



CITY OF WOODINVILLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT GUIDE SUBDIVISIONS / PRELIMINARY PLATS

PPA

WHAT IS A SUBDIVISION?

A **subdivision** is the division or redivision of land into five or more lots or parcels. Subdivisions are often referred to as “**preliminary plats**” or “**long plats**.” The City’s subdivision regulations can be found in Title 20 of the [Woodinville Municipal Code \(WMC\)](#).

CAN MY PROPERTY BE DIVIDED?

There are several considerations to take into account when determining if you can subdivide a property. Although the City can assist with determining the requirements for the zone your property is located in, it is the applicant’s responsibility to determine if his/her proposal meets all of the requirements. Property owners should work with a team of qualified professionals such as surveyors, civil and/or geotechnical engineers, and biologists to assist them with the subdivision process (see “Enlisting qualified professionals” section on Page 3).

The following is a list of common questions to consider when determining whether subdividing is feasible. The requirements for subdivisions can be found in several chapters of the Titles [17](#), [20](#), and [21](#) WMC.

1. *Does the site have critical areas?*
Critical areas include streams, wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, critical aquifer recharge areas, floodplains, and fish and wildlife habitat areas ([Chapter 21.24 WMC](#)). You may need to hire a qualified professional to help you determine if critical areas are present. If critical areas are present on site, a qualified professional will be necessary to help you determine if you can subdivide. Critical areas have minimum buffers that may affect your ability to develop the property. Depending on the type of critical area, the critical area and its buffer may be required to be placed in a separate tract or easement for protection.
2. *What infrastructure improvements and/or will road dedication be required?*
Typically, infrastructure improvements for subdivisions include street widening, sidewalks, drainage, undergrounding of utilities, and water and sewer connections. If a street does not meet the specific road standard for that street type per the City’s adopted Transportation and Infrastructure Standards, infrastructure improvements will be required. Determining what improvements are

required will typically occur during the pre-application meeting (see “Pre-application meeting” section on Page 2).

3. *Can the proposed lots meet the minimum lot standards?*
There are minimum standards that new lots must meet. Lots must meet a general depth to size ratio and shape. Zoning standards also include a minimum lot size, lot width, setback standards, and other components. Each zoning district has separate minimum standards. These standards can be found in [WMC 20.06.040](#), [WMC 21.12.030](#), and [WMC 21.24.085](#).
4. *Will the property be subdivided and sold to individual owners or will it be developed by the same individual or developer?*
For a subdivision, the infrastructure must be completed within three years of preliminary plat approval. If the individual properties will be sold off, it is important to consider the timing of the lot sales, infrastructure improvements, and the financial guarantees for the improvements. If a building permit is issued prior to completion of infrastructure improvements, the improvements must be completed within 6 months of when the building permit was issued.
5. *If there are existing buildings on the site, will they be kept as a part of the subdivision?*
In instances where an existing house is in good condition and an applicant is interested in keeping the structure after platting, the subdivision cannot make a lot or structure nonconforming. This means that the size or shape of the lot may need to be adjusted to meet all impervious surface, setbacks, building coverage, and similar requirements.
6. *What permits are required?*
Required application materials are listed with each step of the platting process below. Be aware that each project is unique and other applications and plans may be required.

Preliminary plat: The basic application includes a preliminary subdivision and tree plan. SEPA review will be required with the application. If critical areas are present, a critical areas study will be required. See the “Determining required applications” section

on page 3 for a typical list of required submittal materials.

Site improvements: Site development application and/or right-of-way permit is required.

Final plat: A separate final plat application is required for a subdivision.

7. *What are the fees and costs associated with the project?*

Fees change at the beginning of each year. The latest fee schedule is available on the city's [website](#). The City has adopted two impact fees that are due at the time of building permit issuance.

Traffic impact fees (TIF) are calculated based on the average daily trips (ADT) generated by a particular use, minus any credits from existing uses on site. For instance, the average daily trips for a single-family residence is 9.52. Traffic impact fees amounts are per average daily trip and change at the beginning of each year:

- 1/1/2016: \$395/ADT
- 1/1/2017: \$440/ADT

For example, a new single family on a vacant lot permitted in 2016 would incur a TIF of \$3,760.40. See Chapter 3.39 WMC for more information.

Park impact fees are calculated at \$3,175 per dwelling unit. Credits may be provided for existing dwelling units, and for developer-provided parkland or system improvements in accordance with WMC [3.36.110](#). See Chapter [3.36](#) WMC for more information.

WHAT ARE THE KEY STEPS?

The City's process for subdivisions is outlined below. This list provides some general steps for applicants, however, the process listed below mainly includes the City's involvement with your application, as the process for property owners or developers vary greatly depending on individual permits. Each step is spelled out in greater detail later in this guide.

- 1 Preparing for application submittal.** During this first step, applicants will schedule a pre-application meeting with the City and enlist qualified professionals to help them prepare the application, plans and reports.
- 2 Preliminary plat application.** During this first step, the plans are reviewed by the Development Services and Public Works departments, state and local agencies, and affected tribal agencies. Public notice and a public hearing in front of the Hearing Examiner are required. During this step, staff

is reviewing the plans to verify if the site can be subdivided and constructed in a manner that meets the development regulations. Staff will make recommendations to the Hearing Examiner, who is the decision authority. Preliminary plat generally includes other land use permits, such as SEPA (environmental) review or critical areas review.

- 3 Site improvements.** Once preliminary plat approval is granted, site improvements must be installed under a site development permit and right-of-way permit. Site improvements include site grading, street and sidewalk improvements, construction, and/or utilities installation. This work must be completed prior to final plat.

- 4 Final plat.** Any corrections and conditions on the preliminary plat will be included on the final plat. Final plat can only occur once the site improvements have been completed. Once the final plat meets all of the development regulations, it will be approved and accepted by the City Council through a legislative action. The final plat is then recorded with King County and the legal lots are established.

PRELIMINARY PLAT PROCESS

1 Preparing for Application Submittal

With the exception of the pre-application meeting, the applicant is responsible for all of the steps in this process. Development Services is typically not involved at this stage.

Pre-application meeting. A pre-application meeting with the Technical Review Committee is required before an application is submitted. This meeting is held with staff from multiple departments, including Building, Planning, Public Works, and may include outside agencies such as the Fire Department and Woodinville Water District.

This meeting is intended to provide you with as much information as possible to help you successfully move through the permitting process. During this meeting, you are encouraged to bring as much information as possible on your proposal, the site, and any plans or reports that have been completed for the project.

Staff will assess your project with the information provided and help you to identify any critical issues or requirements while you are preparing to subdivide. Although staff may not be able to identify all issues with the project, this early feedback can be valuable.

Enlisting qualified professionals, such as a surveyor, engineer, biologist, and/or arborist. To move forward with the subdivision process, you will need a team of professionals to help you make the decision whether to

subdivide your property and to help you prepare the application. It is highly advisable that you assign one of your professionals to be your agent/representative on the application, as they can help coordinate with your team and the City.

A [licensed surveyor](#) is required to prepare the plat documents. A [licensed engineer](#) is required to prepare the civil plans for any site and infrastructure improvements required for the subdivision. A [licensed arborist](#) is required to prepare a tree plan. A [qualified biologist](#) is required to conduct a critical area reconnaissance study, which will determine if critical areas are present on site. If critical areas are present, the qualified biologist will need to conduct a full critical area study.

Determining critical areas. Critical areas are regulated under [Chapter 21.24 WMC](#). Critical areas include streams, wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, critical aquifer recharge areas, floodplains, and fish and wildlife habitat areas. Qualified professionals will help you determine if critical areas are present on the property.

Critical areas typically include a buffer, which can range greatly in size depending on the type and classification. If critical areas are present on the site, a critical area study will be required. A qualified professional will need to determine the buffers, if a buffer reduction or enlargement is necessary, any impacts to the critical areas, mitigation requirements, and other information required in [Chapter 21.24 WMC](#).

Critical areas have minimum buffers that may affect the number or size of lots that can be placed on the property. Depending on the critical area, a separate tract or easement may be required to protect the critical area.

Determining required applications and required reports. Additional permits are required as part of the subdivision process. These applications will be processed concurrently with the subdivision. Additionally, some reports may be required with the application. The typical materials submitted with a subdivision are listed below. Refer to the [application submittal checklist](#) for the complete list of required materials. Contact Development Services at 425-489-2754 for more information.

City applications

- Land Use application
- Tree plan ([Chapter 21.15 WMC](#))
- SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) checklist
- Critical area study, if critical areas are present

Reports

- Title report
- Geotechnical report
- Arborist report
- Critical area study
- Archeological study
- Drainage report

- Site quantity worksheet
- #### Plans

- Site plans
- Clearing and grading plan
- Street and road plan
- Erosion control plans
- Utility plan
- Survey
- Mitigation plan, if critical areas are present

Contacting utility companies. In order to determine what kinds of utilities are present near or on the site and what kind of connections or upgrades are required, you will need to contact the serving utility company.

- Water and sewer: [Woodinville Water District](#)
- Septic: [King County Public Health](#)
- Power and gas: [Puget Sound Energy \(PSE\)](#)

Preparing application materials. All required materials must be submitted with the application in order to determine that the application is “complete” or ready to be processed. The City provides a checklist to applicants that lists application materials and the number of copies required. Incomplete materials or information will not be processed.

The application materials must comply with the City’s latest adopted codes and regulations, including:

- Zoning code ([Title 21 WMC](#))
- Subdivision code ([Title 20 WMC](#))
- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA – [Chapter 197-11 WAC](#))
- [Transportation Infrastructure Standards](#)
- King County Stormwater Design Manual 2009
- Building and construction code ([Title 15 WMC](#))
- International Fire Code 2012
- [Shoreline Master Program](#)

2 Preliminary Plat Application

Subdivisions are anticipated to take 6 months, including time waiting for resubmittal. Staff is required to process permits within 120 days of complete application, excluding time waiting for additional information.

Application submittal. Applicants are required to complete the permit applications and submit the required materials for permits listed in the submittal checklist. Provide copies based on the highest number of copies requested on the checklist. All associated fees (the latest fee schedule can be found on the City’s website) must be submitted with the application.

Determination of completeness. Once the City receives the application, a determination of completeness will be made within 28 days of submittal, and a notification is sent to the applicant regarding the permit status. If the application is incomplete, a list of required materials will be included in the notification. The applicant has 90 days from the

determination to submit missing materials. Once the application is determined complete, staff will issue a notification stating that the application is complete and processing can begin.

Notice of application. Within 14 days of the determination of completeness, staff will issue a notice of application to nearby property owners and affected agencies. A notice will be placed in front of the property and must remain for the entire duration of the project. The notice of application typically has a 15-day comment period to receive public comment.

Initial departmental review. During the notice of application period, the application and plans will be routed to different departments for review and comment. Reviewers include Building, Planning, Public Works, and Fire. Initial reviews are typically completed within 4-6 weeks of the determination of completeness, but may take longer depending on the type of permits and overall complexity of the project. If multiple permits are submitted at the same time, the permits will be reviewed concurrently.

Corrections and revisions. The project manager assigned to the project will consolidate comments provided by the different department reviewers and will issue a comment letter to the applicant for a response. The permits will be placed on hold pending resubmittal.

Additional departmental reviews. Submitted revisions will be routed to various departments for additional review. If reviewers identify additional comments or issues, comment letters will be issued and the application will be placed on hold.

Public hearing and decision. Preliminary plats are quasi-judicial decisions, requiring a public hearing held in front of the Hearing Examiner. Staff will prepare a staff report and recommendations where all of the submitted information is reviewed for compliance with city codes and regulations. Hearings are typically scheduled in the evening and the public is encouraged to attend. The applicant and his/her team should be present for the hearing. During the hearing, staff will present the staff report and recommendation, the applicant may be required to answer questions from the Hearing Examiner, and the public will have an opportunity to comment. A decision is typically issued within 10 business days of the close of the hearing.

Appeals. Once a decision has been issued, a 14-day appeal period will begin. Any party of record, including the applicants, the City, and individuals and outside agencies that commented on the project, has an opportunity to appeal a decision. Appeals are made to City Council. If no appeals are received, the plat decision is considered final.

3 Site Improvements

Construction of subdivision improvements prior to final plat approval.

Site development permit or right-of-way permit. A site development permit covers any site work on private property, whereas a right-of-way permit covers any site work on public property. Both these permits cover a wide range of work, but typically include grading, erosion control measures, pavement, storm drainage, utility connections, and related work. Subdivisions typically require both permits. These permits must be prepared by a licensed civil engineer.

Staff will review the permits and issue comment letters for any items requiring additional revisions. Typically, site development permits take 2-3 months to process, depending on the complexity of the application, staff workload, and completeness of materials.

Performance bonds. In order to issue the site development and/or right-of-way permit, a financial guarantee (typically known as a performance bond) is required to ensure completion of the site work. Financial guarantees may be in the form of a bond or security, cash deposit, or assignment of funds. The performance bond is typically equal to 150% of the totals provided in the Site Quantity Worksheet (see list of application materials on page 3) for right-of-way improvements and landscape work. Right-of-way improvements include work within existing right-of-way as well as future or dedicated right-of-way. Critical areas require a separate calculated bond.

Site work. In this stage, site work permitted under the site development permit and/or right-of-way permit occurs. Staff will conduct several inspections throughout the duration of construction. Site improvements will include site grading, constructing street and sidewalk improvements, and some utilities installation. For subdivisions, all required improvements must be installed prior to final plat.

As-built plans and maintenance bonds. Once the site work is completed and all inspections are approved, maintenance bonds and the as-built plans of the improvements must be submitted and the performance bond may be released. A maintenance bond, which varies from 2 to 5 years, equaling 20% of the totals in the Site Quantity Worksheet. Similar to the performance bond, financial guarantees may be in the form of a bond or security, cash deposit, or assignment of funds.

4 Final Plat

Final plat submittal. Applicants have up to five years after preliminary plat approval to submit for final plat approval. A final plat application cannot be accepted until the required improvements have been installed. A land use application and application submittal checklist should be completed, and all required application materials should be submitted.

Review and approval. During this step, the subdivision will be reviewed to ensure conformance to all of the terms of the preliminary plat and any ordinances in effect at the time of preliminary plat approval. The information required for submittal is provided in a separate guide. The final plat is approved by the City Council.

Signatures. Once approvals are received, mylars should be produced and signed by the surveyor and property owner(s). The mylars are then submitted to the City for signatures from the Department Directors. The City will return the mylars to the applicant for recording.

Recording. The applicant will bring the signed mylars and paper copies to King County Assessor and Recorder office to be recorded. The offices are located in the Administration Building at 500 4th Ave in Seattle. A copy of the recorded mylars must be submitted to the City for records.

DEFINITIONS

Dedication: the deliberate appropriation of land by an owner for any general and public uses, reserving to himself no other rights than such as are compatible with the full exercise and enjoyment of the public uses to which the property has been devoted. The intention to dedicate shall be evidenced by the owner by the presentment for filing of a final plan showing the dedication thereon; and, in the acceptance by the public shall be evidenced by the approval of such plat.

Final plat: the final drawing of the subdivision and dedication prepared for filing for record with the King County Department of Records and Elections, and containing all elements and requirements set forth in this title.

Line, property: the line defining the extent of a lot in a given direction.

Line, setback: a line beyond which, toward a property line, no structure may extend or be placed except as permitted by the regulations of Titles 20 and 21 WMC.

Lot: a specifically described parcel of land with lines defining the extent of the lot in a given direction which is intended to be conveyed in its entirety. A lot may be a lot of record, more than one lot of record or portion of a lot of record.

Right-of-way: the land owned by a public agency and used or planned to be used as a public thoroughfare.

Street frontage: the length along a street upon which a structure, business, or lot is abutting or fronts.

Subdivision: the division of land, creating five or more lots.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was prepared to help assist property owners, residents, and contractors who are interested in developing in the City of Woodinville. This guide provides general information on permitting requirements, key steps, and commonly asked questions.

This guide should not be used as a substitute for regulations, codes, and ordinances. Individuals are responsible for compliance with the City's code requirements, whether or not they are described in this guide.

QUESTIONS AND CONTACT

For any questions related to subdivisions, please contact Development Services at 425-489-2754 or visit the Development Services Counter at City Hall 17301 133rd Avenue NE, Woodinville, WA.