

# Land Use Planning Frequently Asked Questions

## Related Questions

### Can I move the property lines of my property?

A boundary line adjustment is used to move a common property line between two or more abutting parcels of land. If you and a neighbor wish to adjust the property lines between parcels, you must meet the county's "[Procedures For A Property Line Adjustment](#)."

Currently, property line adjustments are allowed within a majority of the county's residential and resource zoning districts provided they meet the standards within the county code. A property line adjustment cannot be used to create a new parcel.

### Can I partition or subdivide my property?

[Partitioning](#) or subdividing property depends on numerous factors. A proposed partition or subdivision may not result in the creation of any parcels smaller the minimum lot size for the underlying zone. If you want to partition or subdivide your property, phone us at (503) 325-8611. We will provide you with brochures and standards explaining the partitioning and subdivision process.

### Can I run a business out of my home?

The county recognizes two classes of home occupations, defined as follows:

- [Home Occupation](#): Any occupation or profession carried on by a member of the family residing on the premises and taking place within a single-family dwelling or an accessory building.
- [Home Occupation, limited](#): Any lawful activity commonly carried on within a dwelling by a member or members of the family, no employee or other person being engaged in the same and in which said activity is secondary to the use of the dwelling for living purposes.

A limited home occupation is permitted as an outright use in most of the county's residential zones. The full home occupation is usually allowed as a conditional use. For specific information, refer to the [home occupation brochure](#) on file at the County Land Use Planning Division office.

## **How do I find out what my property is zoned?**

The zoning of your property depends upon its location. Most of the unincorporated land within Clatsop County is designated as resource land in one of the following zones: F-80 (Forestry-80 acres), AF (Agriculture Forest-80 acres) and EFU (Exclusive Farm Use-80 acres). However, we have other zoning categories as well. To find out your property's zoning:

Visit the Land Use Planning Division office at 800 Exchange Street, Suite 100, Astoria, Oregon. We have zoning maps available at the front desk for your review. With your legal description and ownership listing, we can provide you with the necessary [Zoning](#) information.

Phone the Land Use Planning Division office at (503)325-8611. With your legal description and ownership listing, we can tell you your property's zoning and explain it over the phone.

Or see our [Zoning Guide](#).

## **I live in the city. Can you answer zoning questions about my property in the city?**

Clatsop County does not have jurisdiction within the county's incorporated cities (Astoria, Cannon Beach, Gearhart, Seaside, Warrenton). You must contact the city in which the property is located for information about zoning, getting a development permit or for other use information. If you are in the Urban Growth Boundary, the city also administers the zoning of your property. Contact information for the city planning departments is below.

- Astoria: (503) 338-5183
- Cannon Beach: (503) 436-8040
- Gearhart: (503) 738-5501
- Seaside: (503) 738-7100
- Warrenton: (503) 861-0920

## **I own a vacant piece of land. Can I build a house?**

Whether you can build a house on your land depends on several factors:

- The property must be a legal building lot. Before you can get a development permit you will need to make sure that your property meets the legal definition of a “legal building lot.” The Land Use Planning Division office has a [Lot-of-Record Determination](#) process. Application forms are available at our office. There is a \$250 fee.
- The property must meet all applicable zoning regulations and must have been created legally.
- The property must be physically buildable.
- Do you have a source of water? Can a septic system be installed? Is the property in the floodplain? Is the property in a geologic hazard area?
- Do you have legal access to the site?

## **Is my property in a city or in the county?**

A general rule of thumb is if your property address is 5 numbers long, you’re in unincorporated Clatsop County.

## **My neighbor is doing something on his property that I consider to be a nuisance. How do I file a complaint?**

When the Land Use Planning office receives a complaint, the code compliance specialist is assigned to follow up. The code compliance specialist examines the site without trespassing and determines if the alleged use violation exceeds what is allowed in the land use code. While an adjacent property owner can consider some uses annoying, the use may be legally allowed by the ordinances. In such cases, the property owners in question may have to work out the issues privately.

Contact us at (503) 325-8611 to request a complaint form or download a [fillable complaint form](#). Be sure to include the location of the property as well as a description of the activity occurring. Complaint forms can be emailed to [codecompliance \[at\] co.clatsop.or.us](mailto:codecompliance@co.clatsop.or.us) (.)

## **What are "setbacks" and what are my property's setbacks?**

A "setback" is the required distance between a structure and a boundary line, such as a property line, another building or a different zone. The setback requirement varies depending on the zoning classification, road adjacency, adjacency to a resource zone or riparian area and,

in some cases, a building envelope established through the platting of a subdivision. To find your setbacks, either call the Land Use Planning Division office at (503) 325-8611 or come to our office for our residential and resource zoning districts setbacks brochure.

## **What process do I use to build on or develop my property?**

Generally, a [development permit](#) and a building permit are required. All permitted uses within the underlying zone also require both a development permit and a building permit.

Contact us for a copy of the development permit checklist. The checklist takes you through the specific steps necessary to obtain development and building permits.

Call us at (503) 325-8611 or stop by the office and staff will assist you.

[View All FAQ's](#)