



User's Guide To The Land Use Permit Process

Resource Setback Reduction

Yakima County Planning Division ♦ 128 N. 2nd Street 4th Floor Courthouse - Yakima, Washington 98901 ♦ Phone (509) 574-2300

“Setback” means the minimum horizontal distance required from the property line to the wall line of a building or structure, except where otherwise specified.

“Resource lands” means those lands that are designated by the comprehensive plan as having long term commercial significance for the production of agricultural products, timber or the extraction of minerals.

The Yakima County Zoning Ordinance requires building setbacks be maintained between resource lands (Agricultural, Mineral and Forestry) and certain types of uses, called Especially Sensitive Land Uses (ESLUs), which are defined as:

“...those [uses] that are, by their nature, especially sensitive to farm, forest or mineral resource, linear transmission facilities and management practices. These land uses include dwellings (excluding caretaker dwellings), schools, day care facilities, churches or other places of worship or assembly, medical facilities such as hospitals, clinics and convalescent care facilities, outdoor recreational facilities and similar uses.”

The intent of these setbacks are to minimize the potential conflicts that may arise between these differing uses and to ensure the viability of these resource lands. The following are the building setbacks for especially sensitive land uses where the lot borders an agricultural, mineral or forest land:

- 60 feet from any adjoining lot containing a commercial agricultural use in a rural zoning district;
- 150 feet from an agriculture (AG) zoned lot, unless the application is to establish a lot line adjacent to a legally existing especially sensitive land use, in which case the building setback will be the standard structural setback along the line adjacent to the existing ESLU;
- 200 feet from any forest-watershed (FW) zoned lot; and
- 500 feet from property designated Mineral Resource overlay by the Comprehensive Plan.

Special setbacks were adopted to protect the farmer or other resource property owner from nuisance complaints resulting from common, customary and accepted resource management practices, and to protect non-resource occupants of ESLUs from the noise, spray drift and other potential impacts from such adjacent management practices. Considerations in reducing the setback may include the dimensions of the parcel, historic use, natural features, physical barriers, crop type and location of structures on adjoining properties, proposed site design including location of the ESLU and the use of screening, berms, barriers, and/or landscaping.

Resource setback reductions to the setbacks for ESLUs, under Subsection 19.18.205(2) may be granted, subject to either a Type 1 review or a Type 2 review and recording of a declarative covenant as provided in Section 19.18.205 (4). If you are interested in pursuing a resource setback reduction please contact the Planning Division at (509) 574-2300 for more information.

For specific application submittal requirements and timelines please refer to Title 19 (Unified Land Development Code) and Title 16B (Yakima County Project Permit Administration Ordinance).