



# PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Monday, November 04, 2024, at 7:00 PM

Snoqualmie City Hall, 38624 SE River Street & Zoom

## COMMISSIONERS

Chair: Luke Marusiak

Vice Chair: Andre Testman

Commissioners: Steve Smith, Ashleigh Kilcup, Michael Krohn, Darrell Lambert, and Dan Murphy.

*This meeting will be conducted in person at Snoqualmie City Hall and remotely using Zoom.*

**Join by Telephone:** To listen to the meeting via telephone, please call **253.215.8782** and enter Webinar ID **864 8750 2701** and Password **1900040121** if prompted.

Press \*9 to raise your hand to speak. Raising your hand signals the meeting moderator that you have a comment.

Press \*6 to mute and unmute.

**Join by Internet:** To watch the meeting over the internet via your computer, follow these steps:

- 1) Click this [link](#)
- 2) If the Zoom app is not installed on your computer, you will be prompted to download it.
- 3) If prompted for Webinar ID, enter **864 8750 2701**; Enter Password **1900040121**
- 4) Please confirm that your audio works prior to participating.

## CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

## PUBLIC COMMENT

*Public comment will be accepted by in-person attendees. Remote attendees may submit written comments to the staff liaison.*

## AGENDA APPROVAL

## COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

## MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes dated October 21, 2024.

## PERMIT REVIEW/DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

*The Planning Commission, sitting as the Design Review Board or the Historic Design Review Board, reviews the design of certain development proposals in Snoqualmie. The Planning Commission also reviews certain development permits per the Snoqualmie Municipal Code. Public comment may be limited for some or all of these items due to the nature of the permit approval process.*

## LEGISLATIVE/POLICY ITEMS/REGULATIONS

*The Planning Commission reviews proposed legislation within its scope of authority, including Comprehensive Plan amendments and development regulation amendments, and planning and development replated policy items referred by the City Council.*

2. Historic Downtown Retail District Overlay Code Amendments.
3. Critical Areas Ordinance Update.
4. Comprehensive Plan: Housing Element Policy Review.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Items of Planning Commissioner Interest**

#### **Upcoming Schedule**

[5.](#) Future Agenda List.

[6.](#) Work Program.

## **ADJOURNMENT**



# PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

## October 21, 2024

*This meeting was conducted in person at Snoqualmie City Hall and remotely using Zoom.*

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL:** Chair Marusiak called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Commissioners:**

Chair Luke Marusiak, Ashleigh Kilcup (remote), Steve Smith (remote), Darrell Lambert (remote), and Dan Murphy (remote) were present.

Commissioners Andre Testman and Michael Krohn were absent.

Councilmember liaison Jolyon Johnson was present.

Andrew Levins (remote), Land Use Planning Consultant from Van Ness Feldman, was present.

Jeff Gray (remote), Senior Wetland Biologist from Otak, was present.

**City Staff:**

Emily Arteche, Community Development Director; Gretchen Garrett, Deputy City Clerk; Nicole Wiebe, Community Liaison; and Andrew Jongekryg, IT Support Systems.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

The agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

**MINUTES**

1. The minutes dated October 7, 2024, were unanimously approved.

**COUNCIL LIASION UPDATE**

Councilmember Johnson briefly discussed the strategic implementation plan for parks, recreation, open spaces, and trails. There were several recommendations for the future such as:

- Creating an equitable and inclusive park system that includes expanding the Community Center for additional programming and capacity.
- Adding a dog park on the Ridge.
- Reinvesting in our aging parks by creating a life cycle replacement program for the aging park equipment, especially playground equipment.
- Reimagining the railroad park to be more of an inclusive space and a spot to congregate.
- Enhancing community connectivity by acquiring land near the riverfront trail.
- Celebrating our natural resources by expanding our program offerings to include natural and recreation education, as well as acquiring and protecting open spaces.
- Coverings for some of the outdoor spaces.

Commissioner questions followed.

## DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

### 2. **PUBLIC HEARING: Historic Design Review Requirements Variance.**

Chair Marusiak opened the Public Hearing at 7:13 p.m. With no one wishing to speak, the Public Hearing was closed at 7:14 p.m.

## LEGISLATIVE/POLICY ITEMS/ REGULATIONS

### 3. **PUBLIC HEARING: Historic Downtown Retail District Overlay Code Amendments.**

Chair Marusiak opened the Public Hearing at 7:14 p.m. Public comments were provided by:

- Laura Gowans.
- Elizabeth Hearing.
- Cristie Coffing.
- Liz Leffler.
- Chris McDonald.
- Wendy Thomas.

The public hearing closed at 7:34 p.m.

Commissioner discussion followed. The Commissioners agreed that additional consideration and deliberation is necessary and plan to revisit this agenda item at the next meeting on November 4, 2024.

### 4. **Critical Areas Ordinance Update Presentation.**

Senior Wetland Biologist Jeff Gray presented 2024 updates to Critical Area code based on the best available science. The most substantial change is to stream Riparian Management Zones (RMZ). RMZ is synonymous with buffers. Per Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife:

- Class 1 stream (Type S) RMZ – see SMC 19.08, Shoreline Regulations
- Class 2 stream (Type F) RMZ – increase from 75' to 200'
- Class 3 stream (Type Np) RMZ – increase from 50' to 100'
- Class 4 stream (Type Ns) RMZ – increase from 25' to 100'

Commissioners requested a map showing what properties in Snoqualmie are impacted by the increase in RMZ.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Items of Planning Commission Interest

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Murphy both addressed safety issues with reckless behavior of drivers on motorized scooters.

### Upcoming Schedule

5. Future Agenda List.
6. Work Program.

## ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** by Commissioner Marusiak, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Kilcup to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. Motion was unanimously approved.

*Minutes by Gretchen Garrett, Deputy City Clerk.*

*Recorded meeting audio is available on the City website after the meeting.*

*Minutes approved at the \_\_\_\_\_ Planning Commission Meeting*



# Community Development Department

**Emily Arteche, Director**  
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(425) 888-5337 | [earteche@snoqualmiewa.gov](mailto:earteche@snoqualmiewa.gov)

## STAFF MEMO

To: Planning Commission  
From: Andrew Levins, Land Use Planning Consultant  
Date: November 4, 2024  
Subject: SRI Retail Development Standards and SMC 17.37 Retail District Overlay Code Amendments

### BACKGROUND:

In December of 2023 the Chair of the Economic Development Commission (“EDC”) sent a letter to the Community Development Council Committee regarding recommended draft amendments to the Snoqualmie Municipal Code Chapter 17.37, Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone and 17.37.040 Waiver of special use regulations. The recommendations included:

1. 100 Percent of the storefronts on Railroad Avenue S.E. occupied by retail uses, increased from the current 75% requirement; and
2. 180-day allowance on good faith efforts to lease the premises for a retail use, increased from the current 120-day requirement.

Currently, 75% of the ground floor tenant spaces along Railroad Avenue are required to be occupied by a qualifying retail use. If total retail storefront occupancy drops below 75% on Railroad Ave, a ground floor tenant space must be vacant for 120 days before the landlord can apply to the City for a “retail waiver,” allowing a non-retail commercial use to occupy the space.

On February 5, 2023, the Council CD Committee remanded the draft amendments back to the commission for further discussion because the Economic Development Commission did not have the opportunity to make a formal recommendation. The Community Development Committee provided general feedback to the EDC stating that 100 percent of the storefronts on Railroad Avenue S.E. is too high of a percentage requirement for retail occupation and that the EDC should consider a percentage range within 70 to 100 percentage for retail occupation. Furthermore, the CD Committee stated 180 days is too low for the time allowance to demonstrate a good faith effort to find a retail tenant. Additionally, the definition of what constitutes a retail use should be evaluated and clarified, if necessary.

The City conducted public outreach with both the Downtown Business Association and the Ridge Merchants Association on May 2, 2024 and May 8, 2024, respectively. On May 15, 2024, the Economic Development Commission met and, in light of the findings from outreach with merchant associations,

considered appropriate threshold requirements for ground-floor retail uses, appropriate measures and timelines to demonstrate good faith efforts to lease qualifying tenant spaces to retail uses, and how the definition of retail uses could be clarified.

On May 20, 2024, the Planning Commission met and discussed the recommendations of the EDC, which were as follows:

- Expand the minimum threshold for ground floor retail uses to also apply to Falls Avenue.
- Increase the minimum retail use requirement from 75% to 90%.
- Increase the minimum time allowance to demonstrate a good-faith effort from 120 days to 180 days.
- Require that a vacant tenant space to which the retail use requirement applies be advertised online in order to demonstrate a good-faith effort, in addition to the other methods listed in SMC 17.37.040(B)(1).

On June 19, 2024, the Community Development department mailed an informational flyer and virtual meeting invitation to the owners, as identified by King County Assessor records, of all commercial property affected by proposed changes to retail use waiver requirements in both the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone and along Center Boulevard S.E. in Snoqualmie Ridge. Staff held two virtual open-houses on June 25, 2024 to give an opportunity for property owner feedback; however, neither session was attended by any member of the public. Additionally, no comments on the proposed changes were submitted based on the information provided.

On July 1, 2024, the Planning Commission met to discuss the strikethrough and underline versions of the draft amendments and the proposed revisions to the extents of the Overlay Zone. The Planning Commission indicated it would like to review further analysis regarding the waiver approval process and consider expanding the Overlay Zone to all parcels zoned BR-1 and BR-2 in Downtown Snoqualmie.

On September 16, 2024, the Planning Commission met to discuss the strikethrough and underline versions of the draft amendments and directed staff to study removal of the waiver process altogether.

On October 21, 2024, the Planning Commission convened a public hearing for the proposed amendments. Public commenters provided comments on the proposed amendments. Staff has compiled these questions, comments, and concerns into a matrix in Attachment 6: October 21, 2024 Public Hearing Comment Response Matrix.

Based on the recommendation of the EDC and public outreach, the Planning Commission directed Staff to study amendments to the SMC, as described below.

**ANALYSIS:**

Both the existing retail occupancy requirement of 75% and the time allowance of 120 days apply to the ground floor of buildings facing Railroad Avenue only in the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone. Because of the way the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards incorporate and apply to the Municipal Code, only the time allowance applies to retail tenant spaces facing specific intersections including Center

Boulevard SE and SE Ridge Street, SE Mayrand Lane, and SE Kinsey Street. All uses at these intersections are required to be a retail use, as defined by SMC Section 17.37.020 (See Attachment 1). Please note: any future amendment to the Municipal code regarding the 120-Day limit or the percentage of retail will not be applicable to the businesses on the Ridge without a Mixed Use Final Plan Amendment. Table 1 further illustrates how these requirements currently apply to Snoqualmie’s two primary walkable retail districts:

Table 1: Existing Retail Use Requirements		
	Snoqualmie Ridge I Neighborhood Center, corner tenant spaces facing select intersections	Downtown Retail Overlay Zone along Railroad Avenue
Ground Floor Minimum Retail Use Ratio	N/A	75%
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	120 days	120 days

Public outreach was conducted on May 2 and May 8, 2024, with both the Downtown Business Association and the Ridge Merchants Association, respectively. Each group strongly favored increasing the retail occupancy percentage requirement in the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone along Railroad Avenue to between 90-100%. The Downtown Merchants proposed that this requirement also be expanded to Falls Avenue. Both the Downtown and Ridge Merchants expressed favor toward a 180-day minimum vacancy period, and suggested that some additional requirements, such as demonstrating online rental listings and site-postings, should be required as a part of demonstrating a good-faith effort to find a retail-use tenant consistent with the requirement. One Ridge Merchant Association landlord expressed that 180-days is an appropriate amount of time, but that the requirement should not exceed 180 days. No additional input was provided from either group with regards to the definition of retail. The EDC concurred with the sentiment that online advertising of the retail lease opportunity should be required.

The EDC considered this stakeholder feedback at its May 15, 2024 meeting. Members of the EDC agreed with the recommendations of the two merchants associations, although they recommended additional outreach that specifically includes the owners and landlords that would be affected by this change. Concurring with the suggestions of the Downtown Merchants Association, the EDC also recommends that the ground floor retail use requirement be expanded to also include buildings facing Falls Avenue.

The Planning Commission discussed the EDC’s recommendations on May 20, 2024. The Planning Commission’s directed Staff to study amendments proposing modifications to the minimum requirements to obtain a waiver from retail use requirements, which are presented in Table 2: Proposed Retail Use Requirements.

Table 2: Proposed Retail Use Requirements		
	Snoqualmie Ridge I Neighborhood Center, corner all storefronts facing select intersections <b><u>Center Boulevard SE</u></b> (see Attachment 5)	<b><u>Parcels located in the BR-1 or BR-2 zone in Downtown Snoqualmie</u></b> (see attachment 4)
Ground Floor Minimum Retail Use Ratio	<b><u>90%</u></b>	<b><u>90%</u></b>
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	<b><u>N/A</u></b>	<b><u>N/A</u></b>

The Planning Commission directed Staff to study the expansion of the Historic District Retail Overlay to encompass all Business Retail 1 (“BR-1”) and Business Retail 2 (“BR-2”) zoned property in Downtown Snoqualmie. To accommodate this change, Staff proposes the Planning Commission consider recommending modifications to the [City’s Zoning Map](#) that depict the revised extent of the Overlay District in place of verbally describing the precise extent of the Overlay Zone. This change will increase clarity as to the overall extent of the Overlay Zone, compared to the current verbose description found in the SMC. Language is proposed to be added to the SMC exempting supportive housing uses required by state law as well as City-occupied properties from calculations when determining the retail use ratio.

Currently, the purpose statement of the BR-1 zone states that the zone was created to contain all properties located within the Downtown Historic Retail Overlay zone, and to provide a shopping and dining district in a pedestrian-oriented environment (SMC 17.20.020.C). Staff proposes to modify the purpose statement of the BR-1 and BR-2 zones in SMC 17.20.020.C to reflect the modification of the extent of the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone proposed by the Planning Commission.

Originally, the Planning Commission suggested a procedure in which all retail use waivers would be decided by the Community Development department with that decision appealable to the City Council. The City Attorney has identified a personal liability risk to individual City Council members that would result they were the decisionmakers for retail waivers, and continues to advise that this risk exceeds the acceptable level of risk tolerance for City of Snoqualmie officials. As a result, the Planning Commission recommended removal of the waiver process altogether.

In the Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center, the development standards are proposed to be modified to require that at least 50% of ground-floor windows remain uncovered by signs or other window coverings during normal business hours, ensuring visibility into the tenant space and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

Summarized, the attachments to this memo propose the following changes:

- Expand the extents of the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone to include all parcels zoned BR-1 and BR-2 in Downtown Snoqualmie as depicted on Attachment 4 and depict this



change on the official zoning map. The minimum threshold for ground floor retail uses will apply to these parcels.

- Remove parcels that are currently zoned OS-2 from the Overlay Zone and are being incorporated into the Snoqualmie River Trail project.
- Increase the minimum ground-floor retail use requirement from 75% to 90%.
- Remove the retail use waiver process from the SMC altogether.
- Apply the 90% ground-floor retail use requirement to storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. (see Attachment 5).<sup>1</sup>
- Require that no more than 50% of the ground-floor windows of a tenant space be covered for storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. in the Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center, in order to facilitate pedestrian interest.<sup>1</sup>

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Discuss the contents and form of the proposed amendments.
- Staff will finalize the proposed amendments to the Snoqualmie Municipal Code prior to a future public hearing with the Planning Commission.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. Planning Commission Motion Retail Waiver Amendments**
- 2. SMC Chapter 17, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
- 3. Chapter 12 Snoqualmie Ridge Development Standards, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
- 4. Current and Proposed Downtown Historic District and SRI Retail Overlay Zone Maps**
- 5. BR-1 and BR-2 zone use comparison table**
- 6. Public Hearing Comments with Staff Responses Crosswalk**

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<sup>1</sup> This proposed change will only be enforceable if amendments to the Snoqualmie Ridge Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions are approved.



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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Item 2.

After consideration of the May 15, 2024, Economic Development Commission recommendation and the May 20, 2024, staff report on the Snoqualmie Ridge I Mixed-Use Final Plan amendments, the Planning Commission passed the following motion:

- |   |
|---|
| 1. Delete conditions 4 and 5 from the SRI Mixed-Use Final Plan and Development Standards.   |
| 2. Amend SR1 Development Standards Section 12E.040 to add a 90% retail requirement applicable to businesses in the three-block area of the Neighborhood Center facing Center Boulevard SE, between Snoqualmie Parkway to SE Ridge Street. |
| 3. Amend 17.37.040(A)(2) Waiver of special use regulations, to increase the vacancy period required prior to applying for a waiver to 365 days.   |
| 4. Amend 17.37.040(B)(1) to require vacancies be advertised online during the vacancy period in order to qualify for an application for a waiver.   |
| 5. Amend 17.37.040(C) to make the Council Community Development Committee the deciding body on allowing or denying a retail use waiver, with appeals to City Council.   |
| 6. Amend 17.37.030(A) Special use regulations within downtown historic district overlay zone to increase the minimum percentage of storefronts to 90%.  |
| 7. Increase Retail District Overlay to includes Falls Avenue SE (see Attachment 2).   |

**A MOTION BY THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE 20<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2024.**

Luke Marusiak  
Luke Marusiak (Jun 14, 2024 20:16 PDT)  
Date Jun 14, 2024  
Luke Marusiak  
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:  
Ashley Wragge  
Ashley Wragge (Jun 14, 2024 10:49 PDT)  
Ashley Wragge  
Planning Tech

Attachment 1: Retail Definition Crosswalk  
Attachment 2: Proposed Historic District Retail Overlay Zone boundaries

<b>Table of Uses Examples</b>	<b>Retail</b>	<b>Non- Retail</b>
Apparel	✓	
Books	✓	
Arts and crafts	✓	
Furniture	✓	
Home Furnishings	✓	
Jewelry	✓	
Records/ CDs	✓	
Consumer electronic equipment	✓	
Hardware	✓	
Sporting goods	✓	
Stationery and office supplies	✓	
Toys	✓	
Convenience goods	✓	
Food and grocery	✓	
Pharmacies/ drug stores	✓	
Restaurants/ taverns	✓	
Barber shops/ beauty salons	✓	
Tailors	✓	
Florists	✓	
Shoe Repair	✓	
Movie Theaters	✓	
Bowling alleys	✓	
Museums/ galleries	✓	
Advertising		✓
Architecture		✓
Landscape architecture		✓
Engineering		✓
Planning		✓
Law		✓
Medicine		✓
Music Instruction		✓
Interior design		✓
Dentistry		✓
Accounting		✓
Insurance		✓
Real estate		✓
Finance/ securities investments		✓
Drive- through food or beverage service		✓
Motor vehicle related uses (sales, fueling, repair, storage)		✓
Outside storage of stock, vehicles or machinery		✓
Wholesale sales		✓










# SMC 17.37 and MUFP amendments proposal (002)

Final Audit Report

2024-06-15

Created:	2024-06-14
By:	Ashley Wragge (AWragge@snoqualmiewa.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAYAHQfHRWWc773ekOuzWWk6j0UmQbTHIb

## "SMC 17.37 and MUFP amendments proposal (002)" History

-  Document created by Ashley Wragge (AWragge@snoqualmiewa.gov)  
2024-06-14 - 5:48:31 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Ashley Wragge (AWragge@snoqualmiewa.gov)  
Signature Date: 2024-06-14 - 5:49:51 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Document emailed to Imarusiak@snoqualmiewa.gov for signature  
2024-06-14 - 5:49:52 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Imarusiak@snoqualmiewa.gov  
2024-06-15 - 3:14:52 AM GMT
-  Signer Imarusiak@snoqualmiewa.gov entered name at signing as Luke Marusiak  
2024-06-15 - 3:16:12 AM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Luke Marusiak (Imarusiak@snoqualmiewa.gov)  
Signature Date: 2024-06-15 - 3:16:14 AM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.  
2024-06-15 - 3:16:14 AM GMT

**17.20.020, Commercial/industrial districts.**

The following commercial/industrial districts are hereby established:

- A. Business-General District (BG). The business-general district is intended to accommodate a broad range of retail and commercial uses, including businesses and services that are of a larger scale or are inappropriate for the historic downtown area, such as certain automotive services and limited light-industrial uses.
- B. Business-Office District (BO). The business-office district is intended principally for providing space within the city for smaller-scale office uses, but also allows for some retail and service uses.
- C. Business-Retail District (BR). The business-retail district is intended to serve as the core pedestrian-oriented shopping area within the historic downtown area, with uses serving as shopping catalysts to other businesses within the district. Ground floor retail sales and services are encouraged with offices and professional services on upper floors. The business-retail district should support the downtown historic district by encouraging the use of architectural styles which reflect the history of the city and the railroad depot. The business-retail district is divided into two subdistricts, as follows:
  1. BR-1. The BR-1 subdistrict ~~contains all properties located within the downtown historic district retail overlay zone pursuant to Chapter 17.37 SMC, and~~ is intended for retail, shopping and dining uses in a pedestrian-oriented environment.
  2. BR-2. The BR-2 subdistrict contains all properties within the BR district outside of those listed within the BR-1 subdistrict ~~and is intended to contain retail as well as commercial and professional service uses.~~
- D. Office Park District (OP). The office park district is intended to provide areas appropriate for commercial and office uses, such as medical, dental, and other professional services.
- E. Planned Commercial/Industrial District (PCI). The planned commercial/industrial district is intended to provide areas in the city for master planned commercial/industrial uses, which might include single- or mixed-use retail, office, light industrial and open space uses. All development on parcels of two acres or larger upon which more than one principal structure is to be constructed shall be subject to the requirements of this chapter.
- F. Industrial District (I). The industrial district is intended to provide areas for a broad range of light industrial uses, and includes heavy/resource-based industrial uses as conditional uses. This district is also known as the resource extraction district. (Ord. 1203 § 7, 2018; Ord. 1198 § 22 (Exh. D), 2017; Ord. 1066 § 3, 2010; Ord. 980 § 2, 2005; Ord. 744 § 2, 1995).

**17.37.010, Created.**

There is hereby created a special purpose zoning classification to be known as the downtown historic district retail overlay zone, ~~the boundary of which shall include all lots and parcels fronting on Railroad Avenue S.E. from the southerly margin of the right-of-way of S.E. Northern Street at its intersection with Railroad Avenue to a line intersecting Railroad Avenue defined as the southerly property boundary of 8250 Railroad Avenue S.E., commonly known as the Town Pump extended.~~ be depicted on the official zoning map.

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**17.37.030, Special use regulations within downtown historic district overlay zone.**

- A. Subject to the underlying use regulations of this title, and subject to the provisions of SMC 17.37.040, within the historic district overlay zone at least ~~75-90~~ percent of the storefronts ~~in the downtown historic retail overlay zone on Railroad Avenue S.E.~~ shall be occupied by retail uses, and no more than ~~25-10~~ percent of storefronts shall be occupied by nonretail uses. For purposes of this section, a “storefront” shall mean separately owned or leased ground floor premises with a separate ~~entrance in the downtown historic retail overlay zone on Railroad Avenue S.E.~~. A building may have one or more storefronts. ~~Permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, and emergency housing or shelter uses as defined in Chapter 17.10- and~~ City-occupied buildings ~~in the downtown historic retail overlay zone fronting on Railroad Avenue S.E.~~ shall not be included within the definition of “storefront.”
- B. The director shall establish and maintain a list by address of all storefronts within the downtown historic district retail overlay zone and a determination of whether such storefront is occupied by a retail use. The list shall include a calculation of the percentage of storefronts occupied by retail uses as of the date of the list. The list shall be updated prior to the issuance of any business license for a business intending to locate in any storefront ~~in the downtown historic retail overlay zone fronting on Railroad Avenue S.E. within the downtown historic district retail overlay district.~~ No business license shall be issued for any business proposing to locate in a ground floor storefront ~~in the downtown historic retail overlay zone on Railroad Avenue S.E. within the downtown historic district retail overlay zone~~ unless the director certifies that the issuance of such business license is in compliance with the requirements of subsection A of this section; provided, the renewal of business licenses for businesses in existence as of the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter shall not be prohibited by this section.
- C. ~~Second story uses and s~~Storefronts ~~and second-story uses fronting on Falls Avenue S.E. or Maple Avenue S.E. located outside the downtown historic district retail overlay zone~~ shall be subject to the underlying zoning only and shall not be subject to the special use regulations of this chapter. (Ord. 1198 § 22 (Exh. D), 2017; Ord. 869 § 1, 2000).

**17.37.040, Waiver of special use regulations.**

- ~~A) The owner or authorized agent of the owner of any premises subject to the special use regulations of SMC 17.37.030 may apply for a waiver of such regulations upon making a written application therefor describing the premises by address, the last retail use, the date such premises became vacant, the proposed nonretail use, and the date such proposed nonretail lease is proposed to commence. The application shall be supported by declaration signed under penalty of perjury setting forth the facts supporting the application. The grounds for such waiver shall be as follows:~~
- ~~1) Such premises are vacant;~~
  - ~~2) Such owner or agent has made a good faith effort to lease the premises for a retail use for a period greater than 120 days from the latter of the date of vacancy and the date of commencement of efforts to lease the premises for a retail use;~~
  - ~~3) Such owner or agent has offered the premises for lease for a retail use at a rate no higher than the rate for the proposed nonretail use and upon other terms and conditions at least as favorable;~~

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96 4) ~~Despite such good faith efforts, such owner or agent has not been able to lease the premises for a~~  
97 ~~retail use and such premises remain vacant; and~~

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99 5) ~~Such owner or agent has not offered the premises to a potential nonretail user prior to the date of~~  
100 ~~application for the waiver.~~

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102 B) ~~Such application and declaration shall be supported by copies of the following documentation:~~

103  
104 1) ~~Copies of all published and nonpublished advertising or other solicitations offering the premises~~  
105 ~~for lease, including but not limited to newspaper advertisements, circulars or flyers, and~~  
106 ~~advertisements used by brokers or agents, with annotations as to the date and place of publication;~~

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108 2) ~~A list of potential retail users contacted or expressing interest in leasing the premises, and the reason~~  
109 ~~of each potential user for not leasing the premises, if known; and~~

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111 3) ~~Any other document the owner or agent desires to have considered by the director.~~

112  
113 C) ~~The planning commission shall review all requests for waivers under this section. The planning~~  
114 ~~commission shall review and evaluate a waiver request at a regularly scheduled meeting within 30 days~~  
115 ~~following receipt of a complete application for a waiver. The planning commission director shall make~~  
116 ~~a decision on the waiver request by majority vote to either approve or deny the waiver; issue a written~~  
117 ~~decision allowing or denying the waiver within 14 days of receipt of a complete application; provided,~~  
118 ~~the application shall be allowed unless the director/planning commission affirmatively finds that one or~~  
119 ~~more of the grounds of subsection A of this section have not been met, or the application or declaration~~  
120 ~~is fraudulent or not made in good faith. The director shall prepare a written notice of decision reflecting~~  
121 ~~the decision of the planning commission. The notice of director's decision shall be mailed to the~~  
122 ~~applicant by certified mail, return receipt requested, and by ordinary mail. The effective date of the~~  
123 ~~decision shall be deemed to be the date of mailing of the notice of decision.~~

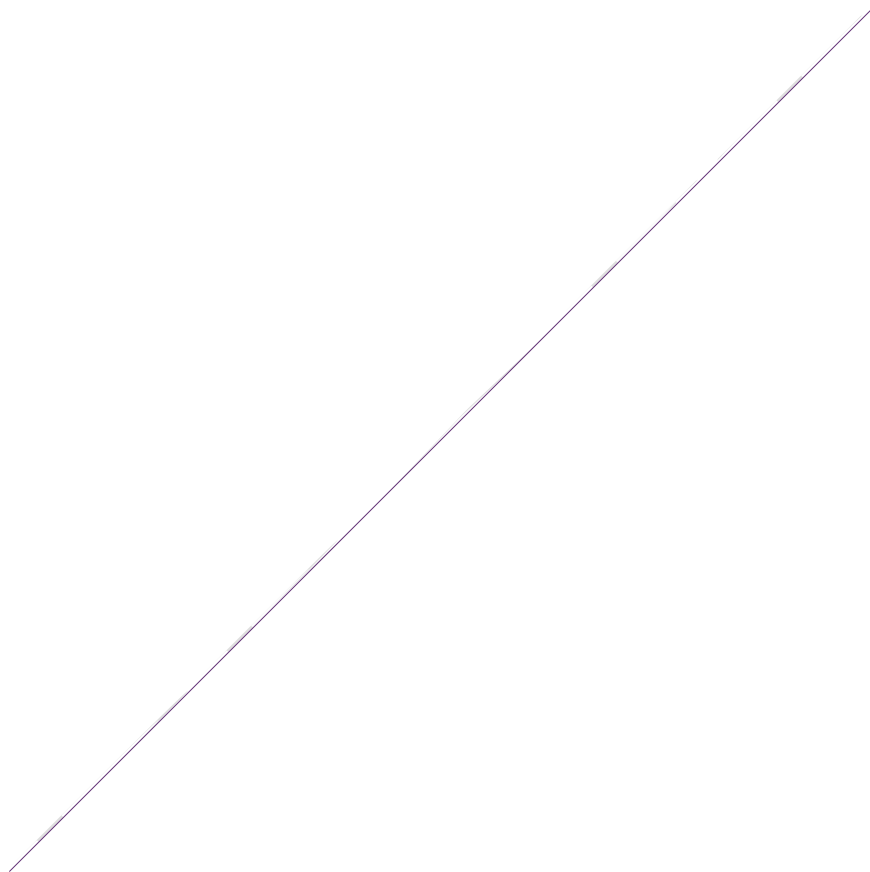
124  
125 A) ~~The decision of the on the waiver request director may be appealed to the planning commission hearing~~  
126 ~~examiner by filing a written notice of appeal with the city clerk, setting forth the factual and legal basis~~  
127 ~~of the appeal within 10 days of the date of the director's decision. The planning commission shall hold~~  
128 ~~a hearing thereon at a regular meeting not less than seven nor more than 30 days from the date of filing~~  
129 ~~of the appeal, and shall immediately deliberate and decide the matter upon conclusion of the hearing.~~  
130 ~~The planning commission shall issue a written decision signed by the chairman within five business~~  
131 ~~days after the hearing, which written decision shall be final unless appealed to superior court. (Ord.~~  
132 ~~1198 § 22 (Exh. D), 2017; Ord. 884 § 1, 2001; Ord. 869 § 1, 2000).~~

133  
134 **17.37.050 Revocation of waiver for fraud.**

135 A) ~~The planning commission may revoke a waiver granted pursuant to SMC 17.37.040, and any business~~  
136 ~~license issued in reliance thereon, after a hearing on notice to the property owner and holder of the~~  
137 ~~business license, upon the grounds that such waiver was obtained by a material misrepresentation in~~  
138 ~~the application, declaration or supporting documents. For purposes of this section, a "material~~  
139 ~~misrepresentation" is a false statement upon which reliance was placed in order to find the existence of~~  
140 ~~one or more of the grounds for granting the waiver. (Ord. 1198 § 22 (Exh. D), 2017; Ord. 869 § 1,~~  
141 ~~2000).~~



142



**12E.040, Ground Floor Commercial Tenant Spaces**

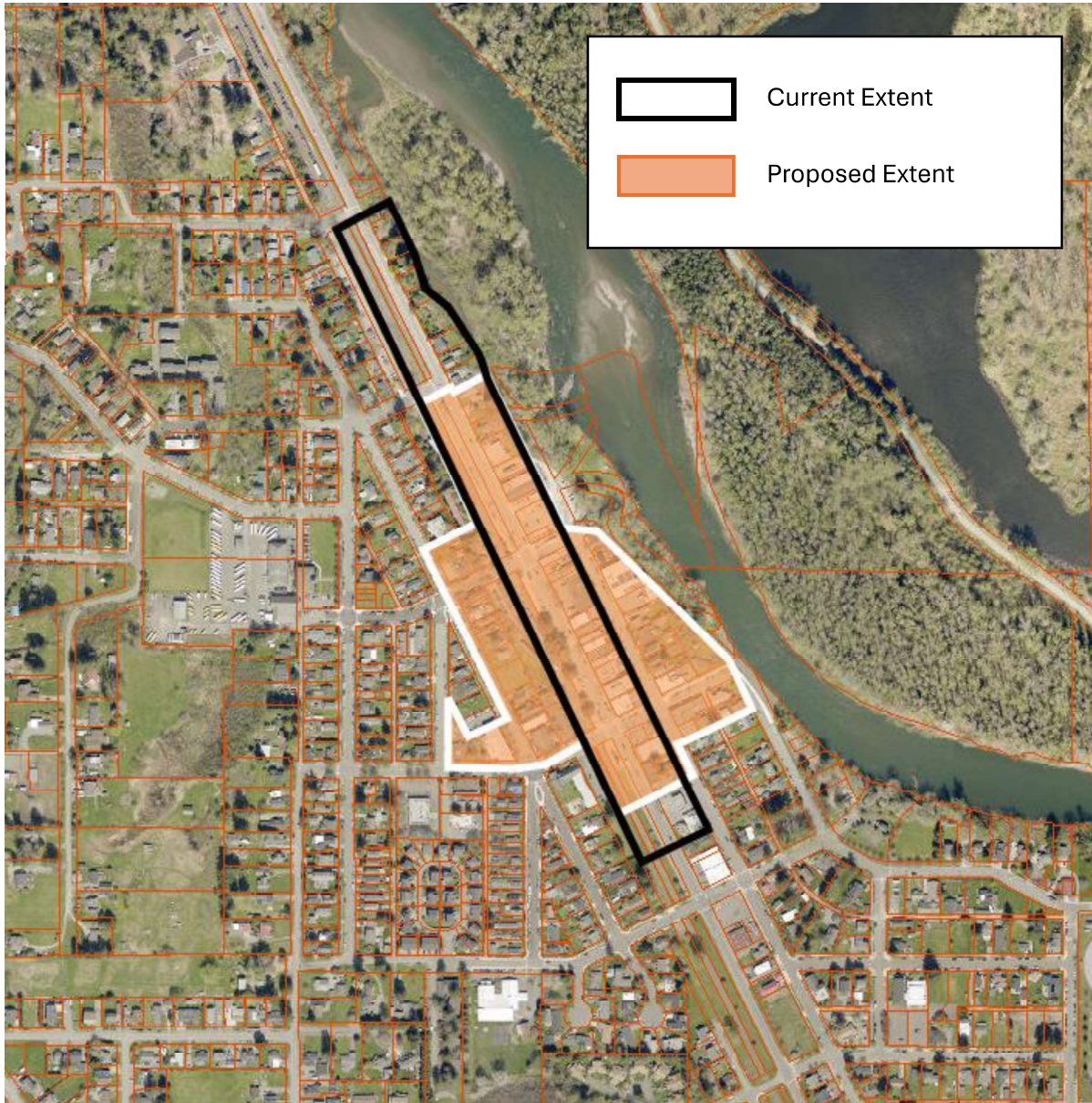
- 1  
2 A. No more than one single-user ground floor retail or commercial space greater than 7,500 sq. ft. in area  
3 shall be allowed within the neighborhood center retail district. Other than the block containing this  
4 larger commercial business space, no more than 50 percent of the number of ground floor retail or  
5 commercial spaces within each block shall be greater than 2,500 sq. ft.
- 6 B. There shall be a minimum of four separate, ground floor retail or commercial tenant spaces, each with  
7 a separate, functional storefront entrance to the street, along each side of each block of Center Blvd.  
8 For the block containing the single-user retail commercial space 7,500 sq. ft. or greater in size, a  
9 minimum of three separate ground floor retail or commercial spaces, each with a separate, functional  
10 storefront entrance to the street, shall be provided. Appendix A-4 illustrates examples of  
11 compliance/noncompliance with this standard.
- 12 C. Retail business uses shall occupy a minimum of 90 percent of all ground-floor tenant spaces and  
13 storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. all corner tenant spaces at the Center/Mayrand, Center/Kinsey  
14 and Center/Ridge intersections. These corner retail tenant spaces shall be a minimum of 400 gross  
15 square feet in area. All leasing plans, demising plans and promotional materials shall carry a notation  
16 of "Retail Use Required" on all ~~corner-tenant~~ spaces subject to this requirement.
- 17 ~~D. The owner or authorized agent of any building containing a corner space subject to the retail use~~  
18 ~~requirement of subsection C of this section may apply for a waiver of such requirement. The required~~  
19 ~~showing and procedures for granting such waiver shall be as set forth in SMC 17.37.040, provided in~~  
20 ~~the case of the initial leasing, the time period shall commence from the date the building is~~  
21 ~~constructed and the first unit is occupied. The provisions of SMC 17.37.050 shall also apply.~~

**12E.053, Storefront Standards.**

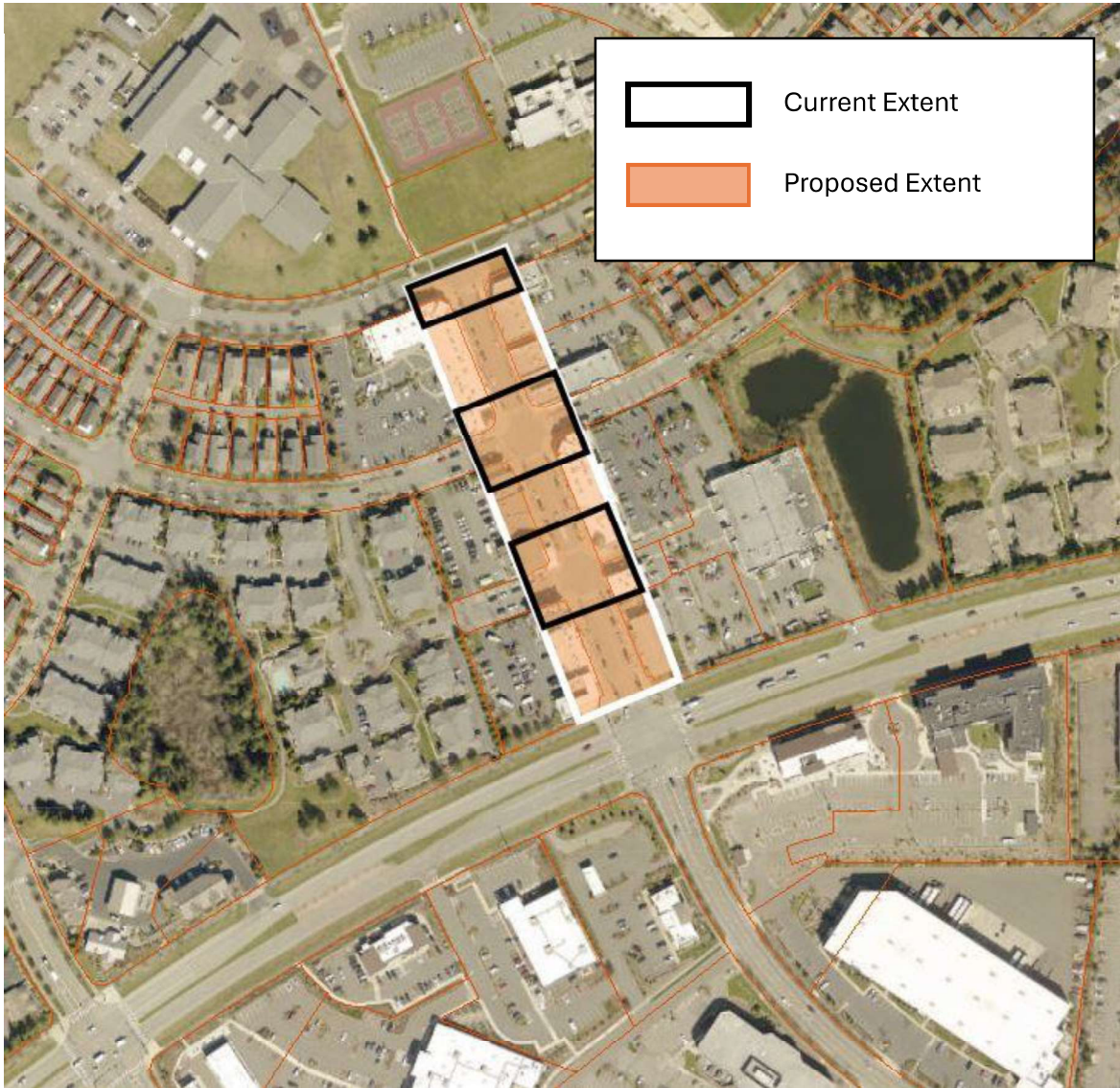
- 22  
23  
24 A. The storefront is the most important and prominent architectural feature of traditional commercial  
25 district buildings and plays a significant role in defining the character of the retail or commercial area.  
26 The storefront also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising efforts to draw  
27 customers and increase business. The storefront is the most transparent portion of the facade, allowing  
28 for maximum light and display and enhancing pedestrian interest and interaction. Storefronts also create  
29 visual openness that is part of the overall proportional system of the entire facade. Although a storefront  
30 normally does not extend beyond the first story, the rest of the building is often related to it visually  
31 through a unity of form and detail.
- 32 B. To provide a regular rhythm and unity at the ground floor level, storefronts shall not exceed 30 feet in  
33 width and shall be separated by opaque wall areas/pilasters that are at least 16 inches, but should not  
34 be more than 10 ft. wide.
- 35 C. All ground floor windows shall be located within a storefront system containing a base panel, display  
36 windows and transom windows.
- 37 D. To emphasize the sense of containment and provide relief at the ground floor facade, the storefront base  
38 panel and display window system shall be recessed a minimum of 3 in. from the face of the adjoining  
39 opaque wall areas.
- 40 E. Storefront base panels shall generally be between 12 in. and 30 in. high, except where grade conditions  
41 require more variation on either end. The finished appearance of the base panel may be wood, finish  
42 grade wood paneling, aluminum paneling, brick, masonry, concrete, tile or metal.
- 43 F. Display windows may be solid or paned glass.
- 44 G. Transom windows at least 2 ft. in height shall be provided above doors in all storefronts. Storefront  
45 glazing shall extend to the height of the top of the transom windows.

- 46 H. Clerestory windows above transom windows are encouraged, particularly within one-story  
47 storefronts, as a way to add architectural interest or emphasize single storefront bays or corner  
48 facades.
- 49 I. The storefront entrance doorway shall be recessed at least 3 ft. from the back of the sidewalk for all  
50 commercial spaces, including lobbies, with a gross leasable area of 1,500 sq. ft. or greater. The  
51 recessed entry shall have a minimum width of 6 ft. The landing within the recessed entrance area may  
52 include special surfacing details such as mosaic tile, painted or textured concrete, brick or other  
53 paving pattern. Storefront entrances need not be located symmetrically within the storefront.
- 54 J. Storefront entry doors shall include transparent glazing.
- 55 K. Storefront entrances shall be located at building corners at the Center/Mayrand and Center/Kinsey  
56 intersections. Alternatively, storefront entrances may be located within 15 feet of the corner, where  
57 fronting directly onto a pedestrian courtyard, plaza or other recessed corner treatment.
- 58 L. Storefront design and materials should be allowed to be unique while maintaining the character of the  
59 building facade of which they are a part.
- 60 M. The interior of stores and/or offices shall be designed to provide for interesting window display and  
61 views into the main retail, restaurant or business merchandise or activity areas.
- 62 N. Appendix D depicts typical storefront design and components.
- 63 ~~N.O.~~ No more than 50% of the ground-floor windows of a retail tenant facing Center Boulevard S.E.  
64 space may be covered with an opaque material that blocks visual penetration into the retail space  
65 from the sidewalk during normal business hours. Opaque materials include, but are not limited to,  
66 signage, adhesive film, curtains, tints exceeding 50% visible light transmission, or shutters located on  
67 the interior or exterior of the glazing.

Current vs. Proposed Extent of Downtown Historic Retail Overlay Zone



Current vs. Proposed Extent of Retail Use Requirements along Center Boulevard S.E.



The table below depicts uses that SMC 17.55.020, Table 1, differ in whether they are allowed in the BR-1 or BR-2 zone.

Land Use Descriptions		BR-1	BR-2
1.0	Residential		
	1.3.2 Day Care II	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	1.4 Miscellaneous Rooms for Rent Situations		
	1.4.1 Bed and Breakfast	C <sup>1</sup>	C
	1.4.2 Boarding Houses	C <sup>1</sup>	C
2.0	Commercial/Business		
	2.1 Retail/Service		
	2.1.4b Tattoo Parlor	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.1.4c Shoe Repair	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.1.4d Copy/Print/Photo Shop	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.1.5 Commercial Services	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.1.5a Banks	X	P
	2.1.5d Dry Cleaner	X	P
	2.1.8 Formula Take-Out Food Restaurants	P <sup>3</sup>	X
	2.1.9 Espresso/Snack Stands	P	X
	2.1.10 Drive-Through Associated with Restaurant or Espresso/Snack Stand	X	P
	2.2 Office/Professional		
	2.2.1 Professional Services	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.2.2 Corporate Offices	P <sup>1</sup>	P
	2.5 Wholesale Sales	X	C
	2.6 Small Animal Veterinarian Clinic	X	P
	2.7 Automotive Uses		
4.0	Institutional		
	4.1 Schools (elementary, middle, or high school)	C <sup>1</sup>	C
	4.2 Churches and Religious Institutions	P <sup>1</sup>	P

Land Use Descriptions			BR-1	BR-2
	4.3	Health Services		
	4.6	Social/Fraternal/Youth Clubs, Lodges, Halls	P <sup>1</sup>	P
5.0	Recreation			
	5.2	Country Club	X	P
	5.3	Swimming Pool	X	P
6.0	Public Service			
	6.2	Public Utilities	C	P
7.0	Agricultural			
	7.1	Commercial Greenhouse	X	C
	7.2	Commercial Farm/U-Pick	X	X
	7.3	Large Animal Veterinarian Facility	X	C
	7.4	Public/Pea Patch Gardens	X	P

<sup>1</sup>. Second floor only within downtown retail overlay district per Chapter [17.37](#) SMC.

**SMC Retail Waivers Amendments: Staff Responses to October 21, 2024 Public Hearing Comments**

#	Comment / Question	Explanation
1.	How will a rezone to retail effect current property taxes? Will taxes increase as a result of retail zoning, thus creating an undue hardship on current residents/property owners?	The Proposal does not modify the underlying zoning of the parcels. All parcels affected by the proposed ordinance are already zoned either BR-1 (“Business Retail 1”) or BR-2 (“Business Retail 2”). The King County Assessor determines the appropriate categorization for the purpose of property taxation based upon the actual use of the property; the City’s zoning designation is not used to determine property taxes.
2.	Will current residents/property owners be able to sell their homes as residential, or are they required to sell to a buyer who will put retail in said space?	All existing ground-floor residential uses are considered non-conforming uses under the current code; non-conforming uses such as these may continue to exist in perpetuity, including when a property containing a non-conforming use is bought or sold, subject to the provisions of SMC 17.55.040.
3.	How will a rezone affect the historic district overlay?	The Proposal does not modify the underlying zoning of the parcels. The proposal would expand the ground floor retail use requirements that already apply to parcels zoned BR-1, in the Historic District Overlay, to apply also to parcels in Downtown Snoqualmie zoned BR-2.
4.	Many of the lots in question are small and a retail building may require a tear down and rebuild. The ordinances in place are strict and require an adherence to the surrounding historic buildings.	No tear down/rebuild is mandated by the Proposal. Modifications to structures within the Historic District remain subject to review as described by SMC 17.35.
5.	Is this an attempt to dismantle the historic district?	No modifications to SMC Chapter 17.35, Historic District Overlay Zones and Landmarks, are proposed. The Planning Commission’s stated purpose of the Proposal is to bolster and emphasize Snoqualmie’s walkable retail districts, including the Downtown Historic District.
6.	The homes in question already have commercial/residential zoning in place. What is the reason for shifting to a more restrictive retail zoning?	The Proposal does not modify the underlying zoning of the parcels. The Proposal regulates the types and quantities of retail uses allowed within the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone; the underlying BR-1 and BR-2 zoning is not affected by the Proposal. The Planning Commission’s stated purpose for expanding the overlay zone is to encourage the occurrence of retail uses within Downtown Snoqualmie to increase walkability and preserve the feel of Snoqualmie’s Downtown. Retail use restrictions do not apply to non-conforming uses, subject to SMC 17.55.040.



#	Comment / Question	Explanation
7.	Is this an attempt to dismantle residential downtown to create condo/retail buildings as in North Bend?	The Proposal does not affect requirements that apply to existing or potential future residential uses in Snoqualmie’s Downtown.
8.	This is spot zoning — which is illegal — and by designating these few homes as retail, you are violating property owner’s rights and jeopardizing said property owner’s health, safety, and welfare.	Spot zoning is generally characterized by parcel-specific rezoning that is incongruent with the pattern of overall land use in the vicinity, or is inconsistent with a City’s Comprehensive Plan. In this case, the Proposal is characterized by neither: the retail overlay zone would be extended from the current BR-1 area to also encompass adjacent BR-2 zoned parcels – both of which are existing retail zones, and all parcels affected by the Proposal are designated for retail use according to the Comprehensive Plan. Given the distribution of the affected area, this is considered an area-wide rezone.
9.	I do not support the proposal to remove the waiver process. This proposed change removes an important guardrail for property owners within the affected zone if they are not able to find tenants to utilize their property. The current language provides a very detailed, lengthy, and thoughtful process to apply for a waiver. Eliminating this waiver process would increase already high risks of commercial property ownership in an economic environment where commercial property has been underperforming other real estate activities. Additionally, this change provides no benefit to property owners, while simultaneously providing the director the ability to wash their hands of any responsibility to assist struggling property owners. Perhaps inadvertently, this change presents itself as a move by the city government to reduce their own workload at the expense of property owners.	Comment Noted. No clarification required.
10.	I do not support the proposal to increase the minimum percentage of storefronts to 90%. The definition of a retail use for the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone is very restrictive. The current 75% mix allows for some built in demand for owners who do have a retail use storefront. For example, "nonretail" businesses such as professional services businesses described in 17.37.020(D) provide co-located demand for the retail business within the Overlay Zone. These "nonretail" businesses provide a more stable and less seasonal customer base for retail business in the Overlay Zone, which leads to less turnover in retail	Comment Noted. No clarification required.

#	Comment / Question	Explanation
	businesses over time. An increase to 90% would likely lead to more turnover in retail business as they compete for the limited supply of tourist and commuting foot traffic that flows through the downtown area.	
11.	I do not support the proposal to expand the Retail District Overlay zone in Downtown Snoqualmie, specifically when combined with the proposed change #3 and proposed change #4. Additionally, further clarification of the impact of section 17.37.030(C) needs to be addressed. The second story use of storefronts in parcels impacted by the proposed change has not been addressed in the public hearing notice letter. This omission should be rectified so that property owners can fully assess the impact of the proposed change. In the absence of any guidance provided by the public hearing notice letter, I believe that if new parcels are brought into the Retail District Overlay zone, their second story uses should be subject to the underlying zoning only and not be subjected to the special use regulations.	The amendments to SMC 17.37.30.C clarify that the ground-floor retail use requirement does not apply to second story uses within the retail overlay zone, or to ground-floor uses outside the retail overlay zone. In other words, second story uses are subject solely to the underlying zoning (BR-1 or BR-2) and are not subject to the retail use requirements of SMC 17.37.
12.	Tearing down houses and putting up 4-story condos is not in keeping with historic feel of the neighborhood.	The Proposal does not modify the development standards in the BR-1 and BR-2 zone. Demolition, remodeling, and new construction continue to be subject to the Historic District Design Guidelines and approvals process within the Downtown Snoqualmie Historic District.
13.	How will retail zoning affect property values in these areas?	Concerns noted, city staff cannot reliably forecast valuation impacts of retail use requirements.
14.	Can homes affected by the Proposal continue to be used as residences?	Non-conforming residential uses affected by the Proposal may continue as they exist in their current form, subject to the non-conforming use provisions of SMC 17.55.040.
15.	Can I use the property for both retail and residential purposes?	Properties affected by the Proposal may be used for residential and retail purposes; however, pursuant to the existing BR-1 and BR-2 use regulations and development standards, new residential, retail, or other uses are subject to the provisions of SMC 17.55 and SMC 17.37. The continuation of non-conforming uses or structures is subject to SMC 17.55.040.

#	Comment / Question	Explanation
16.	Will the Proposal limit the ability to rent out an ADU as an office or other use?	As is the case with all parcels in the City, allowed uses are subject to the zoning and use standards found in SMC 17.55. The Proposal does not modify these underlying zoning requirements, but would require that ground-floor tenant spaces facing the street contain qualifying retail uses.
17.	Non-conforming residential uses being added will skew the 90% retail ratio and make it impossible to achieve, preventing future non-retail uses from locating as part of the 10% allowance.	Non-conforming uses, supportive housing uses as defined by the SMC, and City-owned buildings are not included in the calculation of the 90% minimum retail use requirement.
18.	Non-conforming residential uses face issues expanding the footprint of their house. If a house falls out of residential use for 2 years, it loses its non-conforming status.	The Proposal does not affect non-conforming use regulations within the City. Additionally, the Proposal will not create any additional non-conforming uses. Non-conforming uses continue to be regulated by SMC 17.55.040.
19.	New retail uses may overwhelm infrastructure and cause new traffic.	No new retail zoning is proposed. The Proposal affects properties that are already zoned for retail and commercial uses within the BR-1 and BR-2 zones.
20.	There is no need for additional retail space in the Downtown, retail is a difficult landscape and the Proposal could cause storefront vacancies.	Comment noted. No clarification required.
21.	Stakeholder meetings included only merchants, and did not notice residential and commercial property owners.	<p>Stakeholder outreach was conducted in the following manners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 05/02/2024: In-person, at Downtown Merchants Meeting.</li> <li>• 05/08/2024: In-person, Snoqualmie Ridge Merchants Meeting</li> <li>• 06/17/2024: Mailing notice to all property owners for parcels in BR-1 zone, as listed by the King County Assessor.</li> <li>• 06/25/2024, at 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM: Two online information sessions noticed to all property owners on 06/17 for parcels in BR-1 zone, as listed by King County Assessor.</li> <li>• 10/11/2024: Mailing notice of public hearing to all property owners for parcels in the BR-2 zone, as listed by the King County Assessor, online at the City’s website, and posting in the Seattle Times.</li> <li>• 10/21/2024: Planning Commission Public Hearing</li> </ul>



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**MEMORANDUM**

To: Planning Commission  
From: Emily Arteche, Community Development Director  
Date: October 21, 2024 and Updated November 4, 2024  
Subject: Critical Areas Update and Best Available Science, BAS

**Introduction:**

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities to update their critical area ordinance or before December 31, 2024. Counties and cities have an additional 1-year extension, beyond the periodic update deadline, to complete the review and update of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO Update) pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130(7)(b). All critical areas must be designated, and functions and values protected using the best available scientific, (BAS) information.

The City’s updated regulations should consider increased conservation and protection measures that may be necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries which are intended to preserve the natural environment, maintain fish and wildlife habitat, and protect drinking water.

In addition to updated critical area regulations the City will also consider updates flood hazard regulations in SMC Chapter 15.12.

**Background:**

The City of Snoqualmie critical area codes are regulated by [SMC 19.12](#) and last updated by Ordinance 1176 in 2016. The Planning Commission recently completed draft Environmental Goals and Policies in March 2024, which included recommended policies for the use of Best Available Science; (BAS), the protection of anadromous fisheries, the restoration and maintenance of riparian management zones and their buffers, and for the protection of the City’s environmental critical areas. The Department of Commerce provided a Critical Area Handbook; a complete guidance document for updating critical area regulations. This [2023 publication](#), addresses the following: Wetlands rating system, Voluntary Stewardship Program, agricultural activities, FEMA Biological Opinion, availability of LiDAR, monitoring and adaptive management, a salmon recovery roadmap, and other issues.

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, (WDFW) and the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) released updated guidance based on BAS for management of riparian zones along streams and for wetland mitigation. BAS information was also provided by the Snoqualmie Tribe including information on Indigenous Knowledge/Traditional Ecological Knowledge (IK).

**Analysis:**

BAS is available in multiple environmental areas including riparian ecosystem, wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas and others. BAS review for riparian ecosystem is best synthesized in Department of Ecology Volume 1, *Science Synthesis and Management Implications* (Quinn et al. 2020) which describes how riparian ecosystems and watersheds affect ecological functions and aquatic habitats and Volume 2, *Management Recommendations* (Rentz et al. 2020) which provides guidance for cities to protect and restore functioning riparian ecosystems. Healthy functioning riparian ecosystems are fundamental for clean water, productive salmon populations, and climate resilient watersheds.

According to Quinn et al. (2020) and Rentz et al. (2020), riparian ecosystems are defined as the area that provides full ecological function for bank stability, shade, pollution removal, detrital inputs, recruitment of large woody debris, and wildlife movement. The current term or approach to managing these habitats is to identify them as Riparian Management Zones (RMZ) rather than buffers, as is commonly used in most critical area ordinances. The preferred term is RMZ because buffer implies undeveloped natural areas that can contribute habitat to riparian functions, whereas RMZ is meant to capture the area capable of providing full functions and is managed to that end.

One of the goals of managing RMZs is the Desired Future Condition (DFC), in which habitat composition and structure is old, structurally complex conifer-dominated forest with large diameter trees, numerous snags and logs, and multi-strata canopies that promote plant diversity. This is used as the benchmark for the DFC in riparian areas. Riparian restoration is also expected to counteract climate change and protect juvenile salmon according to climate change models (Fullerton et al. 2022; Yan et al. 2021). A significant component of implementing the RMZ management concept is to use the site-potential tree height (SPTH) for determining RMZ widths on streams.

Tree height refers to the average height of the tallest dominant tree (200 years or older) in which key riparian ecosystem functions are effectively captured. The effectiveness of providing riparian functions decreases as the distance from a stream increases. Designating RMZs based on at least SPTH200 is therefore a scientifically supported approach to protecting and managing fully functioning riparian ecosystems, including salmon.

Rentz et al. (2020) describes procedures for delineating RMZs in city forested ecosystems. The inner edge of the RMZ should be based on the active channel as determined by the location of the

stream ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) following the Department of Ecology's OHWM delineation manual (Anderson et al. 2016). The outer edge should be the recommended minimum based on SPTH200, (Site Potential Tree Height; SPTH) vegetation composition, and pollution removal.

The minimum RMZ width for pollution removal is 100 feet, which has been documented to remove 80-95% or more of common stream contaminants (e.g., nitrogen, phosphorous, sediment, and most pesticides). The mean SPTH200 in western Washington ranges from 100 to 240 feet and is correlated with soil types that support different climax tree species. The greater of the two (e.g., one full SPTH200 or the 100-foot pollution removal overlay) should be utilized to determine the regulated RMZ to protect all key riparian functions. WDFW created the SPTH mapping tool <https://arcg.is/1ueq0a> which may be used to help inform how BAS can be applied to RMZ's in the City. It provides 200-year site-potential tree height information at the parcel level for those areas that are proximate to waterbodies.

Staff mapped out how proposed Class 2 Riparian buffers would impact existing structures. Attached are two exhibits showing the stream types in the city (See Figure 1) and the proposed buffer increases (See Figure 2). Figure 2 includes total linear feet of stream type in the city, and the total increase in area that would be regulated as riparian management zones. An estimated 175 structures in the city would have the riparian buffer intersecting an existing structure. by a proposed change in buffer widths. This estimate assumes the following:

1. Buffers do not extend across existing roadways and parking lots,
2. Dirtfish Rally School is considered an undeveloped site since it will be redeveloped eventually.
3. No change to Type S stream buffers,
4. Type N buffer increases from 50 feet to 100 feet,
5. Type F buffer increases from 75 feet to 200 feet,
6. Increase buffer area likely overestimated due to overlapping Type N and Type F buffers, and buffers on piped stream segments that typically do not have RMZs.

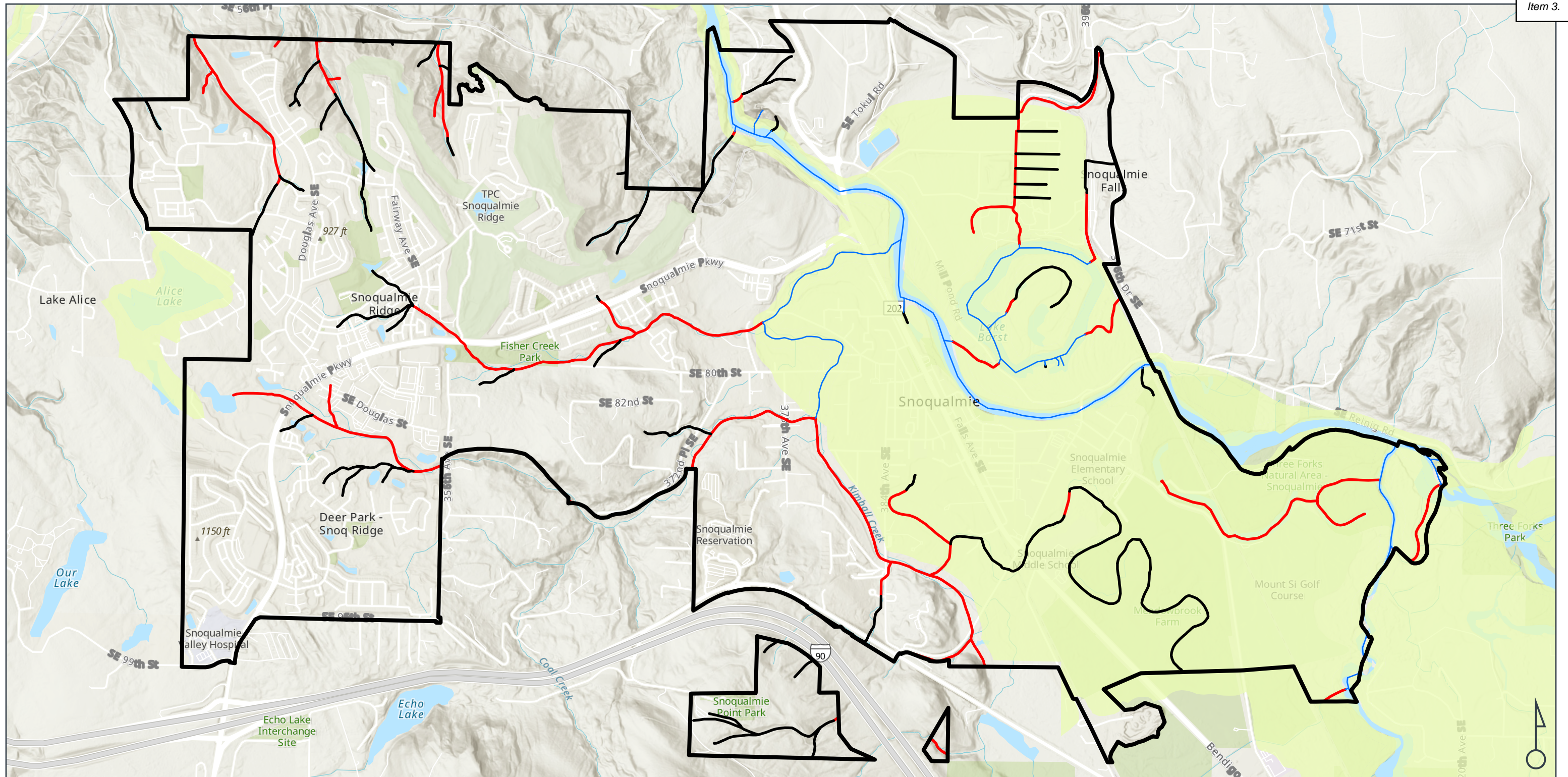
In addition, Quinn et al. (2020) and Rentz et al. (2020) do not distinguish between non-fish bearing and fish-bearing streams. No evidence or scientific literature has been identified that full riparian ecosystem functions along non-fish bearing streams are less important to aquatic ecosystems than full riparian ecosystem functions along fish-bearing streams, due to their connectivity.

BAS review for wetlands is best synthesized, *Wetland Mitigation in Washington State, Part 1; Agency Policies and Guidance (Version 2)* (Ecology et al. 2021) which provides updated guidance on compensatory mitigation specifically for or selecting, designing, and implementing compensatory mitigation based on BAS, to ensure that environmental policies and regulatory requirements are achieved.

A draft ordinance and draft code amendments using BAS will be prepared for Planning Commission review at a subsequent meeting, along with a public hearing. Updates to Snoqualmie Municipal Code will also include updates to the City’s Flood Hazard Regulations, [SMC 15.12](#). Statutory requirements for the updates are defined in RCW 36.70A.030(5) and through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

**Next Steps**

The City’s consulting Senior Scientist, Jeff Gray Otak will present how Best Available Science could be applied to Snoqualmie critical area ordinance. After the presentation time will be allocated for questions and answers.



**FIGURE 1**  
**CITY OF SNOQUALMIE**  
**STREAM TYPING**  
**CRITICAL AREAS CODE UPDATES | 32703**  
 CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON

**LEGEND**

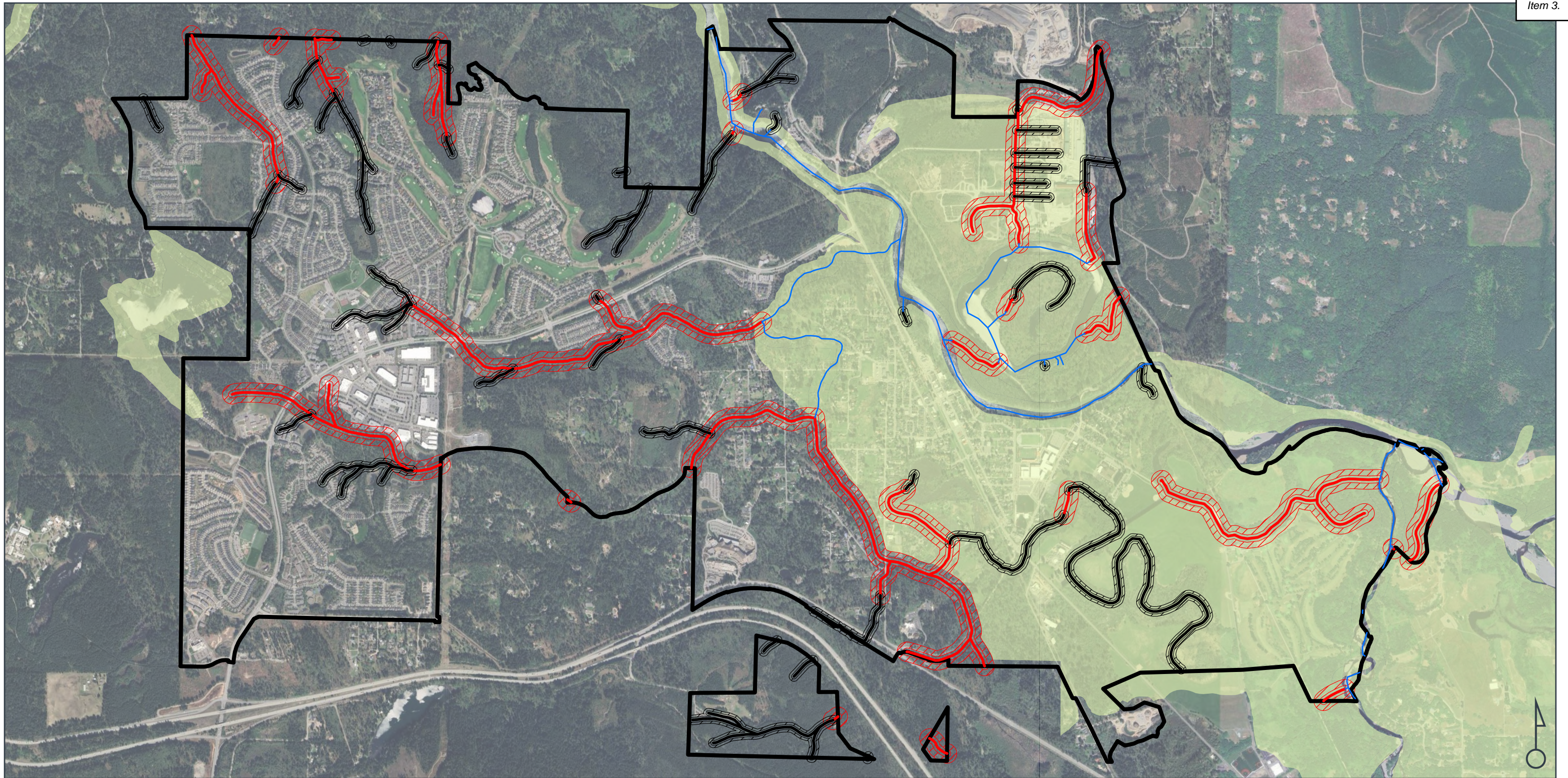
- Streams
  - Type F
  - Type N
  - Type S
- Snoqualmie City Limits and UGAs
- Shoreline Management Area

Data Sources:  
 -Streams and Typing: WDNR Hydrography  
 -Parcels and Shoreline Management Area: King County GIS  
 -Snoqualmie City Limits and Urban Growth Area: Ecology



Data Sources:  
 Date: 10/30/2024  
 Disclaimer: This data is not to survey accuracy and is meant for planning purposes only.  
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**FIGURE 2**  
**CITY OF SNOQUALMIE**  
**STREAM BUFFER UPDATE AREAS**  
**CRITICAL AREAS CODE UPDATES | 32703**  
 CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON

Data Sources:  
 Date: 10/30/2024  
 Disclaimer: This data is not to survey accuracy and is meant for planning purposes only.  
 O:\PROJECT\32700\32703\CADD\GIS\MXD\32703\_SnoqualmieCodeUpdates\_StreamAnalysis.aprx

**LEGEND**

- Streams**
- Type F
  - Type N
  - Type S
- Snoqualmie City Limits and UGAs
  - Proposed Type N Buffer (100 feet)
  - Proposed Type F Buffer (200 feet)
  - Shoreline Management Area

Stream Type	Linear Feet	Additional Buffer Area (Acres)
Type N	58,742	151.6
Type F	98,589	396.6

Data Sources:  
 -Streams and Typing: WDNR Hydrography  
 -Parcels and Shoreline Management Area: King County GIS  
 -Snoqualmie City Limits and Urban Growth Area: Ecology



# Community Development Department

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## MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission  
From: Emily Arteche, Community Development Director  
Date: November 4, 2024  
Subject: Comprehensive Plan – Housing Element Policy Review, New Policy

### Introduction

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) requires King County and cities within King County to update their comprehensive plans on or before December 31, 2024. The housing chapter (sometimes referred to as an “element”) is a core required element of the Comprehensive Plan and must incorporate updated growth targets including King County Countywide and Jurisdictional Housing Needs 2019-2044.

As part of the update cities will plan for an accommodate the jurisdiction’s allocated share. The Element also must comply with all the legislative changes at the State, Regional and County level since the pervious Comprehensive Plan completed over 8 years, including PSRC [Vision 2050](#) housing displacement policies.

In Washington State the population growth has led to a higher demand for housing. The supply of housing is low while incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level increase. The PSRC [Displacement risk Mapping Technical Documentation](#) states that the agency heard from its boards and committees, member jurisdictions, and community partners that displacement is an important issue that has occurred and continues to occur and it must be address regionwide.

### Background

The Housing Element draft goals and policies were discussed at a series of meetings with the public, Planning Commission, and the Community Development Council Committee on the following dates:

- On April 6, 2023, City Staff and consultants held a Comprehensive Plan Open House and received input from the public on the Element.
- On September 5, 2023, City Staff and consultants introduced the Housing Element, (provisions of RCW 36.70A.070 and House Bills 1220 and 1337) and presented on draft polices on Diverse Housing, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Design and Construction for the Planning Commission to review and discuss.
- On September 18, 2023, City Staff and consultants presented revised and new draft policies on Diverse Housing, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Design and Construction as well as draft Housing goals.
- On October 2, 2023, the Planning Commission completed work on the draft Housing Use Element,

with recommended draft goals and policies.

- On October 16, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On October 18, 2023, City Staff and consultants held a Comprehensive Plan Open House and received input from the public on the Element.
- On November 11, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On November 20 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- On December 4, 2023, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element.
- On February 5, 2024, the Community Development Council Committee reviewed the recommended Element at a regularly scheduled meeting including amendments to the draft Housing goals and policies based on comments received from Puget Sound Regional Council, PSRC.
- On February 26, 2024, the City Council held a roundtable discussion followed by a regular Council meeting and approved the draft Housing goals and policies by motion subject to subject to integration and harmonization with the other Comprehensive Plan elements, State and Regional policies under review.

The draft recommended goals and polices were solicited for early review at the state and regional level for GMA and Vision 2050 consistence. Review comments were received from the Puget Sound Regional Council, Liz Underwood-Bultmann Principal Planner, Growth Management Planning on December 21, 2023, and most recently on October 22, 2024 (see Attachment 1, PSRC Comments on Draft Snoqualmie Plan 10\_22\_2024). Staff recommended edits to the City Council February 26, 2024; Housing Element include the following new policy:

*Consider partnerships with state and local agencies, community organizations, and the Snoqualmie Tribe to find solutions that would reduce, mitigate and/or prevent displacement of very low to moderate-income households earning up to 80 percent of area median income.*

### **Analysis**

Displacement is identified in the Puget Sound Regional Council's [Vision 2025](#) in several areas including Housing, MPP H-12 and other policies. These policies are intended to help prevent negative impacts displacement can cause to the health, security, livelihoods and/or education of residents.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) defines displacement as the involuntary relocation of residents or businesses from their current home. Displacement can occur due to several reasons, including:

- Physical displacement happens when residents in existing structures are forced to move to demolition or expired affordable covenants.
- Economic displacement occurs when residents and businesses can no longer afford to pay escalating property taxes or rents.
- Cultural displacement happens when residents voluntarily relocated when other culturally related residents and business associated move and leave an established area.

The City of Snoqualmie is identified as “lower” on the Puget Sound Regional Council [Displacement Risk Map](#).

**Next Steps**

Discuss the draft new Housing Element policy as recommended by Staff.

Attachment 1: PSRC Comments on Draft Snoqualmie Plan 10\_22\_2024





## Puget Sound Regional Council

1201 Third Avenue, Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98101-3055 | [psrc.org](http://psrc.org) | 206-464-7090

October 22, 2024

Emily Arteche, Community Development Director  
City of Snoqualmie  
38624 SE River Street  
Snoqualmie, WA 98065

Subject: PSRC Comments on City of Snoqualmie Draft Comprehensive Plan

Dear Ms. Arteche,

Thank you for providing an opportunity for the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) to review the City of Snoqualmie draft comprehensive plan technical appendices. We appreciate that the city has invested a substantial amount of time and effort in developing the draft plan and appreciate the chance to review while in draft form. This timely collaboration provides an opportunity to review plan elements for the 2024 comprehensive plan and prepares the city well for [certification](#) by PSRC once the full plan has been adopted.

We encourage the city consider the following comments as further work is completed for the comprehensive plan update to align with [VISION 2050](#) and the Growth Management Act. We acknowledge the city has requested revised growth targets and housing need allocations through the King County countywide process, and our comments reflect the draft status of the plan. We encourage the city to work towards a final draft that uses land use assumptions and capacity figures that are consistent with the city's adopted growth targets and provide adequate capacity for housing by income band.

We reviewed the draft plan using the [VISION 2050 Consistency Tool](#). We previously provided comments on draft policies – please refer to previous correspondence on the draft policies and required components. Key sections of the consistency tool are listed below on the left along with relevant comments on the draft plan on the right:

**Regional Growth Strategy**

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Demonstrate sufficient zoned development capacity to accommodate targets (RCW 36.70A.115)</p> <p>Incorporate housing and employment targets (MPP-RGS-1-2)</p> <p>Use land use assumptions substantially consistent with countywide growth targets (RCW 36.70A.070, WAC 365-196-430, VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy)</p> <p>Use consistent land use assumptions throughout plan (RCW 36.70A.070, WAC 365-196-430)</p>	<p>We recognize that the city has requested a revised growth target of 715 housing units through the King County countywide process. As that process is resolved, please note that the final adopted plan and technical analyses must use the countywide growth targets (current or revised) for both land use and transportation planning.</p>

**Housing**

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Increase housing supply and densities to meet the region’s current and projected needs at all income levels consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy (MPP-H-1)</p> <p>Expand the diversity of housing types for all income levels and demographic groups, including low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households (MPP-H-2-6, H-9)</p>	<p>The city has requested revised housing need allocations through the King County countywide process commensurate with revised housing growth targets. As that process is resolved, the final plan must document housing capacity by income band consistent with countywide targets. <a href="#">Commerce’s Guidance for Updating your Housing Element (Book 2)</a> gives directions on how to document this information.</p> <p>Further, the plan must clearly document capacity for the city’s allocated emergency housing beds consistent with Commerce guidance (pp. 44-48).</p>

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Address affordable housing needs by developing a housing needs assessment and evaluating the effectiveness of existing housing policies, and documenting strategies to achieve housing targets and affordability goals. This includes documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations (H-Action-4)</p>	<p>The plan should provide a more complete documentation of potential regulatory barriers to affordable housing. Commerce’s <a href="#">adequate provisions checklist</a> can help document this work.</p>
<p>Identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations and work with communities to develop anti-displacement strategies in when planning for growth (MPP-H-12, H-Action-6)</p>	<p>The draft plan acknowledges concern for displacement. A policy to identify potential displacement of low-income households and to implement strategies to reduce and prevent displacement should be included in the comprehensive plan. PSRC’s <a href="#">Housing Opportunities by Place</a> Tool can be a useful resource on strategies to address displacement.</p>

**Transportation**

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Provide travel demand forecasts and identify state and local system projects, programs, and management necessary to meet current and future demands and to improve safety and human health (RCW 36.70A.070, MPP-T-4-5)</p>	<p>The city must identify projects and programs, including roadway projects, non-motorized projects, and system maintenance, necessary to meet transportation demands. The city currently includes a six-year project list. The city is encouraged to provide a complete project list through 2044 that includes descriptive project titles and project types (nonmotorized, maintenance, etc.). Information on these requirements is provided in Commerce’s <a href="#">Transportation Guidebook</a> and <a href="#">PSRC’s Transportation Guidance</a>.</p>



Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Include a 20-year financing plan, as well as an analysis of funding capability for all transportation modes (RCW 36.70A.070(3), RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iv), WAC 365-196-415, WAC 365-196-430, MPP-RC-11-12, T-6, T-15)</p>	<p>The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) requires that local comprehensive plans include a multiyear transportation financing plan for how the jurisdiction will meet the mobility needs identified for the planning period. The plan includes a list of funding sources and should also include estimated probable revenues available to the city and an analysis of the sufficiency of funding resources compared to estimated costs identified. Further guidance on how to address the financial analysis in the plan can be found in the Department of Commerce’s <a href="#">Transportation Element Guidebook</a>, pages 202-212.</p>
<p>Develop a comprehensive concurrency program that addresses level-of-service standards for multimodal types of transportation and include implementation strategies (RCW 36.70A.070, RCW 36.70A.108, MPP-DP-52-54)</p>	<p>VISION 2050 calls for multimodal level of service standards, and the Growth Management Act will also require these standards by 2029. The plan discusses establishing bicycle, pedestrian, and transit levels of service. PSRC encourages the city to make progress in this area. Resources on multimodal LOS can be found in <a href="#">PSRC’s Transportation Element guidance</a>.</p>
<p>Include state facilities and reflect related (regional/state) level-of-service standards (RCW 36.70A.070, RCW 36.70A.108)</p>	<p>The plan should include LOS standards for state facilities. PSRC has maps and more information on <a href="#">adopted LOS standards for state facilities</a>.</p>

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Ensure mobility choices for people with special needs (MPP-T-10)</p> <p>People with mobility and accessibility needs/priority populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth</li> <li>• Older adults</li> <li>• People with low incomes</li> </ul> <p>People with disabilities</p>	<p>The draft plan includes a policy about mobility choices for people with special needs, but this would be strengthened by including further analysis on the topic. A brief discussion in the narrative portion of the plan about mobility options for people with special needs or locations where mobility barriers may exist would be beneficial.</p> <p>Additionally, if the city has completed an ADA transition plan, it should be incorporated into the plan by 2029 per HB 1181.</p>

**Environment/Climate Change**

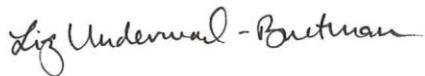
Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
<p>Support achieving regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Electrifying the transportation system,</li> <li>- Reducing vehicle miles traveled through increasing alternatives to driving alone and using land use strategies that reduce trips and trip length, and</li> <li>- Expanding the use of conservation, alternative energy sources, and energy management technology (MPP-CC-1, CC-3, CC-5, CC-11-12, CC-Action-3)</li> </ul>	<p>The plan should address regional policy on climate change, including recognizing regional climate goals in the plan document.</p> <p>PSRC’s <a href="#">Climate Change and Resilience Guidance</a> provides this information and other resources. It is also recommended to reference the <a href="#">King County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis</a>.</p>

Plan Review Consistency Tool	PSRC Comment on Draft Plan
Identify and address the impacts of climate change and natural hazards on the region to increase resilience (MPP-CC-7-10, CC-Action-4)	The city should consider identifying hazards related to climate change, including mapping of these hazards. The <a href="#">Puget Sound Hazards Map</a> is a resource for this. A policy to address the climate hazards identified should also be included.

PSRC has resources available to assist the city in addressing these comments and inform development of the draft plan. We have provided links to online documents in this letter, and additional resources related to the plan review process can also be found on our [Planning Resources](#) page.

We appreciate all the work the city is doing and the opportunity to review and provide comments. We are happy to continue working with you as the draft progresses through the adoption process. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 206-464-6174 or [LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org](mailto:LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org).

Sincerely,



Liz Underwood-Bultmann, Growth Management  
Puget Sound Regional Council

cc: Review Team, Growth Management Services, Department of Commerce



# Planning Commission Work Program

Items are not listed in any order. Subject to change.

2024 WORK PROGRAM ITEMS		
TOPIC	DATE	STAFF
Comprehensive Plan Update	Q1-4	Emily
Snoqualmie Ridge Mixed Use Final Plan Amend – Center Blvd Retail Uses	Q1-Q4	Andrew
Code Amendment Temporary & Emergency Housing	Q1-2	Andrew
Climate Change Element	Q2 and thru 2025	Emily
Historic Design Review Board Training	Q2	Ashley
Code Amendment Critical Areas Ordinance, Flood Improvement	Q3-4 and thru 2025	Emily
Retail Code Amendments	Q2-4	Andrew
Wireless Code Amendment	Q-4	Emily
Permitting Co-living, RCW36.70A.535	TBD	TBD
Permitting commercial buildings to multifamily, RCW35A.21.440 or RCW35.21.990	TBD	TBD

FUTURE WORK PROGRAM ITEMS		
TOPIC	DATE	STAFF
Sign Code update	TBD	TBD
Historic Preservation and Color Palette	TBD	TBD
Snoqualmie Mill Design Standards	TBD	Andrew
Citywide Development Standards	Q1	TBD



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