KitsapCounty
Community Development

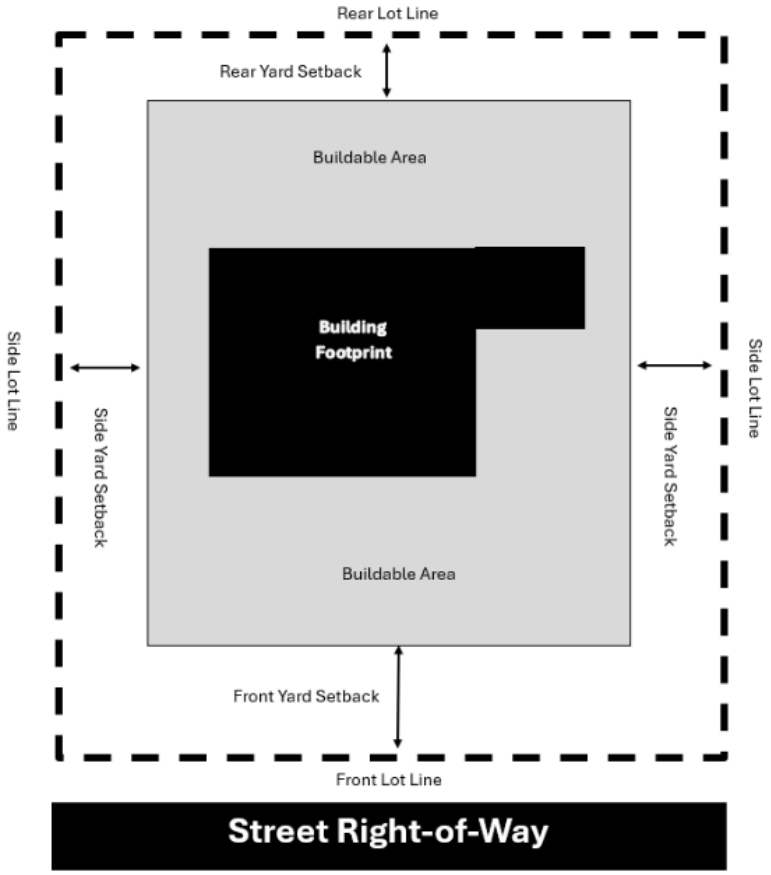
Residential Zoning Setbacks

Overview

This brochure explains the rules for how far homes and other residential buildings must be from property lines.

What are Setbacks?

A zoning setback is the required space between your home or other buildings and the edge of your property. This distance, measured in feet, applies to all sides of your lot. Check the diagram below to see how setbacks work.



Do you add zoning setbacks and buffers together?

No. You use the larger distance. For example, if the buffer is 50-feet and the zoning setback is 20-feet, you use 50-feet. In some cases, critical area buffers also require an additional building setback beyond the buffer.

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Do setbacks only apply to new buildings?

No. They also apply to additions and remodels that increase the footprint of your building. This includes changes that expand the size or shape of your building.

What if my property has a critical area?

If your property includes critical areas, like wetland or steep slopes, extra rules may apply. If the buffer or setback from the critical area is larger than the zoning setback, you must use the larger distance. For specific questions about your property Contact Community Development.

How can I check the setback requirements for my property?

Follow the steps below to find the setbacks for your project.

1. **Locate your property.**
   Visit the Parcel Search tool and enter your address or parcel number. Press Enter to view your property details.

2. **Find your zoning.**
   In the Parcel Search results, click "Land and Location" in the pop-up window. Your zoning information will appear in the upper right corner.

3. **Check the setback requirements.**
   Look up your zoning in the Zoning table (Section 17.420.050) to find the setback distances for your property.

Example:

Standard	Rural		
	RR	RP	RW
Setbacks (34)(35)(48)			
Min. front (feet) (41)(42)(43)	50 (29)	50 (29)	50 (29)
Max. front (feet)	NA	NA	NA
Min. side (feet) (42)(43)	20 feet; 5 feet for accessory structures (29)	20 feet; 5 feet for accessory structures (29)	20 (29)
Min. rear (feet) (42)(43)	20 feet; 5 feet for accessory structures (29)	20 feet; 5 feet for accessory structures (29)	20 (29)

Standard zoning setbacks

Footnotes in 17.420.060 A. may change the zoning setbacks.

17.420.060 A.29 requires a 100 foot setback when the project is adjacent to a Rural Wooded zoning designation.

Want to learn more about zoning? Visit our Zoning Quick Reference Guide.

Some uses like accessory dwelling units and guest houses have special setback rules. Section 17.415 explains these rules by type of use.

Can anything extend into a setback?

Yes. While setbacks are measured from the property line to the nearest vertical wall or other element of a building or structure (KCC 17.420.020.B), certain features are allowed to extend into this space.

Here are some common exceptions:

Items that can extend into setbacks	How far item can extend into the Front Yard Setback	How far item can extend into the Side & Rear Yard Setback
Roof extensions (cornices, canopies & eaves) 17.420.060.48	24 inches	24 inches
Open/uncovered porches, balconies, landings, outside stairs 17.420.060.48	Maximum of 6 feet and Minimum of 5 feet from property line	24 inches
Fire escapes 17.420.060.48	None	24 inches
Fireplaces 17.420.060.48	24 inches	24 inches
Bay windows & sills 17.420.060.48	24 inches	24 inches
Flatwork at or below grade (including driveways, patios, sidewalks) 17.420.020.B	No setback required	No setback required
Swimming pools at or below grade 17.420.020.B	No setback required	No setback required
Fences	No setback required	No setback required
Retaining walls	No setback required	No setback required
Landscaping elements 17.420.020.B	No setback required	No setback required

What if my existing building doesn't meet today's setback requirements?
If your structure was legally built under previous rules, it can remain. However, before you add to it or start new construction, please contact a Land Use Planner.

What if my lot is smaller than what is required today?

If your lot was legally created under previous regulations but is narrower, shallower, or less than one acre, you may be eligible for different setback rules.

What if nearby homes are closer to the property line than current rules allow?

If homes next to yours are closer to the front property line than today's code requires, you may qualify for an exception.

What if my property has more than one front yard?

Corner lots or lots with more than one street frontage may have multiple front yard setbacks.

Can I adjust my setback to improve solar access?

Yes. Front yard setbacks may be modified to help your home get more sunlight.

What if my property is accessed by a private easement?

If the easement could serve five or more lots, your front yard setback will be measured from the inside edge of the easement instead of the property line.

More Questions?

Visit: Contact Us
Call: 360.337.5777
Email: help@kitsap1.com

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