



# Binding Site Plan

Discretionary Permits

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## What is a Binding Site Plan?

A binding site plan (BSP) is a process used to create parcels for sale or lease. It is an alternative to the long plat procedures required by Chapter 58.17 of the revised code of Washington (RCW).

## When do I need a binding site plan?

Binding site plans are required to:

- Create parcels for industrial or commercial use,
- Create lease spaces for a mobile home park or RV park when no other residential structures are permitted, or
- Create parcels for condominium ownership.

## Do I need an appointment for submittal?

Yes, you will need to schedule an appointment to obtain the necessary forms. The process is two-fold: you will first need a Preliminary and General Binding Site Plan to create the boundaries of the property, and later you will need Specific Binding Site Plans to create the tracts within the General.

At your appointment, the Land Use staff will review the application forms with you, and will explain both the Conditional Use processes, including fees, timelines and types of review. Following that appointment, you will be required to complete the application and obtain

any additional documentation, deed, easement agreement, survey, plans, written verification of public water and sewer or septic availability, fire and school approvals, names, addresses and parcel numbers of adjoining property owners, and any other information required as part of the application submittal. In addition, you will schedule a second appointment for the actual submittal.

## What information do I need to provide at the first appointment?

- Tax parcel number
- Vicinity map showing the size, shape, and dimensions of the property as well as abutting access roads

## What is the review process for my project?

Following submission of the application packet and payment of the required fees, PDS staff will review the application and mail you a "Determination of Completeness" letter, at which time the review period begins. The entire file is copied and the originals are routed to the Hearing Examiner's Administrator, who will eventually schedule the hearing. Public notices are sent to the Bellingham Herald and to all persons owning property within 300 feet (if parcel is located in an Urban Growth Area) or 1000 feet (if parcel is located outside of an Urban Growth Area) from the boundaries of the subject site.

THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES HANDOUT SERIES

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An “Agency Distribution” is also sent to all applicable agencies, such as Health, Fire, Engineering, asking for their comments and conditions of approval. During that time, the Critical Areas Administrator and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Official in the PDS office also review the file.

A Technical Review Committee (TRC) Meeting is held following the SEPA determination, at which time the proposal and all required conditions are discussed with the applicant and his or her engineer. Following the TRC meeting, County staff drafts a staff report on behalf of the TRC, with a recommendation of either approval or denial. A copy of the report is forwarded to the applicant, the applicant’s engineer, and the Hearing Examiner.

### **When and where is the public hearing held?**

Public hearings are currently held in the Council Meeting room in the Whatcom County Courthouse at 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham. The Hearing Examiner’s Office will notify you in writing of the date and time of the hearing, and they will also provide you with notices to be posted on the property in a location visible to public roads. You or your agent are required to attend the public hearing.

### **When can I lease or sell the lots?**

You cannot advertise lots for sale or lease until the final approval has been completed and a mylar has been recorded with the Whatcom County Auditor.

### **Will my binding site plan expire?**

Yes, if the first specific BSP is not submitted within five years of the date of the General BSP approval, the BSP will expire.

### **Can I sell the BSP to a new owner?**

Yes. However, the new owner will be held to the same conditions and the same timelines as the original applicant.

### **Fees**

Please refer to the current Whatcom County Unified Fee Schedule.

### **Information**

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

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