

Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Applicability & Purpose

The provisions of this document shall apply to all development and redevelopment in the city, except within the Historic District, the Pilchuck District, Midtown District, and standard single-family lots (not Planned Residential Development or Unit Lot Subdivision). The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to produce development that:

- Builds on and is complementary to the rich heritage and character of Snohomish.
- Emphasizes buildings and landscaping, rather than parking and signs.
- Supports pedestrian movement and the use of transit and bicycles.
- Maintains the scale and texture of historic development patterns.
- Encourages creative designs for sites and buildings.
- Allows for infill development that is sensitive to its context.
- Implements the Comprehensive Plan.
- Protects and enhances the city's environment for living and working in manners that support and stimulate business and industry, and promote investment in business and other properties.

The standards in this document are intended to promote orderly community growth that protects and enhances property values for the community as a whole. Well-designed projects and economic development that support the community's aesthetic values while creating an environment for living and working stimulates business and industry to invest in our local economy. In order to protect the existing environment of the City of Snohomish and to reduce potential negative impacts of new development and redevelopment, the use of low-impact development (LID) practices and techniques are encouraged, provided appropriate conditions exist on a development site to allow for the use of such practices and techniques.

1.2 How to Use This Document

This document is organized by development type, separated into three sections:

- Commercial and Mixed Use
- Multi-Family Residential
- Single-Family Residential

Within each section, the document is further down further to address site design, building design, and alterations to existing developments.

Each development / redevelopment project shall be evaluated with regard to how it achieves an overall design that meets the intent and directions of the Design Standards. Visual examples are provided to illustrate ways in which the intent of the standard can be achieved. The images are meant to be examples and are not the only acceptable means toward accomplishing the

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standards. Applicants and project designers are encouraged to consider designs, styles and techniques not pictured in the examples yet still fulfill the intent of the design standard.

When standards in this document use the word “shall”, the standard is an objective requirement with little flexibility. This document also includes several guidelines, where an element is encouraged but not required. They indicate that the City is open to design features that are equal to, or better than, those stated - so long as the intent is satisfied. The applicant assumes the burden of proof to demonstrate how a proposed design meets the standards. The Planning Director is the decision-making authority in determining if the standards are met.

1.3 Review Process

The design review analysis is conducted administratively, unless the project proponent is a public agency. In those cases the Design Review Board (DRB) shall review the proposed design and make a recommendation to the Planning Director.

Design review shall be concurrent with plan review for any building permit application for projects that involve new construction, additions of floor area, or alterations to the exterior of an existing building.

In all cases, it is the responsibility of the project applicant to provide sufficient information for the reviewing entity to make a recommendation. If sufficient information is not provided, the project review may be delayed. Required materials will vary depending on the circumstances of the site and the specific proposal. Site plans, building elevations, materials information, and manufacturer’s catalog data for fixtures and devices are generally necessary. Applicant self-assessment forms are not required in all cases, but are recommended for all projects. Detailed submittal checklists are maintained and provided by the City Planning & Development Services Department.

1.4 Exceptions

The standards and guidelines within this document are specific, to limit potential confusion about the requirement or intended result. In certain rare circumstances, the physical conditions of a building or site make enforcement of the standards inappropriate and without public benefit. If special circumstances of a property are sufficient to justify modifying a standard, the Planning Director may make findings to that effect. Exceptions will not be used to circumvent merely inconvenient standards. In all cases, the burden of proof is on the applicant to establish during project review that such extraordinary conditions exist and that the intent of the standard is not impaired. If a variance is determined necessary, it shall be subject to Chapter 14.70 SMC.

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1.5 Modifications to Approved Plans

Sometimes even the most carefully planned project must be revised following design review approval due to the availability of materials, unexpected complications in implementation, further design refinements, or other reasons. In such cases, the proposed modifications must be reviewed and approved prior to implementation in the field. If a departure from the approved plans is identified during the inspection process, final approval for occupancy may be delayed until those changes are submitted for review and approval. Approval of changes before they are implemented in the field will prevent delays and additional cost to applicants.

1.6 Design Review Determination & Appeals

The City Planning & Development Services Department will prepare a written analysis that includes a determination of whether or not the application is consistent with applicable design standards. It may include conditions to achieve consistency or recommendations to increase consistency. Conditions are required to be met, while implementation of recommendations is up to the applicant's discretion. Findings of noncompliance shall be grounds for denial of the associated building permit. The denial or conditioning of a permit may be appealed according to the provisions of Chapter 14.20 of the Snohomish Municipal Code.