

Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027
and approved by the Department of
Ecology

Exhibit E: Proposed Amendments to WCC Title 22

Shoreline Management
Program Periodic Update
2020

Whatcom County Planning and Development
Services

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

Chapter 22.05 Project Permit ~~Procedures~~

22.05.010 Purpose and Applicability.

- (1) The purpose of this chapter is to combine and consolidate the application, review, and approval processes for project permits and appeals as defined in WCC 20.97.~~324~~ (Definitions). It is further intended for this chapter to comply with the provisions of Chapter 36.70B RCW. These procedures provide for a consolidated land use permit process and integrate the environmental review process with the procedures for review of land use decisions.
- (2) This chapter applies to the processing of project permit applications for development and appeals related to the provisions of WCC Title 15, Buildings and Construction; WCC Title 16, Environment; WCC Title 17, Flood Damage Prevention; WCC Title 20, Zoning; WCC Title 21, Land Division Regulations; and WCC Title 23, Shoreline Management Program. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all project permit applications as defined in RCW 36.70B.020, and other administrative decisions, as listed in ~~the table in~~ WCC 22.05.020 Table 1.
- (3) The meaning of words used in this chapter shall be as defined in WCC Chapters ~~20.97~~ (Definitions) or 23.60 (Definitions), as appropriate to the permit being applied for.

22.05.020 Project Permit Processing Table.

- (1) ~~Table 1. Project Permit Processing Table~~ Marked boxes in the table below indicates the required general steps for processing all project permit applications or administrative actions. Check marks indicate a step is required; reference letters refer to the notes in subsection (2) of this section. The requirements for each step listed in the top row of the table are provided in WCC 22.05.040 through 22.05.160, as indicated. Specific requirements for each project permit can be found through the references given in the table.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 **Table 1. Project Permit Processing Table**

Permit Application Processing Table	WCC Reference for Specific Requirements	Pre-Application Required (see 22.05.040)	Determination of Completeness Required (see 22.05.050)	Notice of Application Required (see 22.05.070)	Site Posting Required (see 22.05.080)	Notice of Open Record Hearing Required (see 22.05.090)	Open Record Hearing Held By: (see 22.05.090)	County Decision Maker (see 2.11.210 , 22.05.120)	Appeal Body (see 2.11.210 , 2.05.160 , 23.60.150(H))
Type I Applications (Administrative Decision with No Public Notice or Hearing)									
Boundary Line Adjustment	21.03		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Building Permit	15.04	✓ (fd)	✓					Director	Hearing Examiner (kg)
Natural Resource Assessment	Title 16		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Commercial Site Plan Review			✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Exempt Land Division	21.03		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Floodplain Development Permit	Title 17							Director	Hearing Examiner
Land Disturbance Permit	15.04 and 20.80		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Lot of Record/Lot Consolidation	20.83 and 20.97.220		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Nonconforming Use	20.83		✓					Director	Hearing Examiner
Removal of Forest Practices Development Moratorium	20.80.738 (3)							Director	Hearing Examiner
Shoreline Exemption	23.60 22.05.07	✓ (a)	✓					Director	Hearing Examiner

Commented [Co/C1]: Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

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Zoning Interpretation	22.20							Director	Hearing Examiner
Type II Applications (Administrative Decision with Public Notice; No Public Hearing)									
Administrative Use	20.84.235	✓	✓	✓	✓			Director	Hearing Examiner
Lot Consolidation Relief	20.83.070		✓	✓	✓			Director	Hearing Examiner
Reasonable Use (b)	16.16	✓	✓	✓	✓			Director	Hearing Examiner
Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (ea)	23.6022.05 & .07	✓ (a)	✓	✓	✓			Director (eb)	Shorelines Hearings Board (af)
Shoreline Conditional Use for single-family development, uses, and activities (ea)	23.6022.05 & .07	✓ (a)	✓	✓	✓			Director (eb)	Hearing Examiner
Zoning or Critical Areas-Minor Variance (outside of shoreline jurisdiction)-Minor	22.05.024	✓	✓	✓	✓			Director	Hearing Examiner
Short Subdivision	21.04	✓	✓	✓	✓			Director	Hearing Examiner
Type III Applications (Hearing Examiner Decision with Public Notice and Public Hearing)									
Conditional Use	20.84.200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	Superior Court

Commented [CES2]: Commensurate with proposal to have reasonable use permits decided on by the H/E.

Commented [Co/C3]: Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

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Floodplain Development Variance	Title 17		✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	Superior Court
Long Subdivision	21.05	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner (g)	Superior Court
Binding Site Plan	21.07	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner (g)	Superior Court
Reasonable Use (e)	16.16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	Superior Court
Removal of Development Moratorium	20.80.738(2)		✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	Superior Court
Zoning or Critical Areas-Major Variance (outside of shoreline jurisdiction)-Major	22.05.024 or 16.16.273	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	Superior Court
Shoreline Conditional Use	22.05 & 0723.60	✓ (a)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner (d)	Shorelines Hearings Board (H)
Shoreline Substantial Development Permit	22.05 & 0723.60	✓ (a)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner (d)	Shorelines Hearings Board (H)
Shoreline Variance	22.05 & 0723.60	✓ (a)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner (d)	Shorelines Hearings Board (H)

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

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Type IV Applications (County Council Decision with Public Notice and Public Hearing)									
Development Agreement	2.11.205	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	County Council	Superior Court
Major Project Permit	20.88	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	County Council	Superior Court
Planned Unit Development	20.85	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Hearing Examiner	County Council	Superior Court

1 ~~Check marks indicate a step is required; reference letters refer to the notes in subsection (2) of this section.~~

2

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 (2) **Project Permit Processing Table Notes.** As indicated in ~~Table 1~~ ~~the table in subsection (1) of this~~
2 ~~section~~, project permits are subject to the following additional requirements:
- 3 ~~(a) Pre-application conference subject to WCC Title 23, Shoreline Management Program.~~
4 ~~(b) Single-family residential uses in critical areas or critical area buffers, except all uses in geological~~
5 ~~hazardous areas and setbacks.~~
- 6 ~~(c)(a)~~ Whether a public hearing is required is Shoreline permit public hearing decision
7 determined pursuant to 22.07.030(A) (Shoreline Substantial Development Permits) ~~WCC Title 23,~~
8 ~~Shoreline Management Program.~~ If a public hearing is required the shoreline permit shall be
9 processed as a Type III application.
- 10 ~~(d)(b)~~ Pursuant to ~~Chapters 23.60 and 23.70~~ WCC 22.07.060, final administrative
11 determinations or decisions as appropriate shall be filed with, or approved by, the Washington
12 State Department of Ecology.
- 13 ~~(e)(c)~~ All reasonable use exception applications in geological hazardous areas and setbacks
14 and all non-single-family residential uses in critical areas or critical area buffers.
- 15 ~~(f)(d)~~ Building permit pre-application conference, subject to WCC 15.04.020(A)(3)(a).
- 16 ~~(g)(e)~~ The Hearing Examiner may choose to consult with the development standards technical
17 advisory committee concerning technical matters relating to land division applications.
- 18 ~~(h)~~ Whatcom County shall consider an appeal of a decision on a shoreline substantial development
19 permit, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use only when the applicant waives his/her
20 right to a single appeal to the Shorelines Hearings Board. When an applicant has waived his/her
21 right to a single appeal, such appeals shall be processed in accordance with the appeal
22 procedures of section WCC 22.05.160 23.60.150(H) (Appeals).
- 23 ~~(i)(f)~~ Except that appeals of WCC Title 15 fire and building code requirements shall be made
24 to the board of appeals per current building code, as adopted in WCC 15.04.010.

Commented [Co/C4]: Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027

22.05.024 Variances (Non-Shoreline).

- 25 (1) Variances from the ~~terms standards~~ of Title 20 (Zoning) or Chapter 16.16 (Critical Areas Ordinance)
26 may be authorized in specific cases that will not be contrary to the public interest, and where, due
27 to special conditions, literal enforcement of the provisions of those codes would result in
28 unnecessary hardship. Generally, variances shall only be considered for dimensional standards,
29 unless otherwise specified in those codes. Under no circumstances shall a variance be granted that
30 allows a use not permissible or otherwise prohibited in the zoning district in which the subject
31 property is located.
- 32 (2) There are two types of (non-shoreline) variances: Minor and Major Variances.
- 33 (a) Minor variances include those that are unlikely to have impacts on surrounding properties or
34 people. These shall be limited to variances for:
- 35 i. A reduction of up to 10% of a front yard setback
- 36 ii. A reduction in parking stall dimensions down to 9 feet by 18 feet.
- 37 ~~iii.~~ A 25% to 50% reduction of critical area buffers pursuant to 16.16.273 (Variances).
- 38 (b) Major variances include all other variances.
- 39 (3) The appropriate decision maker, as specified in 22.05.020 (Project permit processing table) shall
40 have the authority to grant variances when the conditions set forth in subsection (4) have been
41

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

- 1 found to exist. In such cases, a variance may be granted so that the spirit of the County’s land use
2 codes shall be observed, public safety and welfare secured, and substantial justice done.
- 3 (4) Before any variance may be granted, it shall be shown that the following circumstances are found to
4 apply:
- 5 (a) That any variance granted shall not constitute a grant of special privilege, not be based upon
6 reasons of hardship caused by previous actions of the property owner, nor be granted for
7 pecuniary reasons alone;
- 8 (b) Because of special circumstances applicable to the subject property, including size, shape,
9 topography, location, or surrounding, the strict application of Title 20 (Zoning) or Chapter 16.16
10 (Critical Areas Ordinance) is found to cause a hardship and deprive the subject property of a use
11 or improvement otherwise allowed in its zoning district. Aesthetic considerations or design
12 preferences without reference to restrictions based upon the physical characteristics of the
13 property do not constitute sufficient hardship under this section;
- 14 (c) The granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare, or injurious
15 to the property or improvements in the vicinity and zone in which the subject property is
16 situated.

17 **22.05.026 Conditional Use Permits.**

- 18 (1) **Application.** Conditional use permit applications shall be processed per the provisions of this
19 chapter.
- 20 (2) Conditional use permits shall be nontransferable unless said transfer is approved by the Hearing
21 Examiner.
- 22 (3) **Approval Criteria.** Before approving an application, the Director or Hearing Examiner shall ensure
23 that any specific standards of the zoning district defining the use are fulfilled, and shall find
24 adequate evidence showing that the proposed use at the proposed location:
- 25 (a) Will be harmonious and in accordance with the general and specific objectives of Whatcom
26 County’s Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, and any other applicable regulations.
- 27 (b) Will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be harmonious and
28 appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, and
29 that such use will not change the essential character of the same area.
- 30 (c) If located in a rural area (as designated in the Comprehensive Plan), will be consistent with rural
31 land use policies as designated in the rural lands element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 32 (d) Will not be hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses.
- 33 (e) Will be serviced adequately by necessary public facilities such as highways, streets, police and
34 fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water, sewers, and schools; or that the
35 persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the proposed use shall be able to
36 provide adequately any such services.
- 37 (f) Will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services,
38 and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
- 39 (g) Will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment, and conditions of operation
40 that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reasons of excessive
41 production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 (h) Will have vehicular approaches to the property which shall be so designed as not to create an
- 2 interference with traffic on surrounding public streets.
- 3 (i) Will not result in the destruction, loss or damage of any natural, scenic, or historic feature of
- 4 major importance.
- 5 (4) Approval Criteria for expansion of Fossil Fuel Refineries pursuant to WCC 20.68.153 and expansion
- 6 of Fossil Fuel Transshipment Facilities pursuant to WCC 20.68.154. Before approving an application,
- 7 the hearing examiner shall ensure that any specific standards of the zoning district defining the use
- 8 are fulfilled, and shall find adequate evidence showing that:
- 9 (a) The conditional use permit approval criteria listed under WCC 22.05.026(3) are met;
- 10 (b) Within shorelines, if applicable, County approval shall be contingent upon approval of a
- 11 shoreline permit;
- 12 (c) The applicant has documented to the County decision maker (as applicable):
- 13 (i) All of the anticipated types and volumes of substances to be processed, stored, or
- 14 transferred in bulk with the proposed expansion,
- 15 (ii) Changes in the Maximum Transshipment Capacity or the Maximum Atmospheric Crude
- 16 Distillation Capacity occurring as a result of the proposed expansion, as applicable; and
- 17 (iii) The mode of shipment vessels to be loaded or unloaded with the proposed equipment
- 18 and/or as a result of the proposed expansion.
- 19 (iv) The permit shall be limited exclusively to those types and volumes of materials or products
- 20 as documented and approved.
- 21 (d) Insurance requirements meet the provisions of WCC 22.05.125.
- 22 (e) Mitigation of transportation impacts consistent with Chapter 20.78 WCC, Transportation
- 23 Concurrency Management, and Chapter 16.24 WCC, Commute Trip Reduction.
- 24 (f) Mitigation of impacts to other services including fire and emergency response capabilities,
- 25 water supply and fire flow, to address risks created by expansions.
- 26 (g) Plans for stormwater and wastewater releases have been approved.
- 27 (h) Prior to commencement of any site preparation or construction activities, all necessary state
- 28 leases shall be acquired for any piers or aquatic lands improvements, and it shall be
- 29 demonstrated to the zoning administrator that the project applicant has met any federal or
- 30 state permit consultation requirements, including tribal treaty rights or the provisions of the
- 31 Magnuson Amendment through state and federal permitting decisions.
- 32 (i) The County decision maker may approve a conditional use permit with a condition to obtain
- 33 relevant leases and complete any necessary federal and state permitting requirements, and may
- 34 restrict the conditional use permittee from undertaking site preparation or construction
- 35 activities until it has fulfilled that condition.
- 36 (j) The permittee must inform the county permitting authorities of a change in the aforementioned
- 37 disclosures so that the department can document current capacity levels to ensure that the
- 38 cumulative thresholds under WCC 20.68.153 or WCC 20.68.154 (as applicable) have not been
- 39 exceeded.
- 40 (k) The County decision maker shall include, in any approval of an application for an expansion, as
- 41 per 20.68.153 or 20.68.154, a condition that the permitted equipment shall only be used in the

Commented [CES5]: This section has been added since the P/C acted on it to incorporate as existing text Council's Cherry Point amendments (Ord. 2021-046, 7/27/2021)

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 manner described by the project proponent in the application and approved in the permit. The
2 application shall describe the intended use, including the type of fuel to be stored and, if located
3 at a Fossil Fuel Refinery or Renewable Fuel Refinery, whether the equipment will or will not be
4 used for transshipment.

5 (5) **Revisions.** The Hearing Examiner may administratively approve revisions to conditional use permits;
6 provided, that the proposed changes are within the scope and intent of the original permit. “Within
7 the scope and intent of the original permit” shall mean the following:

- 8 (a) Lot coverage and height may be increased a maximum of 10 percent from the provisions of the
9 original permit; provided, that:
- 10 (i) revisions involving new structures not shown on the original site plan shall require a new
11 permit;
 - 12 (ii) any revisions shall not exceed height, lot coverage, setback, or any other requirements of
13 the regulations for the area in which the project is located; and,
 - 14 (iii) any revisions shall be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan;
- 15 (b) Landscaping may be added to a project without necessitating an application for a new permit;
16 provided, that the landscaping is consistent with conditions (if any) attached to the original
17 permit and is consistent with the regulations for the area in which the project is located;
- 18 (c) The use authorized pursuant to the original permit is not changed;
- 19 (d) No additional over-water construction will be involved for shoreline conditional use permits;
- 20 (e) No substantial increase in adverse environmental impact will be caused by the project revision.

21 **22.05.028 Administrative Approval Uses.**

- 22 (1) Administrative approval applications shall be processed per the provisions of this Chapter.
- 23 (2) The Director of Planning and Development Services is authorized to approve, approve with
24 conditions, or deny all administrative approval use applications.
- 25 (3) **Approval Criteria.** Decisions for all administrative approval use permits shall be based upon
26 compliance with:
- 27 (a) The criteria established for the proposed use in the appropriate zone district;
 - 28 (b) The Comprehensive Plan policies governing the associated land use designation;
 - 29 (c) In rural areas, consideration will be given to the cumulative impacts of permitted uses in relation
30 to the governing Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning district; and
 - 31 (d) The criteria of WCC 22.05.026 (Conditional Use Permits), subsection (3) (Approval Criteria).
 - 32 (e) Additionally, decisions for administrative approval use permits for adult businesses shall be
33 based on the criteria in subsection (4) of this section.
- 34 (4) **Additional Approval Criteria for Adult Businesses.** Prior to granting administrative approval for an
35 adult business, the Director shall find that the proposed use at the proposed location satisfies or will
36 satisfy all the following criteria:
- 37 (a) The adult business will be consistent with WCC 20.66.131 (Light Impact Industrial District,
38 Administrative Approval Uses).
 - 39 (b) The adult business shall be closed from 2:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. if it contains:
40 (i) An adult eating or drinking establishment; or

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 (ii) An adult theater; or
- 2 (iii) Another adult commercial establishment; or
- 3 (iv) One or more viewing booths.
- 4 (c) If the adult business includes one or more viewing booths, the interior of the adult business will
- 5 incorporate all of the following measures:
- 6 (a) Each viewing booth shall have at least a three-foot wide opening where a customer enters
- 7 and exits the booth that is without doors, physical barriers, or visual barriers; and
- 8 (b) Each viewing booth shall have at least one 100-watt light bulb that is properly working and
- 9 turned on when business is open. The light bulb shall not be covered or otherwise shielded
- 10 except with a commercially available lighting fixture. A minimum of one 12-inch by 12-inch
- 11 durable metal sign shall be located at the entrance to each viewing booth area stating that
- 12 lights shall remain on; and
- 13 (c) Aisles or hallways adjacent to viewing booths shall be a minimum of five feet wide; and
- 14 (d) There shall be no holes or openings in common walls between viewing booths.
- 15 (d) Additionally for adult businesses containing one or more viewing booths, a condition of approval
- 16 shall allow an unannounced inspection by Whatcom County every six months during business
- 17 hours to ensure that measures in subsections (4)(c)(i) through (iv) of this section are being
- 18 implemented on an ongoing basis.
- 19 (5) **Revisions.** The Director may approve revisions to administrative approval use permits; provided,
- 20 that the proposed changes are within the scope and intent of the original permit. “Within the scope
- 21 and intent of the original permit” shall mean the following:
- 22 (a) Lot coverage and height may be increased a maximum of 10 percent from the provisions of the
- 23 original permit; provided, that:
- 24 (i) revisions involving new structures not shown on the original site plan shall require a
- 25 new permit; and
- 26 (ii) any revisions shall not exceed height, lot coverage, setback, or any other requirements
- 27 of the regulations for the area in which the project is located; and
- 28 (iii) any revisions shall be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan;
- 29 (b) Landscaping may be added to a project without necessitating an application for a new permit;
- 30 provided, that the landscaping is consistent with conditions (if any) attached to the original
- 31 permit and is consistent with the regulations for the area in which the project is located;
- 32 (c) The use authorized pursuant to the original permit is not changed;
- 33 (d) No additional over-water construction will be involved for shoreline conditional use permits;
- 34 (e) No substantial increase in adverse environmental impact will be caused by the project revision.

35 **22.05.030 Consolidated Permit Review.**

36 The County shall integrate and consolidate the review and decision on two or more project permits
37 ~~subject to this chapter~~ that relate to the proposed project action unless the applicant requests
38 otherwise. Consolidated Type I, II, III and IV permits shall be reviewed under the process required for the
39 permit with the highest process type number per WCC [22.05.020](#). Level IV is considered the highest and
40 Level I is considered the lowest process type.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 **22.05.040 Pre-Application Conference.**

2 The purpose of a pre-application conference is to assist applicants in preparing development
3 applications for submittal to the County by identifying applicable regulations and procedures. It is not
4 intended to provide a staff recommendation on future permit decisions. Pre-application review does not
5 constitute acceptance of an application by the County nor does it vest an application, unless otherwise
6 indicated in Whatcom County Code.

- 7 (1) A pre-application conference is required as indicated in WCC [22.05.020](#), unless the Director or
8 designee grants a written waiver. For other permits, the applicant may request a pre-application
9 conference.
- 10 (2) The County shall charge the applicant a fee for a pre-application conference per the unified fee
11 schedule. If the County makes a determination of completeness on a project permit submitted
12 within one year of the notice of site-specific submittal requirements per subsection (6) of this
13 section, the pre-application fee shall be applied to the application cost.
- 14 (3) It is the responsibility of the applicant to initiate a pre-application conference through a written
15 application. The application shall, at a minimum, include all items identified on the pre-application
16 form and the department's administrative manual. The applicant may provide additional
17 information to facilitate more detailed review.
- 18 (4) A pre-application conference shall be scheduled as soon as possible and held no later than 30
19 calendar days from the date of the applicant's request, unless agreed upon by the applicant and the
20 County.
- 21 (5) The County shall invite the appropriate city to the pre-application meeting if the project is located
22 within that city's urban growth area or which contemplates the use of any city utilities. Notice shall
23 also be given to appropriate public agencies and public utilities, if within 500 feet of the area
24 submitted in the application.
- 25 (6) The County should provide the applicant with notice of site-specific submittal requirements for
26 application no later than 14 calendar days from the date of the conference.
- 27 (7) A new pre-application conference shall be required if an associated project permit application is not
28 filed with the County within one year of the notice of site-specific submittal requirements per
29 subsection (6) of this section or the application is substantially altered, unless waived per
30 WCC [22.05.040](#)(1).

31 **22.05.050 Application and Determination of Completeness.**

- 32 (1) Project permit applications shall be submitted using current forms provided by the review authority.
33 The submittal shall include: all applicable fees per Chapter [22.25](#) WCC, all materials required by the
34 department's administrative manual (unless waived pursuant to subsection (2)), and all items
35 identified in the pre-application notice of site-specific submittal requirements. If a permit is denied,
36 no reapplication for the same or essentially similar development may be made until one year from
37 the date of denial.
- 38 (2) The Director may vary or waive the requirements provided in the department's administrative
39 manual on a case-by-case basis, though may also require additional specific information depending
40 on the nature of the proposal and the presence of sensitive ecological features or issues related to
41 compliance with other county requirements.

Commented [CES6]: Moved from 23.60.090 (Permit Application Review)

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ~~(2)~~(3) Upon submittal by the applicant, the County will accept the application and note the date of
2 receipt. Receipt of an application does not constitute approval of the project proposal.
- 3 ~~(3)~~(4) Within 14 calendar days of receiving the application, the County shall provide to the applicant a
4 written determination which states either that the application is complete or the application is
5 incomplete. To the extent known by the County, other agencies of local, state, or federal
6 government that may have jurisdiction shall be identified on the determination.
- 7 ~~(4)~~(5) A project permit application is complete when it meets the submittal requirements of the
8 department's administrative manual, includes items identified through the pre-application
9 conference process and contains sufficient information to process the application even if additional
10 information will be required. A determination of completeness shall not preclude the County from
11 requiring additional information or studies at any time prior to permit approval. A project permit
12 application shall be deemed complete under this section if the County does not issue a written
13 determination to the applicant that the application is incomplete by the end of the fourteenth
14 calendar day from the date of receipt.
- 15 ~~(5)~~(6) If the application is determined to be incomplete, the following shall take place:
- 16 (a) The County will notify the applicant that the application is incomplete and indicate what is
17 necessary to make the application complete.
- 18 (b) The applicant shall have 90 calendar days from the date that the notification was issued to
19 submit the necessary information to the County. If the applicant does not submit the necessary
20 information to the County in writing within the 90-day period, the application shall be rejected.
21 The Director or designee may extend this period for an additional 90 calendar days upon written
22 request by the applicant.
- 23 (c) Upon receipt of the necessary information, the County shall have 14 calendar days to make a
24 determination and notify the applicant whether the application is complete or what additional
25 information is necessary.
- 26 (7) A determination of an incomplete application is an appealable final administrative determination,
27 subject to WCC [22.05.160](#)(1).
- 28 **22.05.060 Vesting.**
- 29 (1) **Complete Applications.** For a project permit application the department has determined to be
30 complete per WCC [22.05.050](#)(4), the application shall be considered under the zoning or other land
31 use control ordinances in effect on the date the application was submitted to the department.
- 32 (2) **Incomplete Applications.** For a project permit application the department has determined to be
33 incomplete per WCC [22.05.050](#)(5), the application shall be considered under the zoning or other
34 land use control ordinances in effect on the date the department determines the application to be
35 complete based on the necessary information required by the department.
- 36 (3) **Applications Subject to Pre-Application Conference.** Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections
37 (1) and (2) of this section, for a project permit application that is (a) subject to a pre-application
38 conference per WCC [22.05.020](#) and [22.05.040](#), (b) submitted no more than 28 calendar days from
39 the date the department issued its notice of site-specific submittal requirements, and (c)
40 determined complete by the department, the application shall be considered under the zoning or

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

- 1 other land use control ordinances in effect on the date the pre-application conference request was
2 submitted to the department.
- 3 (4) **Continuation of Vesting.** Building or land disturbance permit applications that are required to
4 complete a valid (i.e., not expired) project permit approval for project permits identified in the
5 following list (subsections (4)(a) through (m) of this section) shall vest to the zoning and land use
6 control ordinances in effect at the time the project permit application identified below was
7 determined complete:
- 8 (a) Administrative use;
 - 9 (b) Commercial site plan review;
 - 10 (c) Conditional use;
 - 11 (d) Critical areas variance;
 - 12 (e) Major project permit;
 - 13 (f) Natural resource review;
 - 14 (g) Planned unit development;
 - 15 (h) Reasonable use exceptions(Type II and III);
 - 16 (i) Shoreline conditional use permit;
 - 17 (j) Shoreline exemption;
 - 18 (k) Shoreline substantial;
 - 19 (l) Shoreline variance;
 - 20 (m) Zoning variance.
- 21 (5) **Building Permit Applications within Recorded Long and Short Subdivisions and Binding Site Plans.**
22 Building permit applications, including associated land disturbance permits, shall be governed by
23 conditions of approval, statutes, and ordinances in effect at the time of final approval pursuant to
24 RCW [58.17.170](#). Vesting duration for those building permit applications shall be governed by the
25 time limits established for long subdivisions in RCW [58.17.170](#), unless the County finds that a change
26 in conditions creates a serious threat to the public health or safety.
- 27 (6) **Building and Fire Code Requirements.** Building and fire code provisions adopted per WCC
28 Title [15](#) vest at the time a building permit application is determined complete.
- 29 (7) **Duration.** Vesting status established through subsections (1) through (5) of this section runs with
30 the application and expires upon denial of the application by the County, withdrawal of the
31 application by the applicant, rejection of the application per WCC [22.05.050](#)(5), expiration of the
32 application per WCC [22.05.130](#)(1)(a)(i), or expiration of the approved permit per WCC [22.05.140](#).
- 33 **22.05.070 Notice of Application.**
- 34 (1) For Type II, III, and IV applications per WCC [22.05.020](#), the County shall issue a notice of application
35 within 14 calendar days of a determination of completeness. The date of notice shall be the date of
36 mailing.
 - 37 (2) If the County has made a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) threshold determination of
38 significance concurrently with the notice of application, the County shall combine the determination
39 of significance and scoping notice with the notice of application.
 - 40 (3) Notice shall include:

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 (a) The date of application, the date of determination of completeness for the application, and the
2 date of the notice of application;
- 3 (b) A description of the proposed project action and a list of the project permits included in the
4 application, and, if applicable, a list of any studies requested by the County;
- 5 (c) The identification of other permits not included in the application to the extent known by the
6 County;
- 7 (d) The identification of environmental reviews conducted, including notice of existing
8 environmental documents that evaluate the proposed project (including but not limited to
9 reports, delineations, assessments and/or mitigation plans associated with critical area reviews)
10 and, if not otherwise stated on the document providing notice of application, the location where
11 the application and any studies can be reviewed;
- 12 (e) Any other information determined appropriate by the County;
- 13 (f) A statement indicating those development regulations that will be used for project mitigation or
14 a determination of consistency if they have been identified at the time of notice;
- 15 (g) A statement of the minimum public comment period which shall be 14 calendar days for all
16 project permits except for shoreline substantial development, shoreline conditional use,
17 shoreline variance and major project permits for mitigation banks which shall have a minimum
18 comment period of no more than 30 calendar days;
- 19 (h) A statement of the right of any person to comment on the application and receive notice of and
20 participate in any hearings, request a copy of the decision once made and to appeal a decision
21 when allowed by law. The department may accept public comments at any time prior to the
22 close of the open record public hearing, or if there is no public hearing, prior to the decision on
23 the project permit. In addition, the statement shall indicate that any person wishing to receive
24 personal notice of any decisions or hearings must notify the department.
- 25 (4) The department shall issue a notice of application in the following manner:
 - 26 (a) The notice shall be published once in the official County newspaper and on the Whatcom
27 County website. The applicant shall bear the responsibility of paying for such notice.
 - 28 (b) Additional notice shall be given using the following method:
 - 29 i. For sites within urban growth areas: Application notice shall be sent to all property owners
30 within 300 feet of the external boundaries of the subject property as shown by the records
31 of the County assessor;
 - 32 ii. For sites outside urban growth areas: Application notice shall be sent to all property owners
33 within 1,000 feet of the external boundaries of the subject property as shown by the records
34 of the County assessor.
- 35 (5) The County shall send notices of application to neighboring cities and other agencies or tribes that
36 will potentially be affected, either directly or indirectly, by the proposed development. Notice shall
37 also be given to public utilities, if within 500 feet of the area submitted in the application.
- 38 (6) All public comments received on the notice of application must be received by the department of
39 planning and development services by 4:30 p.m. on or before the last day of the comment period.
- 40 (7) Except for a determination of significance, the County shall not issue its SEPA threshold
41 determination or issue a decision or recommendation on a permit application until the end of the

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 public comment period on the notice of application. If an optional Determination of Nonsignificance
2 (DNS) process is used, the notice of application and DNS comment period shall be combined.
3 (8) Public notice given for project permit applications, SEPA documents, project hearings, and appeals
4 hearings as required by this chapter and other provisions of the County code may be combined
5 when practical, where such combined notice will expedite the permit review process, and where
6 provisions applicable to each individual notice are met through the combined notice.

7 **22.05.080 Posting of Application.**

8 Where posting of public notice is required per WCC [22.05.020](#), the department shall post public notices
9 of the proposal on all road frontages of the subject property and adjacent shorelines on or before the
10 notice of application date and shall be visible to adjacent property owners and to passing motorists. Said
11 notices shall remain in place until three days after the comment period closes.

12 **22.05.090 Open Record Public Hearings.**

13 ~~(1) As shown in~~ Pursuant to WCC [22.05.020](#) (Project Permit Processing Table), Type III and Type IV
14 applications and appeals of Type I and Type II applications require an open record public hearing.

15 ~~(2) These Open Record Hearing Notice. Public~~ hearings ~~are subject to the~~ shall be noticed as following:

16 ~~(a)~~ a. The Hearing Examiner shall publish a notice of open record hearing once in the official
17 County newspaper and on the Whatcom County website at least 14 calendar days prior to the
18 hearing. The notice shall consist of the date, time, place, and type of the hearing. In addition,
19 personal notice shall be provided to any person who has requested such notice in a timely
20 manner, consistent with WCC [22.05.070](#) ~~(a)~~ ([Notice of Application](#)).

21 ~~(b)~~ b. Within two days of the published notice the applicant shall be responsible for posting
22 three copies of the notice in a conspicuous manner on the property upon which the use is
23 proposed. Notices shall be provided by the Hearing Examiner.

24 ~~(c)~~ c. An affidavit verifying distribution of the notice must be submitted to the Hearing
25 Examiner two working days prior to the open record hearing.

26 ~~(d)~~ d. The Hearing Examiner shall send notice of an open record hearing to neighboring cities
27 and other agencies or tribes that will potentially be affected, either directly or indirectly by the
28 proposed development. The Hearing Examiner shall be responsible for such notification.

29 ~~(e)~~ e. The applicant shall pay all costs associated with providing notice.

30 ~~(2)~~ (3) **One Open Record Hearing.** A project proposal subject to this chapter shall be provided with no
31 more than one open record hearing and one closed record hearing pursuant to [RCW](#) Chapter [36.70B](#)
32 ~~RCW~~. This restriction does not apply to an appeal of a determination of significance as provided in
33 [RCW 43.21C.075](#).

34 ~~(3)~~ (4) **Combined County and Agency Hearing.** Unless otherwise requested by an applicant, the County
35 shall allow an open record hearing to be combined with a hearing that may be necessary by another
36 local, state, regional, federal or other agency for the same project if the joint hearing can be held
37 within the time periods specified in Chapter [22.05](#) WCC, or if the applicant agrees to waive such
38 time periods in the event additional time is needed in order to combine the hearings. The combined
39 hearing shall be conducted in Whatcom County pursuant to Chapter [36.70B](#) RCW.

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Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~(4)~~(5) Quasi-judicial actions, including applications listed as Type III and IV applications in
2 WCC [22.05.020](#), are subject to the appearance of fairness doctrine, Chapter [42.36](#) RCW. The Hearing
3 Examiner shall administer the open record hearing and issue decisions or recommendations in
4 accordance with Chapter [42.36](#) RCW.

22.05.100 Application Consistency Review and Recommendations.

6 (1) During project permit review, the review authority shall determine if the project proposal is
7 consistent with the County's comprehensive plan, other adopted plans, and existing regulations and
8 development standards.

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9 ~~(1)~~(a) For Type I and II applications, the conclusions of a consistency determination made
10 under this section shall be documented in the project permit decision.

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11 ~~(2)~~(b) For Type III and IV applications the department shall prepare a staff report on the
12 proposed development or action. Staff shall file one consolidated report with the Hearing
13 Examiner at least 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled open record hearing. The staff report
14 shall:

15 ~~(i)~~i. Summarize the comments and recommendations of County departments, affected agencies,
16 special districts and public comments received within the 14-day or 30-day comment period
17 as established in WCC [22.05.070](#)(6).

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18 ~~(ii)~~ii. Provide an evaluation of the project proposal for consistency as indicated in this section.

19 ~~(iii)~~iii. Include recommended findings, conclusions, and actions regarding the proposal.

20 (2) **Additional Requirements.** For all project permit applications, if more information is required to
21 determine consistency at any time in review of the application, the department may issue a notice
22 of additional requirements. The ~~applicant notice of additional requirements shall have allow the~~
23 ~~applicant~~ 180 calendar days from the date of issuance ~~of said notice~~ to submit all required
24 information.

25 (3) **Permit Inactivity.** Any application that remains inactive for a period of 180 days shall expire and a
26 new application and repayment of fees shall be required to reactivate the proposal; provided, that
27 ~~the Director or designee may grant a 1-year extension for good cause extend this period for no~~
28 ~~more than cumulative 24 months~~ upon written request by the applicant, provided the request is
29 submitted before the end of the first 180-day period. A notice of additional requirements is not a
30 final administrative determination.

Commented [CES7]: Combined 23.60.090 (Permit application review) with this section and normalized the extension date to 1-year.

31 (4) **Burden of Proof.** Permit applicants/proponents have the burden of proving that the proposed
32 development is consistent with all applicable policies and regulations

Commented [CES8]: Moved from 23.60.120

33 ~~(3)~~(5) **Permit conditions.** ~~In granting, revising, or extending a permit, the decision maker may attach~~
34 ~~such conditions, modifications, or restrictions thereto regarding the location, character, and other~~
35 ~~elements of the proposed development deemed necessary to assure that the development will be~~
36 ~~consistent with the applicable policies and regulations (including the policies and provisions of the~~
37 ~~Shoreline Management Act for shoreline permits). In cases involving unusual circumstances or~~
38 ~~uncertain effects, a condition may be imposed to require monitoring with future review or~~
39 ~~reevaluation to assure conformance. If the monitoring plan is not implemented, the permittee may~~
40 ~~be found to be noncompliant and the permit may be revoked in accordance with WCC 22.05.150~~
41 ~~(Permit Revocation).~~

Commented [CES9]: Moved from 23.60.140 (Permit Conditions).

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

22.05.110 Final Decisions – Type I, II, and III applications.

- (1) The Director or designee’s final decision on all Type I or II applications shall be in the form of a written determination or permit. The determination or permit may be granted subject to conditions, modifications, or restrictions that are necessary to comply with all applicable codes.
- (2) The Hearing Examiner’s final decision on all Type III applications per WCC [22.05.020](#) or appeals per WCC [22.05.160](#)(1) shall either grant or deny the application or appeal.
 - (a) The Hearing Examiner may grant Type III applications subject to conditions, modifications or restrictions that the Hearing Examiner finds are necessary to make the application compatible with its environment, carry out the objectives and goals of the comprehensive plan, statutes, ordinances and regulations as well as other official policies and objectives of Whatcom County.
 - (b) Requirements:
 - (i) Performance bonds or other security, acceptable to the prosecuting attorney, may be required to ensure compliance with the conditions, modifications and restrictions.
 - (ii) Fossil or Renewable Fuel Refinery or Fossil or Renewable Fuel Transshipment Facilities: The applicant shall provide insurance or other financial assurance acceptable to the prosecuting attorney consistent with Section 22.05.125.
 - (c) The Hearing Examiner shall render a final decision within 14 calendar days following the conclusion of all testimony and hearings. Each final decision of the Hearing Examiner shall be in writing and shall include findings and conclusions based on the record to support the decision.
 - (d) No final decision of the Hearing Examiner shall be subject to administrative or quasi-judicial review, except as provided herein.
 - (e) The applicant, any person with standing, or any County department may appeal any final decision of the Hearing Examiner to superior court, except as otherwise specified in WCC 22.05.020.

Commented [CES10]: This section has been revised since the P/C acted on it to incorporate as existing text Council’s Cherry Point amendments (Ord. 2021-046, 7/27/2021).

22.05.120 Recommendations and Final Decisions to County Council – Type IV Applications.

- (1) For Type IV applications per WCC [22.05.020](#) the Hearing Examiner’s recommendations to the County Council may be to grant, grant with conditions or deny an application. The Hearing Examiner’s recommendation may include conditions, modifications or restrictions as may be necessary to make the application compatible with its environment, carry out the objectives and goals of the comprehensive plan, statutes, ordinances and regulations as well as other official policies and objectives of Whatcom County.
- (2) Each recommended decision of the Hearing Examiner for an application identified as a Type IV application per WCC [22.05.020](#) shall be in writing to the clerk of the County Council and shall include findings and conclusions based upon the record to support the decision. Such findings and conclusions shall also set forth the manner in which the decision carries out and conforms to the County’s comprehensive plan and complies with the applicable statutes, ordinances or regulations.
- (3) The deliberation of the County Council on quasi-judicial actions shall be in accordance with WCC [22.05.090](#)(4) and Chapter [42.36](#) RCW.
- (4) For planned unit developments and major project permits the following shall apply:

Commented [CES11]: This section has been revised since the P/C acted on it to incorporate as existing text Council’s Cherry Point amendments (Ord. 2021-046, 7/27/2021)

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- 1 (a) The recommendation of the Hearing Examiner regarding planned unit developments and major
2 project permits shall be based upon the criteria set forth in WCC [20.85.335](#) and [20.88.130](#),
3 respectively.
- 4 (b) The Hearing Examiner shall file the recommendation with the clerk of the County Council within
5 21 calendar days following the conclusion of the open record hearing.
- 6 (c) The County Council shall conduct the following within the specified time frames, except as
7 provided in subsection (4)(c)(iii) of this section:
 - 8 i. Hold a public meeting, not an open record public hearing, to deliberate on the project
9 application within 28 calendar days after receiving the Hearing Examiner’s recommendation.
 - 10 ii. Issue a final written decision within 21 calendar days of the public meeting.
 - 11 iii. The County Council may exceed the time limits in subsection (4)(c)(i) or (ii) of this section if
12 the County Council meeting schedule does not accommodate a meeting within the above
13 time frames, or if the County Council makes written findings that a specified amount of
14 additional time is needed to process a specific application or project type, per
15 RCW [36.70B.080](#)(1).
- 16 (5) The County Council’s final written decision may include conditions when the project is approved and
17 shall state the findings of fact upon which the decision is based.
 - 18 (a) Performance bonds or other security, acceptable to the prosecuting attorney, may be required
19 to ensure compliance with the conditions, modifications and restrictions.
 - 20 (b) Fossil or Renewable Fuel Refinery or Fossil or Renewable Fuel Transshipment Facilities: The
21 applicant shall provide insurance or other financial assurance acceptable to the prosecuting
22 attorney consistent with Section 22.05.125.
- 23 (6) Any deliberation or decision of the County Council shall be based solely upon consideration of the
24 record established by the Hearing Examiner, the recommendations of the Hearing Examiner and the
25 criteria set forth in applicable County code, the County Comprehensive Plan if applicable, and the
26 [Whatcom](#) County Shoreline Management Program, including compliance with SEPA, WAC 197-11
27 (SEPA Rules) as adopted and modified in the County Code, and the County’s adopted SEPA policies.
- 28 **22.05.125 Proof of Insurance for Hazards Created in the County**
29 For expansion projects requiring approval under a Conditional Use Permit or Major Project Permit at
30 new or existing facilities per WCC 20.68.153 or WCC 20.68.154, financial assurance for the benefit of
31 Whatcom County shall be required. For such expansion projects, a permittee must demonstrate proof of
32 financial assurance (such as trust funds, letters of credit, insurance, self-insurance, financial tests,
33 corporate guarantees, payment bonds, or performance bonds) sufficient to comply with the financial
34 responsibility requirements set forth in State and Federal law, as applicable, prior to permit approval by
35 a Whatcom County Decision Maker. If the financial assurance is in the form of insurance policies, the
36 policies must name Whatcom County as an additional insured and provide Whatcom County with a
37 certificate of insurance to that effect.
38 The permittee must maintain the approved level of financial assurance coverage for new or expanded
39 uses while operating the permitted facility. At the request of the permittee, the Whatcom County
40 Decision Maker may approve new or altered forms of financial assurance to meet the requirements of

Commented [CES12]: This section has been inserted since the P/C acted on it to incorporate as existing text Council’s Cherry Point amendments (Ord. 2021-046, 7/27/2021).

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1 this section, provided that the new or altered form is consistent with the scope and intent of the original
2 permit condition.

3 **22.05.126 Supplemental Procedures for Fossil Fuel Refinery and Fossil Fuel Transshipment Facility**
4 **Permitting**

- 5 (1) Upon request of the County, Fossil Fuel Refineries or Fossil Fuel Transshipment Facilities shall fill out
6 a supplemental checklist for the purpose of determining whether a project qualifies as a permitted
7 use or requires a conditional use permit as specified in WCC 20.68.153 or WCC 20.68.154. The
8 checklist shall contain supplemental information to include:
9 (a) Impact on Maximum Atmospheric Crude Distillation Capacity (MACDC), Maximum
10 Transshipment Capacity, and fossil fuel unit train shipment frequency from the proposed
11 activity;
12 (b) Confirmation of the acceptance of potential permit conditions as outlined in 20.68.068
13 subsection (23);
14 (c) Applicant name, property owner information, and parcel information as appropriate; and
15 (d) An attestation by the applicant regarding the accuracy of the information contained therein,
16 signed by the applicant and certified by a Notary Public.

17 (2) Confidential Business Information

- 18 (a) For the purpose of checklists, permit applications and all other materials submitted by Fossil
19 Fuel Refineries or Fossil Fuel Transshipment Facilities for activities in the Cherry Point Heavy
20 Impact Industrial District, the following shall apply:
21 (i) The applicant shall clearly identify information the applicant considers to be Confidential
22 Business Information, not subject to disclosure under chapter 42.56 RCW (Public Records
23 Act) and/or WCC 1.32.090. If such information is contained in submittal documents, the
24 applicant shall submit two copies of materials for County use as follows:
25 1. A copy with Confidential Business Information clearly identified, with a watermark
26 indicating the document contains such information; and
27 2. A copy with Confidential Business Information redacted, and a watermark added
28 indicating that the document does not contain such information and is suitable for
29 public disclosure.
30 (ii) Confidential Business Information may include:
31 1. Processing equipment technical specifications on internals, sidestream/pumparounds,
32 design specifications, and process controls;
33 2. Process unit design, instrumentation and controls;
34 3. Feedstock, product, or process unit pump capacity and configuration; and
35 4. Contractual agreements and all terms contained therein.
36 (iii) The information listed above is not meant to be all-inclusive. Other information related to
37 the applicant’s processing activities, feedstock and product purchase, and/or sale and
38 transportation methods and costs may be Confidential Business Information and, if so, shall
39 be marked as such when submitted.
40 (iv) Calculation and permit material submittals may contain, but are not required to contain any
41 of the above information.

Commented [CES13]: This section has been inserted since the P/C acted on it to incorporate as existing text Council’s Cherry Point amendments (Ord. 2021-046, 7/27/2021).

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 (v) Where no increase to MACDC, Maximum Transshipment Capacity, or unit train frequency is
2 proposed, submittal of Confidential Business Information specifically related to the criteria
3 of WCC 20.68.153 and WCC 20.68.154 shall not be required to be submitted with the permit
4 application materials.

5 (3) Where calculations are to be submitted for Maximum Transshipment Capacity of Maximum
6 Atmospheric Crude Distillation Capacity, the applicant shall provide calculations performed and
7 certified by a professional engineer licensed in the state of Washington, clearly indicating the impact
8 on MACDC and Transshipment Capacity. Confidential Business Information shall be clearly identified
9 as required by WCC 22.05.126(2)(a)(i) above.

10 (4) If the County receives a public records request for records containing information the applicant has
11 clearly indicated to be Confidential Business Information pursuant to WCC 22.05.126(2)(a)(i), the
12 County will notify the applicant of the request and provide the applicant with at least 30 days to file
13 for an injunction under RCW 42.56.540 to prevent the disclosure of such information. If the
14 applicant does not file for an injunction within the period of time set by the County, the County will
15 disclose the records containing the information that the applicant has designated as Confidential
16 Business Information pursuant to WCC 22.05.126(2)(a)(i).

22.05.130 Permit Review Time Frames.

17 (1) The County shall issue a notice of final decision for all permit types, including procedures for
18 administrative appeal and notice that affected property owners may request a change in valuation
19 for property tax purposes, to the applicant, the Whatcom County assessor, and any person who
20 requested notice or submitted substantive comments on the application within 120 calendar days of
21 the date the department determined the application complete, except as provided below:

22 (a) The following time periods shall be excluded from the calculation of the number of days
23 elapsed:

- 24 i. Any period during which the applicant has been required by the County to correct plans,
25 perform required studies, or provide additional, required information through a notice of
26 additional requirements, per WCC [22.05.100\(3\)](#). The period shall be calculated from the
27 date the County issues a notice of additional requirements until the date the County
28 receives all of the requested additional information;
- 29 ii. Any period during which an environmental impact statement is being prepared following a
30 determination of significance pursuant to Chapter [43.21C](#) RCW and WCC Title [16](#);
- 31 iii. The period specified for administrative appeals of project permits as provided in
32 Chapter [2.11](#) WCC;
- 33 iv. The period specified for administrative appeals of development standards as provided in
34 WCC [12.08.035\(I\)](#);
- 35 v. Any period in which the applicant has not met public notification requirements;
- 36 vi. Any period of time mutually agreed upon in writing by the applicant and the County.

37 (b) The time limits established by this section shall not apply to a project permit application that:

- 38 i. Requires an amendment to the Whatcom County comprehensive plan or a development
39 regulation in order to obtain approval.
- 40

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ii. Requires approval of a new fully contained community as provided in RCW [36.70A.350](#), a
- 2 master planned resort as provided in RCW [36.70A.360](#), or the siting of an essential public
- 3 facility as provided in RCW [36.70A.200](#).
- 4 iii. Is substantially revised by the applicant, including all redesigns of proposed land divisions, in
- 5 which case a new time period shall start from the date at which the revised project
- 6 application is determined to be complete.

7 (c) Additionally, for shoreline permits and exemptions, and pursuant to WAC 173-27-125, the

8 following special procedures apply to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

9 projects:

- 10 i. Pursuant to RCW 47.01.485, the Legislature established a target of 90 days review time for
- 11 local governments.
- 12 ii. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.140, WSDOT projects that address significant public safety risks may
- 13 begin twenty-one days after the date of filing if all components of the project will achieve no
- 14 net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

15 ~~(c)~~(d) The County may extend notice of final decision on the project if the County can

16 document legitimate reasons for such a delay. In such a case the County shall provide written

17 notice to the applicant at least 14 calendar days prior to the deadline for the original notice of

18 final decision. The notice shall include a statement of reasons why the time limits have not been

19 met and a date of issuance of a notice of final decision.

- 20 (2) If an applicant believes a project permit application has not been acted upon by the County in a
- 21 timely manner or otherwise consistent with this chapter, the applicant or authorized representative
- 22 may request a meeting with the Director to resolve the issue. Within 14 calendar days ~~of~~after the
- 23 meeting, the Director shall:
 - 24 (a) Approve the permit if it is within the Director's authority to do so, provided the approval would
 - 25 not violate state or County regulations; or
 - 26 (b) Deny the permit if it is within the Director's authority to do so; or
 - 27 (c) Respond in writing with the department's position, or a mutually acceptable resolution of the
 - 28 issue, which may include a partial refund of application fees at the Director's discretion.
- 29 (3) Any final order, permit decision or determination issued by Whatcom County shall include a notice
- 30 to the applicant of his or her appeal rights per WCC [22.05.160 \(Appeals\)](#).

22.05.140 Expiration of Project Permits.

32 (1) This section shall apply to non-shoreline project permits and shoreline statements of exemption.

33 Expiration of shoreline permits shall be subject to the rules of WCC 22.07.080 (Expiration of

34 Shoreline Permits).

35 ~~(1)~~(2) Project permit approval status shall expire two years from the date of approval except where a

36 different duration of approval is authorized by Whatcom County Code, or is established by a court

37 decision or state law, or executed by a development agreement. The decision maker may extend

38 this period up to one year from the date of original expiration upon written request by the

39 applicant.

Commented [CES14]: Added per Periodic Review Checklist, Item 2015.a, and Scoping Document, Item #2e.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ~~(2)~~(3) Any complete project permit application for which no information has been submitted in
2 response to the department's notice of additional requirements per WCC [22.05.100](#)(3) shall expire
3 at the end of the time limit established in [22.05.100](#)(3).
- 4 ~~(3)~~(4) For projects that have received a SEPA determination of significance per Chapter [16.08](#) WCC, all
5 underlying project permit applications shall expire when one of the following occurs:
6 (a) The applicant has not in good faith maintained a contract with a person or firm to complete the
7 environmental impact statement (EIS) as specified in the scoping document. The applicant is
8 responsible for informing the County of the status of such contract. If there is no notice given to
9 the County, all underlying project permit applications shall expire upon the end date of the
10 contract; or
11 (b) The mutually agreed time frame to complete the draft EIS or final EIS has lapsed.
- 12 (4) Project permits which received preliminary approval or a final decision prior to February 22, 2009,
13 that did not include an expiration time frame in the conditions of approval shall expire on June 16,
14 2020.

15 **22.05.150 Permit Revocation-Procedure.**

- 16 (1) Upon notification by the Director that a substantial violation of the terms and conditions of any
17 previously granted zoning conditional use, shoreline substantial development, or shoreline
18 conditional use permit exists, the Hearing Examiner shall issue a summons as per WCC [2.11.220](#) to
19 the permit holder requiring said permit holder to appear and show cause why revocation of the
20 permit should not be ordered. Failure of the permit holder to respond may be deemed good cause
21 for revocation.
- 22 (2) Upon issuance of a summons as set forth in subsection (1) of this section, the Hearing Examiner shall
23 schedule an open record hearing to review the alleged violations. The summons shall include notice
24 of the hearing and shall be sent to the permit holder and the Director of planning and development
25 services no less than 12 calendar days prior to the date of the hearing. At the hearing the Hearing
26 Examiner shall receive evidence of the alleged violations and the responses of the permit holder, as
27 per the business rules of the Hearing Examiner's office. Testimony shall be limited to that of the
28 division and the permit holder except where additional evidence would be of substantial value in
29 determining if revocation should be ordered. The land use division's evidence may include the
30 testimony of witnesses.
- 31 (3) Upon a showing of violation by a preponderance of the evidence as alleged, the Hearing Examiner
32 may revoke the permit or allow the permit holder a reasonable period of time to cure the violation.
33 If the violation is not cured within the time set by the Hearing Examiner, the permit shall be
34 revoked. Where a time to cure the violation has been set out, no further hearing shall be necessary
35 prior to the revocation. The permit holder shall have the burden of proving that the violation has
36 been cured within the time limit previously set. Such evidence as is necessary to demonstrate that
37 the violation has been cured may be submitted to the Hearing Examiner by either the permit holder
38 or the Director of planning and development services. Any revocation shall be accompanied by
39 written findings of fact and conclusions of law. The permit holder shall be notified of any revocation
40 within 14 calendar days of the revocation.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

22.05.160 Appeals.

- (1) Any person with standing may appeal any order, final permit decision, or final administrative determination made by the Director or designee in the administration or enforcement of any chapter to the Hearing Examiner, who has the authority to hear and decide such appeals per WCC [2.11.210](#).
- (a) To be valid, an appeal shall be filed, on a form provided by the department, with the department within 14 calendar days of the issuance of a final permit decision and shall be accompanied by a fee as specified in the Unified Fee Schedule. The written appeal shall include:
- The action or decision being appealed and the date it was issued;
 - Facts demonstrating that the person is adversely affected by the decision;
 - A statement identifying each alleged error and the manner in which the decision fails to satisfy the applicable decision criteria;
 - The specific relief requested; and
 - Any other information reasonably necessary to make a decision on the appeal.
- (b) The Hearing Examiner shall schedule an open record public hearing on the appeal to be held within 60 calendar days following the department's receipt of the application for appeal unless otherwise agreed upon by the County and the appellant.
- (c) A party who fails to appeal within 14 calendar days is barred from appeal, per Chapter [2.11](#) WCC.
- (d) The business rules of the Hearing Examiner shall govern appeal procedures. The Hearing Examiner shall have the authority granted in the business rules, and that authority is incorporated herein by reference. See also WCC [2.11.220](#).

~~(2) For non-shoreline permits, the applicant,~~ any person with standing, or any County department may appeal any final decision of the Hearing Examiner to superior court or other body as specified by WCC [22.05.020](#). The appellant shall file a written notice of appeal within 21 calendar days of the final decision of the Hearing Examiner, as provided in RCW [36.70C.040](#).

~~(3)~~ For shoreline permits, after the issuance of the appeal determination, a party with standing may appeal to the Shorelines Hearings Board a decision on a shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use pursuant to RCW 90.58.180 within 21 days of the "date of filing" as defined in Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program) and RCW 90.58.140(6). The appeal to the Shorelines Hearing Board shall be filed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 461-08C WAC. Appeals of a decision of the Department of Ecology shall be filed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 461-08C WAC.

Commented [AP15]: Updated per Periodic Review Checklist, Item 2017.d, and Scoping Document Item #2a.

Commented [CES16]: Moved from 23.60.150 (Notice of Decision, Reconsideration, and Appeal)

22.05.170 Annual Report.

Staff shall prepare an annual report on the implementation of this chapter and submit it to the Council.

22.05.180 Interpretation, Conflict and Severability.

- (1) **Interpret to Protect Public Welfare.** In the event of any discrepancies between the requirements established herein and those contained in any other applicable regulation, code or program, the regulations which are more protective of the public health, safety, environment and welfare shall apply.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 (2) **Severability.** The provisions of this chapter are severable. If a section, sentence, clause, or phrase of
- 2 this title is adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the decision shall not affect
- 3 the remaining portions of this chapter.

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Chapter ~~23.60~~22.07 Additional Requirements for Shoreline Permits and Exemptions

Commented [CES17]: Though this is a new chapter, the existing language from Title 20 is not shown as new; only changes to that existing language is shown in ~~strikeout~~/underline.

~~23.60.005~~22.07.010 **General Requirements.**

- A. In addition to the requirements of WCC Chapter 22.05 (Project Permits), shoreline permits shall be subject to the provisions of this chapter.
- B. To be authorized, all ~~shoreline activities~~, uses, and developments shall be ~~planned and carried out~~ done in a manner ~~that is consistent with this program~~ Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program) and the policy of the Shoreline Management Act as required by RCW 90.58.140(1), regardless of whether a shoreline permit, statement of exemption, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use permit is required.
- C. All final shoreline substantial development, variance, and conditional use permit decisions or recommendations shall be filed with the Department of Ecology pursuant to WCC 22.07.060.
- D. A development or use that is listed as a shoreline conditional use pursuant to Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program) or is an unlisted use must obtain a shoreline conditional use permit even if the development or use does not require a substantial development permit.
- E. When a development, use, or activity is proposed that does not comply with the bulk, dimensional and/or other standards of the Shoreline Management Program, such development or use shall only be authorized by approval of a shoreline variance even if the development or use does not require a substantial development permit.
- F. All permits issued for development, use, or activity within shoreline jurisdiction shall include written findings prepared by the Director, including compliance with bulk and dimensional standards and policies and regulations the Shoreline Management Program. The Director may attach conditions to the approval to project permits as necessary to assure consistency of the project with the Act and the Program.
- G. Pursuant to WAC 173-27-044, requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, shoreline conditional use permit, shoreline variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement the Shoreline Management Program do not apply to:
 - 1. Remedial Action. Any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70.105D RCW, or to the Department of Ecology (Ecology) when it conducts a remedial action under chapter 70.105D RCW. Ecology must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70.105D RCW, or during the Ecology-conducted remedial action, through the procedures developed by Ecology pursuant to RCW 70.105D.090;
 - 2. Boatyard Facilities. Any person installing site improvements for stormwater treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system stormwater general permit. Ecology must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the review of engineering reports, site plans, and other documents related to the installation of boatyard stormwater treatment facilities; or

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 3. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) facility maintenance and safety
2 improvements. Any Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) projects or
3 activities that meet the conditions of RCW 90.58.356.

4 A.H. All applications for shoreline substantial development permits or permit revisions shall be
5 submitted to the Department of Ecology upon a final decision by local government pursuant to WAC
6 173-27-130. "Final decision by local government" shall mean the order of ruling, whether it be an
7 approval or denial, that is established after all local administrative appeals related to the permit
8 have concluded or the opportunity to initiate such appeals has lapsed.

9 ~~23.60.22.07.020~~ Exemptions from Shoreline Substantial Development Permits ~~process.~~

10 A. ~~23.60.021~~ Application and interpretation.

11 1. An exemption from the substantial development permit process is not an exemption from
12 compliance with the Act, ~~or this program~~ Whatcom County Shoreline Management Program, or
13 from any other regulatory requirements. To be authorized, all uses, ~~and~~ developments, and
14 activities must be consistent with the policies and regulatory provisions of ~~this program~~ the
15 Shoreline Management Program and the Act. A statement of exemption shall be obtained for
16 exempt activities consistent with the below ~~provisions of WCC 23.60.020.~~

17 2. Exemptions shall be construed narrowly. Only those developments that meet the precise terms
18 of one or more of the listed exemptions may be granted exemptions from the substantial
19 development permit process.

20 3. The burden of proof that a development, ~~or use, or activity~~ is exempt is on the
21 applicant/proponent of the exempt development action.

22 4. If any part of a proposed development is not eligible for exemption, then a substantial
23 development permit is required for the entire project.

24 ~~5. A development or use that is listed as a conditional use pursuant to this program or is an~~
25 ~~unlisted use, must obtain a conditional use permit even if the development or use does not~~
26 ~~require a substantial development permit.~~

27 ~~6. When a development or use is proposed that does not comply with the bulk, dimensional~~
28 ~~and/or performance standards of the program, such development or use shall only be~~
29 ~~authorized by approval of a shoreline variance even if the development or use does not require~~
30 ~~a substantial development permit.~~

31 ~~7. All permits or statements of exemption issued for development or use within shoreline~~
32 ~~jurisdiction shall include written findings prepared by the administrator, including compliance~~
33 ~~with bulk and dimensional standards and policies and regulations of this program. The~~
34 ~~administrator may attach conditions to the approval of exempt developments and/or uses as~~
35 ~~necessary to assure consistency of the project with the Act and the program.~~

36 B. ~~23.60.022~~ Exemptions listed.

37 ~~1.B. The following activities shall be considered exempt from the requirement to obtain a shoreline~~
38 ~~substantial development permit. A statement of exemption, as provided for in WCC 23.60.023 of~~
39 ~~this program shall be required for those activities listed in WCC 23.60.023(B) and (C). Certain~~
40 ~~developments, uses, or activities are exempt from the substantial development permit~~

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Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 requirements of the Act and the Shoreline Management Program. These developments, uses, or
2 activities are those set forth in WAC 173-27-040 (or as amended), and do not meet the definition of
3 substantial development under RCW 90.58.030(3)(e). A summary of exempt developments is listed
4 below, the application of which shall be guided by WAC 173-27-040 (or as amended).

5 2.1. Any development of which the total cost or fair market value, whichever is higher, does not
6 exceed \$~~5,7187,047~~, or as amended by the state Office of Financial Management, if such
7 development does not materially interfere with the normal public use of the water or shorelines
8 of the state. For the purposes of determining whether or not a permit is required, the total cost
9 or fair market value shall be based on the value of development that is occurring on shorelines
10 of the state as defined in RCW 90.58.030(2)(c). The total cost or fair market value of the
11 development shall include the fair market value of any donated, contributed or found labor,
12 equipment or materials.

13 3.2. Normal maintenance or repair of existing structures or developments, including damage by
14 accident, fire or elements. Normal maintenance includes those usual acts to prevent a decline,
15 lapse or cessation from a lawfully established condition. Normal repair means to restore a
16 development to a state comparable to its original condition within a reasonable period after
17 decay or partial destruction except where repair causes substantial adverse effects to the
18 shoreline resource or environment. Replacement of a structure or development may be
19 authorized as repair where such replacement is the common method of repair for the type of
20 structure or development and the replacement structure or development is comparable to the
21 original structure or development including but not limited to its size, shape, configuration,
22 location and external appearance and the replacement does not cause substantial adverse
23 effects to shoreline resources or the environment.

24 4.3. Construction of the normal protective bulkhead common to single-family residences. A normal
25 protective bulkhead includes those structural and nonstructural developments installed at or
26 near, and parallel to, the ordinary high water mark for the sole purpose of protecting an existing
27 single-family residence and appurtenant structures from loss or damage by erosion. A normal
28 protective bulkhead is not exempt if constructed for the purpose of creating dry land. When a
29 vertical or near vertical wall is being constructed or reconstructed, not more than one cubic yard
30 of fill per one foot of wall may be used for backfill. When an existing bulkhead is being repaired
31 by construction of a vertical wall fronting the existing wall, it shall be constructed no further
32 waterward of the existing bulkhead than is necessary for construction of new footings. When a
33 bulkhead has deteriorated such that an ordinary high water mark has been established by the
34 presence and action of water landward of the bulkhead then the replacement bulkhead must be
35 located at or near the actual ordinary high water mark. Beach nourishment and bioengineered
36 erosion control projects may be considered a normal protective bulkhead when any structural
37 elements are consistent with the above requirements and when the project has been approved
38 by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

39 5.4. Emergency construction necessary to protect property from damage by the elements. An
40 emergency is an unanticipated and imminent threat to public health, safety or the environment
41 that requires immediate action within a time too short to allow full compliance with ~~this~~

Commented [CES19]: This number gets updated every 5 years by OFM. As of 2017 it was \$7,047. (Though set in code here, PDS updates our permit application, website, and handouts to reflect OFM's newest threshold amount whenever it's published.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~program~~the Shoreline Management Program. Emergency construction does not include
2 development of new permanent protective structures where none previously existed. Where
3 new protective structures are deemed by the ~~administrator~~Director to be the appropriate
4 means to address the emergency situation, upon abatement of the emergency situation the
5 new structure shall be removed or any permit that would have been required, absent an
6 emergency, pursuant to Chapter 90.58 RCW, Chapter 173-27 WAC, or the Shoreline
7 Management Program~~this program~~, shall be obtained. All emergency construction shall be
8 consistent with the policies of Chapter 90.58 RCW and the Shoreline Management Program~~this~~
9 ~~program~~. As a general matter, flooding or other seasonal events that can be anticipated and
10 may occur but that are not imminent are not an emergency.

11 6.5 Construction and practices normal or necessary for farming, irrigation, and ranching activities,
12 including agricultural service roads and utilities, construction of a barn or similar agricultural
13 structure, and the construction and maintenance of irrigation structures including, but not
14 limited to, head gates, pumping facilities, and irrigation channels; provided, that this exemption
15 shall not apply to agricultural activities proposed on land not in agricultural use on December
16 17, 2003; and further provided, that a feedlot of any size, all processing plants, other activities of
17 a commercial nature, or alteration of the contour of the shorelands by leveling or filling other
18 than that which results from normal cultivation shall not be considered normal or necessary
19 farming or ranching activities. A feedlot shall be an enclosure or facility used or capable of being
20 used for feeding livestock hay, grain, silage, or other livestock feed, but shall not include land for
21 growing crops or vegetation for livestock feeding and/or grazing, nor shall it include normal
22 livestock wintering operations.

23 ~~7.6~~ Construction or modification, by or under the authority of the Coast Guard or a designated port
24 management authority, of navigational aids such as channel markers and anchor buoys.

25 8.7 Construction on shorelands by an owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of a single-family
26 residence for their own use or for the use of their family, which residence does not exceed a
27 height of 35 feet above average grade level and that meets all requirements of the state agency
28 or local government having jurisdiction thereof. Single-family residence means a detached
29 dwelling designed for and occupied by one family including those structures and developments
30 within a contiguous ownership which are a normal appurtenance as defined in Chapter 23.60
31 WCC-23.110.010.

32 ~~9.8~~ Construction of a dock, including a shared moorage, designed for pleasure craft only, for the
33 private noncommercial use of the owners, lessee, or contract purchaser of a single-family or
34 multifamily residence. A dock is a landing and moorage facility for watercraft and does not
35 include recreational decks, storage facilities or other appurtenances. The private dock
36 exemption applies if either:

37 a. In salt waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed \$2,500; or

38 b. In fresh waters the fair market value of the dock does not exceed:

39 i. \$20,000 for docks that are constructed to replace existing docks, are of equal or lesser
40 square footage than the existing dock being replaced

41 ii. \$10,000 for all other docks constructed in fresh waters,

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~but~~ However, if subsequent construction ~~having a fair market value exceeding \$2,500~~ occurs
2 within five years of the completion of the prior construction, ~~and the combined fair market~~
3 ~~value of the subsequent and prior construction exceeds the amount specified above,~~ the
4 subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of ~~the~~
5 ~~Shoreline Management Program~~ ~~this program~~. For the purpose of this section, saltwater shall
6 include the tidally influenced marine and estuarine water areas of the state including the ~~Pacific~~
7 ~~Ocean, Strait of Juan de Fuca, Strait of Georgia, and Puget Sound local marine waters~~ and all
8 associated bays, inlets, and estuaries.

9 ~~10-9.~~ Operation, maintenance, or construction of canals, waterways, drains, reservoirs, or
10 other facilities that now exist or are hereafter created or developed as a part of an irrigation
11 system for the primary purpose of making use of system waters including return flow and
12 artificially stored ground water for the irrigation of lands; provided, that this exemption shall not
13 apply to construction of new irrigation facilities proposed after December 17, 2003.

14 ~~11-10.~~ The marking of property lines or corners on state-owned lands, when such marking does
15 not significantly interfere with normal public use of the surface of the water.

16 ~~12-11.~~ Operation and maintenance of any system of dikes, ditches, drains, or other facilities
17 existing on June 4, 1975, that were created, developed or utilized, primarily as a part of an
18 agricultural drainage or diking system.

19 ~~13-12.~~ Any project with a certification from the governor pursuant to Chapter 80.50 RCW.

20 ~~14-13.~~ Site exploration and investigation activities that are prerequisite to preparation of a
21 development application for authorization under ~~the Shoreline Management Program~~ ~~this~~
22 ~~program~~, if:

23 ~~i.a.~~ The activity does not interfere with the normal public use of surface waters;

24 ~~ii.b.~~ The activity will have no significant adverse impact on the environment including but not
25 limited to fish, wildlife, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality and aesthetic values;

26 ~~iii.c.~~ The activity does not involve the installation of any structure and, upon completion of the
27 activity, the vegetation and land configuration of the site are restored to conditions existing
28 before the activity;

29 ~~iv.d.~~ A private entity seeking development authorization under this section first posts a
30 performance bond or provides other evidence of financial responsibility to the
31 ~~administrator~~ Director to ensure that the site is restored to preexisting conditions; and

32 ~~v.e.~~ The activity is not subject to the permit requirements of RCW 90.58.550.

33 ~~15-14.~~ The process of removing or controlling aquatic noxious weeds, as defined in RCW
34 17.26.020, through the use of an herbicide or other treatment methods applicable to weed
35 control that is recommended by a final environmental impact statement published by the
36 Department of Agriculture or the Department of Ecology jointly with other state agencies under
37 Chapter 43.21C RCW.

38 ~~16-15.~~ Watershed restoration projects as defined in Chapter ~~23.60~~ ~~23-110~~-WCC and ~~WAC 193-~~
39 ~~27-040(2)(o)~~ ~~by RCW 89-08-460~~. The ~~administrator~~ Director shall review the projects for
40 consistency with ~~the Shoreline Management Program~~ ~~the program~~ in an expeditious manner
41 and shall issue its decision along with any conditions within 45 days of receiving a complete

Commented [CES20]: Amended to more precisely reflect WAC 173-27-040

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Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 application form from the applicant/proponent. No fee may be charged for accepting and
2 processing applications for watershed restoration projects as defined in Chapter ~~23.60.23.110~~
3 WCC (Definitions).

4 ~~17.16.~~ A public or private project, the primary purpose of which is to improve fish or wildlife
5 habitat or fish passage, including restoring native kelp, eelgrass beds and native oysters, when
6 all of the following apply:

7 ~~i.a.~~ The project has been approved in writing by the Department of Fish and Wildlife as
8 necessary for the improvement of the habitat or passage and appropriately designed and
9 sited to accomplish the intended purpose;

10 ~~ii.b.~~ The project received hydraulic project approval by the Department of Fish and Wildlife
11 pursuant to Chapter 77.55 RCW; and

12 ~~c.~~ The ~~administrator~~Director has determined that the project is consistent with the Shoreline
13 Management Program~~this program~~. The ~~administrator~~Director shall make such
14 determination in a timely manner and provide it by letter to the project proponent.

15 ~~18.17.~~ The external or internal retrofitting of an existing structure with the exclusive purpose
16 of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or to otherwise provide physical
17 access to the structure by individuals with disabilities.

18 C. ~~23.60.023~~ Statements of Exemption.

19 1. Statements of Exemption are considered Type I applications pursuant to WCC 22.05.020 (Project
20 Permit Processing Table).

21 ~~1-2.~~ The ~~administrator~~Director is hereby authorized to grant or deny requests for statements of
22 exemption from the shoreline substantial development permit requirement process for
23 developments, uses, or activities and developments within shorelines that are specifically listed
24 in WCC 23.60.022 in subsection (B). ~~Such statements shall be applied for on forms provided by~~
25 ~~the administrator. The statement shall be in writing and shall indicate the specific exemption of~~
26 ~~this program that is being applied to the development, and shall provide a summary of the~~
27 ~~administrator's analysis of the consistency of the project with this program and the Act. As~~
28 ~~appropriate, such statements of exemption shall contain conditions and/or mitigating measures~~
29 ~~of approval to achieve consistency and compliance with the provisions of the program and Act.~~
30 ~~A denial of an exemption shall be in writing and shall identify the reason(s) for the denial. The~~
31 ~~administrator's actions on the issuance of a statement of exemption or a denial are subject to~~
32 ~~appeal pursuant to WCC 23.60.150.~~

33 ~~2-3.~~ Exempt activities ~~related to any of the following~~ shall not be conducted until a statement of
34 exemption has been obtained from the ~~administrator~~Director: ~~dredging, flood control works and~~
35 ~~instream structures, development within an archaeological or historic site, clearing and ground~~
36 ~~disturbing activities such as landfill or excavation, dock, shore stabilization, freestanding signs,~~
37 ~~or any development within an aquatic or natural shoreline designation; provided, that no~~
38 ~~separate written statement of exemption is required for the construction of a single family~~
39 ~~residence when a county building permit application has been reviewed and approved by the~~
40 ~~administrator; provided further, that no statement of exemption is required for emergency~~
41 ~~development pursuant to WAC 173-27-040(2)(d) and that other project permits (e.g., building~~

Commented [CES21]: Added pursuant to DOE checklist.

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Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~permits), at the Director's discretion, may serve as a statement of exemption when they contain~~
2 ~~a statement of review and compliance with the Shoreline Management Program.~~

3 ~~3-4. No statement of exemption shall be required for other uses or developments exempt pursuant~~
4 ~~to WCC 23.60.022 unless the administrator has cause to believe a substantial question exists as~~
5 ~~to qualifications of the specific use or development for the exemption or the administrator~~
6 ~~determines there is a likelihood of adverse impacts to shoreline ecological functions. Whether or~~
7 ~~not a written statement of exemption is issued, all permits issued within the area of shorelines~~
8 ~~shall include a record of review actions prepared by the administrator/Director, including~~
9 ~~compliance with bulk and dimensional standards and policies and regulations of the Shoreline~~
10 ~~Management Program this program. The administrator may attach conditions to the approval of~~
11 ~~exempted developments and/or uses as necessary to assure consistency of the project with the~~
12 ~~Act and this program.~~

Commented [CES23]: Covered by the new language in (2)

13 ~~4-5. A notice of decision for shoreline statements of exemption shall be provided to the~~
14 ~~applicant/proponent and any party of record. Such notices shall also be filed with the~~
15 ~~Department of Ecology, pursuant to the requirements of WAC 173-27-050 when the project is~~
16 ~~subject to one or more of the following federal permitting requirements:~~

Commented [CES24]: Covered by 22.05.100(5)

- 17 a. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 10 permit under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.
18 (The provisions of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act generally apply to any project
19 occurring on or over navigable waters. Specific applicability information should be obtained
20 from the Corps of Engineers.); or
21 b. A Section 404 permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972. (The provisions
22 of Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act generally apply to any project that
23 may involve discharge of dredge or fill material to any water or wetland area. Specific
24 applicability information should be obtained from the Corps of Engineers.)

25 ~~5. Whenever the exempt activity also requires a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 10 permit~~
26 ~~under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 or a Section 404 permit under the Federal Water~~
27 ~~Pollution Control Act of 1972, a copy of the written statement of exemption shall be sent to the~~
28 ~~applicant/proponent and Ecology pursuant to WAC 173-27-050.~~

Commented [CES25]: Covered by (5)

29 ~~22.07.030 23.60.010 Shoreline Substantial Development Permits criteria.~~

30 ~~A. A shoreline substantial development permit shall be required for all proposed uses, development,~~
31 ~~and activities within the shoreline jurisdiction unless the proposal is specifically exempt pursuant to~~
32 ~~WCC 22.07.020 (Exemptions).~~

Commented [CES26]: Moved from below.

33 ~~B. All shoreline substantial development permits are considered Type III permits (see WCC~~
34 ~~22.05.020, Project Permit Processing Table), except those the Director has determined meets the~~
35 ~~any one of the following criteria, in which case it shall be considered a Type III permit:~~

36 ~~A. The administrator shall determine whether an application requires a public hearing pursuant to the~~
37 ~~criteria below no later than 15 days after the minimum public comment period provided by WCC~~
38 ~~23.60.080. An open record public hearing shall be required for all of the following:~~

- 39 1. The proposal has a cost or market value in excess of ~~\$1500,000~~, except for single-family
40 residences, agriculture, ~~and~~ commercial forestry, ~~and~~ ecological restoration projects; or

Commented [CES27]: Increased due to inflation. This amount has not been changed since 1986.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ~~2. The proposal would result in development of an area larger than five acres; or~~
2 ~~3. The proposal is a new or expanded marina, pier, aquaculture structure, any building over 35 feet~~
3 ~~high, mine, dam, stream diversion, landfill; or~~
4 ~~4. The administrator has reason to believe the proposal would be controversial based on public~~
5 ~~response to the notice of receipt of application and other information; or~~
6 ~~5.2. The proposal is determined to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and an~~
7 ~~environmental impact statement is required in accordance with the State Environmental Policy~~
8 ~~Act; or,~~
9 ~~6.3. The proposal requires a shoreline variance and/or Type III shoreline conditional use approval~~
10 ~~pursuant to this program Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program); or~~
11 ~~7. The use or development requires an open record public hearing for other Whatcom County~~
12 ~~approvals or permits.~~
13 ~~B. A substantial development permit shall be required for all proposed uses, and development, and~~
14 ~~activities within the of shorelines jurisdiction unless the proposal is specifically exempt pursuant to~~
15 ~~WCC 23.60.0220.~~
16 C. In order to be approved, the decision maker must find that the proposal is consistent with the
17 Shoreline Management Act and the Shoreline Management Program, following criteria:
18 1. All regulations of this program appropriate to the shoreline designation and the type of use or
19 development proposed shall be met, except those bulk and dimensional standards that have
20 been modified by approval of a shoreline variance under WCC 23.60.030.
21 2. All policies of this program appropriate to the shoreline area designation and the type of use or
22 development activity proposed shall be considered and substantial compliance demonstrated.
23 3. For projects located on shorelines of statewide significance, the policies of Chapter 23.40 WCC
24 shall also be adhered to.
25 D. In the granting of all shoreline substantial development permits, consideration shall be given to the
26 cumulative environmental impact of additional requests for like actions in the area. For example, if
27 shoreline substantial development permits were granted for other developments in the area where
28 similar circumstances exist, the sum of the permitted actions should also remain consistent with the
29 policy of RCW 90.58.020 and should not produce significant adverse effects to the shoreline
30 ecological functions and processes or other users.
31 22.07.040 23.60.040 Shoreline Conditional Use Permits criteria.
32 A. The purpose of a shoreline conditional use permit is to allow greater flexibility in administering the
33 use regulations of the Shoreline Management Program this program in a manner consistent with the
34 policy of RCW 90.58.020. In authorizing a shoreline conditional use, special conditions may be
35 attached to the permit by the county or the Department of Ecology to control any undesirable
36 effects of the proposed use.
37 B. Uses specifically classified or set forth in WCC this program Title 23 (Shoreline Management
38 Program) as shoreline conditional uses and unlisted uses may be authorized, provided the
39 applicant/proponent can demonstrate all of the following:

Commented [CES28]: Proposed for deletion since developments of 5 acres or more would undoubtedly be valued at more than \$500,000.

Commented [CES29]: Covered by the shoreline use table in conjunction with subsection (c).

Commented [CES30]: Not necessary; already covered by the modified use table in T-23.

Commented [CES31]: Proposed for deletion as there is no criteria for staff to objectively determine when a project might be controversial.

Commented [CES32]: Covered by 22.05.030

Commented [CES33]: Moved to (A)

Commented [CES34]: P/C motion to amend as shown. Carries 7-2

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1. That the proposed use will be consistent with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the Shoreline Management Program~~this program~~.
2. That the proposed use will not interfere with normal public use of public shorelines.
3. That the proposed use of the site and design of the project will be compatible with other permitted uses within the area.
4. That the proposed use will not cause adverse effects to the shoreline environment in which it is to be located.
5. That the public interest suffers no substantial detrimental effect.

C. All shoreline conditional use permits are considered Type III permits (see WCC 22.05.020, Project Permit Processing Table), except those for single-family residential development, uses, or activities, which shall be processed as a Type II permit.

D. Other uses not specifically classified or set forth in WCC Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program)~~this program~~, including the ~~expansion or~~ resumption of a nonconforming use pursuant to WCC 23.50.0170 (Nonconforming Uses), may be authorized as shoreline conditional uses, provided the applicant/proponent can demonstrate that the proposal will satisfy the criteria set forth in subsection (B) of this section, and that the use clearly requires a specific site location on the shoreline not provided for under the ~~program~~Shoreline Management Program, and extraordinary circumstances preclude reasonable use of the property in a manner consistent with the use regulations of ~~this program~~the Shoreline Management Program. Uses that are prohibited cannot be authorized by a shoreline conditional use permit.

E. In the granting of all shoreline conditional use permits, consideration shall be given to the cumulative environmental impact of additional requests for like actions in the area. For example, if shoreline conditional use permits were granted for other developments in the area where similar circumstances exist, the sum of the shoreline conditional uses and their impacts should also remain consistent with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and should not produce a significant adverse effect to the shoreline ecological functions and processes or other users.

~~E. Permits and/or variances applied for or approved under county zoning or subdivision code requirements shall not be construed as shoreline variances under this program.~~

~~23.60.03022.07.050 Shoreline Variance permit criteria.~~

A. The purpose of a shoreline variance is to grant relief to specific bulk or dimensional requirements set forth in ~~this~~the Shoreline Management Program and any associated standards appended to this program such as critical areas buffer requirements where there are extraordinary or unique circumstances relating to the property such that the strict implementation of this program would impose unnecessary hardships on the applicant/proponent or thwart the policy set forth in RCW 90.58.020. Use restrictions may not be varied.

B. Shoreline variances are considered Type III applications pursuant to WCC 22.05.020 (Project Permit Processing Table).

B-C. Shoreline Variances will be granted in any circumstance where denial would result in a thwarting of the policy enumerated in RCW 90.58.020. In all instances extraordinary circumstances shall be shown and the public interest shall suffer no substantial detrimental effect.

Commented [CES35]: Moved to General Requirements section.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ~~C. Proposals that would otherwise qualify as a reasonable use pursuant to WCC 16.16.270(A) shall~~
2 ~~require a shoreline variance and shall meet the variance criteria in this section.~~
- 3 D. Shoreline variances for development and/or uses that will be located landward of the ordinary high
4 water mark (OHWM) and/or landward of any wetland may be authorized provided the applicant can
5 demonstrate all of the following: ~~Variations may be authorized, provided the applicant/proponent can~~
6 ~~demonstrate all of the following:~~
- 7 1. That the strict application of the bulk or dimensional criteria set forth in ~~this program~~ WCC Title
8 23 (Shoreline Management Program) precludes or significantly interferes with reasonable
9 permitted use of the property;
 - 10 2. That the hardship described in subsection ~~(A1)~~ of this section is specifically related to the
11 property, and is the result of unique conditions such as irregular lot shape, size, or natural
12 features and the application of ~~this program~~ the Shoreline Management Program, and not, for
13 example, from deed restrictions or the applicant's/proponent's own actions;
 - 14 3. That the design of the project ~~will be~~ is compatible with other ~~permitted~~ authorized uses
15 activities within the area ~~and with uses planned for the area under the Comprehensive Plan and~~
16 Shoreline Management Program and will not cause adverse ~~effects on adjacent properties~~
17 or impacts to the shoreline environment;
 - 18 4. That the variance authorized does not constitute a grant of special privilege not enjoyed by the
19 other properties in the area, and will be the minimum necessary to afford relief;
 - 20 5. That the public interest will suffer no substantial detrimental effect;
 - 21 6. That the public rights of navigation and use of the shorelines will not be materially interfered
22 with by the granting of the variance; and
 - 23 7. Mitigation is provided to offset unavoidable adverse impacts caused by the proposed
24 development or use.
- 25 E. ~~Shoreline Variations~~ permits for development and/or uses that will be located waterward of the
26 ordinary high water mark (OHWM), ~~as defined herein,~~ or within any wetland ~~as defined herein,~~ may
27 be authorized, provided the applicant can demonstrate all of the following:
- 28 ~~1. That the strict application of the bulk, dimensional or performance standards set forth in this~~
29 ~~program precludes all reasonable use of the property; and~~
 - 30 ~~2.1~~ 1. That the proposal is consistent with the criteria established under subsections (D) ~~(1) through~~
31 ~~(7)~~ of this section; and
 - 32 ~~3.2~~ 2. That the public rights of navigation and use of the shorelines will not be adversely affected.
- 33 ~~Other factors that may be considered in the review of variance requests include the conservation of~~
34 ~~valuable natural resources and the protection of views from nearby roads, surrounding properties~~
35 ~~and public areas; provided, the criteria of subsection D of this section are first met. In addition,~~
36 ~~variance requests based on the applicant's/proponent's desire to enhance the view from the subject~~
37 ~~development may be granted;~~
- 38 ~~where there are no likely detrimental effects to existing or future users, other features, or shoreline~~
39 ~~ecological functions and/or processes, and~~
- 40 ~~where reasonable alternatives of equal or greater consistency with this program are not available.~~

Commented [CES36]: This section's text amended to mimic WAC 173-27-170(3)

Commented [CES37]: Already addressed in subsection (D).

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

4. ~~In platted residential areas, variances shall not be granted that allow a greater height or lesser shore setback than what is typical for the immediate block or area.~~

F. In the granting of ~~all shoreline~~ variances, consideration shall be given to the cumulative environmental impact of additional requests for like actions in the area. For example, if ~~shoreline~~ variances were granted to other developments in the area where similar circumstances exist, the total of the variances should also remain consistent with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and should not produce significant adverse effects to the shoreline ecological functions and processes or other users.

G. ~~Permits and/or variances applied for or approved under other county codes such as WCC Title 20 or 21 shall not be construed as shoreline permits under this program.~~

~~23.60.050 Minimum application requirements.~~

~~Where other approvals or permits are required for a use or development that does not require an open record hearing, such approvals or permits shall not be granted until a shoreline approval or permit is granted. All shoreline approvals and permits shall include written findings prepared by the administrator documenting compliance with bulk and dimensional standards and other policies and regulations of this program.~~

~~A complete application for a substantial development, conditional use, or variance permit shall contain all materials required in the Department's administrative manual; provided, that the administrator may vary or waive these requirements as provided in the manual and may vary or waive these requirements on a case-by-case basis. The administrator may require additional specific information depending on the nature of the proposal and the presence of sensitive ecological features or issues related to compliance with other county requirements.~~

~~23.60.060 Pre-application conference.~~

~~Prior to filing a permit application for a shoreline substantial development permit, variance or conditional use permit decision:~~

~~The applicant shall contact the County to schedule a pre-application conference, which shall be held prior to filing the application; provided, that such meetings shall not be required for development activities associated with shoreline restoration projects, agriculture, commercial forestry, or the construction of a single-family residence.~~

~~23.60.070 Fees.~~

A. ~~Required fees for all shoreline substantial development permits, shoreline conditional use permits, shoreline variances, statements of exemption, appeals, pre-application conferences and other required reviews and/or approvals shall be paid to the county at the time of application in accordance with the Whatcom County Unified Fee Schedule in effect at that time and Chapter 22.05 WCC.~~

B. ~~When any given project requires more than one of the following permits or applications, the total amount of fees shall be reduced pursuant to WCC 22.25.030:~~

~~1. Preliminary plat application.~~

~~2. Rezone application.~~

Commented [AP38]: Revised per Scoping Document, Item #3a and staff comment #28

Commented [CES39]: This is covered by the Variance Criteria for protection of public interest.

Commented [CES40]: Moved to General Requirements section.

Commented [CES41]: General provision moved to appropriate section.

Commented [RCE42]: Don't need, as permit review consolidation is required

Commented [CES43]: Moved to 22.05.050

Commented [CES44]: Covered by 22.05.040

Commented [CES45]: Covered by 22.05.050(1)

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 ~~3. Major development permit.~~
2 ~~4. Planned unit development.~~
3 ~~5. Binding site plan.~~
4 ~~C. When any project requires a shoreline conditional use permit or shoreline variance in addition to a~~
5 ~~shoreline substantial development permit, the fees for the conditional use or variance shall be~~
6 ~~reduced by half.~~
7 ~~D. In the event that actions of an applicant result in the repetition of the review, inspections and other~~
8 ~~steps in the approval process, those items or steps repeated shall be charged to and paid by the~~
9 ~~applicant prior to any further processing of the application by the county. The cost shall be in~~
10 ~~accordance with the adopted fee schedule.~~
11 ~~E. If an application is withdrawn within 30 days of submittal, and no work has commenced at the site~~
12 ~~of the proposal for which the application was made, a refund of not more than 50 percent of the~~
13 ~~shoreline fees paid may be granted by the administrator. This amount may be reduced where staff~~
14 ~~time, public notice and other costs exceed 50 percent of the fees paid.~~

23.60.080 Notice of application.

15 ~~A. Upon receipt of a completed shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or~~
16 ~~shoreline conditional use permit application the County shall issue a notice of application for a~~
17 ~~proposed land use action in the manner set forth in WCC 22.05.070.~~

18 ~~(9) The rights of treaty tribes to resources within their usual and accustomed areas shall be~~
19 ~~accommodated through the notification and comment provisions of the permit review process.~~
20 ~~Tribal treaty rights may be addressed through specific permit conditions. Direct coordination~~
21 ~~between tribes and the applicant/proponent is encouraged.~~

Commented [MD46]: Covered by 22.05.070. Draft revision per Scoping Document, Item #4a (staff comment #31).

Commented [RCE47]: Moved to 23.05.040(F)(3)

23.60.090 Permit application review.

23 ~~A. All shoreline permit applications, exemptions, or other approvals shall be subject to the provisions~~
24 ~~of this program that are in effect at the time of application.~~

25 ~~B. To facilitate review of an application the decision maker shall consider any or all of the following:~~

- 26 ~~1. The application and attached information;~~
27 ~~2. The SEPA checklist, threshold determination, environmental impact statement, or other~~
28 ~~environmental studies and/or documentation;~~
29 ~~3. Written comments from interested persons;~~
30 ~~4. Information and recommendations from any public agency and from the administrator/rector in~~
31 ~~cases where the administrator/rector is not the decision maker;~~
32 ~~5. Information or comment presented at a public hearing, if held, on the application; and~~
33 ~~6. The policy and provisions of the Act and this program including the criteria enumerated in WCC~~
34 ~~23.60.010, 23.60.030 and 23.60.040, as applicable.~~

Commented [CES48]: Covered by 22.05.060 (Vesting)

35 ~~C. The decision maker shall process project permit applications for shoreline substantial development~~
36 ~~permits, shoreline variance, and shoreline conditional use permits in compliance with the provisions~~
37 ~~of Chapter 22.05 WCC.~~

38 ~~D. The decision maker shall process project permit applications for shoreline statements of exemption~~
39 ~~in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 22.05 WCC and WCC 23.60.023(A).~~

Commented [CES49]: Moved to 22.05.100 Consistency Review and Recommendations

Commented [CES50]: No longer needed as permit procedures have been combined.

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~E. Any application for a shoreline permit or approval that remains inactive for a period of 180 days~~
2 ~~shall expire and a new application and repayment of fees shall be required to reactivate the~~
3 ~~proposal; provided, that the administrator may grant a single 90-day extension for good cause.~~
4 ~~Delays such as those caused by public notice requirements, State Environmental Policy Act review,~~
5 ~~litigation directly related to the proposal, or changes in government regulations shall not be~~
6 ~~considered as part of the inactive period.~~
7 ~~If a shoreline permit is denied, no reapplication for the same or essentially similar development may~~
8 ~~be made until one year from the date of denial.~~

Commented [CES51]: Moved to 22.05.050 Application and Determination of Completeness

23.60.100 Consolidated Permit Review.

9 ~~A. Whenever an application for a project permit under the program requires a project permit or~~
10 ~~approval under another County permit authority, such as zoning or subdivision, the shoreline~~
11 ~~project permit application, time requirements, and notice provisions for processing the shoreline~~
12 ~~permit shall apply, in addition to those of other regulatory programs.~~
13 ~~provisions of Chapter 22.05 WCC shall apply to the consolidated application, review, and approval of~~
14 ~~applications that require an open record hearing.~~
15 ~~B. Any shoreline use or development that is subject to other approvals or permits that requires an~~
16 ~~open record hearing under another permit authority, such as zoning or subdivision, shall be subject~~
17 ~~to consolidated review and the decision maker designated for the open record hearing shall be the~~
18 ~~decision maker for the consolidated review.~~

Commented [CES52]: Don't need this; covered by 22.05.030

23.60.110 State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) compliance.

20 ~~A. Whenever an application for shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance,~~
21 ~~shoreline conditional use permit, or statement of exemption is subject to the rules and regulations~~
22 ~~of SEPA (Chapter 43.21C RCW), the review requirements of SEPA, including time limitations, shall~~
23 ~~apply, where applicable.~~
24 ~~B. Applications for shoreline permit(s) or approval(s) that are not categorically exempt under SEPA~~
25 ~~shall be subject to environmental review by the responsible official of Whatcom County pursuant to~~
26 ~~the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 197-11 WAC).~~
27 ~~C. As part of SEPA review, the Responsible Official may require additional information regarding the~~
28 ~~proposed development in accordance with Chapter 197-11 WAC.~~
29 ~~D. Failure of the applicant/proponent to submit sufficient information for a threshold determination to~~
30 ~~be made shall be grounds for the Responsible Official to determine the application incomplete.~~

Commented [RCE53]: Deleted, as this is covered in permit application and permit types.

23.60.120 Burden of proof.

32 ~~Permit applicants/proponents have the burden of proving that the proposed development is consistent~~
33 ~~with the criteria set forth in the Act and this program.~~

Commented [CES54]: Moved to 22.05.100 Permit Consistency Review and Recommendations

23.60.130 Public Hearings.

35 ~~A. An open record public hearing on shoreline permit applications shall be held in accordance with the~~
36 ~~provisions of Chapter 22.05 WCC, unless a continuance is granted pursuant to the rules and~~
37 ~~procedures of the Hearing Examiner or other hearing body and subject to time requirements for~~
38 ~~compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act.~~

Commented [CES55]: Pertinent sections moved to 22.05.090 Open Record Public Hearings

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

~~B. Repealed by Ord. 2018-032.~~

~~C. Repealed by Ord. 2018-032.~~

~~D. Public hearing requirements for permit appeals shall be processed according to WCC 23.60.150.~~

23.60.140 Permit conditions.

~~In granting, revising, or extending a shoreline permit, the decision maker may attach such conditions, modifications, or restrictions thereto regarding the location, character, and other elements of the proposed development deemed necessary to assure that the development will be consistent with the policy and provisions of the Act and this program as well as the supplemental authority provided in Chapter 43.21C RCW as applicable. In cases involving unusual circumstances or uncertain effects, a condition may be imposed to require monitoring with future review or reevaluation to assure conformance with the Act and this program. If the monitoring plan is not implemented, the permittee may be found to be noncompliant and the permit may be rescinded in accordance with WCC 23.60.180.~~

Commented [CES56]: Moved to 22.05.100 Permit Consistency Review and Recommendations

22.07.060 Filing Shoreline Permits with the Department of Ecology

A. After all local permit administrative appeals or reconsideration periods are complete, the County will deliver the final permit using return receipt requested mail or email to the Department of Ecology regional office and the attorney general.

B. Proposals that require both shoreline conditional use permits and/or shoreline variances shall be delivered simultaneously with any shoreline permit for the project.

C. The permit and documentation of final local decision will be delivered together the following information:

1. A copy of the complete application;

2. Findings and conclusions that establish the basis for the decision, including but not limited to identification of shoreline environment designation(s), applicable program Shoreline Management Program policies and regulations, and the consistency of the project with appropriate review criteria for the type of permit(s);

3. The final decision of the local government;

4. A completed permit data sheet (WAC 173-27-990, Appendix A); and

5. Where applicable, local government shall also file the applicable documents required by SEPA, or in lieu thereof, a statement summarizing the actions and dates of such actions taken under Chapter 43.21C RCW.

6. When the project has been modified in the course of the local review process, plans or text shall be provided that clearly indicate the final approved plan.

F. Development pursuant to a shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use permit shall not begin and shall not be authorized until 21 days after the "date of filing," as defined in this program Title 23 (Shoreline Management Program) and RCW 90.58.140(6), or until all review proceedings before the Shorelines Hearings Board have terminated.

Commented [AP57]: Updated per Periodic Review Checklist, Item 2017.d, and Scoping Document Items #2a and 5c.

G. Upon approval of a permit revision, the decision maker shall file a copy of the revised site plan and a detailed description of the authorized changes to the original permit with the Department of Ecology together with a final ruling and findings supporting the decision based on the requirements of this section. In addition, the decision maker shall notify parties of record of the action.

Commented [AP58]: Updated per Periodic Review Checklist, Item 2017.d, and Scoping Document Item #2a.

Commented [CES59]: Moved from 23.60.160 Initiation of development

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

23.60.150 Notice of Decision, Reconsideration and Appeal.

~~A notice of decision for action on a shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use permit shall be provided to the applicant/proponent and any party of record in accordance with the review procedures of Chapter 22.05 WCC, and at least 10 days prior to filing such decisions with the Department of Ecology pursuant to WAC 173-27-130. Decisions filed with the Department of Ecology shall contain the following information:~~

Commented [CES60]: Covered by 22.05.110

~~After all local permit administrative appeals or reconsideration periods are complete and the permit documents are amended to incorporate any resulting changes, the County will mail or hand deliver the permit using return receipt requested mail to the Department of Ecology regional office and the Office of the Attorney General.~~

Commented [CES61]: Moved to 22.07.070

~~Projects that require both Conditional Use Permits and or Variances shall be mailed simultaneously with any Substantial Development Permits/shoreline permit for the project.~~

~~The permit and documentation of final local decision will be mailed together the following information:~~

a. ~~A copy of the complete application;~~

b. ~~Findings and conclusions that establish the basis for the decision including but not limited to identification of shoreline environment designation(s), applicable program policies and regulations and the consistency of the project with appropriate review criteria for the type of permit(s);~~

c. ~~The final decision of the local government;~~

d. ~~A completed permit data sheet (see Appendix A of this title); and~~

e. ~~Where applicable, local government shall also file the applicable documents required by SEPA, or in lieu thereof, a statement summarizing the actions and dates of such actions taken under Chapter 43.21C RCW.~~

f. ~~When the project has been modified in the course of the local review process, plans or text shall be provided that clearly indicate the final approved plan.~~

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~~A. Notice of decision for shoreline statements of exemption shall comply with WCC 22.05.110(1) and 23.60.023(E).~~

Commented [CES62]: Covered by 22.05.110(1)

~~Any person with standing may appeal any order, final permit decision, or final administrative determination made by the director or designee in the administration of this program.~~

~~Administrative Appeal Procedures.~~

~~Administrative appeals are processed in accordance with WCC 22.05.160.~~

~~After the issuance of the appeal determination, a party with standing may appeals to the Shorelines Hearings Board of a decision on a shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use pursuant to RCW 90.58.180 within 21 days of the "date of filing," as defined in this program and RCW 90.58.140(6). The appeal to the Shorelines Hearing Board shall be filed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 461-08C WAC.~~

Commented [CES63]: Moved to 22.05.160 (Appeals)

~~B. This program shall only establish standing for parties of record for shoreline substantial development permits, shoreline variances, or shoreline conditional use permits. Standing as a party of record is not established by this program for exempt actions pursuant to WCC 23.60.022;~~

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 provided, that in such cases standing may be established through an associated permit process that
2 provides for public notice and provisions for parties of record.

3
4 F. The applicant/proponent or any party of record may request reconsideration of any final
5 action by the decision maker within 10 days of notice of the decision. Such requests shall be
6 filed on forms supplied by the county. Grounds for reconsideration must be based upon the
7 content of the written decision. The decision maker is not required to provide a written
8 response or modify his/her original decision. He/she may initiate such action as he/she deems
9 appropriate. The procedure of reconsideration shall not preempt or extend the appeal period
10 for a permit or affect the date of filing with the Department of Ecology, unless the
11 applicant/proponent requests the abeyance of said permit appeal period in writing within 10
12 days of a final action.

13 G. Appeals to the Shorelines Hearings Board of a decision on a shoreline substantial
14 development permit, shoreline variance or shoreline conditional use permit may be filed by the
15 applicant/proponent or any aggrieved party pursuant to RCW 90.58.180 within 21 days of filing
16 the final decision by Whatcom County with the Department of Ecology.

17 C. Whatcom County shall consider an appeal of a decision on a shoreline substantial development
18 permit, shoreline variance or shoreline conditional use only when the applicant/proponent waives
19 his/her right to a single appeal to the Shorelines Hearings Board. Such waivers shall be filed with the
20 county in writing concurrent with a notice of appeal within 10 days of a final action. When an
21 applicant/proponent has waived his/her right to a single appeal, such appeals shall be processed in
22 accordance with the appeal procedures of subsection H of this section and shall be an open record
23 hearing before the hearing examiner.

24 H. With the exception of a shoreline substantial development permit, aAny order, requirement or
25 administrative permit decision, or determination by the administrator based on a provision of this
26 program, including the issuance of a statement of exemption or denial, except a shoreline
27 substantial development permit, may be the subject of an appeal to the office of the hearing
28 examiner by any aggrieved person. Such appeals shall be processed in accordance with the appeal
29 procedures of subsection H of this section and shall be an open record hearing before the hearing
30 examiner.

31 I. Appeal Procedures.

- 32 1. Appeals shall be filed on forms supplied by the county within 10 calendar days of the issuance of
33 a substantial development permit, shoreline variance or shoreline conditional use permit and
34 within 20 calendar days of any other action of the administrator being appealed.
- 35 2. A public hearing on the appeal shall be held within 45 working days following receipt of the
36 application for appeal.
- 37 3. Legal notice of the public hearing shall be made by mailing notice of time, date, and location of
38 the hearing to the appellant, any parties of record, the Washington Department of Ecology, and
39 the administrator at least 15 days prior to the hearing.
- 40 4. A decision by the hearing examiner shall be mailed within 10 working days of the public hearing
41 to all parties of record unless otherwise mutually agreed to by all parties to the appeal.

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Commented [AP64]: Removed per Scoping Document, Item #5c.

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Commented [MD65]: Draft revision per Scoping Document, Items #4a and 5c (staff comment #34).

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

- 1 5. Any party of record may request a closed record review of the hearing examiner's decision
2 issued under subsection (H)(4) of this section by the county council. Such an appeal shall be filed
3 with the county council on forms supplied by the county within 10 calendar days of the written
4 decision. If appeal is made to the county council, notice of appeal shall be provided to all parties
5 of record at least 15 days prior to consideration by the county council. The council shall meet to
6 review the hearing examiner's decision within 21 days of transmittal thereof, at which time it
7 may approve or disapprove the application, or remand the matter to the hearing examiner.
8 6. The time period for appeal to the Shorelines Hearings Board shall begin after the decision maker
9 has filed the final county decision with the Department of Ecology.

23.60.160 Initiation of development.

10 ~~Development pursuant to a shoreline substantial development permit, shoreline variance, or~~
11 ~~conditional use permit shall not begin and shall not be authorized until 21 days after the "date of~~
12 ~~filing" or until all review proceedings before the Shorelines Hearings Board have terminated.~~

A. Date of Filing.

- 15 1. "Date of filing" of a substantial development permit is the date of actual receipt of the decision
16 by the Department of Ecology.
17 2. The "date of filing" for a shoreline variance or shoreline conditional use permit shall mean the
18 date the permit decision rendered by the Department of Ecology is transmitted by the
19 department to the county and the applicant/proponent.

Commented [CES66]: Moved to 22.07.060 (Filing Shoreline Permits with the Department of Ecology)

Commented [AP67]: Updated per Periodic Review Checklist, Item 2017.d, and Scoping Document Item #2a.

Commented [CES68]: Moved to permit application review section.

Commented [AP69]: Definition for "date of filing" added to definitions section.

22.07.070~~23.60.170~~ Revisions to Shoreline Permits.

- 20 A. A revision is required whenever the applicant/proponent proposes substantive changes to the
21 design, terms, or conditions of a project from that which is approved in the permit and/or statement
22 of exemption. Changes are substantive if they materially alter the project in a manner that relates to
23 its conformance to the terms and conditions of the permit, ~~this program~~the Shoreline Management
24 Program, or the Act. ~~Changes that are not substantive in effect do not require a revision.~~
25 B. An application for a revision to a shoreline permit shall be submitted to the ~~administrator~~Director.
26 The application shall include detailed plans and text describing the proposed changes. The County
27 decision maker that approved the original permit may approve the request upon a finding that the
28 proposed changes are within the scope and intent of the original approval, and are consistent with
29 ~~this program~~the Shoreline Management Program and the Act.
30 C. "Within the scope and intent of the original approval" means all of the following:
31 1. No additional over-water construction is involved except that a pier, dock, or floating structure
32 may be increased by 500 square feet or 10 percent from the provisions of the original permit,
33 whichever is less over that approved under the original approval;
34 2. Ground area coverage and/or height may be increased a maximum of 10 percent over that
35 approved under the original approval; ~~provided, that the revised approval does not authorize~~
36 ~~development to exceed the height, impervious surface, setbacks, or any other requirements of~~
37 ~~this program except as authorized under a variance granted for the original development;~~
38

Commented [RCE70]: Changes made to match WAC 173-27-100

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 3. The revised permit does not authorize development to exceed height, lot coverage, setback, or
2 any other requirements of the ~~applicable master program~~ Shoreline Management Program
3 except as authorized under a variance granted as the original permit or a part thereof;

4 ~~3.4.~~ Additional or revised mitigation and/or landscaping is consistent with any conditions attached to
5 the original approval and with ~~this program~~ the Shoreline Management Program;

6 ~~4.5.~~ The use authorized pursuant to the original approval is not changed; and

7 ~~5.6.~~ The revision will not cause adverse environmental impacts beyond those originally authorized in
8 the approval.

9 ~~D.~~ Revisions to shoreline permits ~~and statements of exemption~~ may be authorized after the original
10 authorization has expired pursuant to WCC 22.07.080 (Expiration of Shoreline Permits). Revisions
11 made after the expiration of the original approval shall be limited to changes that ~~are~~ meet the
12 definition of a shoreline exemption and are consistent with this program ~~the Shoreline Management~~
13 Program, and that would not require a permit under this program. If the proposed change is a
14 substantial development as defined by this program, then a new permit is required.

15 ~~D.E.~~ The provisions of this subsection shall not be used to extend the time requirements or to authorize
16 substantial development beyond the time limits or scope of the original approval; provided the
17 revision approval shall expire within 1 year from the date of approval, tolling of expiration does not
18 apply to revision approvals.

19 ~~E.F.~~ A new permit shall be required if the proposed revision and any previously approved revisions in
20 combination would constitute development beyond the scope and intent of the original approval as
21 set forth in subsection (C) of this section.

22 G. The revision approval, including the revised site plans and text consistent with the provisions of
23 WAC 173-27-180 as necessary to clearly indicate the authorized changes, and the final ruling on
24 consistency with this section shall be filed with the Department of Ecology pursuant to WCC
25 22.07.060 (Filing Shoreline Permits with the Department of Ecology). In addition, the County shall
26 notify parties of record of their action.

27 ~~F.~~ ~~Upon approval of a revision, the decision maker shall file a copy of the revised site plan and a~~
28 ~~detailed description of the authorized changes to the original permit with the Department of~~
29 ~~Ecology together with a final ruling and findings supporting the decision based on the requirements~~
30 ~~of this section. In addition, the decision maker shall notify parties of record of the action.~~

31 H. If the proposed revision is to a development for which a shoreline conditional use or shoreline
32 variance was issued, the decision maker shall submit the revision to the Department of Ecology for
33 approval with conditions or denial, and shall indicate that the revision is being submitted under the
34 requirements of this subsection.

35 I. Under the requirements of WAC 173-27-110(6), the Department shall render and transmit to the
36 decision maker and the applicant/proponent its final decision within 15 days of the date of the
37 Department's receipt of the submittal from the decision maker. The decision maker shall notify
38 parties on record of the Department's final decision.

39 ~~G.A.~~ ~~Appeals of a decision of the Department shall be filed in accordance with the provisions of~~
40 ~~Chapter 461-08C WAC.~~

Amended Pursuant to Resolution 2022-027 and approved by ECY

SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

~~23.60.180 Rescission and modification.~~

~~A. Any shoreline permit granted pursuant to this program may be rescinded or modified upon a finding by the Hearing Examiner that the permittee or his/her successors in interest have not complied with conditions attached thereto. If the results of a monitoring plan show a development to be out of compliance with specific performance standards, such results may be the basis for findings of noncompliance.~~

~~B. The Administrator shall initiate rescission or modification proceedings by issuing written notice of noncompliance to the permittee or his/her successors and notifying parties of record at the original address provided in application review files.~~

~~C. The Hearing Examiner shall hold a public hearing no sooner than 15 days following such issuance of notice, unless the applicant/proponent files notice of intent to comply and the Administrator grants a specific schedule for compliance. If compliance is not achieved, the Administrator shall schedule a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner. Upon considering written and oral testimony taken at the hearing, the Hearing Examiner shall make a decision in accordance with the above procedure for shoreline permits.~~

~~D. These provisions do not limit the Administrator, the Prosecuting Attorney, the Department of Ecology or the Attorney General from administrative, civil, injunctive, declaratory or other remedies provided by law, or from abatement or other remedies.~~

~~22.07.080~~**23.60.190 Expiration of Shoreline Permits.**

~~A.~~ Expiration of shoreline statements of exemptions shall be in accordance with WCC 22.05.140 (Expiration of Project Permits).

~~A.B.~~ The following time requirements shall apply to all substantial development permits and to any development authorized pursuant to a shoreline variance, or shoreline conditional use permit, or statement of exemption:

1. Construction shall be commenced or, where no construction is involved, the use or activity shall be commenced, within ~~two~~2 years of the effective date of a shoreline permit ~~or exemption~~ or the permit shall expire; provided, that the Hearing Examiner or ~~Administrator~~Director, as appropriate, may authorize a single extension for a period of not more than ~~one~~1 year based on a showing of good cause if a request for extension has been filed with Planning and Development Services ~~with the hearing examiner or administrator as appropriate~~ before the expiration date of the shoreline permit ~~or exemption~~; ~~and The Director shall provide~~ notice of the proposed extension ~~is given~~ to parties of record and the Department of Ecology.
2. Authorization to conduct development activities shall terminate ~~five~~5 years after the effective date of a shoreline permit ~~or exemption~~; provided, that the Hearing Examiner or ~~Administrator~~Director, as appropriate, may authorize a single extension for a period of not more than ~~one~~1 year based on a showing of good cause, if a request for extension has been filed with Planning and Development Services ~~with the hearing examiner or administrator, as appropriate~~, before the expiration date of the shoreline permit ~~or exemption~~ ~~and The Director shall provide~~ notice of the proposed extension ~~is given~~ to parties of record and the Department of Ecology.

Commented [CES71]: Covered under 22.05.150 Permit Revocation

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SMP Update – Title 22 Amendments

August 30, 2024

1 ~~3.~~ 3. The effective date of a shoreline permit or exemption shall be the date of filling as provided in
2 RCW 90.58.140(6).

3 ~~—Tolling. The effective date does not include the time during which a development, use, or~~
4 ~~activity was not actually pursued due to the need to obtain other government permits and~~
5 ~~approvals for which the issued shoreline permit authorizes, including the pendency of all~~
6 ~~reasonably related administrative appeals or legal actions on any such permits or approval. Last~~
7 ~~action required on the shoreline permit or exemption and all other government permits and~~
8 ~~approvals that authorize the development to proceed, including administrative and legal actions~~
9 ~~on any such permit or approval.~~

10 4. The applicant/proponent shall be responsible for informing the County ~~of the of such~~ pendency
11 ~~of other permit applications filed with agencies other than the County and of any related~~
12 ~~administrative and legal actions on any permit or approval.~~

13 ~~3.~~ 3. If no notice of the pendency of other permits or approvals is given to the County prior to the
14 ~~date of the last action by the County to grant County permits and approvals necessary to~~
15 ~~authorize the development to proceed, including administrative and legal actions of the county,~~
16 ~~and actions under other County development regulations, the date of the last action by the~~
17 ~~County shall be the effective date.~~

18 ~~B-C.~~ B-C. Notwithstanding the time limits established in subsections ~~(AB) (1) and (2)~~ of this section, upon a
19 finding of good cause based on the requirements and circumstances of the proposed project and
20 consistent with the policies and provisions of ~~this program~~ the Shoreline Management Program and
21 the Act, the Hearing Examiner or ~~Administrator~~ Director, as appropriate, may set different time limits
22 for a particular substantial development permit or exemption as part of the action to approve the
23 permit or exemption. The Hearing Examiner may also set different time limits on specific shoreline
24 conditional use permits or shoreline variances with the approval of the Department of Ecology. The
25 different time limits may be longer or shorter than those established in subsections ~~(AB) (1) and (2)~~
26 ~~of this section~~ but shall be appropriate to the shoreline development or use under review. “Good
27 cause based on the requirements and circumstances of the proposed project” shall mean that the
28 time limits established for the project are reasonably related to the time actually necessary to
29 perform the development on the ground and complete the project that is being permitted, and/or
30 are necessary for the protection of shoreline resources.

31 ~~C-D.~~ C-D. When permit approval includes conditions, such conditions shall be satisfied prior to occupancy
32 or use of a structure or prior to the commencement of a nonstructural activity; provided, that
33 different time limits for compliance may be specified in the conditions of approval as appropriate.

34 E. The Hearing Examiner or ~~Administrator~~ Director, as appropriate, shall notify the Department of
35 Ecology in writing of any change to the effective date of a permit, ~~authorized by subsections A~~
36 ~~through C of this section~~, with an explanation of the basis for approval of the change. Any change to
37 the time limits of a permit other than those authorized ~~by the sections of this program previously~~
38 ~~listed~~ shall require a new permit application.

39 ~~D-F.~~ D-F. ~~All shoreline permits shall expire as indicated in subsection (B); however, regardless of tolling no~~
40 ~~shoreline permit shall be valid beyond 8 years from the date of filing unless a different time period is~~
41 ~~granted by the outcome of an administrative appeal or legal action.~~

Commented [Co/C72]: Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027

Commented [Co/C73]: Amended pursuant to Resolution 2022-027

Commented [CES74]: Proposed to deal with permits that span multiple versions of the SMP.