CITY OF SEQUIM



Sequim Municipal Code –

Title 17 Land Division

Agenda

Purpose and overview of Title 17

Tonight we will cover Chapters 17.10-17.50

- 17.10 General Provisions
- 17.20 Land Divisions Standards
- 17.30 Boundary Line Adjustments and Lot Combinations
- 17.40 Minor Subdivisions
- 17.50 Unit Lot Subdivisions



Purpose

- The January 2026 draft represents a **comprehensive rewrite and modernization** of SMC Title 17.
- It restructures the code, adds new land division tools required by state law, clarifies procedures, and relocates technical detail to adopted standards and SMC Title 20.
- The draft is more explicit, consolidated, and defensible than the existing code.
- Comply with new state law, including new processes for “Unit Lot Subdivisions,” “Administrative Lot Splits,” and other housing related reform.
- Incorporates feedback from the development community and comprehensive plan update process.

Overview

Current SMC Title 17:

- Organized around legacy subdivision/short plat concepts
- Limited internal consistency across chapters
- Minimal cross-references to Titles 18 (Zoning) and 20 (Permits)

Draft Title 17:

- Reorganized into a clear, logical land-division framework
- Explicit separation between:
  - General provisions
  - Standards
  - Division types (minor, major, unit lot, etc.)
- Strong cross-references to:
  - SMC Title 18 (zoning & development standards)
  - SMC Title 20 (project permit procedures)
  - Engineering standards and adopted plans
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Chapter 17.10 General Provisions

Key Differences

- **New or Expanded in Draft:**
- Clear statement of authority and purpose tied directly to RCW 58.17 and GMA
- Explicit administrative authority granted to DCED Director
- Formal conflict-resolution hierarchy (state law > city code, etc.)
- Expanded and modernized definitions, including:
  - Unit lot / parent lot / child lot
  - Administrative lot split
  - Binding site plan (updated to current RCWs)
- **Current Code:**
- Definitions are older, fragmented, and less aligned with current state statutes
- Less clarity on administrative discretion and interpretation authority
- **Impact:** The draft resolves ambiguity present in the current code and aligns terminology with post-2021 state law.

Chapter 17.20 Land Division Standards

Key Differences

- **Draft Code Introduces or Clarifies:**
- Explicit proportionality language (RCW 82.02.020)
- Stronger alignment with:
  - Transportation Master Plan
  - Engineering standards
  - Fire Code Appendix D
- Clear street connectivity requirements, including:
  - Stub-outs
  - Future connections
  - TMP consistency findings
- Standardized certification/dedication language managed administratively
- Clear utility undergrounding and frontage improvement expectations
- **Current Code:**
- Improvement requirements are scattered
- Less explicit proportionality and nexus language
- Fewer objective standards tied to adopted plans
- **Impact:** Draft substantially improves legal defensibility of infrastructure conditions and exactions.

Chapter 17.30 Boundary Line Adjustments (BLA) and Lot Combinations

Key Differences

- **Draft Code:**
- Combines boundary line adjustments and lot consolidations into one chapter
- Establishes:
  - Clear application type (Type A-1)
  - Detailed submittal requirements
  - Explicit approval criteria
  - 180-day recording deadline
- Adds protections against:
  - Creating constrained or future-unbuildable lots
  - Interference with access, utilities, or code enforcement
- **Current Code:**
- More limited procedural detail
- Less explicit decision criteria
- **Impact:** Draft significantly improves clarity, consistency, and administrative efficiency.

Chapter 17.40 Minor Subdivisions

Key Differences

- **Draft Code:**
- Fully modernizes minor subdivision procedures
- Explicitly allows **unit lot subdivisions** under RCW 58.17.060(3)
- Clarifies:
  - Five-year validity period
  - Modification pathways (pre- and post-recording)
  - Density calculations tied to zoning
- Stronger integration with:
  - Critical areas code
  - Engineering standards
  - Title 20 review procedures
- **Current Code:**
- Short plat provisions are more limited and less coordinated
- No express framework for unit lot subdivisions
- **Impact:** Draft supports infill and housing flexibility while retaining infrastructure and safety

Chapter 17.50 Unit Lot Subdivisions

Key Differences: This chapter does not exist in the current SMC.

- **Draft Code Adds:**
- A complete, state-authorized framework for fee-simple unit lot subdivisions
- Allows:
  - Cottage housing
  - Townhomes
  - Small-scale infill ownership models
- Applies development standards to the parent lot, not individual unit lots
- Requires clear plat notes, CCRs, and common-area ownership provisions
- Limits unit lot subdivisions to:
  - ≤9 lots
  - Non-stacked dwelling units
  - Residential zones only
- **Impact:** This chapter enables middle housing and ownership opportunities consistent with state housing legislation.

Title 17 Update – Key Differences Summary

Topic	Current Title 17	January 2026 Draft Title 17
Overall Approach	Legacy subdivision code	Modern land-division framework
Organization	Fragmented chapters	Clear, logical structure
State Law Alignment	Pre-2021 RCWs	Aligned with current RCW 58.17
Administrative Authority	Limited clarity	Clear Director authority
Definitions	Dated, limited	Updated and expanded
Infrastructure Standards	Scattered	Consolidated & defensible
Proportionality	Implicit	Explicit RCW 82.02 compliance
Transportation Connectivity	Minimal	Requires future connections
Boundary Line Adjustments	Limited standards	Clear criteria & deadlines
Minor Subdivisions	Short plat focus	Modern minor subdivision framework
Unit Lot Subdivisions	Not allowed	New fee-simple ownership tool
Housing Support	Limited	Supports middle housing
Code Integration	Minimal	Integrated with Titles 18 & 20
Legal Defensibility	Moderate	Significantly strengthened

Next Steps

Next Meeting 1/20/2026:

- Chapters 17.60-17.110
  - 17.60 Administrative Lot Splits
  - 17.70 Major Subdivisions
  - 17.80 Binding Site Plans
  - 17.90 Final Plats and Site Plans
  - 17.100 Vacation and Alteration
  - 17.110 Phased Developments

Schedule

Dev Regulations Update

- Jan. 6: Chapters 17.10-17.50
- Jan. 20: Chapters 17.60-17.110
- Jan. 22: Developers Forum
- Jan. 27: Title 17 if needed
- Feb. 3: Chapter 18.21 Special Housing Requirements
- Feb. 10: Chapter 18.21 if needed
- Feb. 17: Public Hearing