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Townhouse Permit Fees Ordinance 26-005 (ECAF 2026-0024)

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 @ 10:30 a.m.

Council Staff: Deb Bell

PDS Staff: Julie Mass

DPA: Christina Richmond

Click on exhibit number to view document

EXHIBIT	RECORD TYPE	DATE	RECEIVED FROM	EXHIBIT DESCRIPTION	# OF PAGES
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Project Name		Townhouse Permit Fees		
Part 1 - DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES				
Exhibit #	Record Type	Date	Received From	Exhibit Description
1.0001	Correspondence		Staff	Parties of Record
1.0002	Correspondence	7/24/2025	Staff	Email 7.24.25 to MBAKS (Fee proposals)
1.0003	Correspondence	11/12/2025	Staff	Email 11.12.25 to MBAKS (updated spreadsheet)
1.0004	Correspondence	11/12/2025	Staff	Attachment to 11.12.25 email to MBAKS (Permit Fee List Phase III - 3 proposals 11.12.2025)
1.0005	Correspondence	12/8/2025	Staff	Email 12.8.25 to MBAKS (PDS proposed ordinances)
1.0006	Legislative Documents	11/13/2025	Staff	26-0024 Ordinance-PA Signed Copy
1.0007	Legislative Documents	11/13/2025	Staff	26-0024 Ordinance
1.0008	Legislative Documents	11/13/2025	Staff	26-0024 Ordinance (WORD version)
1.0009	Legislative Documents	11/13/2025	Staff	26-0024 Staff Report
<i>*Contact the Clerk of the Council for copies of Part 1 Exhibits - 425-388-3494 or contact.council@snoco.org</i>				

Executive/Council Action Form (ECAF)**ITEM TITLE:**

Ordinance 26-005, relating to Development Permit Fees for Townhouses; amending Chapter 30.86 SCC

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Development Services

ORIGINATOR: Julie Mass

EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION: Approved by Ken Klein 1/13/26

PURPOSE: To update fees related to townhouses in SCC 30.86 to streamline the permitting and inspection process for townhomes.

BACKGROUND: Chapter 30.86 SCC establishes the permit fees required to be paid by applicants to cover the cost of administering title 30 SCC. PDS is proposing amendments to the fees related to townhomes in order to streamline the permit and inspection process. The proposal eliminates the need for separate mechanical and plumbing permits on townhouses, and aligns the townhouse mechanical and plumbing fees with residential building permits. This will result in a reduction in the cost of permitting a new townhouse. The changes will also result in significant efficiencies in the inspection process since all structural, mechanical, and plumbing work will be under one townhouse permit.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

EXPEND: FUND, AGY, ORG, ACTY, OBJ, AU	CURRENT YR	2ND YR	1ST 6 YRS
None			
TOTAL			

REVENUE: FUND, AGY, ORG, REV, SOURCE	CURRENT YR	2ND YR	1ST 6 YRS
193-3055134580 Commercial revenue	(\$44,000)	(\$53,000)	(\$362,000)
TOTAL	(\$44,000)	(\$53,000)	(\$362,000)

DEPARTMENT FISCAL IMPACT NOTES: There are no fiscal impacts to PDS expenditures as the ordinance only affects revenue.

CONTRACT INFORMATION:

ORIGINAL	CONTRACT#	AMOUNT
AMENDMENT	CONTRACT#	AMOUNT

Contract Period

ORIGINAL	START	_____	END	_____
AMENDMENT	START	_____	END	_____

OTHER DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW/COMMENTS: Reviewed/approved by Finance – Nathan Kennedy 1/12/26. AATF: Christina Richmond

1 Adopted: _____, 2026
2 Effective: _____, 2026
3
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
11 CHAPTER 30.86 SCC
12

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

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

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

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

30 WHEREAS, PDS currently permits townhouses under a commercial building permit
31 type and charges a commercial plan check fee of 85% of the permit fee for townhouses;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, PDS currently requires separate permits for the building construction,
34 mechanical work and plumbing work; and

35 WHEREAS, as part of PDS's continuous improvement program and efforts to
36 streamline the commercial building permit process, townhouses have been identified a
37 permit type for which combining multiple permits into one townhouse permit would achieve
38 savings of time and cost for both builders and PDS staff; and

Ordinance No. 26-005
RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES FOR
TOWNHOUSES; AMENDING CHAPTER 30.86 SCC

1
2 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would create a new permit type for
3 townhouses regardless of whether they are built under the IRC or the IBC; and
4

5 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would eliminate the need for separate
6 mechanical and plumbing permits for the construction of townhouses by charging the fee
7 for mechanical and plumbing inspections along with the building permit, consistent with
8 how these fees are charged for other residential structures such as single family
9 residences and duplexes; and
10

11 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would provide better cost recovery for
12 the inspection of mechanical and plumbing work associated with townhouses by charging
13 a flat fee of 11% instead of charging a price per fixture; and
14

15 WHEREAS, the proposed code amendments would clarify that all other fees for
16 townhouse construction such as the base fee, plan review fee and permit fee will continue
17 to be charged at the existing rates; and
18

19 WHEREAS, on _____, 2026, the County Council held a public hearing after
20 proper notice, heard public testimony related to the proposed code amendments, and
21 considered the entire record; and
22

23 WHEREAS, following the public hearings, the County Council deliberated on the
24 proposed code amendments.
25

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:

27 Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as findings of fact and
28 conclusions as if set forth in full.
29

30 Section 2. The County Council adopts the following additional findings in support of
31 this ordinance:
32

33 A. This ordinance will amend title 30 SCC as follows:
34

- 35 1. Amend SCC 30.86.400 to clearly identify the base fee, plan review fees, site
36 review fees, and permit fees related to townhouses.
37
- 38 2. Amend SCC 30.86.410 to amend the fees relating to mechanical permits for
39 townhouses to be consistent with other residential types of construction.
40
- 41 3. Amend SCC 30.86.420 to amend the fees relating to plumbing permits for
42 townhouses to be consistent with other residential types of construction.
43

1 B. The code amendments in this ordinance will become effective on January 1, 2026.
2
3 C. Stakeholder feedback was solicited during the development of the proposed fee
4 changes. On July 23, 2025, proposed fee amendments were provided to the
5 representative for the Snohomish County Builders Council (SCBC) of the Master
6 Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties who did outreach to committee
7 members on the proposed fees and solicited member comment. A presentation was
8 given to SCBC on September 3, 2025, and additional meetings with SCBC
9 representatives were held on September 15, 2025, October 2, 2025, and November
10 12, 2025.

11
12 D. The proposed amendments are consistent with the record.

13
14 1. Amendments to chapter 30.86 SCC are necessary to establish fees to
15 implement the State Building Code, keep up with inflation, and to better recoup
16 the permitting expenses of PDS.

17
18 2. County policy is to use permit fees to cover only the direct and indirect costs of
19 permitting as allowed by state law, and to reasonably and consistently allocate
20 PDS overhead costs among all programs, regardless of the type of revenue
21 source supporting them.

22
23 3. In 2008, PDS developed a cost of services model to estimate the cost of
24 providing permitting services at the present level of service and the fees
25 necessary to recover permitting costs. That model has been updated based on
26 PDS's 2025-2026 biennial budget and this ordinance is consistent with that cost
27 of services model.

28
29 4. The proposed updates to fees through the amendments in this ordinance are
30 reasonable and will reimburse the County for the staff time required to process
31 permit applications.

32
33 Section 3. The County Council makes the following conclusions:

34
35 A. The proposed changes to townhouse, mechanical, and plumbing fees set forth in this
36 ordinance are calculated in accordance with RCW 82.02.020 and provide for improved
37 cost recovery, equity, and fee predictability and simplicity.

38
39 B. The proposed changes to fees set forth in this ordinance will help streamline the permit
40 process for builders of townhouses, resulting in less time spent by contractors who pull
41 multiple county permits and by county building inspectors who perform inspections on
42 townhouses. The time saved will mean that townhouses can be more efficiently and
43 effectively inspected during construction due to the reduced time spent on
44 administrative tasks related to tracking multiple permits for each townhouse.

1

2 C. The proposed amendments are consistent with Washington state law, chapter 19.27

3 RCW, and the SCC.

4

5 D. The County Council concludes that this ordinance is related solely to government

6 procedures, not the Growth Management Act (chapter 36.70A RCW), and therefore

7 does not adopt development regulations under SCC 30.10.080. Therefore, notice to

8 the Washington State Department of Commerce of intent to adopt is not required

9 pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106 and Snohomish County Planning Commission review is

10 not required pursuant to SCC 30.73.040(2)(c).

11

12 E. Pursuant to SCC 30.61.020 and WAC 197-11-800(19), the proposed amendments in

13 this ordinance are categorically exempt from review under the State Environmental

14 Policy Act (SEPA) as being related solely to government procedures containing no

15 substantive standards respecting use or modification of the environment.

16

17 F. The regulations proposed by this ordinance do not result in an unconstitutional taking

18 of private property for public purpose. The Washington State Attorney General last

19 issued an advisory memorandum, as required by RCW 36.70A.370, in October 2024,

20 entitled "Advisory Memorandum and Recommended Process for Evaluating Proposed

21 Regulatory or Administrative Actions to Avoid Unconstitutional Takings of Private

22 Property" to help local governments avoid the unconstitutional taking of private

23 property. The process outlined in the State Attorney General's 2024 advisory

24 memorandum was used by Snohomish County in objectively evaluating the regulatory

25 changes proposed by this ordinance.

26

27 G. The proposed amendments are in the best interest of the county and promote the

28 general public health, safety, and welfare.

29

30 Section 4. The County Council bases its findings and conclusions on the entire

31 record of the County Council, including all testimony and exhibits. Any finding, which

32 should be deemed a conclusion, and any conclusion which should be deemed a finding, is

33 hereby adopted as such.

34 Section 5. Snohomish County Code Section 30.86.400, last amended by Amended

35 Ordinance No. 22-073 on Jan. 11, 2023, is amended to read:

36

37

38 **30.86.400 Construction Code fees.**

39

40 (1) *Occupancies defined.* Fees established in this section shall be assessed based on whether an

41 occupancy type is commercial or residential. SCC Table 30.86.400(3) defines the occupancy groups in

42 these two occupancy types.

1 (2) *Outstanding fees*. Any outstanding fees or portions of fees shall be added to the required fee(s) of
2 any future plan review or permit prior to application acceptance or permit issuance. Any fee shall not
3 relieve the applicant from a duty to obtain permits for moving buildings upon roads and/or highways
4 from the appropriate authorities. The permit fee for construction of a new foundation, enlargement, or
5 remodeling of the move-in building shall be in addition to the pre-move fee. The fee for any factory built
6 structure as approved by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries is specified in SCC
7 30.86.440 under mobile homes.

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

9 **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

10

11 (4) *Commercial pre-application review⁽¹⁾*.

12 **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
Reference notes:	
(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.	
(2) Includes a conference with only a senior planner in attendance, and does not include review of detailed construction plans and specifications.	

13

1 (5) *Base permit fees⁽¹⁾.*

2 **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.	

3

4 (6) *Plan review fees⁽¹⁾.*

5 **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 townhouse</u> 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.

1

2 (7) *Building permit fees⁽¹⁾.*

3 **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:	
<p>(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.</p> <p>(2) The department shall use the building valuation multipliers provided in the most current building valuation data (BVD) published by the International Code Council.</p> <p>(3) For new construction of Group R-3 occupancies, <u>including townhouses</u>, 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.)</p>	

1

2 (8) *Certificates of occupancy fees.*

3 **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
--	-------

1

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

3 **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
Reference notes:	
<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>	

4

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

6 **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
Reference notes:	

Ordinance No. 26-005
 RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES FOR
 TOWNHOUSES; AMENDING CHAPTER 30.86 SCC

(1) These fees are charged in addition to building/structural plan and permit fees.

(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.

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

30.86.410 Mechanical permit fees.

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 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 <u>AND TOWNHOUSES</u>).	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-PIPEING 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.	

1
 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:

1 **30.86.420 Plumbing permit fees.**

2 **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 <u>AND</u> 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

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.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL

Snohomish County, Washington

Chairperson

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Council

1
2 () APPROVED
3 () EMERGENCY
4 () VETOED

5
6
7
8
9 Date: _____, 2026

10 ATTEST:

11
12
13 County Executive
14
15
16

17 Approved as to form only:
18

19 *Christen Richard* 11/13/25
20 _____
21

22 Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

**Planning & Development Services
Staff Report****Proposed Amendment to PDS Permit Fees: Townhouses**

Snohomish County Department of Planning and Development Services charges a variety of application and permit fees to recover its costs of regulating development. Most of these fees are currently listed in Chapter 30.86 of the Snohomish County Code (SCC). Other fees charged by PDS are found in SCC Chapter 13.

In the 2025-2026 biennium, PDS expects to recover 84% of permitting costs from charges for services and permit fees at their current levels and 11% from non-permit revenue. The budgeted gap of 5% between revenue and expense (net loss) is \$2.17 million¹. Thus far into 2025, PDS is on track with these projections. In addition, the number of new permit applications is down significantly from prior years which will negatively impact PDS's revenue in the coming months.

In 2020, PDS began a multi-phase effort called the "PDS Fee Alignment Project" to examine and update permit fees. Phase I was completed in 2020, through Ord. No. 20-039, when PDS updated the fees in the Building Permit Fee Table in SCC 30.86.400(7), which had not been updated since 1997. Phase II, adopted in 2021 through Am. Ord. No. 21-048, examined miscellaneous permit fees that were simple to analyze, had not been updated in decades, and for which PDS did not achieve cost recovery. Phase III will address reviews for which PDS does not currently charge a fee as well as the more complex land use fees. The Phase III ordinance will be coming to Council soon via a separate ordinance. Phase IV will address fire-related fees and other fees which need an adjustment due to the higher costs of doing business.

This ordinance addressing townhouses is not part of any of the Phases in the PDS Fee Alignment Project. The purpose of this ordinance is to clarify and slightly change how townhouses are permitted in Snohomish County. This change will help streamline one type of permit that is currently handled very inefficiently. It also meets PDS's goal of having a fee structure that is fair and equitable, while achieving cost recovery on all types of permits.

Over the past seven years, PDS has worked hard to streamline the permit process. In 2018, PDS implemented online permitting for all building permits and land use applications. In 2019, PDS undertook a formal review of the permitting process through a project called Electronic Permitting Process Improvements (EPPI). From 2017-2022, PDS worked on a series of small process improvements as part of the County's STEP program. In 2023, PDS hired an Operational Improvement Program Manager to help formalize PDS's continuous improvement efforts and embed it into the PDS culture. For the past several years, staff have been highly engaged in making improvements to PDS's permitting process. In 2024, PDS implemented a new online permit portal to streamline the intake of building permits, land use applications, and other permits. All of PDS's efforts to make its permitting system more efficient has coincided with the State of Washington's recent mandate to speed up the permit review process. Through Senate Bill 5290 adopted by the legislature in 2023, the State implemented mandatory review time frames for certain permit types. PDS also increased staffing levels to meet the new time frames. PDS has been able to reduce time frames, improve the level of customer service, and streamline the permitting process for both staff and customers.

¹ Excludes the Technology Reserve Fund revenue and expenses which is a separate, restricted fund.

Proposed Permit Fee Amendments – SCC Chapter 30.86

Snohomish County's fee code for building permits breaks structures out into two categories: residential and commercial. A townhouse is a single-family dwelling unit constructed in a group of three or more attached units in which each unit extends from the foundation to roof. Typically, the number of townhouse units in each building is between three and eight units. Townhouses are considered a type "R-3" residential occupancy in the International Residential Code (IRC); the International Building Code (IBC) is silent on townhouses. Although townhouses can be built under the IBC, nearly all are built under the IRC due to the rigorous commercial construction requirements in the IBC.

PDS has permitted townhouses as a commercial building permit and required separate permits for the mechanical and plumbing systems in each building. It costs the builders both time and money to apply for separate mechanical and plumbing permits, and it takes PDS staff time to review and issue each one. Extra process steps are needed on the front end at intake (by PDS staff) to ensure all the permits are linked, to make it easier on the Building Inspectors. In many instances it is difficult to determine which permits go with which townhouse building on the site plan, so it can take a lot of time to research and figure out which permits go together.

It also takes more time for the Building Inspector to inspect townhouses because the approved plans are on the building permit, the mechanical system information is on one or more commercial mechanical permits, and the plumbing system information is on a commercial plumbing permit. It takes longer to find the correct information in the Inspector Application (the Amanda software the inspectors use) and document the inspection results because the inspector has to flip back and forth between the various permits. Combining separate permits into one main townhouse permit would achieve a savings of time and cost for both builders and PDS staff.

Townhouse building and trade permit fees are amended to provide for a new Townhouse permit type by providing clarity on how fees are charged on townhouse building permits. Below is a summary of the actions proposed in ordinance:

Code Reference	Type of Permit Fee	Action
SCC 30.86.400	Base Permit Fees	Amended to separate out the base fee on townhouse permits (remains the same as commercial ²)
	Plan Review Fees	Amended to separate out the plan review fees and site review fees for townhouse permits (remains the same as commercial ²)
	Plumbing and Mechanical Fees	Added townhouses to the method of charging 11% of the building permit fee instead of separate commercial mechanical and plumbing permits (like residential building permits)
SCC 30.86.410	Commercial mechanical	Eliminates commercial

² Keeping the commercial base fee and plan review fee of 85% of the permit fee is warranted because townhouse structural plans are more complex and take more time to review compared to single family residences.

		mechanical permits for townhouses by changing the way mechanical work is permitted for townhouses. Fees to be included in the building permit and charged 11% like other residential building permits in SCC 30.86.400(7).
SCC 30.86.420	Commercial plumbing	Eliminates commercial plumbing permits for townhouses by changing the way mechanical work is permitted for townhouses. Fees to be included in the building permit and charged 11% like other residential building permits in SCC 30.86.400(7).

Permit Fees Charged by Other Jurisdictions

A comparison of other jurisdictions was conducted to determine how other jurisdictions permit townhouses. The method for charging mechanical and plumbing permits varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and there is little consistency on how townhouses are permitted. Some jurisdictions permit townhouses as commercial structures, while others treat them as residential. Some jurisdictions include the mechanical and plumbing fixtures with the building permit fee, while others issue separate mechanical and plumbing permits like at Snohomish County. Below are a few examples:

- Pierce County – Townhouses are permitted as commercial structure with commercial fees (they have two separate fee tables based on valuation³, one for residential and one for commercial). They issue separate mechanical and plumbing permits with a base fee plus unit fee charged for each fixture.
- Kitsap County – Townhouses are permitted as a residential structure and mechanical/plumbing are included in the building permit fee.
- City of Lynnwood – Townhouses are permitted as a commercial structure with mechanical/plumbing fees based on per fixture but of a more limited scope than Snohomish County.
- City of Everett – Townhouses are permitted as a residential structure. (Note: Plan review fees are same for residential and commercial so this is really a distinction without meaning.) It appears that no separate plumbing and mechanical permits are required.

Fiscal Framework

The permitting divisions within the Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) operate as a special revenue fund, which means that (a) there is no revenue from

³ Snohomish County has one building valuation fee table in SCC 30.86.400(7).

taxes or the County's General Fund, and (b) a separate fund balance that carries over from year to year is maintained.⁴

Financial Impact of Change in Townhouse Permit

PDS has done an analysis on what the fiscal impact will be on the proposed code amendments. Based on a review of completed 2024 townhouse permits, it appears that on average, the overall combined fees to permit a new townhouse will decrease. This will result in cost savings to the applicant, and a loss of revenue for PDS. Based on the sample reviewed, the cost savings ranges from \$250 to \$1,500, with an average savings of \$600 per townhouse permit. The lost revenue for PDS is estimated to be around \$53,000 per year. However, the amount of staff time saved by both intake staff and building inspectors is significant and will offset the loss of revenue. The benefit to the applicants is overall lower cost to build and a more streamlined construction process.

Summary

PDS needs to update its permit fees to improve its recovery of the costs of processing, reviewing, issuing and inspecting various types of permits handled by PDS, while simultaneously ensuring that the fees are equitable and reasonable. The proposed changes to the fees related to townhouses will result in some cost savings to builders and therefore reduced revenue to PDS. However, the efficiency benefits outweigh the loss of revenue.

⁴ The discussion in this report is limited to the special revenue fund for PDS's permitting divisions (known as Fund 193). PDS has other divisions that do receive funding from the County's General Fund, such as the Long Range Planning, Code Enforcement, and the Fire Marshal's Office investigation divisions. PDS accounts for the activities and expenses of those divisions separately from the special revenue fund for PDS's permitting divisions.

ECAF: 2026-0024
RECEIVED: 1/14/2026

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION SLIP

TO: Clerk of the Council

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL

EXHIBIT # 3.1.004

FILE ORD 26-005

TITLE OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE:

**RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES FOR TOWNHOUSES;
AMENDING CHAPTER 30.86 SCC**

Introduced By:

N. N. N.
Councilmember

1/14/2026

Date

Clerk's Action:

Proposed Ordinance No. 26-005

Assigned to: **Planning and Community Development Committee** Date: **1/20/2026**

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FORM

On 2/3/2026, the Committee considered the Ordinance by Consensus / Yeas and Nays and made the following recommendation:

Move to Council to schedule public hearing on: **2/4/2026 GLS**

Other

Regular Agenda Administrative Matters

Public Hearing Date 2/25/2026 at 10:30 am

N. Nelson
Committee Chair



Planning and Community Development

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL

Deb Bell

Council Initiated:

Yes

No

EXHIBIT # 3.2.001

FILE ORD 26-005

ECAF: 2026-0024
Ordinance: 26-005

Type:

- Contract
- Board Appt.
- Code Amendment
- Budget Action
- Other

Requested Handling:

- Normal
- Expedite
- Urgent

Fund Source:

- General Fund
- Other
- N/A

Executive Rec:

- Approve
- Do Not Approve
- N/A

Approved as to

Form:
 Yes
 No
 N/A

Subject: Relating to Development Permit Fees for Townhouses, Snohomish County Code Chapters 30.86.

Scope: The proposed amendment to Snohomish County Code would assist in streamlining the current permitting process for townhomes and would create a new type of permit for townhouses regardless of whether they are built under the IRC or the IBC. This change would eliminate the need for separate mechanical and plumbing permits, making this process more consistent with residential permitting. This would also clarify all other permit fees for townhouse construction, such as the base fee and plan review fee. The proposed ordinance would allow for the combining of multiple permits into one townhouse permit, saving time and cost for both builders and PDS staff.

Duration: NA

Fiscal Impact: Current Year Multi-Year N/A

Authority Granted: The County Council adopts the recitals as findings of fact and conclusions as set forth in Ordinance 26-005, under Snohomish County Charter 2.110.

Background: Townhouses are considered an R-3 residential occupancy type under the International Residential Code (IRC) but can be built under the IRC or the International Building Code (IBC). Currently, PDS permits townhomes under a commercial building permit and charges the commercial plan check fee for these permits, including separate mechanical and plumbing permits.

The goal is to streamline the permitting process for townhome construction. To accomplish this, the proposed would amend SCC 30.86.400 to clarify the base fee, plan review fees, and site review fees and permit fees related to townhomes. This includes amending SCC 30.86.410; these are the fees relating to mechanical permits for townhouses to be consistent with other residential types of construction and amend SCC 30.86.420 to update fees relating to plumbing permits for townhouses to be consistent with other residential types of construction.

Action Requested: For Council to move Ordinance 26-005 to GLS on Wednesday February 4, 2026, to set time and date for a Public Hearing, with the suggested date and time of February 25th, 2026, at 10:30 am.

Exhibit 3.2.002

Planning and Community Development Committee – 02/03/26

Video



Snohomish County Council Planning and Community Development Committee Agenda

Nate Nehring, Committee Chair
Strom Peterson, Committee Vice-Chair
Committee Members: Sam Low, Megan Dunn, Jared Mead

Deb Bell, Legislative Analyst
Russell Wiita, Legislative Aide
Lisa Hickey, Assistant Clerk of the Council

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

11:00 AM

**Jackson Board Room - 8th Floor
Robert J. Drewel Building
& Remote Meeting**

Webinar Link: <https://zoom.us/j/94846850772>

Attend in person at 3000 Rockefeller Ave, Jackson Board Room, 8th Floor, Everett, WA
Join remotely using the Zoom link above or call 1-253-215-8782 or 1-206-337-9723
and enter Meeting ID 948-4685 0772

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

ACTION ITEMS

1. Ordinance 26-002, relating to Growth Management; concerning the Regulation of Uses in Commercial and Industrial Zones; amending Chapters 30.31a and 30.31b and Sections 30.21.025, 30.22.100, 30.23.010, 30.70.025, 30.70.050, 30.70.140, 30.70.300, and 30.86.200 of the Snohomish County Code **2026-0173**

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

2. Ordinance 26-003, relating to Development Permit Fees for [2026-0025](#) Transportation Review; amending SCC 13.110.030

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

3. Ordinance 26-004, related to Miscellaneous Permit Fees Amending [2026-0026](#) Chapter 30.86 SCC

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

4. Ordinance 26-005, relating to Development Permit Fees for [2026-0024](#) Townhouses; amending Chapter 30.86 SCC

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

5. Motion 26-041, authorizing the County Executive to execute a [2026-0152](#) formal Task Assignment to the Public Works On-Call Agreement for professional services with Haley & Aldrich for environmental due diligence at Snohomish County Airport

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

6. Motion 26-047, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 3 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0185](#)

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

7. Motion 26-048, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 4 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0188](#)

Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

8. Motion 26-046, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 7 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0191](#)
Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

9. Motion 26-058, approving Amendment 15 with Puget Sound Energy for the Weatherization Program [2026-0276](#)
Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

10. Motion 26-050, approving 2026 Contract Amendment 16 with Puget Sound Energy for the Weatherization Program [2026-0193](#)
Proposed Action: Move to General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.



Snohomish County Council Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Nate Nehring, Committee Chair
Strom Peterson, Committee Vice-Chair
Committee Members: Sam Low, Megan Dunn, Jared Mead

Deb Bell, Legislative Analyst
Russell Wiita, Legislative Aide
Lisa Hickey, Assistant Clerk of the Council

Tuesday, February 3, 2026

11:00 AM

**Jackson Board Room - 8th Floor
Robert J. Drewel Building
& Remote Meeting**

PRESENT:

Committee Chair Nehring
Committee Vice-Chair Peterson (*not present*)
Committee Member Low (*remote*)
Committee Member Dunn
Committee Member Mead
Deb Bell, Council Staff
Michael Saponaro, Planning and Development Services
Lisa Hickey, Assistant Clerk of the Council

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Nehring called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and stated that four members were present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no persons present wishing to provide public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

Deb Bell, Sr. Legislative Analyst, provided a staff report for the following items:

1. Ordinance 26-002, relating to Growth Management; concerning the Regulation of Uses in Commercial and Industrial Zones; amending Chapters 30.31a and 30.31b and Sections 30.21.025, 30.22.100, 30.23.010, 30.70.025, 30.70.050, 30.70.140, 30.70.300, and 30.86.200 of the Snohomish County Code [2026-0173](#)

Michael Saponaro, Planning and Development Services, provided a PowerPoint Presentation and responded to questions.

ACTION: Move to Regular Agenda, General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

2. Ordinance 26-003, relating to Development Permit Fees for Transportation Review; amending SCC 13.110.030 [2026-0025](#)

ACTION: Move to Regular Agenda, General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

3. Ordinance 26-004, related to Miscellaneous Permit Fees Amending Chapter 30.86 SCC [2026-0026](#)

ACTION: Move to Regular Agenda, General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

4. Ordinance 26-005, relating to Development Permit Fees for Townhouses; amending Chapter 30.86 SCC [2026-0024](#)

ACTION: Move to Regular Agenda, General Legislative Session February 4th to set time and date for a public hearing.

Cynthia Foley, Legislative Analyst, provided a staff report for the following items:

5. Motion 26-041, authorizing the County Executive to execute a formal Task Assignment to the Public Works On-Call Agreement for professional services with Haley & Aldrich for environmental due diligence at Snohomish County Airport [2026-0152](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

6. Motion 26-047, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 3 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0185](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

7. Motion 26-048, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 4 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0188](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

8. Motion 26-046, authorizing the Snohomish County Executive to sign contract Amendment 7 with Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson, P.S. for environmental legal services for the Snohomish County Airport [2026-0191](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

Nicole Gorle, Sr. Legislative Analyst, provided a staff report for the following items:

9. Motion 26-058, approving Amendment 15 with Puget Sound Energy for the Weatherization Program [2026-0276](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

10. Motion 26-050, approving 2026 Contract Amendment 16 with Puget Sound Energy for the Weatherization Program [2026-0193](#)

ACTION: Move to Consent Agenda, General Legislative Session February 11th for consideration.

Committee Chair Nehring adjourned the Council for the day at 11:24 a.m.