.

Trantow Surveying  
c/o Klein & Associates  
PO Box 786  
Bingen, WA 98605  
(509) 493-3111

Bell Design Company  
P.O. Box 308  
Bingen, WA 98605  
(509) 493-3886

Hagedorn Inc.  
1924 Broadway, Suite B  
Vancouver, WA 98663  
(360) 696-4428

Olson Engineering  
1111 Broadway  
Vancouver, WA 98660  
(360) 695-1385

Tenneson Engineering  
3775 Crates Way  
The Dalles, OR 97058  
(541) 296-9177

Mackay & Sposito, Inc.  
1325 SE Tech Center Drive, Suite 140  
Vancouver, WA 98683  
(360) 695-3411

Pioneer Surveying & Engineering, Inc.  
228 Columbus Avenue, Suite 104  
Goldendale, WA 98620  
(509) 773-4945

WyEast Surveys  
4399 Woodworth Drive  
Mt. Hood, OR 97041  
(541) 352-6065

Thomas Ray & Co. Surveyors  
PO Box 435  
Camas, WA 98607  
(360) 834-4827

Minister-Glaeser Surveying, Inc.  
2200 East Evergreen  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
(360) 694-3313

Lawson Land Services  
113 S Parkway Ave.  
Battle Ground, WA 98604  
(360) 687-0500

Klein and Associates  
Land Surveying  
1308 12<sup>th</sup> St.  
Hood River, OR 97031  
(541) 386-3322

Terra Surveying  
1406 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 100  
PO Box 617  
Hood River, OR 97031  
(541) 386-4531

**SKAMANIA COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE RECORDING FEES:**

Plat (1<sup>st</sup> Page) - \$187.50  
Each additional page - \$5.00

## Skamania County Land Use Hearing Examiner Process

The following information explains the fundamental role of the Land Use Hearing Examiner and the process by which the Examiner renders land use decisions. ***This is not a complete description of the rules and laws governing the hearing process, but rather an overview to prepare applicants, appellants, and members of the public for participation in public proceedings.*** The land use hearing process is described in more detail in Chapter 2.80 of the Skamania County Code (SCC) and in the Land Use Hearing Examiner Rules of Procedure. Copies of the relevant ordinances and rules are available through the Skamania County Community Development Department.

The Hearing Examiner system assures fairness and due process protection for all persons involved in the land use hearing process. It is the Examiner's responsibility to render land use decisions in an efficient manner. County ordinances authorize the Hearing Examiner to conduct hearings on certain land use permit applications and appeals of administrative decisions. The specific applications and appeals under the Hearing Examiner's jurisdiction are listed in SCC 2.80.060.

### **Overview of the Process**

Hearings before the Hearing Examiner are usually "open record hearings." The purpose of the open record hearing is to allow parties to present evidence as to whether the application or appeal under review satisfies the County's criteria for approval and other applicable state and local laws. The evidence submitted at the hearing, which may consist of oral testimony or written documents, is known as the "record" of the hearing. Because the Hearing Examiner's decision - and a court's decision on appeal of a Hearing Examiner's decision - is based on the record, **it is important that parties present all relevant information and arguments at the open record hearing.** When the hearing is concluded, the record is "closed" and no new evidence may be submitted.

Occasionally, the Hearing Examiner may leave the record open for submission of specific information that was not provided prior to or at the hearing. This can happen when the Examiner has questions the parties need time to answer or when interested parties at the hearing bring up relevant issue not addressed to the Examiner's satisfaction. If the Hearing Examiner determines the information is necessary for making a decision on the matter, the record will be "held open" for the specific information. When this occurs, the Hearing Examiner will be admitted. Typically, both the specific information requested and the deadline are spelled out in a Post-Hearing Order for Submission of Additional Evidence. The Order will usually state when the record will close. Generally, no new evidence may be submitted after the close of record, even on appeal.

Hearings on permit applications typically proceed in the following order:

- Introductory comments by the Hearing Examiner;
- Presentation by County staff, including staff's analysis of the application and recommendation;
- Presentation by the applicant;
- Public testimony, which may include questions for County staff or the applicant; and
- County and applicant responses to the issues and questions that have been raised.

Hearings on appeals typically proceed in the following order:

- Introductory comments by the Hearing Examiner;
- Presentation by the appellant, and any witnesses the appellant calls;
- Presentation by the County, and any witnesses the County calls;
- Presentation by the applicant, if different from the appellant, and any witnesses the applicant calls;
- Rebuttal testimony and/or concluding remarks by the parties.

Each hearing is audio recorded in order to establish a verbatim record of the testimony and procedures. All testimony is given under oath, and each person who testifies must identify him or herself for the record. The Hearing Examiner may establish time limits for testimony.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Examiner closes the record and sets the due date for rendering his or her decision. No decision is issued at the hearing itself. The Hearing Examiner takes the case under advisement and prepares a written decision including findings of fact and conclusions of law.

The Hearing Examiner's final decision is mailed to parties of record (i.e., individuals who submit written or oral testimony, the applicant or appellant, and the County) and to other individuals who request a copy.

### **How to Participate Effectively**

- Limit testimony and/or written documentation to the specific case at hand. Testimony about desired changes in the code is not relevant and will not be considered. Land use applications are required to be decided according to the rules in effect at the time of application. Changes to the code are more properly addressed to the Board of County Commissioners.
- Focus on facts that have some tendency to show that the project does or does not satisfy the County's criteria for approval or other applicable laws. The most persuasive testimony or written documentation is that which is based on the speaker's or writer's first-hand observations and, for technical issues, is within the speaker's or writer's area of expertise.
- To the extent possible, review the project documents and the relevant codes prior to the hearing.
- Be courteous and respectful to each participant.
- Direct your comments to the Hearing Examiner and not to members of the audience.

### **Due Process Considerations**

- Land use hearings before the Hearing Examiner are quasi-judicial proceedings, which means that certain due process protections apply. Not only must quasi-judicial proceedings be fair; they must appear to be fair. Accordingly, the Hearing Examiner may not participate in any matter in which he or she has financial or personal interest. Any person who has grounds to believe the Hearing Examiner may be influenced by a consideration outside the public record should promptly bring that concern to the attention of the Hearing Examiner prior to or at the hearing.
- If written testimony is submitted, it must be received prior to or at the public hearing for it to be considered by the Hearing Examiner. Written testimony should be addressed to the Hearing Examiner in care of the Community Development Department; should contain the writer's name and mailing address (the mailing address is needed to ensure the writer receives notice of the decision); should reference the application file number;  
  
and should be legible. Comments should contain the specific reasons why the application should be approved, denied, or conditioned.
- The Hearing Examiner may not be contacted directly about specific applications. To ensure that the Hearing Examiner will remain free from bias or prejudice in the decision-making process, any contact with the Examiner must be through testimony or written statements submitted at the hearing, or through material submitted to Community Development Department staff for transmittal to the Hearing Examiner. Material submitted in an inappropriate manner will not be considered part of the record.

### **Appeals from Hearing Examiner Decisions**

- Section 2.80.140 of the Skamania County Code contains information on appealing a Hearing Examiner's decision. To be considered, appeals must be filed by one of the parties of record with the appropriate decision-making body (Superior Court, Shorelines Hearings Board, or Columbia River Gorge Commission) within the time limits specified in the applicable statutes.