



FACT SHEET - Special Use

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NEED FOR PERMIT: Required when any works, structure, or activity that is not explicitly permitted in a specific land use zone district is proposed (RCW 36.70, CCC 18.10.280).

COWLITZ COUNTY CODE / ORDINANCE REVIEW CRITERIA:

- CCC 18.10 & CCC 18.10.280 – Land Use Ordinance/Special Use provisions
- CCC 19.15 Critical Areas Ordinance
- CCC19.11 Environmental Policy – State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
- Comprehensive Plan
- Other codes/ordinances applicable to development proposed.

PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW:

- Optional, but strongly recommended.
- Meetings held 4th Tuesday of each month.
- See Pre-Application Submittal Checklist Requirements and timelines.

DEPARTMENT PROCESSING TIME:

- Preliminary Review once application is complete - 60-120 days.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL – PRELIMINARY APPLICATION PROCESSING:

- Application determined complete.
- SEPA determination made 14-day review period begins; staff reviews project through required and applicable criteria.
- Staff writes staff report and schedules a quasi-judicial, open record public hearing date in front of the Hearings Examiner and notifies the applicant, adjacent property owners, and publishes and posts legal notices.
- The Hearings Examiner holds the public hearing and hears from staff, the applicant and takes public testimony.
- The Hearings Examiner has 10 working days in which to make his decision.

DURATION OF SPECIAL USE: Approved special uses may be provisioned to be permanent so long as the same special use activity continues. Special use approvals apply only to the use approved, no changes can occur unless for a use specifically allowed in the zone district. If the special use has not become operational within one year, or ceases to operate for a year, the special use approval expires.

APPEAL: If the Hearings Examiner denies the Special Use Application, the applicant may appeal the decision to Superior Court.

If you have further questions, please call (360) 577-3052.