



# Snohomish County Council

## Legislation Text

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File #: 2021-1085, Version: 1

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### Executive/Council Action Form (ECAF)

**ITEM TITLE:**

Ordinance 21-106, relating to growth management; amending development regulations in chapters 30.24 and 30.41 SCC pertaining to roads and access

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Development Services

**ORIGINATOR:** Amber Piona, Planner

**EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION:** Approve-Ken Klein

**PURPOSE:** Adopt code amendments amending the development regulations pertaining to roads and access to: promote access for emergency fire responders and apparatus; remove the need for variance requests to develop private road networks within proposed subdivisions or short subdivisions in urban areas; allow the county engineer to approve private road access to individual dwelling units within a unit lot subdivision; and promote flexibility for the provision of pedestrian facilities within rural cluster and subdivision development.

**BACKGROUND:** Click or tap here to enter text.

- The Growth Management Act requires the County to both encourage efficient transportation systems that are coordinated with the County's comprehensive plan and to ensure that permits are processed in a timely and fair manner.
- Existing regulations allow for the inclusion of a pedestrian facility on one side of a drive aisle or shared court to be included as part of the minimum 20-foot driving surface width necessary to be classified as a fire lane. County fire officials have encountered objects placed in or on pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks that block or impede fire access. These objects often include garbage cans and portable basketball hoops which impede access for fire vehicles when the sidewalk width is included in the fire lane width. Consistent with the EDDS, the proposed amendment will prohibit pedestrian facilities being used to meet the minimum driving surface width to qualify as a fire lane.
- Existing code language in SCC 30.24.050 states access to a subdivision, short subdivision, binding site plan development, or SFDU in urban areas shall be provided by a public road unless a variance is approved to allow a private road. The requirement to seek a variance for a proposed private road can add considerable time, cost, and uncertainty to a residential project. The proposed code amendments authorize the County Engineer to determine if a proposed private road meets public health, safety, and welfare and would not negatively impact connectivity needs of the public road system. The proposed amendments remove the need for an applicant to seek a variance. Allowing this decision to be made by the County Engineer will help to expedite permit review for subdivisions, short subdivisions, binding site plan development, and SFDUs in urban areas.
- Existing code language in SCC 30.24.055 requires access to individual lots, tracts, or easements within

urban subdivisions to be by a public road unless a variance is requested by the applicant. Code amendments would specifically allow a private road or drive aisle for access to individual dwelling units within a unit lot subdivision or unit lot short subdivision in urban areas unless the County Engineer determines that a public road is required.

- The standards for road design in a rural cluster subdivision or short subdivision require pedestrian facilities to be physically separated from the vehicular roadway. This requirement for a specific design for pedestrian facilities in rural cluster subdivisions and short subdivisions does not provide any flexibility. This code amendment proposes to remove this specific design requirement and add language that the pedestrian facilities shall be designed in accordance with the EDDS. The EDDS establish the construction standard for building roads and is the more appropriate place to define pedestrian facilities required in rural cluster subdivisions and short subdivisions.
- The Planning Commission held a hearing on this proposal on November 16, 2021 and eight commissioners voted unanimously to recommend that the County Council approve the proposed amendments with a planning commission recommendation letter dated November 17, 2021.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**

EXPEND: FUND, AGY, ORG, ACTY, OBJ, AU	CURRENT YR	2ND YR	1ST 6 YRS
<b>TOTAL</b>			

REVENUE: FUND, AGY, ORG, REV, SOURCE	CURRENT YR	2ND YR	1ST 6 YRS
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**DEPARTMENT FISCAL IMPACT NOTES:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**CONTRACT INFORMATION:**

ORIGINAL      \_\_\_\_\_ CONTRACT#      \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT      \_\_\_\_\_  
 AMENDMENT    \_\_\_\_\_ CONTRACT#      \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT      \_\_\_\_\_

**Contract Period**

ORIGINAL      START      \_\_\_\_\_ END      \_\_\_\_\_  
 AMENDMENT    START      \_\_\_\_\_ END      \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW/COMMENTS:** Approved-Finance, Nathan Kennedy 12/20/21