



Community Development 2026 Administrative Code Updates

Project Charter

Author and Review

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Updates

- Updated TBD

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1. Purpose

The scope of this project is limited to edits that are not considered substantial and that will not materially change the intent of any existing code. The objectives of this project include:

- Eliminate or reduce conflicting provisions of code.
- Add clarity to existing sections of code without changing meaning or intent of language.
- Create more predictability and certainty in development standards and the permit review process.
- Create an efficient system to catalog and organize previous and new code edits initiated by County Staff or the public.

Administrative Updates

The Kitsap County Community Development Department proposes to complete administrative, or “housekeeping” edits to the Kitsap County Code (KCC). Edits may be related to any development code.

Director Interpretations

In addition to administrative edits, the DCD proposes to codify director interpretations per 21.04.040(C)(4). Additional information on the director interpretations can be found at [Code Interpretations and Determinations](#).

2. Background

Administrative edits and director interpretations are an important part of maintaining clarity and consistency in the Kitsap County Code. The County intends to repeat this process no less than annually. The last administrative update was in 2025.

Administrative Edits

Authority

The Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates that Kitsap County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations be reviewed and, if needed, revised at least every 8 years [RCW 36.70A.130(5)]. The most recent Kitsap County periodic update concluded with the adoption of the 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan on December 2, 2024. The GMA also mandates that Kitsap County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations be subject to continuing review and evaluation, allowing for annual amendment to the Comprehensive Plan [RCW 36.70A.130(1)] and as-needed updates to development regulations to ensure consistency with desired development outcomes.

Proposed Amendment

Various general amendments to KCC Titles 17, 21, and 22 as referenced in Table 1.

Geographic Description

The amendments do not have a geographic focus and apply to all of unincorporated Kitsap County.

Director’s Interpretation

Authority

Kitsap County Code 21.04.040 states director interpretations shall be prioritized and considered for inclusion in the next applicable code update.

Proposed Amendment

Two director’s interpretation amendments to KCC Titles 16 and 17 as referenced in Table 1.

Geographic Description

The amendments do not have geographic focus and apply to all of Unincorporated Kitsap County.

3. Project Approach

This project is organized into two focused components: “Administrative Edits” and “Director’s Interpretation.”

Administrative Edits

The “Administrative Edits” part of the project addresses straightforward administrative edits that improve clarity, consistency, and usability without introducing unnecessary complexity. Content included in the scope was reviewed to identify minor corrections, redundancies, and outdated references, with suggested edits presented clearly for quick review and approval. The emphasis is on changes that reduce confusion and enhance readability while maintaining the original intent.

To keep the process efficient and low-friction, only simple, non-controversial edits will be included. Any change that requires extended discussion, interpretation, or restructuring may be deferred. If an edit cannot be made quickly and clearly, it will not be carried forward as administrative code changes.

Director’s Interpretation

The “Director’s Interpretation” element of this project compiles Director-level interpretations where clarification is needed to support consistent application. The full set of interpretations from 2008 to 2025 is included and will be reviewed to determine whether each item should be removed from consideration, codified, or carried forward into a future work plan.

Interpretations advanced in this project will be intentionally limited in scope and complexity, with an emphasis on clarity and ease of application. Any item that introduces layered, nuanced, or difficult-to-apply guidance will be set aside for future consideration to ensure the final output remains simple, direct, and usable.

Community Engagement

This project is purely administrative, any proposed edits or director interpretations that become controversial will be removed from this project and moved forward in another capacity. Due to the administrative nature of this project, there will be no additional public engagement opportunities outside of the public comment periods in commission meetings and the 14-day SEPA public comment period. Engagement will include:

- Project website
- SEPA will open a public comment period
- Legal notice published in Kitsap Sun
- Email to subscribers of the DCD GovDelivery “Code Update” list
- Notifications sent to Tribes with Usual and Accustomed Areas in Kitsap County
- DCD newsletter mail list

- KBA presentation if requested for the removal of 17.440 Master Planning
- Planning Commission
 - May 19, 2026 Briefing
 - June 2, 2026 Work Study
 - June 16, 2026 Public Hearing
- Board of County Commissioners
 - September 7, 2026 Briefing
 - September 2026 Workstudy if needed
 - September 14, 2026 Hearing
 - October 10, 2026 Deliberations if needed
 - October 12, 2026 Adoption

4. Outcomes

- Clear code, removal of conflicting code
- Removal of section KCC 17.440
- Clear definitions
- Director’s interpretation codification and acknowledgement

5. Deliverables

- Updated code

6. Scope of Work

The scope of work is limited to administrative code updates and director’s interpretations in the following table (Table 1). If any of the proposed updates or interpretations become controversial, they will be removed from the scope of work. These amendments will be non-substantive and will not change the intent or interpretation of policies or regulations.

Table 1. Scope of Work

KCC	Issue	Description of Change	Reason For Change/ Notes
17.495	It is not immediately clear that the tree canopy section applies to commercial uses.	Clarify early in 17.495 that the section applies to commercial uses.	Section 17.495 Tree Canopy applies to residential and commercial uses, but commercial uses are not mentioned until table 17.495.030-1. That it

			applies to both residential (with minimum thresholds) and commercial should be more clear.
17.510.020	Sign Code	Add in definition for "FACE" in relation to sign and location where the advertising is located	<p>Definition: Sign face means the area of a sign on which the graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademark or text is placed - it should not be included with the height and width of the entire structure.</p> <p>Currently our monument sign is limited to height and width, but using the maximum of those dimensions is larger than we allow for the "Face" of the sign, even though you typically do not advertise on the base of the structure. Also, "Face" is not defined in the code.</p>
17.110.504	<p>The current def of MFR housing in KCC 17.110.504 is: "Multiple-family" means a building or portion thereof containing three or more dwelling units constructed with units above other units, and designed for occupancy by three or more families."</p> <p>This should also include side-by-side units.</p> <p>17.100.040 references 17.520, which has been repealed.</p> <p>17.110.504 specifies</p>	This definition should be revised to also include side-by-side units.	-

	that multiple-family is for units "on top of one another" but multiple-family apartment buildings could be built as townhomes.		
17.110.166	Section is missing Oxford Comma.	"Clubhouse" means the structure or premises occupied by a club and its staff. This definition excludes places of worship, and groups organized primarily for commercial business purposes.	Section is missing Oxford Comma after "worship".
17.490	Requirements may not always be appropriate. Site specific conditions may be beneficial.	Allow director's discretion for non-residential parking requirements.	Allowing softer parking requirements in specific situations for non-residential facilities at the discretion of the director.
17.440	17.440 Master Planning has not been used once since its codification. If KBA does not have concerns KCC 17.440 may be removed in its entirety as an admin update.	Remove.	17.440 Master Planning has not been used once since its codification.
17.495.030	The deciduous tree credit was updated from 0.5 to 1, but the example math in the footnote of table 17.495.030-2 was not.	On a seven thousand five-hundred-square-foot lot in ULR zone (three credits needed) with one twenty-four-inch DBH tree, one twelve-inch DBH tree, and two six-inch DBH trees, the minimum tree unit credits are met by retaining the twenty-four-inch DBH tree only, or retaining the twelve-inch DBH tree and one of the six-inch DBH trees, or remove all trees on site and plant six <u>three</u> new deciduous or three new conifers to meet the minimum tree density units for the lot.	The deciduous tree credit was updated from 0.5 to 1, but the example math in the footnote of table 17.495.030-2 was not.

<p>21.08.060</p>	<p>Improve consistency and clarity of code requirements.</p>	<p>Refer to requirements from 19.100.155.</p> <p>19.100.155.I states that:</p> <p>Prior to taking action on a zone reclassification or a Comprehensive Plan amendment, the proponent shall complete an environmental review to confirm the nature and extent of any critical areas on or adjacent to the property; determine if the subsequent development proposal would be consistent with this title; and determine whether mitigation or other measures would be necessary if the proposal were approved. Such review shall occur prior to any SEPA threshold determination. Findings of such review may be used to condition or mitigate the impact through the SEPA threshold determination or to deny the proposal if the impacts are significant and cannot be mitigated.</p>	<p>Improve consistency and clarity of code requirements.</p>
<p>21.02.085</p>	<p>Clarify definition of "building site" to exclude critical area buffers.</p>	<p>21.02.085 Building site. "Building site" means an area of land, lying within one or more lots (or portions of lots when aggregated), that is legally developed or capable of being developed under current federal, state and local laws and that, exclusive of required setbacks and critical area buffers (except as reduced through critical area buffer reduction per 19.200.220 C), contains or is capable of containing a primary structure and, if required, associated septic system components.</p>	<p>Clarifying definition, spurred by the BLA code update. Definition appears in both T16 and T21. CO proposed to remove the definition from T 21 and adjust the definition in T16.</p>

22.400.135	Potential incorrect Reference	<p>DCD thinks there may be an incorrect reference in this section:</p> <p>22.400.135(B)(1) 1. Siting Accessory Structures. Accessory structures may be sited within the shoreline structure setback area; provided, that they do not substantially obstruct the view of adjacent principal buildings and they comply with applicable buffer provisions. Fences six feet or less, unenclosed decks eighteen inches or less from average grade, and structures less than ten feet in height from grade level and under two hundred square feet do not constitute view blockage but are still subject to the other provisions of this title including vegetation conservation buffers. Water-oriented storage structures that meet the requirements in Section 22.400.120(D)(1)(e) do not constitute a view blockage.</p>	<p>Fixing error. 22.400.120(D)(1)(e) is the incorrect reference and should be replaced with 22.400.120(D)(1)(f).</p>
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Director's Interpretations

16.62.030(A)	T16 - DI_Cell Tower.pdf	<p>The DI provided for exemptions from land division criteria, under certain circumstances, for wireless facilities.</p>	<p>Director's Interpretation</p>
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17.570.050 (D)	CBO - DI Formal- Replacement of Certain Nonconforming Homes.pdf	Current nonconforming language is similar, but without the 10% threshold.	Directors Interpretation
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7. Project Schedule

- Charter
- Website launch
- SEPA
- May 19, 2026 Planning Commission Briefing
- June 2, 2026 Planning Commission Work Study
- Last week of May or first week of June 2026 KBA meeting if needed
- June 16, 2026 Planning Commission Public Hearing and recommendation to adopt
- BOCC Hearing September 2026
- BOCC Adoption October 2026

Task	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Complete Charter							
Complete Community Engagement Plan							
Launch Website							
Kitsap Sun Notice							
Gov Delivery Notices							
Planning Commission Briefing							
Planning Commission Work Study, if needed							
Planning Commission Public Hearing							

SEPA							
KBA Meeting if needed							
Planning Commission FOF, if needed							
60-day notice of intent to adopt to Commerce							
BOCC Briefing							
BOCC Work Study, if needed							
BOCC Hearing							
BOCC Deliberations, if needed							
Adoption							

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Organization	Role	Responsibility
Scott Diener	Kitsap County	Planning Division Manager	Project Sponsor
Jim Rogers	Kitsap County	Long Range Planning Supervisor	Program Management
April Gassman	Kitsap County	Project Manager	Project Management
Heather Cleveland	Kitsap County	Project Support	Project review and support
Garrett Ballew	Kitsap County	Project Support	Project review and support

9. Organization and Internal Communication

Project meetings will be held as needed. Project progress will be tracked using Microsoft Planner.