



WCF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For more information, refer to Snohomish Municipal Code (SMC) 14.242

WHAT IS A WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITY (WCF)?

“Wireless communications facility” (WCF) means any antenna, associated equipment, base station, small cell system, tower, and/or transmission equipment.

ARE ANY WCFs PROHIBITED?

The following are prohibited by SMC 14.242.040:

- New guyed and/or lattice towers.
- New monopoles within the Historic District unless demonstrated to be necessary and without effective alternative.
- WCFs in the Public Park land use designation.

WHAT ARE THE PERMIT TYPES?

- A. A Category 1 WCF Permit shall be required for an eligible facilities request.
- B. A Category 2 WCF Permit shall be required for:
 1. Any modification of an eligible support structure, including the collocation of new equipment, that substantially changes the physical dimensions of the eligible support structure on which it is mounted; or
 2. Any collocation not eligible for a Category 1 WCF Permit.
- C. A Category 3 WCF Permit shall be required for the siting of any WCF that is not a collocation subject to a Category 1 or 2 WCF Permit.

WHAT IS THE SITING HIERARCHY?

Siting of antennas or support structures shall adhere to the siting hierarchy of SMC 14.242.050. The order of preference ranking, from highest to lowest, shall be Tier 1 to Tier 4. See the WCF Tier/Category table on the next page to see how the siting hierarchy relates to the permit categories.

WHAT IS AN ELIGIBLE FACILITIES REQUEST?

An eligible facilities request is any request for modification of an existing tower or base station that, within the meaning of the Spectrum Act, does not substantially change the physical dimensions of that tower or base station and involves (a) the collocation of new transmission equipment, (b) the removal of transmission equipment, or (c) the replacement of transmission equipment.

HOW DO I BEGIN?

You are encouraged to participate in a Pre-Application Review prior to formal submittal of your WCF project. The Pre-Application process is an opportunity for applicants to receive feedback from all City departments on issues involving land use, street and utility improvements, building codes, and City code compliance. A Pre-Application Review is free of charge.

WHAT DOES THE CITY NEED TO REVIEW MY APPLICATION?

In addition to the Wireless Communication Facilities Application form and signed Submittal Checklist, a Land Use Application form and all submittal fees are required at the time of submittal through the [SSPP](#). Depending on the permit category and siting hierarchy tier, additional requirements may include a Site Plan, Building/Construction permit, Project Drawings, Right-of-Way permit, SEPA submittal (including checklist and mailing labels of all property owners within a 300’ radius of the project site), Critical Areas Review, Geotechnical Report, and/or mailing labels for all City of Snohomish property owners.

HOW WILL MY APPLICATION BE PROCESSED?

- A **Category 1 WCF Permit** is reviewed by the City Planner. The decision shall be final and shall not be appealable pursuant to Chapter 14.75 SMC.
- A **Category 2 WCF Permit** is reviewed by the City Planner. The decision shall be appealable to the Hearing Examiner pursuant to Chapter 14.75 SMC.
- A **Category 3 WCF Permit** on
 - **Siting preference hierarchy Tier 1, 2, or 3** is reviewed by the City Planner. The decision shall be appealable to the Hearing Examiner pursuant to Chapter 14.75 SMC.
 - **Siting preference hierarchy Tier 4** is reviewed by the Hearing Examiner as a conditional use permit. The decision shall be appealable according to the provisions of Chapter 14.75 SMC.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR THE HEARING EXAMINER?

A Category 3, Tier 4 permit is reviewed by the Hearing Examiner as a conditional use permit. Planning and Development Services will notify you of your hearing date. Based on the staff report, the project file, applicable codes, and testimony from staff, the public, and the applicant, the Hearing Examiner typically issues the final decision within 10 working days.

You or your representative must appear at the meeting so the Hearing Examiner can ask questions about your application. If you are unable to attend, or if you'd like to withdraw your application, please notify Planning & Development Services in writing at least 5 days in advance of the scheduled hearing.

WHERE ARE THE HEARINGS HELD?

Hearings are typically held in the George Gilbertson Board Room at 1601 Avenue D, Snohomish School Administration Building and are open to the public.

HOW DO I APPEAL THE HEARING EXAMINER'S DECISION?

Appeals of Hearing Examiner decisions are made to the Superior Court and must be filed within 21 days of the date of the notice of the Hearing Examiner's decision.

WHAT IF MY APPLICATION IS DENIED?

If your application is denied, you will have 21 days from the date of decision to file an appeal to the Snohomish County Superior Court (36.70C RCW). If you do not file a timely appeal, the decision is considered final.

NOTE: This information should not be used as a substitute for City codes and regulations. You should review all the details of your project with the Planning and Development Services Department at 116 Union Avenue (360-568-3115).