

1 Adopted: February 25, 2026
2 Effective: March 1, 2026

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4
5 SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
6 Snohomish County, Washington

7
8 ORDINANCE NO. 26-004

9
10 RELATING TO MISCELLANEOUS PERMIT FEES; AMENDING CHAPTER 30.86 SCC

11
12 WHEREAS, the Snohomish County Council (“County Council”) and the Snohomish
13 County Executive have identified regulation of development to ensure safe and quality
14 construction as a high priority; and

15
16 WHEREAS, under RCW 82.02.020, the county may collect reasonable fees from an
17 applicant to cover the cost to the county of processing development applications,
18 inspecting, and reviewing plans, or preparing detailed statements required by chapter
19 43.21C RCW; and

20
21 WHEREAS, chapter 30.86 SCC establishes fees required to be paid by an applicant
22 to cover county costs of administering the Unified Development Code (title 30) SCC; and

23
24 WHEREAS, PDS administers land development permits, approvals, and decisions
25 issued under title 30 SCC; and

26
27 WHEREAS, PDS’s costs of processing permits are higher than current and
28 projected revenue, and PDS is facing a budget deficit in its permitting division of \$2.17
29 million in 2025 and 2026 which will deplete PDS’s fund balance; and

30
31 WHEREAS, periodic adjustments to fees are necessary to maintain financial self-
32 sufficiency in providing permitting services and keep pace with inflation, to align the fees
33 charged to applicants with the type and level of services provided, and to provide for
34 improved cost recovery, fee equity, and predictability; and

35
36 WHEREAS, as part of a multi-phase project beginning in 2020 (this being Phase III)
37 to examine and analyze permitting and land use fees, PDS has identified certain approvals
38 and decisions in title 30 SCC, identified in this ordinance, which have not been adjusted
39 for several years and for which either the cost of processing is significantly greater than
40 the fee charged or for which PDS has not charged a fee for services and the cost of that
41 service is significant enough to warrant the addition of a new type of fee; and

42
43 WHEREAS, on February 25, 2026, the County Council held a public hearing after
44 proper notice, heard public testimony related to the proposed code amendments, and
45 considered the entire record; and

1 WHEREAS, following the public hearings, the County Council deliberated on the
2 proposed code amendments.

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4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:
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6 Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as findings of fact and
7 conclusions as if set forth in full.
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9 Section 2. The County Council adopts the following additional findings in support of
10 this ordinance:
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12 A. This ordinance will add two new sections to title 30 SCC as follows:
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- 14 1. SCC 30.86.050 Administrative Fees.
- 15 2. SCC 30.86.520 Landslide Hazard Deviations, Channel Migration Reviews, and
16 Zero-Rise Analysis.
17

18
19 B. This ordinance will amend title 30 SCC as follows:
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- 21 1. Amend SCC 30.86.450 to amend the fees related to permitting signs.
- 22 2. Amend SCC 30.86.710 to amend the fees related to EDDS deviations and
23 requests for relief under SCC 30.66B.810.
24

25
26 C. The code amendments in this ordinance will become effective on January 1, 2026.
27

28 D. More detail about the amendments proposed in this ordinance is described in the
29 accompanying PDS Staff Report.
30

31 E. Stakeholder feedback was solicited during the development of the proposed fee
32 changes. On July 23, 2025, proposed fee amendments were provided to the
33 representative for the Snohomish County Builders Council (SCBC) of the Master
34 Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties who did outreach to committee
35 members on the proposed fees and solicited member comment. A presentation was
36 given to SCBC on September 3, 2025, and additional meetings with SCBC
37 representatives were held on September 15, 2025, October 2, 2025, and November
38 12, 2025.
39

40 F. The proposed amendments are consistent with the record.
41

- 42 1. Amendments to chapter 30.86 SCC are necessary to establish fees to
43 implement the Snohomish County Code, keep up with inflation, and to better
44 recoup the permitting expenses of PDS.
45

- 1 2. County policy is to use permit fees to cover only the direct and indirect costs of
2 permitting as allowed by state law, and to reasonably and consistently allocate
3 PDS overhead costs among all programs, regardless of the type of revenue
4 source supporting them.
- 5
- 6 3. In 2008, PDS developed a cost of services model to estimate the cost of
7 providing permitting services at the present level of service and the fees
8 necessary to recover permitting costs.
- 9
- 10 4. The PDS cost of services model, which provides the analytical framework used
11 to recover permitting costs, was updated in 2017 with the adoption of fees
12 related to fire systems, was used again in the 2020 (Phase I) and 2021 (Phase
13 II) permit fee increases, and has again been updated based on PDS's 2025-
14 2026 biennial budget. The PDS cost of services model was used to update the
15 fees in the code amendments in this ordinance.
- 16
- 17 5. The PDS cost of services model consists of four main costs: labor expenses
18 (salary and benefits); direct (non-labor) expenses; department overhead/indirect
19 management costs; and county-wide overhead related to development review
20 and permits.
- 21
- 22 6. PDS performed an analysis to estimate the time it takes staff to perform the
23 related permit functions and applied the average labor rates for those positions.
24 The estimates were used to update the fees in the code amendments in this
25 ordinance.
- 26
- 27 7. Proposed updates to the fees are reasonable and will reimburse the County for
28 the staff time required to process permit applications.
- 29

30 Section 3. The County Council makes the following conclusions:

- 31
- 32 A. The proposed fees set forth in this ordinance are calculated in accordance with RCW
33 82.02.020 and provide for improved cost recovery, equity, and fee predictability and
34 simplicity.
- 35
- 36 B. The proposed amendments are consistent with Washington state law, chapter 19.27
37 RCW, and the SCC.
- 38
- 39 C. The County Council concludes that this ordinance is related solely to government
40 procedures, not the Growth Management Act (chapter 36.70A RCW), and therefore
41 does not adopt development regulations under SCC 30.10.080. Therefore, notice to
42 the Washington State Department of Commerce of intent to adopt is not required
43 pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106 and Snohomish County Planning Commission review is
44 not required pursuant to SCC 30.73.040(2)(c).
- 45

- 1 D. Pursuant to SCC 30.61.020 and WAC 197-11-800(19), the proposed amendments in
 2 this ordinance are categorically exempt from review under the State Environmental
 3 Policy Act (SEPA) as being related solely to government procedures containing no
 4 substantive standards respecting use or modification of the environment.
 5
- 6 E. The regulations proposed by this ordinance do not result in an unconstitutional taking
 7 of private property for public purpose. The Washington State Attorney General last
 8 issued an advisory memorandum, as required by RCW 36.70A.370, in October 2024,
 9 entitled “Advisory Memorandum and Recommended Process for Evaluating Proposed
 10 Regulatory or Administrative Actions to Avoid Unconstitutional Takings of Private
 11 Property” to help local governments avoid the unconstitutional taking of private
 12 property. The process outlined in the State Attorney General’s 2024 advisory
 13 memorandum was used by Snohomish County in objectively evaluating the regulatory
 14 changes proposed by this ordinance.
 15
- 16 F. The proposed amendments are in the best interest of the county and promote the
 17 general public health, safety, and welfare.
 18

19 Section 4. The County Council bases its findings and conclusions on the entire
 20 record of the County Council, including all testimony and exhibits. Any finding, which
 21 should be deemed a conclusion, and any conclusion which should be deemed a finding, is
 22 hereby adopted as such.
 23

24 Section 5. A new section is added to chapter 30.86 of the Snohomish County Code
 25 to read:
 26

27 **30.86.050 Administrative fees.**

28 **Table 30.86.050 Administrative Fees**

Notice of application fee ⁽¹⁾	\$350
Notice of open record public hearing fee ⁽²⁾	\$300
Exempt Subdivision	\$575
Zoning verification letter	\$245
(1) This fee will be collected at the time of application and applies to all permit or land use applications for which public notice is required under SCC Table 30.70.050(5),	

with the exception of Flood Hazard Permits. This fee covers the department costs of notice pursuant to SCC 30.70.045 including signage, publishing and mailing costs.

(2) This fee applies to all open record public hearings for Type 2 applications for which public notice is required under SCC 30.72.030. This fee covers the department costs of notice pursuant to SCC 30.70.045 including signage, publishing and mailing costs. This fee will be collected prior to scheduling the hearing. This fee will be collected prior to the scheduling of a Type 2 open record public hearing pursuant to SCC 30.72.025 and SCC 30.72.030.

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Section 6. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.450, last amended by Amended Ordinance No. 21-048 on Sept. 29, 2021, is amended to read:

30.86.450 Sign fees.

Table 30.86.450 Sign Fees⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

<u>BASE FEE</u>	<u>\$250</u>
<u>PLAN REVIEW FEE</u>	<u>85% of permit fee</u>
<u>PERMIT FEE (per sign)</u>	
WALL SIGN	\$250
POLE, MONUMENT OR ROOF SIGN	\$350
BILLBOARD (DIGITAL AND NON-DIGITAL)	\$850
Reference notes:	
(1) A permit is not required for signs four square feet or less in area.	
(2) A SEPA threshold determination may be required.	

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1 Section 7. A new section is added to chapter 30.86 of the Snohomish County Code
 2 to read:

3
 4 **30.86.520 Landslide hazard deviations, channel migration reviews, and zero-rise**
 5 **analysis fees.**

6 **Table 30.86.520 Landslide Hazard Deviation, Channel Migration and Zero-Rise**
 7 **Analysis Fees**

Landslide hazard deviation requests pursuant to SCC 30.62B.340	\$1,750
Channel migration reviews pursuant to SCC 30.62B.330	\$750
Zero-rise analysis review pursuant to SCC 30.63B.120	\$750

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 9 Section 8. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.710, last amended by
 10 Ordinance No. 15-103 on Jan. 11, 2016, is amended to read:

11
 12 **30.86.710 Engineering, Design and Development Standards (EDDS) deviations and**
 13 **requests for relief under SCC 30.66B.810.**

14 **Table 30.86.710 Engineering, Design and Development Standards (EDDS) Deviation**
 15 **and Request for Relief from Mitigation or Concurrency Requirements of Chapter**
 16 **30.66B SCC Fees**

((Activity	Fee))
Application for deviation from Engineering, Design and Development Standards (EDDS) – <u>Chapters 2-4</u> ⁽¹⁾	(((\$1,350)) <u>\$1,750</u>
<u>Application for deviation from Engineering, Design and Development Standards (EDDS) – Chapters 6-10</u> ⁽¹⁾	<u>\$1,075</u>

<u>Requests for relief from mitigation or concurrency requirements pursuant to SCC 30.66B.810</u>	<u>\$1,075</u>
(1) Modifications and waivers of the stormwater-applicable requirements of the EDDS are authorized under SCC 30.63A.170. The fee for a modification or waiver is established in SCC 30.86.515. Deviations from the stormwater-applicable requirements of the EDDS are not authorized.	

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Section 9. Effective date.

This ordinance shall take effect March 1, 2026.

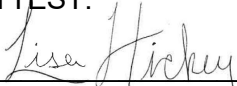
Section 10. Severability and Savings. If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance. Provided, however, that if any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is held to be invalid by the court of competent jurisdiction, then the section, sentence, clause or phrase in effect prior to the effective date of this ordinance shall be in full force and effect for that individual section, sentence, clause or phrase as if this ordinance had never been adopted.

PASSED this 25th day of February 2026.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington



Chairperson

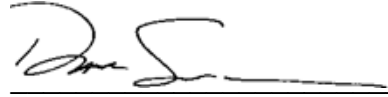
ATTEST:


Asst. Clerk of the Council

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- (X) APPROVED
- () EMERGENCY
- () VETOED

Date: March 3, 2026



County Executive

ATTEST:

Melissa Geraghty

Approved as to form only:

Christine Richmond 01/06/26
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney