



# Dimensional Standards Worksheet

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Permit #:

Received by:

## About this worksheet

This worksheet will help you determine the setbacks and other dimensional standards applicable to your project.

There are several primary types of dimensional standards in the County zoning code that affect the layout of buildings on your property:

- Part 1** Setbacks based on zone or plat
- Part 1A** Overlay setbacks (AEO, MRO, Guemes Island)
- Part 2** Setbacks from Natural Resource Lands
- Part 3** Height limits
- Part 4** Lot coverage limits

## What are setbacks?

Each setback is a line generally parallel with and measured from the lot line, existing or planned street or road right-of-way, easement or driven surface (whichever is most restrictive).<sup>1</sup> No above-ground buildings, structures or junk may be located within the setback area.<sup>2</sup>

## Why do we have setbacks?

Setbacks help ensure that streets and yards are provided more open space, buildings are appropriately separated from neighbors, and uses receive adequate light and air.

## We're here to help!

If you require assistance completing this worksheet, or if you'd like us to check your work, please come see one of our permit technicians.

## Cautions

In some instances this worksheet may not list all of the dimensional standards applicable to your project, for example:

**Shorelines.** If your project is within jurisdiction of the Shoreline Master Program, it must comply both with the standards in this worksheet and those in the shoreline regulations, which are generally more restrictive.

**Other requirements.** In addition to the setbacks on this worksheet, there may be other required setbacks from critical areas and shorelines, for wellhead protection areas, from septic systems, and from other requirements that apply to your site.

**Non-conforming.** If your project is remodel or expansion of an existing building that does not comply with current rules for dimensional standards, your project will be limited to repair and maintenance. No expansion within the required setback is allowed,<sup>3</sup> but additions that meet setbacks are OK.

## Variances

What if the dimensional standards prevent reasonable use of your lot?

If the setbacks rules are the constraint, one option for reducing side and rear setbacks is to request an easement from your neighbor.<sup>4</sup> Setback easement forms are available from the Department and must be submitted with your building permit application.

If you still cannot make reasonable use of your property, you may be eligible for a variance. To be approved, a variance application must comply with all the criteria in SCC 14.10.040. The cost and time to process a variance depend on the type of dimensional standard from which you're seeking to vary.

## Part 1 Setbacks based on zone or plat

### Get Started

Look up your parcel at [www.skagitcounty.net/propertyinfo](http://www.skagitcounty.net/propertyinfo).

- Identify the zone applicable to your project. Some parcels may have multiple zones. Write your zone here:

- Sketch your site plan.** On the Property Details page, click iMap on the Property Information Page, and print the map of your parcel. Alternatively, sketch your parcel on a blank sheet of paper.

As you move through the worksheet, you will sketch in your setbacks on this illustration. Odd-shaped lots can make identifying lot lines difficult. Use the examples later in this worksheet to help you apply setbacks and drawing conventions.

### Roads

Setbacks are defined relative to public roads and your primary access.

- Add any existing or proposed roads, right-of-ways, or driveways to your site plan.
- Label roads as public, private, or public Class 09. The list of Class 09 roads is on the Public Works road list at [www.skagitcounty.net/Departments/PublicWorksEngineering/countyroadlisting.htm](http://www.skagitcounty.net/Departments/PublicWorksEngineering/countyroadlisting.htm). Private, dead-end, and Class 09 roads are eligible for smaller setbacks in some zones.

## Front Setbacks

Setbacks for each zone are measured from your **front**, **rear**, and **side** lot lines.

- Label your front lot lines as “front.” Your front lot line is where your lot faces a right-of-way, or where you access your lot via a driveway. Lots may have more than one front lot line.
- Draw your front setbacks on your illustration as dashed lines.
- Label the setback off the front lot line that contains your dedicated access as your *primary* front setback.
- Refer to the setbacks table at the back of this worksheet for your zone. Label your primary front setback distance with the required front setback distance from the table.
- Label any front setback distances off any other front lines. These secondary front setbacks are always 20 feet.

## Rear Setback

- Label your rear lot line as “rear,” opposite your primary front lot line. If your lot is triangular, and your front lot line is opposite a corner, draw in your rear lot line as a line 20 feet long parallel to and opposite the primary front lot line. See examples.
- Draw your rear setback opposite your primary front setback as a dashed line.
- Label the line with the required rear setback distance for your zone.

## Side Setbacks

Any remaining lot lines are side lot lines.

- Draw your side setbacks as dashed lines at the required distances from your side lot lines.
- Label your side setbacks with the required side setback distance for your zone.

## Accessory Structures

Some zones have reduced setbacks for accessory structures. These reduced setbacks are shown in the table under the Accessory Structures columns. See the code provision for that zone for details.

## Plat Map Setbacks

If your lot was part of a land division, the setbacks shown on the plat map may apply.

If the land division was recorded less than five years ago (seven years for plats recorded prior to 2015), any setbacks shown on the plat map control over the zoning setbacks.<sup>5</sup>

Conversely, if the land division was recorded more than five years ago, any setbacks shown on the plat map control only if they are more restrictive than zoning setbacks.

- If your lot meets the criteria above for different plat map setbacks, draw those in and label them as plat map setbacks.

## Exemptions

Setbacks do not apply to fences 6 feet or less in height (8 feet or less in height in the commercial–industrial or aviation-related zones), retaining walls 4 feet or less in height, landscaping, freestanding signs, or paved areas.<sup>6</sup> Certain architectural features may extend or project into a required setback a distance of not more than 30% of the required yard, and in no case shall they be closer than 2 feet to any lot line.<sup>7</sup> Uncovered and unenclosed ground story porches and decks less than 30 inches above grade may project into a required setback up to 1 foot from the property line.<sup>8</sup>

Conversely, personal wireless facility towers have 100 percent tower height setbacks that the tower must meet along with any other setbacks.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> SCC 14.04.020, definition of “setback.”;

<sup>2</sup> SCC 14.04.020, definition of “setback.”

<sup>3</sup> SCC 14.16.880(3).

<sup>4</sup> SCC 14.16.810(5).

<sup>5</sup> RCW 58.17.170(2)(a) and (3)(a).

<sup>6</sup> SCC 14.16.810(1)(b).

<sup>7</sup> SCC 14.16.810(3)(a).

<sup>8</sup> SCC 14.16.810(3)(b).

<sup>9</sup> SCC 14.16.720(13)(b).

## Part 1A Overlay Zone Standards

The standards in this part of the form apply only to specific parts of the County.

### Airport Environs Overlay

Is your proposed project within the Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) surrounding Skagit Regional Airport?

- No.** Go to next section.
- Yes:**
- Lookup the allowed building height for your project location on the **AEO Building Heights Restrictions Contours** map. Write that allowed height here: \_\_\_\_\_ ft
  - In which Airport Compatibility Zone will the project be located? ACZ # \_\_\_\_\_
  - Lookup the required open space for your Airport Compatibility Zone in SCC 14.16.210(3). Write that amount here: \_\_\_\_\_%
  - Does the height of your proposed building impede the **FAA Aeronautical Review Contours** map?
    - Yes:** Submit [Form 7460](#) to the **FAA**, and attach proof of submission.
    - No:** Nothing further required.

### Guemes Island Combined Side Setbacks/Height Limit

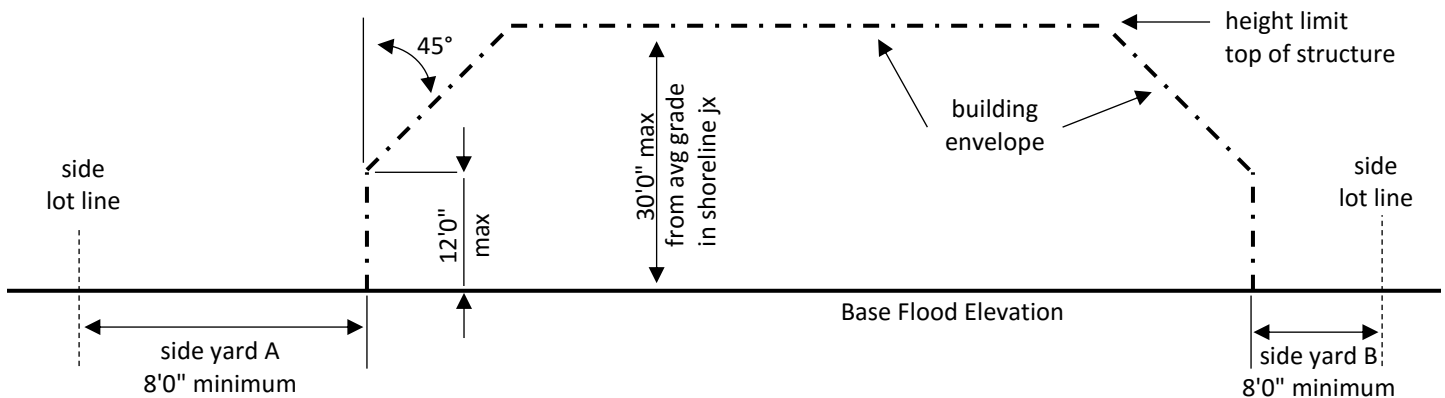
Is your proposed project on Guemes Island?

- No.** Go to next section.
- Yes:** On Guemes Island, the side setbacks in the underlying zone are overridden by the special setback/height limit in the Guemes Island Overlay, SCC 14.16.360. Complete the remainder of this section.

**Each side setback must be at least eight feet. The total of both side setbacks must be at least 30 feet, or 30 percent of the lot width at its widest point, whichever is less.**

To calculate:

1. Width of your lot between the side lot lines, at its widest point: \_\_\_\_\_ ft
2. Multiply Line 1 by 30% (0.3): \_\_\_\_\_ ft
3. Enter Line 2 or 30 feet, whichever is smaller: \_\_\_\_\_ ft
4. Your two proposed side yard setbacks, added together, must sum to at least the number of feet in line 3.
5. Your height is limited as shown to the building envelope in the drawing below. Height is measured from Base Flood Elevation.



## Part 2 Natural Resource Land Setbacks

Skagit County highly values natural resource lands (NRL) and restricts nearby development to protect resource industries. If your parcel is near an NRL zone, you may need to set back 200 feet from the adjoining NRL zone, or choose one of the other options to comply with the requirement.<sup>10</sup>

Is your parcel outside of and immediately adjacent to **Rural Resource, Secondary Forest, or Mineral Resource Overlay**?

- No.** Go to next question.
- Yes:** Choose one of the following:
  - Draw in a minimum building setback of 200 feet from the adjoining natural resource lands.
  - Attach an NRL acknowledgment/waiver form.
  - An NRL form has already been recorded under Auditor's File Number \_\_\_\_\_.

Is your parcel outside of and immediately adjacent to **Agriculture-NRL**?

- No.** Go to next question.
- Yes.** Choose one of the following:
  - Draw in a minimum building setback of 200 feet from the adjoining natural resource lands.
  - Attach an NRL acknowledgment/waiver form AND obtain the adjacent landowner's approval.
  - Attach an NRL acknowledgment/waiver form AND obtain Department approval if the property meets variance criteria.
  - An NRL form has already been recorded under Auditor's File Number \_\_\_\_\_.

Is your parcel outside of **and** immediately adjacent to **Industrial Forest-NRL**?

- No:** Go to next section.
- Yes.** Choose one of the following:
  - Draw in a minimum building setback of 200 feet from the adjoining natural resource lands; or
  - Attach an NRL acknowledgment/waiver form AND obtain the adjacent landowner's approval.
  - Attach an NRL acknowledgment/waiver form AND obtain a Hearing Examiner variance to reduce the setback.
  - An NRL form has already been recorded under Auditor's File Number \_\_\_\_\_.

### Agricultural Zone Siting Criteria

In the Agricultural-NRL zone, Skagit County has strict rules about locations of non-agricultural buildings.<sup>11</sup>

If your lot is in the Ag-NRL zone, does it have existing development (other than agricultural buildings)?

- Yes:**
  - Draw in the existing developed area (any area covered with lawn, gravel, asphalt, etc.).
  - Locate all new development within the existing developed area. New buildings must be clustered and located no more than 35 feet from existing, compatible buildings. If a driveway is needed for access, the distance between buildings may be 50 feet.
  - If the existing developed area is less than one acre AND there is insufficient developed area for the proposed building, the undeveloped area used must be kept to a minimum by locating any proposed buildings as close to each other and the existing buildings as possible. In no case may the total developed area exceed a maximum of one-acre.
- No:**
  - Draw in a one-acre development envelope at a corner of the parcel. If an adjoining parcel has development, your development envelope must be in the corner nearest the adjacent development. Locate all non-ag buildings within this envelope.

## Part 3 Height Limits

Each zone also sets a height limit for structures. Refer to the table on the last page for your zone.

Height is the vertical distance measured from the average elevation of the area occupied by the structure to the highest point of the structure or roof for flat roofs, and the average height of the roof on gable, shed, hip or other peaked roofs.<sup>12</sup>

- Write your height limit here: \_\_\_\_\_ ft

Although you don't need to show it on your site plan, make sure your proposed structure complies with the height limit.

**Exemptions.** In most zones, the following are exempt from height limits: flagpoles, ham radio antennas, church steeples, water towers, meteorological towers, and fire towers.<sup>13</sup>

## Part 4 Lot Coverage

"Lot coverage" is the area of a lot that may be covered by buildings. It is not a limit on impervious surface.

- Write your lot coverage limit here: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>10</sup> SCC 14.16.810(7)

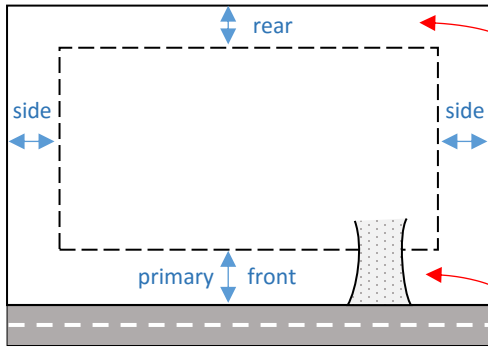
<sup>11</sup> Administrative Official Interpretation issued March 16, 2010, revised May 14, 2010, available at [www.skagitcounty.net/planning](http://www.skagitcounty.net/planning).

<sup>12</sup> SCC 14.04.020, definition of "height."

<sup>13</sup> The height of personal wireless services towers is regulated in SCC 14.16.720.

# Lot Type Examples

Identify the shape of your lot from the examples below, then refer to the table on the last page for the setbacks for your zone.

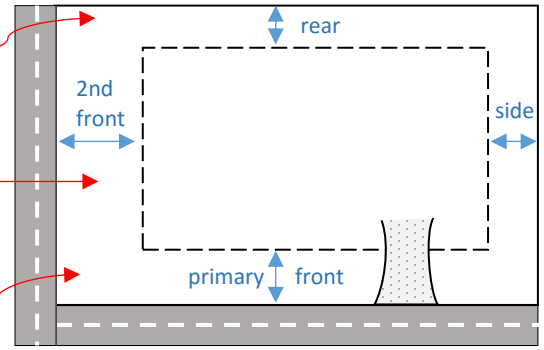


Typical Rectangular Lot

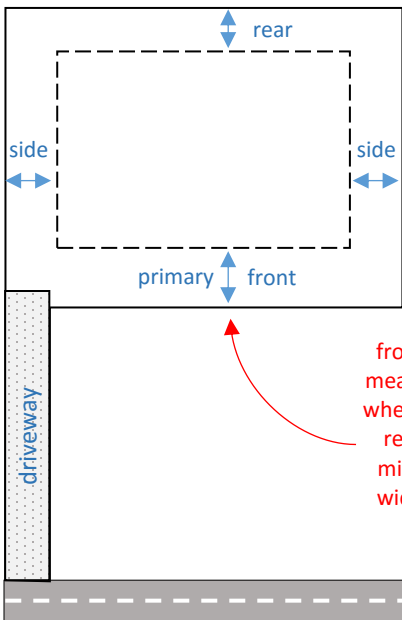
rear setback is opposite the primary front

other fronts always have a setback of 20 ft

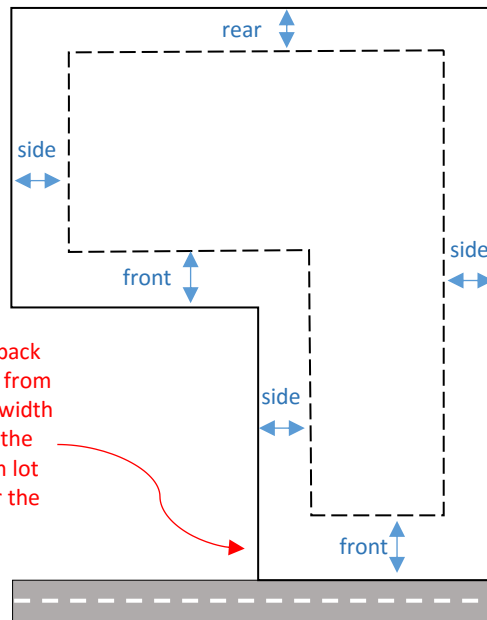
primary front is the side the lot is accessed from



Typical Corner Lot

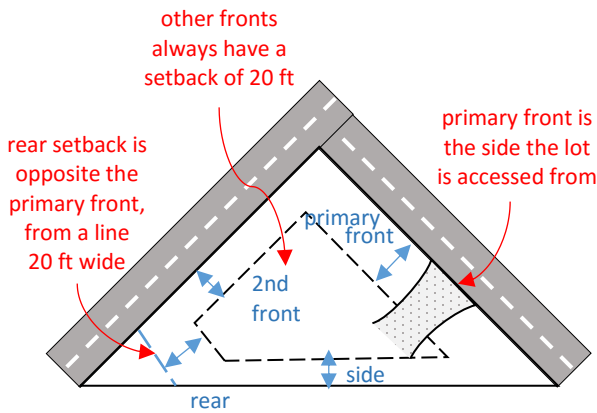


Flag Lot



L-Shaped Lot

front setback measured from where lot width reaches the minimum lot width for the zone

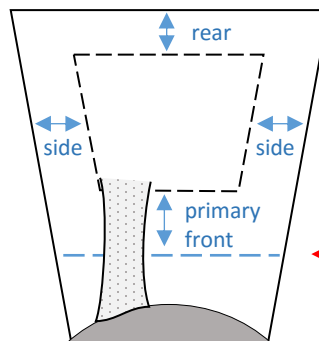


Corner Triangle Lot

other fronts always have a setback of 20 ft

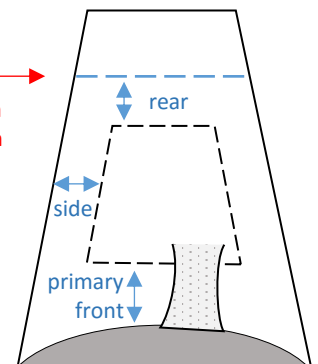
rear setback is opposite the primary front, from a line 20 ft wide

primary front is the side the lot is accessed from



Pie-Shaped Lot  
(common on cul-de-sacs)

setback calculated from where lot width reaches the minimum lot width for the zone



Inverted Pie Lot  
(common on cul-de-sacs)

## Dimensional Standards Table

Note: If your property is located on Guemes Island, side setbacks are controlled by the Guemes Island Overlay (see Part 1). When a range is shown, see the code for details.

Zone	Name	Code Cite	Primary Structures			Accessory Structures			Height	Min Lot Width	Lot Coverage
			Front	Side	Rear	Front	Side	Rear			
RVC	Rural Village Commercial	14.16.100	5-15	0-8	0-20	15	15	20	40	0	50%
RC	Rural Center	14.16.110	35-55	20	20	35	20	20*	40	0	50%
RFS	Rural Freeway Services	14.16.120	35-55	35-55	35-55	same	same	same	40	0	25%
SRT	Small Scale Rec & Tourism	14.16.130	35-55	35	35	35	35	35	50	0	
SSB	Small Scale Business	14.16.140	35-55	0-35	0-35	same	same	same	50	0	25%
RB	Rural Business	14.16.150	35-55	35	35	35	35	35	40	0	50%
NRI	Natural Resource Industrial	14.16.160	50	50	50	same	same	same	50	0	
RMI	Rural Marine Industrial	14.16.170	50	50	50	same	same	same	50	0	see code
BR-LI	Bayview Ridge Light Ind	14.16.180	35	0-50	0-50	same	same	same	35-50	0	see AEO limits
BR-HI	Bayview Ridge Heavy Ind	14.16.190	35	0-50	0-50	same	same	same	50	0	see AEO limits
URC-I	Urban Reserve Comm/Ind	14.16.195	35	0-20	0-20	same	same	same	40	0	50%
AVR	Aviation Related	14.16.200	0	0	0	0	0	0	See AEO	0	see AEO limits
AVR-L	Aviation Related Limited	14.16.205	35	0-50	0-50	same	same	same	35-50	0	see AEO limits
RI	Rural Intermediate	14.16.300	35 <sup>1</sup>	8	25	35	3-8	3-25	40	150'	35%
RVR	Rural Village Residential	14.16.310	35 <sup>1</sup>	8-20	25	35	3-8	3-25	40		50%
RRv	Rural Reserve	14.16.320	35 <sup>1</sup>	8	25	35	3-20	3-25	40	150'	See footnote <sup>2</sup>
BR-R	Bayview Ridge Residential	14.16.340	See code	See code	See code	20	3-20	3-20	40	50'-60'	65%
URR	Urban Reserve Residential	14.16.370	20	8	10	25	3-8	3-10	40	150'	35% (1 primary dwelling unit per lot)
HR	Hamilton Residential	14.16.380	50	50	50	same	same	same	40	400'	
H-URv	Hamilton Urban Reserve	14.16.385	50	50	50	same	same	same	40	400'	
Ag-NRL	Agricultural	14.16.400	See code	8	35	same	same	same	40	0	see code
IF-NRL	Industrial Forest	14.16.410	100	100	100	same	same	same	40	400' @ the Building line	see code
SF-NRL	Secondary Forest	14.16.420	100	100	100	same	same	same	40	400'	see code
RRc-NRL	Rural Resource	14.16.430	50	50	50	same	same	same	40	400'	
MRO	Mineral Resource Overlay	14.16.440			See code	same	same	same	See code	0	see code
URP-OS	Urban Reserve Public	14.16.450	35	0-15	0-20	same	same	same	40	0	50%
OSRSI	Open Space Regional/State	14.16.500	35	35	35	same	same	same	40	0	see code

<sup>1</sup> The front setback is 25 feet on ingress/egress easements, private roads, Class 09 public roads, and dead-end streets.

<sup>2</sup> For agricultural accessory and agricultural processing uses: 35 percent. For all other uses: 5,000 square feet or 20 percent, whichever is greater, but not to exceed 25,000 square feet.