



## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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## ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE APPLICATION

# ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE APPLICATIONS - INTRODUCTION (TYPE I & TYPE II DECISION)

### What is an administrative variance?

An administrative variance is process to apply for a limited exception to certain specific zoning code standards. Through an administrative variance (generally, a Type I or II decision, in accordance with ACC 14.03), the Planning Director may, when certain criteria are met, authorize up to a specific amount of relief to specific zoning dimensional standards. The dimensional standards available for relief include variances to setbacks, lot coverage, lot area, lot width, and building height. Exceptions to other zoning standards, or that allow a greater amount of relief are subject to the regular variance process through a public hearing process and decision by the Hearing Examiner (generally, a Type III decision, in accordance with ACC 14.03).

Administrative variances relating to setbacks, lot coverage, lot area, and lot width shall not exceed 25 percent of a quantifiable standard. Administrative variances relating to building height shall not exceed 50 percent of a quantifiable standard. Per ACC 18.70.010, variances and administrative variances cannot be requested for changes in land use, increases in density, or changes to previous conditions established by a surface mining permit, administrative use permit, conditional use permit, or contract rezone.

Administrative variances which are subject to specific approval criteria included in ACC 18.70.015, are processed by City staff (administratively), and are not subject to a public hearing, unless a written decision on an administrative variance is appealed to the City of Auburn Hearing Examiner.

### What does Type I & Type II refer to?

Type I decisions are administrative decisions made by the City which are not subject to environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) codified at Chapter 43.21C RCW.

Type II decisions are typically administrative decisions made by the City which include threshold determinations under SEPA. When SEPA is required, the City issues a Notice of Application which has a public comment period.

In each case, the written decision of the Planning Director can be appealed to the Hearing Examiner and the written decision of the Hearing Examiner appealed to the Superior Court of the county in which the property is located.

### What is SEPA and when is it applicable?

Administrative variances may be subject to compliance with the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) based on the presence of environmentally critical areas; projects that exceed specific thresholds (e.g. grading, number of dwelling units, timber removal, size of building); projects that require licensing for air emissions or discharges to water; or other factors. WAC 197-11-800 provides the specific thresholds which determine whether SEPA is required. If subject to SEPA, an environmental checklist application must be submitted with the application. After the Notice of Application comment period expires, the Planning Director – who is the City's SEPA Responsible Official - issues a SEPA threshold determination (TD), or other SEPA decision as provided in ACC 16.06, RCW 43.21 and WAC 197-11. The SEPA decision is final unless the TD is appealed or the City revises the TD based on further comments during the appeal period.

If the SEPA Responsible Official issues a Determination of Significance (DS) because of probable significant impacts by the proposal, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required before the City makes any decision on this application.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Applicants are responsible for complying with all applicable City Codes and ordinances and should review all City regulations that may be applicable to their proposed project. For assistance in determining which regulations are applicable, please contact the City of Auburn Permit Center.

**QUESTIONS? PHONE 253.931.3090 or E-MAIL [permitcenter@auburnwa.gov](mailto:permitcenter@auburnwa.gov)**



**CITY OF AUBURN**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE  
APPLICATION**

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE VARIANCE – SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST**

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### ***DIGITAL COPIES OF WRITTEN MATERIALS AND PLANS & GRAPHICS.***

- Provide electronic files of all submitted written materials and plans and graphics for use by the City of Auburn during the development review process. Staff will use this information in report preparation and public noticing so please be sure to provide current and accurate information. Documents totaling less than 20 MBs may be attached to the email submittal to [applications@auburnwa.gov](mailto:applications@auburnwa.gov). If total file size is more than 20 MBs then email only the application form to [applications@auburnwa.gov](mailto:applications@auburnwa.gov) and you will be provided with a Dropbox link to upload all of the documents. Please allow until the end of the following business day for a Permit Technician to contact you with further instructions and to arrange payment and complete the intake process.

### ***PDF REQUIREMENTS.***

- All documents shall be submitted in *unsecured* and *flattened* PDF format. Each document shall be separate PDF documents and clearly named by document title (common acronyms are OK, e.g. SSP – Stormwater Site Plan/Report, *Geotech* – Geotechnical Report, *TIA* – Traffic Impact Analysis/Study/Memo, *CAR* – Critical Areas Report).  
Example: Smith Building – Prelim SSP.pdf

### ***WRITTEN MATERIALS***

- A. **APPLICATION FORM** Provide a completed Master Land Use Application Form
- B. **LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION** Provide a letter of authorization to act contained within this application packet inclusive of all required signatures.
- C. **WRITTEN STATEMENT** addressing:
  - In detail, a description of your request for an administrative variance; and
  - Why the administrative variance should be issued, relating to approval criteria listed under Auburn City Code (ACC) 18.70.015.

### ***PLANS & GRAPHICS***

- A. **SCALE & LEGIBILITY** All plans, except architectural elevations, should be to scale (engineering scale) on paper no larger than **24x36"**, at **1"=100'** or larger (**1"=50'** preferred). An index sheet of the same size is required for multi-sheet submittals. All plans should be folded to fit a legal size file jack.

**B. SITE PLAN DRAWING – GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION** The following graphic features shall be shown on the drawing:

- 1. North arrow, numeric/graphic scale, and date plan was prepared;
- 2. Boundaries and dimensions of the property;
- 3. Adjacent public streets;
- 4. Easements, existing and proposed;
- 5. Location and size of all existing and proposed utilities;
- 6. Location of building requiring variance, including setbacks;
- 7. Location of all other buildings, including setbacks;
- 8. Location and layout of off-street parking;
- 9. Location and height of fences;
- 10. Location and size of signs, if applicable;
- 11. Height of structures;
- 12. Points of access, interior streets, and driveways, existing and proposed;
- 13. Location of refuse storage locations, bicycle parking areas and pedestrian/bike paths, if applicable;
- 14. Flood hazards, geological hazards (seismic, steep slope, landslide, erosion), groundwater protection areas, streams, significant trees, wetlands, and wildlife habitat.

**C. VICINITY MAP** A vicinity map sufficient to define the property location and boundaries.