



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING AGENDA

Monday, April 21, 2025, at 6:00 PM

Snoqualmie City Hall, 38624 SE River Street & Zoom

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Louis Washington

Councilmembers Jolyon Johnson and Robert Wotton

This meeting will be conducted in person and remotely using Zoom.

Join by Telephone: To listen to the meeting via telephone, please call **253.215.8782** and enter

Webinar ID **860 6728 7531** and Password **1730040121** if prompted.

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

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CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

AGENDA APPROVAL

PUBLIC COMMENTS (online public comments will not be taken).

MINUTES

- [1.](#) Approval of the minutes dated April 8, 2025.

AGENDA BILLS

- [2.](#) **AB25-035:** Ordinance Amending SMC Titles 17.20 Retail Use Requirements in Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone
- [3.](#) **AB25-036:** Resolution Amending SR1 Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions of Approval and Development Standards

ADJOURNMENT

UPCOMING ITEMS

The following items reference either upcoming projects or issues pertaining to matters of the Community Development Council Committee. There will be no discussion of these items unless there is a change in status.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES APRIL 8, 2025

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

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL: Chair Louis Washington called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Louis Washington and Rob Wotton were present. CM Johnson appeared at 5:03 pm.

City Staff:

Dena Burke, City Attorney; Mona Davis, Interim Community Development Director; and Fletcher Lacroix, IT Director.

AGENDA APPROVAL - The agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were no public comments.

MINUTES - The minutes dated February 3, 2025, were approved as presented.

AGENDA BILLS

2. **AB25-035:** Ordinance Amending SMC Titles 17.20 Retail Use Requirements in Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone. This item was introduced by Interim Community Development Committee Director Mona Davis. This item was heard with **AB25-036:** Resolution Amending SR1 Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions of Approval and Development Standards. Public outreach was completed at downtown business association and ridge merchant meetings and several public meetings were held during regular Planning Commission meetings. These proposed adoptions were recommended for Council adoption by the Planning Commission. Discussion followed. These items are to be brought back at the April 21, 2025, committee meeting.
4. **AB25-051:** Hailstone Trust Property Acquisition. This item was introduced by Interim Community Development Director Mona Davis. Committee comments and questions followed. This item is approved to move forward at the April 14, 2025, City Council meeting on the non-consent agenda.

CM Holloway appeared at 5:34 pm.

DISCUSSION ITEMS – There were no discussion items.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 pm.

Minutes prepared by Deana Dean, City Clerk.

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

Minutes approved at the _____ Community Development Committee Meeting.

Council Agenda Bill

AB Number

AB25-035

Agenda Bill Information

Title*

Ordinance Amending SMC Titles 17.20 and 17.37

Action*

Motion

Council Agenda Section

Ordinance

Council Meeting Date*

04/28/2025 & 05/12/2025

Staff Member

Mona Davis

Department* Community

Development

Committee

Community Development

Committee Date

04/21/2025

Exhibits

Packet Attachments - if any

Summary

Introduction*

Brief summary.

This agenda item is associated with proposed amendments to the city's Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone including: waivers of special use regulations, the percentage of required retail use in the downtown, the geographic extent of the Retail Overlay boundaries, and the percentage of covered storefront window usage.

Proposed Motion

No action, first reading of Ordinance.

Background/Overview*

What was done (legislative history, previous actions, ability to hyperlink)

In December of 2023 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. Their 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.

On February 5, 2023, the Council CD Committee remanded the draft amendments back to the EDC for further discussion and a recommendation to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission met and discussed the recommendations of the EDC from May thru December of 2024.

Analysis*

The Planning Commission discussed and recommended as shown in the attached Ordinance with draft amendments the following: an adjustment to the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone to remove parcels that are currently zoned OS-2 from the Overlay adding additional property as shown on the attached map, an increase to the minimum ground-floor retail use requirement from 75% to 90%, and the removal of the retail use waiver process from the SMC altogether as steps necessary to protect the integrity of the retail commerce in the downtown.

Budgetary Status*

This action has no budgetary implications.



Community Development Department

Item 2.

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Snoqualmie, Washington 98065

STAFF MEMO

To: Community Development Committee
From: Andrew Levins, Land Use Planning Consultant
Date: April 21, 2025
Subject: SRI Retail Development Standards and SMC 17.37 Retail District Overlay Code Amendments

BACKGROUND:

The proposed amendments originated from recommendations by the Economic Development Commission (EDC) in December 2023, initially suggesting an increase in retail occupancy to 100% in the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone, along Railroad Avenue, and extending the good faith leasing period from 120 to 180 days. Outreach occurred through City Staff meetings with the Ridge and Downtown Merchants associations in May 2024, resulting in broad merchant support for higher retail use occupancy requirements and clear good-faith leasing guidelines. Commercial property owners affected by these amendments were mailed notice of two online public meetings held by the City for the purpose of collecting property owner and landlord feedback on the amendments, but neither meeting had any attendees, and no written comments were provided.

Following public outreach efforts in May 2024, the Planning Commission continued to discuss the proposed amendments through multiple meetings until September 16, 2024, in pursuit of their vision of a set of amendments that would support the vitality of Snoqualmie's walkable retail districts. As a result of these discussions, the Planning Commission adjusted the recommendation to: 1) reflect a 90% retail use occupancy requirement, 2) remove the retail waiver process altogether, and 3) expand the area to which these amendments would apply to all storefronts facing Center Boulevard SE in Snoqualmie Ridge and to all downtown parcels within the BR-1 and BR-2 zone.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 21, 2024 for the proposed amendments and received substantial public comment from attendees of the hearing. One of the primary points of concern among public commenters was the expansion of the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone to encompass properties in the BR-2 zone. As a result, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to a later date to review public comments received and adjust proposed amendments as necessary, and Staff developed a comment response matrix addressing concerns raised during public comment (Attachment 4).

The Public Hearing was reopened on December 2, 2024, with the amendments revised to reduce the scope of the expansion of the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone to affect only parcels within the BR-1 zone

and select parcels along Falls Avenue as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission (Attachment 3). Hearing no significant public comment regarding this amendment concept, the Planning Commission unanimously moved to recommend the amendments to the City Council at their January 21, 2025 meeting (Attachments 1, 2).

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 reference the Municipal Code, the retail use requirements only apply to storefront tenant spaces facing specific intersections, including Center Boulevard SE and SE Ridge Street, SE Mayrand Lane, and SE Kinsey Street. 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	100%	75%
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	120 days	120 days

Under the proposed amendments, 90% of the storefronts within the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone and within Snoqualmie Ridge facing Center Boulevard S.E. must be "bona-fide" retail uses that support the vitality of the walkable retail district, and the retail use waiver process is removed.

Currently, the ratio of retail to non-retail uses within the existing Downtown Retail Overlay Zone is approximately 75% retail to 25% non-retail uses. If adopted, because there is no waiver process, no new non-retail uses may utilize a ground-floor storefront until compliance with the 90% retail use requirement is achieved within the overlay zone and for storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. Table 2: "Proposed Retail Use Requirements" summarizes these changes.

Table 2: Proposed Retail Use Requirements

	Snoqualmie Ridge I Neighborhood Center; corner all storefronts facing select intersections <u>Center Boulevard SE</u> (see Attachment 3)	<u>Parcels located in the BR- 1 or along Falls Ave in Downtown Snoqualmie</u> (see attachment 3)
Ground Floor Minimum Retail Use Ratio	<u>90%</u>	<u>90%</u>
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	<u>N/A, No Retail Waivers</u>	<u>N/A, No Retail Waivers</u>

Under the current code, the Community Development Director is obligated to approve a waiver from the retail use requirement if specific findings (that the storefront was advertised at a fair market value for a period of 120 days) are met. Disapproving of the ministerial nature of this process, 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 if 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 recommends removal of the waiver process altogether.

Other minor changes are proposed. Within the Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center, the development standards are proposed to be modified to require that at least 50% of ground-floor windows along Center Boulevard SE remain uncovered by signs or other window coverings during normal business hours, ensuring visibility into the tenant space and enhancing the pedestrian experience. Within the Snoqualmie Municipal Code, minor code changes are proposed for the sake of internal consistency and general code cleanup.

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 select parcels along Falls Avenue in Downtown Snoqualmie as depicted on Attachment 3 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 3).¹

- 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.¹

NEXT STEPS:

- Review and discuss recommendation in advance of City Council first reading.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. **SMC Chapter 17, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
2. **Chapter 12 Snoqualmie Ridge Development Standards, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
3. **Current and Proposed Downtown Historic District and SRI Retail Overlay Zone Maps**
4. **October 21, 2024, Public Hearing Comment Response Matrix**

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

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.~~

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 ~~entrance 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;~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17.37.050 Revocation of waiver for fraud:

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

142

12E.040, Ground Floor Commercial Tenant Spaces

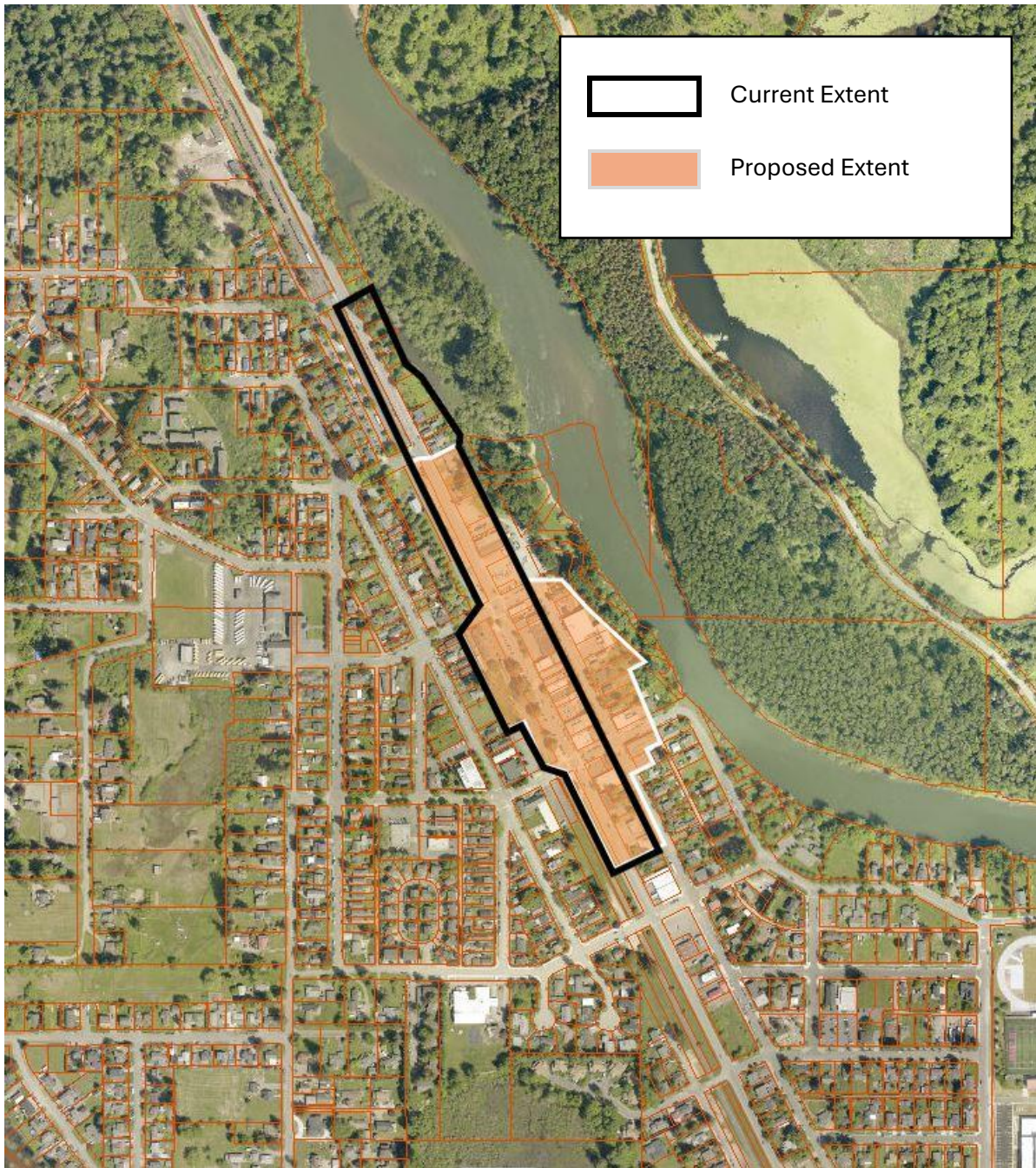
- A. No more than one single-user ground floor retail or commercial space greater than 7,500 sq. ft. in area shall be allowed within the neighborhood center retail district. Other than the block containing this larger commercial business space, no more than 50 percent of the number of ground floor retail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

12E.053, Storefront Standards.

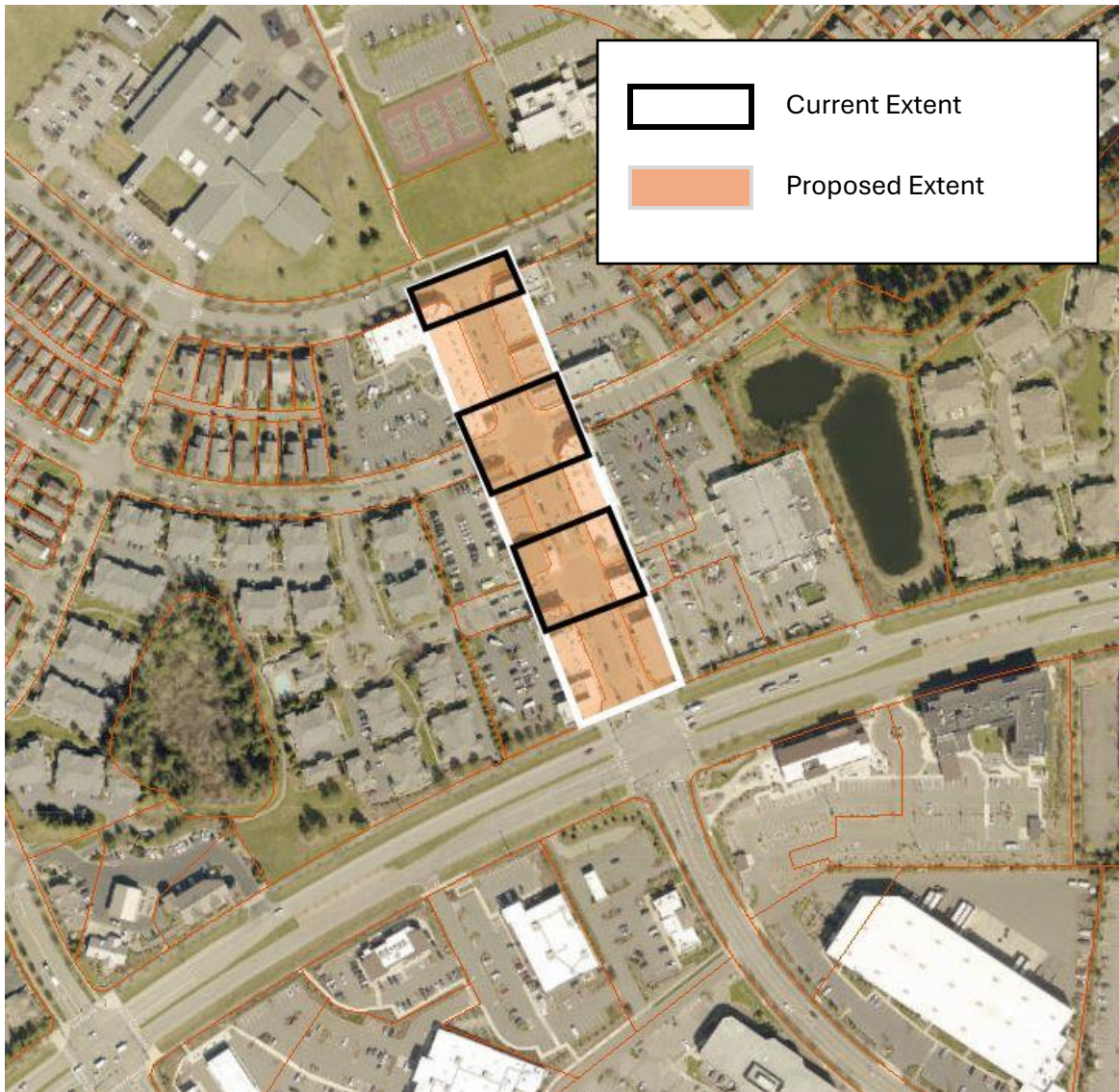
- A. The storefront is the most important and prominent architectural feature of traditional commercial district buildings and plays a significant role in defining the character of the retail or commercial area. The storefront also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising efforts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



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"> • 05/02/2024: In-person, at Downtown Merchants Meeting. • 05/08/2024: In-person, Snoqualmie Ridge Merchants Meeting • 06/17/2024: Mailing notice to all property owners for parcels in BR-1 zone, as listed by the King County Assessor. • 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. • 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. • 10/21/2024: Planning Commission Public Hearing

ORDINANCE NO. _____**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON,
AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 17.20 AND CHAPTER
17.37 OF THE SNOQUALMIE MUNICIPAL CODE TO AMEND RETAIL
USE REQUIREMENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT
RETAIL OVERLAY ZONE**

WHEREAS, within the Snoqualmie Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone, Snoqualmie Municipal Code (“SMC”) Section 17.37.040 currently requires that 75% of ground floor storefronts contain a bona-fide retail use, as defined by SMC 17.37.020, with a waiver from this requirement available if lessors of affected property demonstrate a good-faith effort to lease the premise to a bona-fide retail use for a period of 120 days; and

WHEREAS, the Chair of the Snoqualmie Economic Development Commission sent a letter to the Council Community Development Committee in December 2023 recommending draft amendments to SMC Section 17.37.040, Waiver of special use regulations, proposing revisions to increase the ground-floor storefront retail use requirement from 75% to 100% within the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone, and to increase the amount of time lessors must demonstrate a good-faith effort to lease property to a retail use from 120 days to 180 days; and

WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee indicated that a requirement of 100% retail uses within the Retail Overlay Zone was too high, and that a 180-day requirement to demonstrate a good-faith effort to lease to a bona-fide retail use was too short, and suggested that the definition of retail use should be examined; and

WHEREAS, the City of Snoqualmie conducted public outreach to gather community input and appropriately noticed the amendments in the following manner: Community Development Department staff attended and discussed the amendments with the Downtown Business Association and the Ridge Merchants Association on May 2, 2024 and May 8, 2024, respectively; notice of two virtual public meeting was mailed to all owners of property affected by the amendments on June 19, 2024, with those meetings held on June 25, 2024; notice was issued for a public hearing by the Planning Commission on October 21, 2024; notice of a reopened public hearing by the Planning Commission was issued and mailed on December 2, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the input received from the public by the Planning Commission informed the modifications made to the amendments by the Planning Commission, during meetings held on May 6, 2024, May 20, 2024, May 28, 2024, July 1, 2024, August 5, 2024, September 3, 2024, October 7, 2024, October 21, 2024, and December 2, 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a result of public outreach and Planning Commissioner efforts, the Planning Commission proposed to increase the ground-floor storefront retail use requirement from 75% to 90%, to expand the extents of the Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone to include all parcels zoned “BR-1” and select parcels along Falls Avenue in Downtown Snoqualmie and to depict this change upon the zoning map, to remove parcels zoned “OS-2” from the Retail Overlay Zone, and to repeal the retail waiver process from the SMC altogether; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plan Goal LU-2 directs the City of Snoqualmie to tell the story of Snoqualmie's history and identity through buildings, districts, and landscape (with sustainable development) that fosters civic pride; and

WHEREAS, the required 60-day notice was sent to the State of Washington Department of Commerce on October 4, 2024; and

WHEREAS, a SEPA DNS was issued for this non-project action on November 21, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 21, 2024 to receive testimony on the proposed code amendments, and held a second duly-noticed reopened public hearing on December 2, 2024 to receive additional testimony on the proposed code amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, by motion on January 21, 2025, unanimously recommended approval of the proposed amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee of the Snoqualmie City Council reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendation on April 21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie City Council has considered the recommendations of the Community Development Committee, the Planning Commission, and City Administration and has determined to take the actions set forth in this ordinance:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, as follows:

Section 1. Amendment of Chapter 17.20 SMC. Snoqualmie Municipal Code section 17.20.020, line 18 through line 24, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 2. Amendment of Chapter 17.37 SMC. Snoqualmie Municipal Code section 17.37.010, line 41 through line 44, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 3. Amendment of Chapter 17.37 SMC. Snoqualmie Municipal Code section 17.37.030, is amended as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 4. Repeal of Chapter 17.37 SMC. Snoqualmie Municipal Code section 17.37.040 is repealed in its entirety, as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 5. Repeal of Chapter 17.37 SMC. Snoqualmie Municipal Code section 17.37.050 is repealed in its entirety, as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 6. Severability. If any one or more section, subsection, or sentence of this ordinance or the Snoqualmie Municipal Code amendments adopted or repealed in any portion of this ordinance are held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity

of the remaining portion of this ordinance or the Snoqualmie Municipal Code sections, and the same shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 7. Corrections by City Clerk or Code Reviser. Upon approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk, and either the Community Development Department Director or the Parks and Public Works Department Director, as applicable, code revisers are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance and Snoqualmie Municipal Code sections, including the correction of clerical errors; references to other local, state or federal laws, codes, rules, or regulations; or ordinance or Snoqualmie Municipal Code section numbering and section/subsection numbering.

Section 8. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective five (5) days after passage and publication, as provided by law.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Katherine Ross, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Deana Dean, City Clerk

Dena Burke, City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

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 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 be depicted on the official zoning map.

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 90 percent of the storefronts in the downtown historic retail overlay zone shall be occupied by retail uses, and no more than 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. A building may have one or more storefronts. Permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, and emergency housing or shelter uses as

Deleted: contains all properties located within the downtown historic district retail overlay zone pursuant to Chapter 17.37 SMC, and

Deleted: 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.

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Deleted: on Railroad Avenue S.E.

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Deleted: entrance on Railroad Avenue S.E.

defined in Chapter 17.10, and City-occupied buildings in the downtown historic retail overlay zone, shall not be included within the definition of "storefront."

Deleted:

Deleted: fronting on Railroad Avenue S.E.

Deleted: fronting on Railroad Avenue S.E. within the downtown historic district retail overlay district

Deleted: on Railroad Avenue S.E. within the downtown historic district retail overlay zone

Deleted: Second story uses and

Deleted: fronting on Falls Avenue S.E. or Maple Avenue S.E.

Deleted: 17.37.040, Waiver of special use regulations. ¶
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:¶

¶
Such premises are vacant;¶

¶
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;¶

¶
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;¶

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

¶
Such owner or agent has not offered the premises to a potential nonretail user prior to the date of application for the waiver.¶

¶
Such application and declaration shall be supported by copies of the following documentation:¶

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

¶

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Deleted: 17.37.050 Revocation of waiver for fraud.¶

The planning commission may revoke a waiver granted pursuant to SMC 17.37.040, and any business license issued in reliance thereon, after a hearing on notice to the property owner and holder of the business license, upon the grounds that such waiver was obtained by a material

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON,
AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF CHAPTER 17.20 AND CHAPTER 17.37 OF
THE SNOQUALMIE MUNICIPAL CODE TO AMEND RETAIL USE
REQUIREMENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT RETAIL
OVERLAY ZONE**

WHEREAS, within the Snoqualmie Downtown Historic District Retail Overlay Zone, Snoqualmie Municipal Code (“SMC”) Section 17.37.040 currently requires that 75% of ground floor storefronts contain a bona-fide retail use, as defined by SMC 17.37.020, with a waiver from this requirement available if lessors of affected property demonstrate a good-faith effort to lease the premise to a bona-fide retail use for a period of 120 days; and

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WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee indicated that a requirement of 100% retail uses within the Retail Overlay Zone was too high, and that a 180-day requirement to demonstrate a good-faith effort to lease to a bona-fide retail use was too short, and suggested that the definition of retail use should be examined; and

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WHEREAS, a SEPA DNS was issued for this non-project action on November 21, 2024; and

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Section 8. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be effective five (5) days after passage and publication, as provided by law.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, this 12th day of May 2025.

Katherine Ross, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Deana Dean, City Clerk

Dena Burke, City Attorney

Ordinance No.
Published: _____

EXHIBIT A

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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 be depicted on the official zoning map.

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 90 percent of the storefronts in the downtown historic retail overlay zone shall be occupied by retail uses, and no more than 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. A building may have one or more

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Published: _____

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 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. No business license shall be issued for any business proposing to locate in a ground floor storefront in the downtown historic 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. Storefronts and second-story uses 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).

A)

A)

Council Agenda Bill

AB Number

AB25-036

Agenda Bill Information

Title*

Resolution Amending SR1 Mixed Use Final Plan
Conditions of Approval and Development Standards

Action*

Motion

Council Agenda Section

Committee Report

Council Meeting Date*

05/27/2025

Staff Member

Mona Davis

Department*

Community Development

Committee

Community Development

Committee Date

04/21/2025

Exhibits

Packet Attachments - if any

Summary

Introduction*

Brief summary.

Over the past several years, City Council discussions occurred regarding the issuance of retail waivers for businesses on Center Boulevard associated with Snoqualmie Ridge 1. The area is regulated by the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 (SR1) Mixed Use Final Plan (MUFP). Conditions of approval in the MUFP and associated development standards should be amended in order to complete amendments related to SMC 17.37.040 Waiver of special use regulations.

Proposed Motion

Move to approve Resolution xxxx amending the Mixed Use Final Plan for Snoqualmie Ridge 1 and associated development standards.

Background/Overview*

What was done (legislative history, previous actions, ability to hyperlink)

The City Council Community Development Committee ("CD Committee") has indicated a preference for additional retail uses on Center Boulevard within Snoqualmie Ridge ("SRI"). Various SRI Mixed Use Final Plan ("MUFP") conditions of approval, originally part of SRI Final Plan approval in 1995, make it difficult to diversify the types of retail uses in the present-day Neighborhood Center, which has resulted in the issuance of waivers for non-retail uses in this area. Modifying the MUFP, including the development standards to increase the types of retail uses allowed, is complicated by a lack of procedural clarity and conflicts between the MUFP Conditions of Approval and the Snoqualmie Municipal Code ("SMC") Title 17, specifically Chapters 17.20 and 17.37.

Analysis *

Staff considered amendments to the SR1 MUFP that would facilitate procedural clarity and comply with an SMC amendment to control retail uses in the SRI Neighborhood Center. Two conditions of approval in the MUFP are identified to be deleted including: Condition 4: The development standards specifically approved with this Final Plan shall govern future development applications in place of any conflicting standards found elsewhere in the Snoqualmie Municipal Code and Condition 5: Development standards adopted by the City after the date of the Final Plan which are different than those specifically approved in the Final Plan shall apply to SR only if determined by the City Council to be necessary to address imminent public health and safety hazards, or, in the case of subsequently adopted more restrictive standards that are not necessary to address imminent public health and safety hazards, shall apply if the applicant elects to use these standards in place of those approved in the Final Plan.

Additional changes to the geographic extent of the retail district are proposed in the attached Proposed Map Amendment to include all of Center Boulevard within the retail district. A 90% retail use requirement would be required for the area along with a maximum of 50% window coverage.

Budgetary Status *

This action has no budgetary implications.



Community Development Department

Item 3.

(425) 888-5337 | communitydevelopment@snoqualmiewa.gov
38624 SE River St. | P.O. Box 987
Snoqualmie, Washington 98065

STAFF MEMO

To: Community Development Committee
From: Andrew Levins, Land Use Planning Consultant
Date: April 21, 2025
Subject: SRI Retail Development Standards and SMC 17.37 Retail District Overlay Code Amendments

BACKGROUND:

The proposed amendments originated from recommendations by the Economic Development Commission (EDC) in December 2023, initially suggesting an increase in retail occupancy to 100% in the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone, along Railroad Avenue, and extending the good faith leasing period from 120 to 180 days. Outreach occurred through City Staff meetings with the Ridge and Downtown Merchants associations in May 2024, resulting in broad merchant support for higher retail use occupancy requirements and clear good-faith leasing guidelines. Commercial property owners affected by these amendments were mailed notice of two online public meetings held by the City for the purpose of collecting property owner and landlord feedback on the amendments, but neither meeting had any attendees, and no written comments were provided.

Following public outreach efforts in May 2024, the Planning Commission continued to discuss the proposed amendments through multiple meetings until September 16, 2024, in pursuit of their vision of a set of amendments that would support the vitality of Snoqualmie's walkable retail districts. As a result of these discussions, the Planning Commission adjusted the recommendation to: 1) reflect a 90% retail use occupancy requirement, 2) remove the retail waiver process altogether, and 3) expand the area to which these amendments would apply to all storefronts facing Center Boulevard SE in Snoqualmie Ridge and to all downtown parcels within the BR-1 and BR-2 zone.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 21, 2024 for the proposed amendments and received substantial public comment from attendees of the hearing. One of the primary points of concern among public commenters was the expansion of the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone to encompass properties in the BR-2 zone. As a result, the Planning Commission continued the hearing to a later date to review public comments received and adjust proposed amendments as necessary, and Staff developed a comment response matrix addressing concerns raised during public comment (Attachment 4).

The Public Hearing was reopened on December 2, 2024, with the amendments revised to reduce the scope of the expansion of the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone to affect only parcels within the BR-1 zone

and select parcels along Falls Avenue as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission (Attachment 3). Hearing no significant public comment regarding this amendment concept, the Planning Commission unanimously moved to recommend the amendments to the City Council at their January 21, 2025 meeting (Attachments 1, 2).

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 reference the Municipal Code, the retail use requirements only apply to storefront tenant spaces facing specific intersections, including Center Boulevard SE and SE Ridge Street, SE Mayrand Lane, and SE Kinsey Street. 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	100%	75%
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	120 days	120 days

Under the proposed amendments, 90% of the storefronts within the Downtown Retail Overlay Zone and within Snoqualmie Ridge facing Center Boulevard S.E. must be "bona-fide" retail uses that support the vitality of the walkable retail district, and the retail use waiver process is removed.

Currently, the ratio of retail to non-retail uses within the existing Downtown Retail Overlay Zone is approximately 75% retail to 25% non-retail uses. If adopted, because there is no waiver process, no new non-retail uses may utilize a ground-floor storefront until compliance with the 90% retail use requirement is achieved within the overlay zone and for storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. Table 2: "Proposed Retail Use Requirements" summarizes these changes.

Table 2: Proposed Retail Use Requirements

	Snoqualmie Ridge I Neighborhood Center; corner all storefronts facing select intersections <u>Center Boulevard SE</u> (see Attachment 3)	<u>Parcels located in the BR- 1 or along Falls Ave in Downtown Snoqualmie</u> (see attachment 3)
Ground Floor Minimum Retail Use Ratio	<u>90%</u>	<u>90%</u>
Minimum time allowance to demonstrate good-faith effort to find retail tenant	<u>N/A, No Retail Waivers</u>	<u>N/A, No Retail Waivers</u>

Under the current code, the Community Development Director is obligated to approve a waiver from the retail use requirement if specific findings (that the storefront was advertised at a fair market value for a period of 120 days) are met. Disapproving of the ministerial nature of this process, 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 if 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 recommends removal of the waiver process altogether.

Other minor changes are proposed. Within the Snoqualmie Ridge Neighborhood Center, the development standards are proposed to be modified to require that at least 50% of ground-floor windows along Center Boulevard SE remain uncovered by signs or other window coverings during normal business hours, ensuring visibility into the tenant space and enhancing the pedestrian experience. Within the Snoqualmie Municipal Code, minor code changes are proposed for the sake of internal consistency and general code cleanup.

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 select parcels along Falls Avenue in Downtown Snoqualmie as depicted on Attachment 3 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 3).¹

- 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.¹

NEXT STEPS:

- Review and discuss recommendation in advance of City Council first reading.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. **SMC Chapter 17, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
2. **Chapter 12 Snoqualmie Ridge Development Standards, Strikethrough and Underline Changes**
3. **Current and Proposed Downtown Historic District and SRI Retail Overlay Zone Maps**
4. **October 21, 2024, Public Hearing Comment Response Matrix**

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

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.~~

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 ~~entrance 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;~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17.37.050 Revocation of waiver for fraud:

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

142

12E.040, Ground Floor Commercial Tenant Spaces

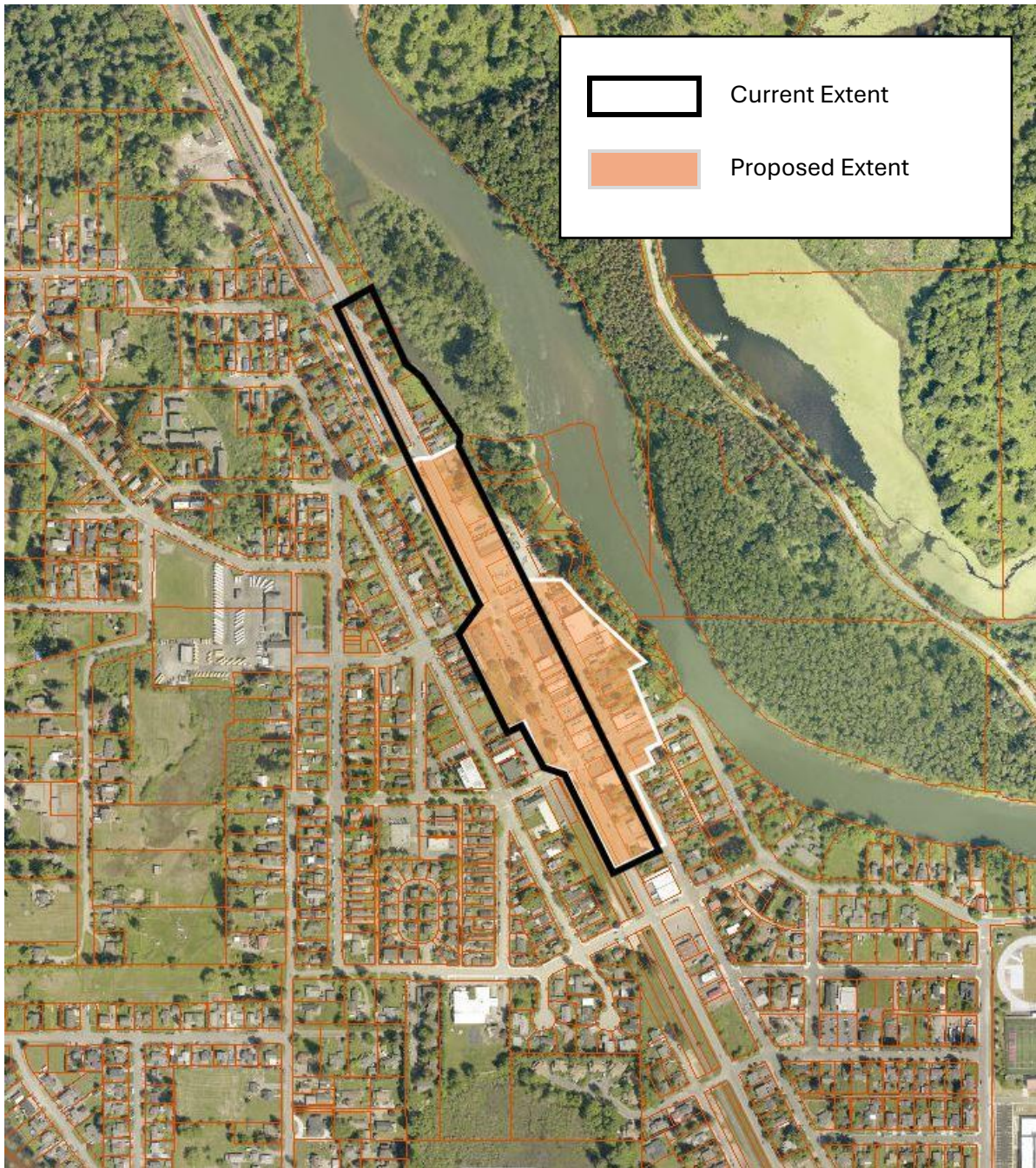
- A. No more than one single-user ground floor retail or commercial space greater than 7,500 sq. ft. in area shall be allowed within the neighborhood center retail district. Other than the block containing this larger commercial business space, no more than 50 percent of the number of ground floor retail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

12E.053, Storefront Standards.

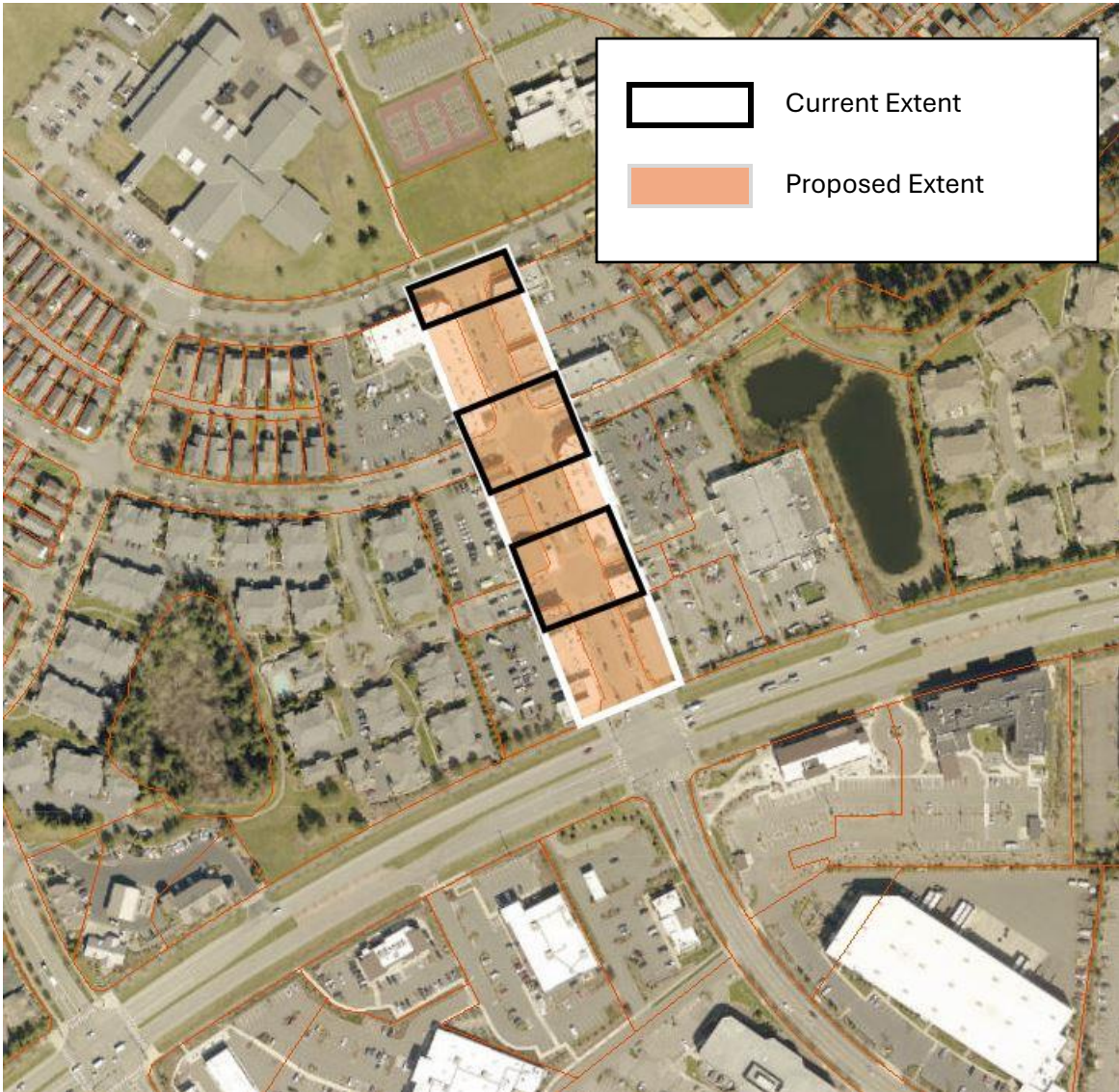
- A. The storefront is the most important and prominent architectural feature of traditional commercial district buildings and plays a significant role in defining the character of the retail or commercial area. The storefront also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising efforts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



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"> • 05/02/2024: In-person, at Downtown Merchants Meeting. • 05/08/2024: In-person, Snoqualmie Ridge Merchants Meeting • 06/17/2024: Mailing notice to all property owners for parcels in BR-1 zone, as listed by the King County Assessor. • 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. • 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. • 10/21/2024: Planning Commission Public Hearing

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE AMENDING TWO
CONDITIONS OF THE SNOQUALMIE RIDGE 1 MIXED USE FINAL PLAN AND
SNOQUALMIE RIDGE 1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards require that all corner ground-floor storefront tenant spaces facing the intersections of Center Boulevard and SE Ridge Street, Center Boulevard and SE Mayrand Lane, and Center Boulevard and SE Kinsey Street contain a bona-fide retail use, as defined by Snoqualmie Municipal Code (“SMC”) Section 17.37.020; and

WHEREAS, Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five prevent amendments to the Snoqualmie Municipal Code from applying within Snoqualmie Ridge 1, and must be amended in order to allow the City of Snoqualmie to amend retail use requirements in the Neighborhood Center, as well as allow other future amendments to development regulations within Snoqualmie Ridge 1; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission informed business owners and property owners within the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Neighborhood Center of proposed amendments that would modify Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five, and modify the retail use requirements and development standards for ground-floor storefronts along Center Boulevard on May 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a result of public outreach and Planning Commissioner efforts, the Planning Commission proposed to modify the ground floor storefront retail use requirement to a minimum of 90%, to increase the scope of the amendments to apply to all ground-floor storefronts facing Center Boulevard in the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Neighborhood Center, to limit the proportion of ground-floor fenestration that may be obstructed by any opaque material for a ground-floor

storefront to a maximum of 50% of the window area, to repeal the retail waiver process altogether, and to repeal Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on May 20, 2024, to receive testimony on the proposed amendments to the Mixed Use Final Plan conditions, and

WHEREAS, a SEPA DNS was issued for this non-project action on November 21, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, by motion on January 21, 2025, unanimously recommended approval of the proposed amendments to the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards and the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee of the Snoqualmie City Council reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendation on April 21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie City Council has considered the recommendations of the Community Development Committee, the Planning Commission, and City Administration and has determined to take the actions set forth in this ordinance:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, as follows:

Section 1. Amendment of Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards. Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards, Section 12E.040, line 12 through line 21, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 2. Amendment of Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards. Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards, Section 12E.053, line 63 through 67, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 3. Amendment of Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions of

Approval. Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan conditions of approval numbers four and five are repealed in their entirety, as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 4. Severability. If any one or more section, subsection, or sentence of this resolution or the amendments adopted or repealed in any portion of this resolution are held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this resolution or the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan sections, and the same shall remain in full force and effect.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, this 27th day of May 2025.

Katherine Ross, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Deana Dean, City Clerk

Dena Burke, City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

12E.040, Ground Floor Commercial Tenant Spaces

- A. No more than one single-user ground floor retail or commercial space greater than 7,500 sq. ft. in area shall be allowed within the neighborhood center retail district. Other than the block containing this larger commercial business space, no more than 50 percent of the number of ground floor retail or commercial spaces within each block shall be greater than 2,500 sq. ft.
- B. There shall be a minimum of four separate, ground floor retail or commercial tenant spaces, each with a separate, functional storefront entrance to the street, along each side of each block of Center Blvd. For the block containing the single-user retail commercial space 7,500 sq. ft. or greater in size, a minimum of three separate ground floor retail or commercial spaces, each with a separate, functional storefront entrance to the street, shall be provided. Appendix A-4 illustrates examples of compliance/noncompliance with this standard.
- C. Retail business uses shall occupy a minimum of 90 percent of all ground-floor tenant spaces and storefronts facing Center Boulevard S.E. All leasing plans, demising plans and promotional materials shall carry a notation of "Retail Use Required" on all tenant spaces subject to this requirement.

12E.053, Storefront Standards.

- A. The storefront is the most important and prominent architectural feature of traditional commercial district buildings and plays a significant role in defining the character of the retail or commercial area. The storefront also plays a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising efforts to draw customers and increase business. The storefront is the most transparent portion of the facade, allowing for maximum light and display and enhancing pedestrian interest and interaction. Storefronts also create visual openness that is part of the overall proportional system of the entire facade. Although a storefront normally does not extend beyond the first story, the rest of the building is often related to it visually through a unity of form and detail.
- B. To provide a regular rhythm and unity at the ground floor level, storefronts shall not exceed 30 feet in width and shall be separated by opaque wall areas/pilasters that are at least 16 inches, but should not be more than 10 ft. wide.
- C. All ground floor windows shall be located within a storefront system containing a base panel, display windows and transom windows.
- D. To emphasize the sense of containment and provide relief at the ground floor facade, the storefront base panel and display window system shall be recessed a minimum of 3 in. from the face of the adjoining opaque wall areas.
- E. Storefront base panels shall generally be between 12 in. and 30 in. high, except where grade conditions require more variation on either end. The finished appearance of the base panel may be wood, finish grade wood paneling, aluminum paneling, brick, masonry, concrete, tile or metal.
- F. Display windows may be solid or paned glass.
- G. Transom windows at least 2 ft. in height shall be provided above doors in all storefronts. Storefront glazing shall extend to the height of the top of the transom windows.
- H. Clerestory windows above transom windows are encouraged, particularly within one-story storefronts, as a way to add architectural interest or emphasize single storefront bays or corner facades.
- I. The storefront entrance doorway shall be recessed at least 3 ft. from the back of the sidewalk for all commercial spaces, including lobbies, with a gross leasable area of 1,500 sq. ft. or greater. The recessed entry shall have a minimum width of 6 ft. The landing within the recessed entrance area may

Deleted: all corner tenant spaces at the Center/Mayrand, Center/Kinsey and Center/Ridge intersections. These corner retail tenant spaces shall be a minimum of 400 gross square feet in area

Deleted: comer

Deleted: <#>The owner or authorized agent of any building containing a corner space subject to the retail use requirement of subsection C of this section may apply for a waiver of such requirement. The required showing and procedures for granting such waiver shall be as set forth in SMC 17.37.040, provided in the case of the initial leasing, the time period shall commence from the date the building is constructed and the first unit is occupied. The provisions of SMC 17.37.050 shall also apply.¶

- include special surfacing details such as mosaic tile, painted or textured concrete, brick or other paving pattern. Storefront entrances need not be located symmetrically within the storefront.
- J. Storefront entry doors shall include transparent glazing.
- K. Storefront entrances shall be located at building corners at the Center/Mayrand and Center/Kinsey intersections. Alternatively, storefront entrances may be located within 15 feet of the corner, where fronting directly onto a pedestrian courtyard, plaza or other recessed corner treatment.
- L. Storefront design and materials should be allowed to be unique while maintaining the character of the building facade of which they are a part.
- M. The interior of stores and/or offices shall be designed to provide for interesting window display and views into the main retail, restaurant or business merchandise or activity areas.
- N. Appendix D depicts typical storefront design and components.
- O. No more than 50% of the ground-floor windows of a retail tenant facing Center Boulevard S.E. space may be covered with an opaque material that blocks visual penetration into the retail space from the sidewalk during normal business hours. Opaque materials include, but are not limited to, signage, adhesive film, curtains, tints exceeding 50% visible light transmission, or shutters located on the interior or exterior of the glazing.

Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions for Snoqualmie Ridge, Condition No. 4

Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions for Snoqualmie Ridge, Condition No. 5

Deleted: The development standards specifically approved with this Final Plan shall govern future development applications in place of any conflicting standards found elsewhere in the Snoqualmie Municipal Code.¶

Deleted: Development standards adopted by the City after the date of the Final Plan which are different than those specifically approved in the Final Plan shall apply to SR only if determined by the City Council to be necessary to address imminent public health and safety hazards, or, in the case of subsequently adopted more restrictive standards that are not necessary to address imminent public health and safety hazards, shall apply if the applicant elects to use these standards in place of those approved in the Final Plan.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE AMENDING TWO
CONDITIONS OF THE SNOQUALMIE RIDGE 1 MIXED USE FINAL PLAN AND
SNOQUALMIE RIDGE 1 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards require that all corner ground-floor storefront tenant spaces facing the intersections of Center Boulevard and SE Ridge Street, Center Boulevard and SE Mayrand Lane, and Center Boulevard and SE Kinsey Street contain a bona-fide retail use, as defined by Snoqualmie Municipal Code (“SMC”) Section 17.37.020; and

WHEREAS, Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five prevent amendments to the Snoqualmie Municipal Code from applying within Snoqualmie Ridge 1, and must be amended in order to allow the City of Snoqualmie to amend retail use requirements in the Neighborhood Center, as well as allow other future amendments to development regulations within Snoqualmie Ridge 1; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission informed business owners and property owners within the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Neighborhood Center of proposed amendments that would modify Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five, and modify the retail use requirements and development standards for ground-floor storefronts along Center Boulevard on May 8, 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a result of public outreach and Planning Commissioner efforts, the Planning Commission proposed to modify the ground floor storefront retail use requirement to a minimum of 90%, to increase the scope of the amendments to apply to all ground-floor storefronts facing Center Boulevard in the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Neighborhood Center, to limit the proportion of ground-floor fenestration that may be obstructed by any opaque material for a ground-floor

storefront to a maximum of 50% of the window area, to repeal the retail waiver process altogether, and to repeal Mixed Use Final Plan conditions four and five; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on May 20, 2024 to receive testimony on the proposed amendments to the Mixed Use Final Plan conditions, and

WHEREAS, a SEPA DNS was issued for this non-project action on November 21, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, by motion on January 21, 2025, unanimously recommended approval of the proposed amendments to the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards and the Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Mixed Use Final Plan conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Community Development Committee of the Snoqualmie City Council reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendation on April 21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie City Council has considered the recommendations of the Community Development Committee, the Planning Commission, and City Administration and has determined to take the actions set forth in this ordinance:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, as follows:

Section 1. Amendment of Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards. Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards, Section 12E.040, line 12 through line 21, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 2. Amendment of Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards. Snoqualmie Ridge 1 Development Standards, Section 12E.053, line 63 through 67, are amended to include the text as shown in Exhibit A, attached hereto.

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PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, this 27th day of May 2025.

Katherine Ross, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Deana Dean, City Clerk

Dena Burke, City Attorney

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Mixed Use Final Plan Conditions for Snoqualmie Ridge, Condition No. 4

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