



# STEVENS COUNTY LAND SERVICES

## Guide to Short Platting in Rural Stevens County

This handout is designed to assist you as you move through the Short Platting process in rural Stevens County. It provides useful Code information about project timelines, what will be required prior to Final Approval of your project, and tips that will get you through the process quickly and efficiently. While every development scenario is different, we hope this provides some general information and guidance about the Short Plat process.

### 1) PLANNING -



The Planning Division of the Land Services Department is responsible for processing your application, assisting you as you navigate through the Short Plat permitting process and making a final decision on your application. We are also responsible for administering a number of Codes as they pertain to your project proposal including Subdivision, Zoning, Forest Practices, SEPA, and Critical Areas regulations to name a few. The Planner assigned to your project is your main contact throughout the process and is available to steer you in the right direction should you have any questions. If your project requires multiple approvals in conjunction with your Short Plat, such as the need for a Forest Practice Lift or a Road Standards Variance, we will process those applications concurrently as specified in Stevens County Code, Title 3.

The Short Plat Application covers the information you are required to submit to the Planning Division of the Land Services Department. When a Short Plat Application is submitted, our first job is ensuring the application is complete before distributing it to required agencies. We are not only reviewing for Code consistency, but making certain the application is filled out completely and that the Preliminary Plat Map contains the required information. The easiest way to lose time during the application process is to turn in an incomplete application. Make sure to review the application requirements carefully.

The time it takes from application submittal to final approval for a Short Plat depends a lot on you. If you utilize the Fast Tracking program and your application is complete (including a survey containing all required information), Preliminary Approval for your Short Plat will take approximately 5 weeks depending on the project. The Preliminary Approval process lets you know that your project is approved subject to meeting certain requirements. The faster you get those requirements completed, the faster your project will go. The information provided below is intended to give you information on what is required and tips on how to get it completed quickly.

**TIP:** *If you review this Worksheet and still have questions about the Short Plat process that pertains to multiple Departments, set up a pre-application meeting. We can get Public Works, Northeast Tri-County Health District, Planning and more, in one room to answer your questions upfront. Contact the Land Services – Planning Division to set up a pre-application meeting.*

**TIP:** *When you are ready to submit your application, make an appointment with the Land Services Planning Division and go through the **Fast Tracking process**. Fast tracking will save you time and will give you an opportunity to meet the Planner who will be working on your project.*

**Building Division:** (509) 684-8325  
**FAX:** (509) 685-0674

**Planning Division:** (509) 684-2401  
**FAX:** (509) 684-7525

**MAILING ADDRESS:** 215 S. Oak St. – Courthouse Annex • Colville, WA 99114  
**STREET ADDRESS:** 260 S. Oak St. – Courthouse Annex • Colville, WA 99114

**TIP:** A SEPA checklist is required for any Short Plat if: there are lands covered by water; the Short Plat is a re-plat of a previously platted lot; or, there is a Forest Practices Moratorium on the Property. Check in advance of submitting your project to see if SEPA will be required for your proposal.

**IMPORTANT:** Did you know that a Variance from the requirements may be applied for concurrently with a Short Subdivision Application? If you plan on applying for a Variance from the required standards, talk to our office in advance of submitting your application so you can get an idea of how feasible your request might be.

**IMPORTANT:** Did you know that the Land Services Director may grant a Limited Administrative Variance from the required lot size to reflect a demonstrated discrepancy between surveyed property boundaries and the previously relied on legal description of the property boundaries? The Variance shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the parcel size and may be granted for all lots within the Short Subdivision.

**Contact Information:** The Stevens County Land Services – Planning Division may be reached at (509) 684-2401. Applications and other useful information may be obtained online at [www.co.stevens.wa.us/landservices/index.php](http://www.co.stevens.wa.us/landservices/index.php).

## 2) SEPTIC/SEWER -



Prior to final Short Plat approval, we will either need:

- 1) An approved site for on-site sewage for each lot based on a site review by Northeast Tri-County Health District (NETCHD). When you have satisfied all of NETCHD's requirements, they will send us a letter verifying that all requirements have been met.

**OR**

- 2) In areas where public sewer exists, you will need a letter from the public sewer provider verifying service will be provided to all lots.

**TIP:** Please contact NETCHD prior to submitting your Short Plat application if you will be proposing small lots or if you have Critical Areas on your property. NETCHD requires a minimum lot size of 1.25 acres when using a private well and ½ acre when utilizing a public water system. Typically minimum lot sizes are dictated by the space needed for a wellhead protection area, septic system and replacement drainfield. A preliminary discussion with NETCHD upfront may save you time and money in the end.

**Tip:** NETCHD has a separate application process that must be completed prior to final Short Plat approval. To speed up the application process, turn in your NETCHD application at the same time you turn in your Short Plat application.

**Tip:** Lots with existing onsite sewage disposal systems may still need to have test holes reviewed. Contact NETCHD prior to application. They may be able to waive the requirements for test holes on lots with existing systems. NETCHD may, in some cases when each of the lots you are proposing already has an approved onsite sewage disposal system, waive the entire application process and fees.

**TIP:** For Plats proposing to use a public sewer it is recommended that you talk to your service provider prior to your Short Plat submittal and turn in your verification letter with your application. This will be one less thing you have to do later.

**Contact Information:** If you are proposing onsite septic systems for each lot, you will need to contact the Northeast Tri-County Health District at (509) 684-2262.

If you are proposing to hook up to a public sewer provider you will need to contact the city or private service provider in your area.

### 3) WATER -



Prior to final Short Plat approval you will need to provide the Planning Division with proof of water availability for your proposal. If you are utilizing individual wells or will be hooking up to a public water system for your proposal, this may be accomplished in a number of ways:

- 1) Representative test well(s) meeting the minimum availability and potable water requirements for Stevens County Building Permits (a minimum of .55 gallons per minute). The representative test well(s) must be contained within the plat boundaries. Also, the well(s) will need to be tested for water quality and quantity by licensed water professionals. Said well test shall not be more than 2 years old at the time of submittal.

**OR**

- 2) A report from a hydrogeologist indicating sufficient water availability for the proposed lots.

**OR**

- 3) Confirmation letter from a public water provider that they will provide water to your proposed Short Plat.

**OR**

- 4) Confirmation of an approved Group B Water System from the Washington State Department of Health.

**OR**

- 5) Other methods indicating sufficient water availability for the proposed lots. Area well logs and/or use of new technologies such as EMS (Electromagnetic Surveying) and VLF (Very Low Frequency) without a hydrogeologist report is insufficient for showing the availability of water.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are using an existing well to show water availability, a pump test (quantity and quality) may be required prior to Final Short Plat approval.

**Contact Information:** If you have questions about what is required to show water availability for individual wells, please contact the Stevens County Land Services – Planning Division at (509) 684-2401.

If you have questions about Group B Water System requirements, please contact the Washington State Department of Health at (509) 456-3115.

### 4) ROADS -



The type of road you will be required to build and easement provided as part of your Short Plat proposal depends on a number of factors. For most projects, you will be working with the Planning Division, your local Fire District and either the Stevens County Department of Public Works (DPW) or Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on road issues. Private Road and Driveway standards as provided in Stevens County Code, Title 3, are administered by the Land

Services – Planning Division. Access and approaches to County Roads/State Highways are administered by the DPW or WSDOT respectively. Fire Districts review Short Plat applications to ensure access to each lot is suitable for handling emergency vehicles.

The following options are most common when Short Platting in Rural areas:

- 1) **Providing direct access to a County Road or State Highway:** Please contact DPW or WSDOT prior to submitting your Short Plat Application if you plan to have all lots directly access a County Road or State Highway to ensure they will grant access for each proposed lot. You may also want to contact your local Fire District as well. While in many cases direct access to the County Road/State Highway may be appropriate for each lot, please remember that our goal is to ensure that access is suitable for handling emergency vehicles. Joint access may be required if DPW/WSDOT and/or your local Fire District feel that direct access for all lots is unsafe. If a joint access is required, you will utilize the private driveway or road standards listed below.
- 2) Private Driveways may be allowed within a Short Plat in any rural zone as long as they provide adequate easements and unobstructed travel widths and are capable of supporting fire apparatus and emergency vehicles. Private driveway design shall not be less than 16 feet in width and shall include a year-round driving surface and turn-arounds for emergency vehicles. **Private driveways shall not serve more than two lots (see SCC 3.16.200(C)).**
- 3) Private Road standards are contained in SCC 3.16.210 and 3.16.232. Most Short Plats in rural areas will require at a minimum Type 3 access:

The following is required for Roads that may serve adjacent properties: 50 foot easement with a 20 foot surfaced width with a minimum of 2" of 1¼" crushed or screened gravel top course over 4" of 3- (three minus) base rock.

The following is required for Roads that end within the proposed plat and will NOT serve adjacent properties: A 30 foot easement with an 18 foot surfaced road with a minimum 2" of 1¼" crushed or screened gravel top course over 4" of 3- (three minus) base rock.

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**IMPORTANT:** Type 2 Access is required in areas designated Type I and II LAMIRDs. Please contact the Planning Division for information on Type 2 requirements.

**TIP:** *Although on first glance it may look easier to provide each lot within your Short Plat individual access to the private, County or State Road or Highway, a joint use access private road may actually be more economical, practical, and feasible for your proposal. Talk to the Planning Division before submitting your application if you have questions about private road and driveway requirements.*

**TIP:** *It is recommended that you talk to the Stevens County Department of Public Works or the Washington State Department of Transportation prior to submitting your Short Plat Application if your proposed lots will be accessing a County Road/State Highway. This will ensure that your proposed access location(s) will meet County or State regulations. Pre-planning will save you time and money in the end. This is especially important if you will be proposing multiple approaches onto the public road.*

**IMPORTANT:** Regardless of whether you use Option 2 or 3 above, unless you bond for improvements prior to final Short Plat approval, our office will require construction drawings and a letter from a registered engineer stating that the road is built to the correct standards as outlined in SCC 3.16. This will satisfy the requirements listed in SCC 3.16.400 and 3.16.410(A)(1).

**IMPORTANT:** The type and location of the road you intend on proposing for your development, including easements, must be shown on your preliminary plat drawing (See SCC 3.16.050(C)(6)). This includes private driveways and private roads.

**IMPORTANT:** New lots adjacent to a County Federal Functional Class (FCC) arterial or collector shall have access from a frontage road or other non-arterial roadway and the plat shall recite a waiver of any right of direct access to the arterial unless the County Engineer waives this requirement on a showing that other access is not feasible or practicable and that no impairment to the function of the County arterial will result.

**IMPORTANT:** The maximum road grade shall be twelve (12) percent, except for short distances. You will need to apply for a variance if you are proposing road grades exceeding twelve (12) percent.

**IMPORTANT:** In some cases the County may require an applicant to provide for future extension or continuation of public roads to serve property contiguous to the proposed subdivision.

**IMPORTANT:** The overall public and private road network and access needs of lands in the area of the subdivision shall be considered in determining road and lot location within the subdivision.

**IMPORTANT:** The County Code does not specify that connecting private access roads must be upgraded for Plat approval. However, if the connecting private road is not suitable to provide practical and feasible access, you may be required to improve the easement between the County Road or State Highway and your property. We are more concerned with the traveled road and less with the easement width. In such cases, you may be required to upgrade the road to a Type 3 standard (18 or 20 foot surfaced road with a minimum of 2" of 1¼" crushed or screened gravel top course over 4" of 3-(three minus) base rock). Please note the following Code requirements:

SCC 3.16.200(A): All Short Subdivisions shall be served by one or more public or private roads that provide practical and feasible ingress and egress to and from the subdivision and to and from each lot.

SCC 3.16.210(D): In any case where a subdivision proposes access to the County or State Road system via connecting Private Roads, the County Engineer may require that connecting Private Roads be upgraded to meet the standard for Type 2 or Type 3 access, as applicable.

SCC 3.16.210(E): Other improvements to connecting roads may be required when the proposal will generate direct impacts that trigger a need for such improvements; provided that improvements to connecting roads shall be required only at a level determined to be roughly proportionate to the impact.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are unhappy with the road and access standards provided in Stevens County Code, the County Engineer may, in conjunction with a Variance Application, modify the road and access standards contained in SCC 3.16.200 and 3.16.210 when it can be shown that the proposed roads and connections are adequate to serve the needs of current and expected residents, provide for an efficient and functional road system, and provide for future development capacity as anticipated by the County Comprehensive Plan. A Variance from road standard requirements may be applied for at the Planning Division concurrent with your Short Plat application.

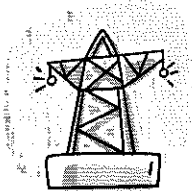
**Contact Information:**

The Stevens County Land Services – Planning Division may be reached at (509) 684-2401. Applications and other useful information may be obtained online at [www.co.stevens.wa.us/landservices/index.php](http://www.co.stevens.wa.us/landservices/index.php)

The Stevens County Department of Public Works may be reached at (509) 684-4548 or online at [www.co.stevens.wa.us/publicworks/index.htm](http://www.co.stevens.wa.us/publicworks/index.htm)

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) may be reached at (509) 324-6199.

**5) POWER -**



Prior to final Short Plat approval you will need to submit a letter from your electrical service provider verifying electrical availability to your development.

**TIP:** Talk to your service provider prior to Short Plat submittal and turn in your verification letter with your application. This will be one less thing you will have to do later.

**Contact Information:** In most cases, power will be provided by Avista Utilities or Inland Power.

Avista may be reached at (509) 685-6414 or toll free 800-227-9187.

Inland Power and Light may be reached at (509) 747-7151 or toll free 800-747-7151.

**6) FIRE -**



Conditions may be placed on your Preliminary Approval if comments are received by your Fire District or by the Fire Marshal during our internal comment period. Said conditions will need to be satisfied prior to final Short Plat approval.

**TIP:** *If you are planning private driveways for your proposal or if access to your property comes via a connecting private road, contact your Fire District in advance of submitting your Short Plat application.*

**TIP:** *Make contact with your Fire District/Fire Marshal to discuss your specific project issues.*

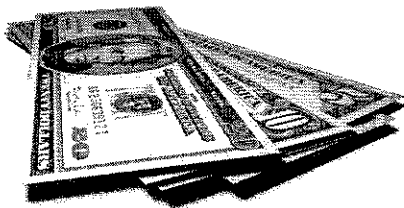
**IMPORTANT:** If conditions/requirements have been placed on the Preliminary Plat based on comments received by the Fire District/Fire Marshal, a letter from said Fire District/Fire Marshal stating that the conditions/requirements have been met shall be submitted prior to final Short Plat approval.

**Contact Information:** The following are contact numbers for each Fire District. If you are having trouble figuring out which Fire District you are located in, you may contact the Land Services – Planning Division at (509) 684-2401.

FD#1 (509) 262-9660	FD#4 (509) 937-2246	FD#7 (509) 685-9415	FD#10 (509) 732-4363
FD#2 (509) 722-5311	FD#5 (509) 935-8738	FD#8 (509) 684-2595, Ext. 328	FD#11 (509) 732-4274
FD#3 (509) 675-0015	FD#6 (509) 738-6066	FD#9 (509) 684-3375	FD#12 (509) 738-6352
Chewelah FD (509) 935-8311	Marcus FD (509) 695-1720		

If you are not located in a Fire District, you can contact the Stevens County Fire Marshal. To get in touch with the Fire Marshal, please contact the Stevens County Commissioner’s Office at (509) 684-3751.

**7) TAXES -**



Prior to final Short Plat approval, real estate taxes must be paid in full for the current tax year.

**TIP:** *Get your taxes paid before or at the same time you turn in your final survey for approval. If steps 1-6 above are completed, we hate to see your project getting delayed because taxes haven't been paid.*

**Contact Information:** The Stevens County Treasurer’s Office may be reached at (509) 684-2593 or online at [www.co.stevens.wa.us/treasurer/index.htm](http://www.co.stevens.wa.us/treasurer/index.htm)