

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. 26-005

9
10 RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES FOR TOWNHOUSES; AMENDING CHAPTER
11 30.86 SCC

12
13 WHEREAS, the Snohomish County Council (“County Council”) and the Snohomish County
14 Executive have identified regulation of development to ensure safe and quality construction as a
15 high priority and have delegated the responsibility for administering the State Building Code,
16 chapter 19.27 RCW, to the Snohomish County Department of Planning and Development Services
17 (PDS); and

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

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

25
26 WHEREAS, periodic adjustments to fees are necessary to maintain financial self-
27 sufficiency in providing permitting services and keep pace with inflation, to align the fees charged
28 to applicants with the type and level of services provided, and to provide for improved cost
29 recovery, fee equity, and predictability; and

30
31 WHEREAS, townhouses are considered an R-3 residential occupancy type under the
32 International Residential Code (IRC) but can be built under the IRC or the International Building
33 Code (IBC); and

34
35 WHEREAS, PDS currently permits townhouses under a commercial building permit type
36 and charges a commercial plan check fee of 85% of the permit fee for townhouses; and

37
38 WHEREAS, PDS currently requires separate permits for the building construction,
39 mechanical work and plumbing work; and

40
41 WHEREAS, as part of PDS’s continuous improvement program and efforts to streamline
42 the commercial building permit process, townhouses have been identified a permit type for which
43 combining multiple permits into one townhouse permit would achieve savings of time and cost for
44 both builders and PDS staff; and

45
46 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would create a new permit type for
47 townhouses regardless of whether they are built under the IRC or the IBC; and

48
49 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would eliminate the need for separate
50 mechanical and plumbing permits for the construction of townhouses by charging the fee for

1 mechanical and plumbing inspections along with the building permit, consistent with how these
2 fees are charged for other residential structures such as single family residences and duplexes;
3 and
4

5 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would provide better cost recovery for the
6 inspection of mechanical and plumbing work associated with townhouses by charging a flat fee of
7 11% instead of charging a price per fixture; and
8

9 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would clarify that all other fees for townhouse
10 construction such as the base fee, plan review fee and permit fee will continue to be charged at the
11 existing rates; and
12

13 WHEREAS, on February 25, 2026, the County Council held a public hearing after proper
14 notice, heard public testimony related to the proposed code amendments, and considered the
15 entire record; and
16

17 WHEREAS, following the public hearings, the County Council deliberated on the proposed
18 code amendments.
19

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:
21

22 Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as findings of fact and conclusions
23 as if set forth in full.
24

25 Section 2. The County Council adopts the following additional findings in support of this
26 ordinance:
27

28 A. This ordinance will amend title 30 SCC as follows:
29

30 1. Amend SCC 30.86.400 to clearly identify the base fee, plan review fees, site review
31 fees, and permit fees related to townhouses.
32

33 2. Amend SCC 30.86.410 to amend the fees relating to mechanical permits for
34 townhouses to be consistent with other residential types of construction.
35

36 3. Amend SCC 30.86.420 to amend the fees relating to plumbing permits for townhouses
37 to be consistent with other residential types of construction.
38

39 B. The code amendments in this ordinance will become effective on January 1, 2026.
40

41 C. Stakeholder feedback was solicited during the development of the proposed fee changes. On
42 July 23, 2025, proposed fee amendments were provided to the representative for the
43 Snohomish County Builders Council (SCBC) of the Master Builders Association of King and
44 Snohomish Counties who did outreach to committee members on the proposed fees and
45 solicited member comment. A presentation was given to SCBC on September 3, 2025, and
46 additional meetings with SCBC representatives were held on September 15, 2025, October 2,
47 2025, and November 12, 2025.
48

49 D. The proposed amendments are consistent with the record.
50

- 1 1. Amendments to chapter 30.86 SCC are necessary to establish fees to implement the
2 State Building Code, keep up with inflation, and to better recoup the permitting
3 expenses of PDS.
4
- 5 2. County policy is to use permit fees to cover only the direct and indirect costs of
6 permitting as allowed by state law, and to reasonably and consistently allocate PDS
7 overhead costs among all programs, regardless of the type of revenue source
8 supporting them.
9
- 10 3. In 2008, PDS developed a cost of services model to estimate the cost of providing
11 permitting services at the present level of service and the fees necessary to recover
12 permitting costs. That model has been updated based on PDS's 2025-2026 biennial
13 budget and this ordinance is consistent with that cost of services model.
14
- 15 4. The proposed updates to fees through the amendments in this ordinance are
16 reasonable and will reimburse the County for the staff time required to process permit
17 applications.
18

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

- 20
- 21 A. The proposed changes to townhouse, mechanical, and plumbing fees set forth in this
22 ordinance are calculated in accordance with RCW 82.02.020 and provide for improved cost
23 recovery, equity, and fee predictability and simplicity.
24
- 25 B. The proposed changes to fees set forth in this ordinance will help streamline the permit
26 process for builders of townhouses, resulting in less time spent by contractors who pull multiple
27 county permits and by county building inspectors who perform inspections on townhouses. The
28 time saved will mean that townhouses can be more efficiently and effectively inspected during
29 construction due to the reduced time spent on administrative tasks related to tracking multiple
30 permits for each townhouse.
31
- 32 C. The proposed amendments are consistent with Washington state law, chapter 19.27 RCW, and
33 the SCC.
34
- 35 D. The County Council concludes that this ordinance is related solely to government procedures,
36 not the Growth Management Act (chapter 36.70A RCW), and therefore does not adopt
37 development regulations under SCC 30.10.080. Therefore, notice to the Washington State
38 Department of Commerce of intent to adopt is not required pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106 and
39 Snohomish County Planning Commission review is not required pursuant to SCC
40 30.73.040(2)(c).
41
- 42 E. Pursuant to SCC 30.61.020 and WAC 197-11-800(19), the proposed amendments in this
43 ordinance are categorically exempt from review under the State Environmental Policy Act
44 (SEPA) as being related solely to government procedures containing no substantive standards
45 respecting use or modification of the environment.
46
- 47 F. The regulations proposed by this ordinance do not result in an unconstitutional taking of private
48 property for public purpose. The Washington State Attorney General last issued an advisory
49 memorandum, as required by RCW 36.70A.370, in October 2024, entitled "Advisory
50 Memorandum and Recommended Process for Evaluating Proposed Regulatory or

1 Administrative Actions to Avoid Unconstitutional Takings of Private Property” to help local
2 governments avoid the unconstitutional taking of private property. The process outlined in the
3 State Attorney General’s 2024 advisory memorandum was used by Snohomish County in
4 objectively evaluating the regulatory changes proposed by this ordinance.
5

6 G. The proposed amendments are in the best interest of the county and promote the general
7 public health, safety, and welfare.
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9 Section 4. The County Council bases its findings and conclusions on the entire record of
10 the County Council, including all testimony and exhibits. Any finding, which should be deemed a
11 conclusion, and any conclusion which should be deemed a finding, is hereby adopted as such.
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13 Section 5. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.400, last amended by Amended
14 Ordinance No. 22-073 on Jan. 11, 2023, is amended to read:
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16
17 **30.86.400 Construction Code fees.**
18

19 (1) *Occupancies defined.* Fees established in this section shall be assessed based on whether an
20 occupancy type is commercial or residential. SCC Table 30.86.400(3) defines the occupancy
21 groups in these two occupancy types.

22 (2) *Outstanding fees.* Any outstanding fees or portions of fees shall be added to the required
23 fee(s) of any future plan review or permit prior to application acceptance or permit issuance. Any
24 fee shall not relieve the applicant from a duty to obtain permits for moving buildings upon roads
25 and/or highways from the appropriate authorities. The permit fee for construction of a new
26 foundation, enlargement, or remodeling of the move-in building shall be in addition to the pre-move
27 fee. The fee for any factory built structure as approved by the Washington State Department of
28 Labor and Industries is specified in SCC 30.86.440 under mobile homes.

29 (3) *Commercial and residential occupancies defined.*

30 **Table 30.86.400(3) Commercial and Residential Occupancies Defined**

OCCUPANCY TYPES	OCCUPANCY GROUPS
COMMERCIAL	A, I, R, E, H, F, M, S, B, and U
RESIDENTIAL	R-3, U

31
32 (4) *Commercial pre-application review*⁽¹⁾.

1 **Table 30.86.400(4) Commercial and Townhouse Pre-Application Review**

REVIEW FEE ⁽²⁾	\$400
SITE REVIEW (at applicant's request)	\$100
ADDED SERVICES REQUEST	\$60/hour
<p>Reference notes:</p> <p>(1) Prior to making application for a commercial building <u>or townhouse</u> permit, an applicant may request pre-application review to learn about submittal requirements. The department will provide a written outline of requirements, and may include identification of site-specific issues when known, depending on the detail and scope of the submitted materials.</p> <p>(2) Includes a conference with only a senior planner in attendance, and does not include review of detailed construction plans and specifications.</p>	

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3 (5) *Base permit fees⁽¹⁾.*

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Table 30.86.400(5) Base Permit Fees

COMMERCIAL	\$350
COMMERCIAL PLUMBING	\$250
COMMERCIAL MECHANICAL	\$250
COMMERCIAL MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING (not in conjunction with a commercial building permit)	\$250
<u>TOWNHOUSE</u>	<u>\$350</u>
RESIDENTIAL	\$150

RESIDENTIAL MECHANICAL, PLUMBING, OR MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING	\$150
Reference notes: (1) Base fees shall compensate the department for preliminary application screening and the establishment and administration of the permit application file.	

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2 (6) *Plan review fees*⁽¹⁾.

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Table 30.86.400(6) Plan Review Fees

PLAN, DRAWING, OR DOCUMENT BEING REVIEWED		
•	R-3 and U Occupancies for residential purposes, <u>excluding townhouses</u>	65% of building permit fee
	<u>R-3 Occupancies for townhouses</u>	<u>85% of building permit fee</u>
•	A, I, R-1, R-2, R-4, E, H, F, M, S, U and B Occupancies	85% of building permit fee
EXCEPTIONS		
Successive construction (2) (3)		
•	Structures regulated by the IRC	20% of building permit fee
•	R-2 structures	45% of building permit fee
The plan review fee shall be supplemented for A, I, R-1, R-2, <u>R-3 for Townhouses</u> , R-4, E, H, F, M, S, U and B Occupancies as follows:		
•	Commercial <u>or townhouse</u> permit application for 1 or more buildings or additions requiring site review	\$640

•	Commercial <u>or</u> townhouse permit application for 1 or more buildings or additions with a previously approved official site plan	\$500
•	Tenant improvements not requiring site plan review	\$100
ADDITIONAL REVIEW (4)		\$200 or 25% of the plan review fee, whichever is less.
APPLICATION EXTENSION		\$500
Reference notes:		
(1) Plan review fees shall compensate the department for the plan review necessary to determine compliance with the adopted construction codes and other county regulations.		
(2) A plan review fee for successive construction will be assessed where more than one building or structure is proposed to be constructed in accordance with a single basic plan for the following classifications of buildings and structures:		
(a) Group R occupancies.		
(b) Garages, carports, storage buildings, agricultural buildings, and similar structures for private use.		
(3) Procedures for approval of basic plans for successive construction shall be established by the director.		
(4) This fee is charged whenever an applicant re-submits documents failing to make county-required corrections noted on "markup" plans, drawings, or such other documents during plan review; or whenever as a result of changes, additions, or revisions to previously approved plans, drawings or such other documents, a subsequent plan review is required.		

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2 (7) *Building permit fees*⁽¹⁾.

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Table 30.86.400(7) Building Permit Fees

TOTAL BUILDING/STRUCTURAL VALUATION ⁽²⁾	PERMIT FEE ⁽³⁾
\$1-\$500	\$45.00
\$501-\$2,000	\$45.00 for the first \$500 plus \$3.70 for each additional \$100 or fraction thereof, including \$2,000
\$2,001-\$25,000	\$100.50 for the first \$2,000 plus \$17.50 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, including \$25,000
\$25,001-\$50,000	\$503.00 for the first \$25,000 plus \$10.50 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, including \$50,000
\$50,001-\$100,000	\$765.50 for the first \$50,000 plus \$9.75 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, including \$100,000
\$100,001-\$500,000	\$1,253.00 for the first \$100,000 plus \$7.00 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, including \$500,000
\$500,001-\$1,000,000	\$4,053.00 for the first \$500,000 plus \$6.50 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof, including \$1,000,000
\$1,000,001-\$5,000,000	\$7,453.00 for the first \$1,000,000 plus \$4.30 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof.
Over \$5,000,000	\$24,503.00 for the first \$5,000,000 plus \$4.00 for each additional \$1,000 or fraction thereof.
PERMIT EXTENSION	\$500

Reference notes:

(1) Permit fees shall compensate the department for inspections necessary to determine compliance with the adopted construction codes, other county regulations, and the approved plan. The fee table shall be applied separately to each building within a project and used for the

calculation of all plan review and permit fees, except those for which a separate permit fee is required to be paid in accordance with this title.

(2) The department shall use the building valuation multipliers provided in the most current building valuation data (BVD) published by the International Code Council.

(3) For new construction of Group R-3 occupancies, including townhouses, a fee of 11 percent of the building permit fee shall apply for mechanical and plumbing inspections. (See SCC 30.86.410 and 30.86.420.)

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2 (8) *Certificates of occupancy fees.*

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Table 30.86.400(8) Certificates of Occupancy Fees

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY	
Home occupation in detached accessory structures	\$140
Temporary or final, when applicant requests phased issuance for each structure or structures	\$140

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5 (9) *Special inspections and investigation fees.*

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Table 30.86.400(9) Special Inspections and Investigation Fees

BUILDING AND MOBILE HOME PRE-MOVE INSPECTIONS	
Snohomish County inspection	\$140/hour - 2 hour min
Outside Snohomish County inspection for move to Snohomish County	\$140/hour plus county's standard mileage rate/mile
INSPECTIONS OUTSIDE NORMAL COUNTY BUSINESS HOURS	\$140/hour - 2 hour min

INSPECTIONS FOR WHICH NO FEE IS OTHERWISE INDICATED	\$140/hour - 2 hour min
REINSPECTION FEE ⁽¹⁾	\$140
INVESTIGATION PENALTY ⁽²⁾	100% of permit fee
<p>Reference notes:</p> <p>(1) A fee assessed for work requiring an inspection or re-inspection when said work is not complete at the last inspection or re-inspection. No further inspection or re-inspection of the work will be performed until the required fees have been paid.</p> <p>(2) A penalty charged for work requiring a permit, which is commenced without first obtaining said permit. This penalty shall be collected regardless of whether a permit is subsequently issued or not.</p>	

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2 (10) *Miscellaneous review and permit fees⁽¹⁾.*

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Table 30.86.400(10) Miscellaneous Review and Permit Fees

PRE-APPLICATION SITE REVIEW (\$200 to be applied towards site review/permit fees at time of application)	\$320
ACCESSORY BUILDINGS LESS THAN 1,000 SQUARE FEET	50% of site review fee
BUILDING ADDITIONS	50% of site review fee
CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION PERMIT (per unit)	\$140
DECK PERMIT	\$140
DEMOLITION PERMIT	\$140
DOCK PERMIT	\$140

FIREPLACE PERMIT	\$140
SWIMMING POOL PERMIT	\$140
TEMPORARY BUILDING PERMIT	\$140
TITLE ELIMINATION	\$50
LOT STATUS DETERMINATION	\$255 per lot requested. No fee if submitted concurrently with a land use or building permit application.
ROOFING PERMIT	\$140
SITE REVIEW FOR NEW BUILDINGS OR ADDITIONS²	\$320
SUCCESSIVE CONSTRUCTION SET-UP FEE	\$200
<p>Reference notes:</p> <p>(1) These fees are charged in addition to building/structural plan and permit fees.</p> <p>(2) If permits are sought for more than one lot within the same subdivision and the subdivision has been recorded within the previous year, and all the permit applications are submitted at the same time, the first lot's site review fee shall be for the full amount and the site review fee for each of the other lots shall be one-half the full fee amount.</p>	

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2 Section 6. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.410, last amended by Amended
3 Ordinance No. 21-048 on Sept. 29, 2021, is amended to read:

4
5 **30.86.410 Mechanical permit fees.**

6 **Table 30.86.410 Mechanical Permit Fees**

COMMERCIAL MECHANICAL PERMITS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	For mechanical permits on commercial projects not related to new building construction, the fee table in SCC
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	30.86.400(7) applies based on the valuation.
MECHANICAL INSPECTION FEES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW GROUP R- 3 OCCUPANCIES (ONE-AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND TOWNHOUSES).	For new construction of Group R-3 occupancies, 11 percent of the building permit fee shall apply for mechanical and plumbing inspections.
The per-fixture fees below apply to: (1) standalone mechanical permits related to Group R-3 occupancies, and (2) mechanical permits associated with new commercial building construction.	
GAS-PIPING SYSTEM	\$5 per outlet
VENTILATION FAN OR SYSTEM - installed, which is not a portion of any heating or air conditioning system authorized by permit	\$5
AIR-HANDLING UNIT - install, and including ducts attached thereto	\$15 each
APPLIANCE VENT TO THE OUTSIDE - install or relocate, and not included in an appliance permit	\$15
BOILER, COMPRESSOR, OR ABSORPTION SYSTEM - install or relocate ⁽¹⁾	\$15
DOMESTIC OR INDUSTRIAL-TYPE INCINERATOR - install or relocate	\$15
FLOOR FURNACE - install or relocate, including exhaust vent, suspended heater, recessed wall heater, or floor-mounted unit heater	\$15
FURNACE OR BURNER - forced air or gravity-type: install or relocate, including ducts and vents attached	\$15
HOOD - install, which is served by mechanical exhaust, including the ducts for such hood	\$15
INSTALLED APPLIANCE, or PIECE OF EQUIPMENT	
Regulated by this code, but not classed in other appliance categories, or for which no other fee is listed in this code	\$15
SOLID FUEL BURNING APPLIANCE - install, relocate, replace	\$25 each
TANK - above-ground, underground, or LPG in a residential application ⁽²⁾	
125-250 gallon capacity	\$25 each
over 250 gallon capacity	\$50 each

Reference notes:

(1) This fee shall not apply to an air-handling unit, which is a portion of a factory-assembled appliance, cooling unit, evaporative cooler, or absorption unit for which a permit is required elsewhere in this code.

(2) No permit is required for tanks with less than a 125-gallon capacity.

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2 Section 7. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.420, last amended by Amended
3 Ordinance No. 21-048 on Sept. 29, 2021, is amended to read:

4 **30.86.420 Plumbing permit fees.**

5 **Table 30.86.420 Plumbing Fees**

COMMERCIAL PLUMBING PERMITS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	For plumbing permits on commercial projects not related to new building construction, the fee table in SCC 30.86.400(7) applies based on the valuation.
PLUMBING INSPECTION FEES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW GROUP R-3 OCCUPANCIES (ONE-AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND TOWNHOUSES).	For new construction of Group R-3 occupancies, 11 percent of the building permit fee shall apply for mechanical and plumbing inspections.
The per-fixture fees below apply to: (1) standalone plumbing permits related to Group R-3 occupancies, and (2) plumbing permits associated with new commercial building construction.	
FOR FACTORY-BUILT MODULAR STRUCTURES (the fee will be assessed for each fixture built into the structure by the manufacturer)	\$3.50
FOR EACH:	
> Backflow protective devices,	\$7
> Industrial waste pre-treatment interceptor, including its trap and vent,	\$7
> Installation, alteration, or repair of water piping,	\$7
> Plumbing fixture,	\$7
> Rainwater systems-per drain (inside building) repair or alteration of drainage or vent piping,	\$7

>	Set of fixtures on one trap, (including water, drainage, piping),	\$7
>	Trap,	\$7
>	Water heater or vent,	\$7
>	Water treating equipment.	\$7
FOR EACH BUILDING SEWER AND EACH TRAILER PARK SEWER		\$15

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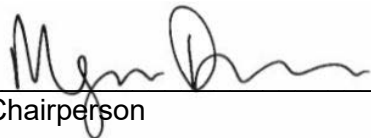
Section 8. Effective date.

This ordinance shall take effect March 1, 2026.

Section 9. 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

APPROVED
 EMERGENCY
 VETOED

Date: March 3, 2026

ATTEST:


Melissa Geraghty


County Executive

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Approved as to form only:

Christ Richmond 11/13/25
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney