



Administrative Uses and Approvals

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What are Administrative Uses and Approvals?

An Administrative Use is a use that is not explicitly allowed in a given zoning designation. However, the Zoning Administrator of Planning and Development Services may permit the use, provided the use complies with certain restrictions. Permits for these types of uses are called Administrative Approvals and do not require a public hearing. Normally, Administrative Approvals are issued within a shorter time frame and with considerably lower fees than those permits requiring public hearings. Neighboring property owners are notified and may comment on any Administrative Approval request. Requirements for Administrative Uses and Approvals are addressed in Whatcom County Zoning Ordinance (Title 20) under the site's Comprehensive Plan Zoning Designation. Some of the most common Administrative Uses requiring an Administrative Permit are:

- [Permanent Accessory Dwelling Units](#);
- [Temporary Accessory Dwelling Units](#);
- [Cottage Industries](#);
- [Lot Consolidation Relief](#);
- [Co-location on an Existing Wireless Communication Facility](#).

Will I still need a building permit?

Yes. Administrative Approvals permit certain land use activities. To construct buildings,

garages, etc., you are required to obtain additional permits including the building permit. Once you have received the Administrative Approval, you may apply for a building permit for the accessory dwelling unit. Information packets for building permits are available at the PDS counter. **Please bring a copy of your Administrative Approval with you when submitting your building permit application.**

Fees

Please refer to the current Whatcom County Unified Fee Schedule.

Note: Administrative Approval fees do not cover your building permit. You will be required to pay building permit fees at the time of building permit application submittal.

Information

Due to the administrative complexity of these regulations, it is usually best to visit with PDS staff or contact the Zoning Administrator to answer any additional questions.

Planning and Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, Washington 98226 USA
E-mail: pds@co.whatcom.wa.us

Staff Contact: Zoning Administrator
Phone: (360) 676-6907

THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES HANDOUT SERIES

Whatcom County Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226
Phone (360) 676-6907 ▪ Fax (360) 738-2525 ▪ Inspections (360) 738-2520

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