

## Part One – Administration

# Critical Areas Designation

## Critical Areas Designation

*Reference K.C.C. 21A.24.500 - .510 (CAO Sections 209-211)*

The critical areas designation process enables a property owner or applicant to determine the conditions and constraints on site development. Through this process a property owner can establish a site plan that will be vested for a period of five years. The scope of the process can be adapted to meet the property owner's needs. Options Include:

1. Limited Scope Critical Areas Designations – address only those issues and that portion of the property requested by the applicant.
2. Comprehensive Critical Areas Designations - address all critical areas in the proposed development area. (Required for projects that propose new onsite septic and/or wells.)
3. The consolidated review option – adds review of residential fire access, addressing, and site engineering, allowing all site issues to be pre-certified and vested.

## Onsite septic system and well location approval

*Reference K.C.C. 21A.24.510*

King County requires a Certificate of Sewer Availability and Water Availability at the time of application for a residential building permit or for the subdivision of land. If the development proposal relies on either a new onsite septic system or new well, Seattle King County Department of Public Health must approve the location. A critical areas designation is required as part of the public health application process.

## Application requirements

The following information is required at the time a critical areas designation is requested:

1. A completed Critical Areas Designation Application Form;
2. Three copies of a site plan drawn to an engineering scale;

- The site plan must include a north arrow, location and dimensions of all property lines and easements, including any known native growth protection easement areas or special setback areas.
  - If the request for site designation is for less than the entire parcel, the area to be evaluated must be clearly demarcated and dimensioned on the site plan.
  - Existing improvements, including structures and roads, on the property must be identified.
  - Any known rivers, streams, swales, springs, seeps, wetlands, ponds, steep slopes or areas of saturated ground on the property or within 300 feet must also be identified.
3. Fees. The fee for a Critical Areas Designation will vary according to the nature of the request and the size and complexity of the property.
- A deposit of \$796.95 covering the first 5.5 hours of review must be submitted with the application.
  - The fee will be calculated based on the hourly rate of \$144.90 and the actual hours worked.
  - If the consolidated review option is chosen, the total fee is fixed at \$1,850.
  - At the time of application, the applicant must submit either the **deposit** of \$796.95 for a Critical Areas Designation or the **fixed fee** of \$1,850 for a designation with the consolidated review option.

Optional supplemental information:

- Topographic or boundary surveys;
- Aerial photos;
- Prior permits (building, grading, onsite septic or well etc.) or title notification of sensitive or critical areas;
- Special studies including: wetland reconnaissance reports, wetland delineations, aquatic area or stream reports, and geotechnical or soils reports;
- Technical information reports or drainage studies; and
- A vicinity map showing the general location of the property. If the property is located in a difficult to find location, include driving directions.

## Site preparation

Prior to application, the property boundaries need to be clearly flagged. If the site designation request is only for a portion of the property, the boundaries of the area covered by the request must be flagged prior to the initial site investigation. Failure to clearly flag the property may result in increased costs and delays in completing the site designation.

## **Additional information**

The application form and related information for the critical areas designation can be found at: <http://apps01.metrokc.gov/www6/ddes/scripts/forms.cfm>.