

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH**  
**City Council**  
**Planning, Development & Environment Committee**

6:30 PM  
September 9, 2025

**MINUTES**

Council Chambers, 135 E.  
Sunset Way, Issaquah WA

**COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Committee Members:*

Zach Hall, Chair  
Lindsey Walsh  
Kelly Jiang

*Administration/Staff:*

Wally Bobkiewicz, City Administrator  
T. Cassidy Mueller, Deputy City Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hall called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

David Kappler, resident, spoke regarding the tree preservation code amendments and absence of mention to impacts on solar access.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) There being no changes, the minutes for the July 8, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- a) **COM 0109 - Tree Preservation Code Amendments**

*Presented by:*

*Minnie Dhaliwal, Director of Community Planning & Development*

The following public comment was received:

- Richard Searce, resident and Montreux HOA Vice-President, spoke regarding the tree permitting process.
- Susan Glicksberg, resident and Montreux HOA Board member, spoke regarding the requirement to replace trees if they fall on a structure and criteria for classifying trees as hazards.
- Connie Marsh, resident, spoke regarding consideration of a wholistic neighborhood canopy instead of individual lots and disagreed that the code amendments were ready to be sent to Council.

A recess was called at 8:12 PM. The Committee reconvened at 8:20 PM.

**It was moved by Chair Hall; seconded by Council President Walsh, to:**

**MAIN MOTION:** Forward the proposed draft tree code to City Council for final adoption, amending Issaquah Municipal Code 18.812 as shown in the Exhibit C in the agenda packet, except no changes to the existing 18.812.060 Tree Canopy Coverage table.

**It was moved by Chair Hall; seconded by Council President Walsh, to:**

**AMENDMENT:** Strike the last part of the main motion reading: "except no changes to the existing 18.812.060 Tree Canopy Coverage table."

**There being no objection, the amendment was approved by unanimous consent.**

**MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:** Forward the proposed draft tree code to City Council for final adoption, amending Issaquah Municipal Code 18.812 as shown in the Exhibit C in the agenda packet.

**The motion carried 3-0.**

The item was scheduled to be brought before the City Council at their October 6, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Other Committee comments included:

- Concerns regarding the complexity of the tree code and residents' experiences navigating it.
- Concerns regarding Central Issaquah being treated differently under the proposed code.
- Desire to define goals and measures of success for the City's tree code.
- Desire to clarify definitions and table in the proposed code.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Planning, Development & Environment Committee will be held October 7, 2025.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 PM.

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Zach Hall, Chair

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T. Cassidy Mueller, Deputy City Clerk



# Staff Report

## COM # 0173 –Fire Code Permit Fee Increase and EF&R

### Budget

<b>Meeting Date</b>	Oct 7, 2025
<b>Department</b>	Community Planning & Development
<b>Staff Lead</b>	James Gray, Building Official

### Exhibits

- A. Draft Fire Fee Ordinance
- B. Appendix to the Draft Fire Fee Ordinance
- C. Presentation

### Direction Needed from Committee

The Administration is seeking input from the Planning, Development, and Environment (PDE) Committee regarding the Fire Permit Fees.

1. Does the Committee recommend increasing the fire permit fees as shown in Exhibit A?
2. Does the Committee recommend passing the proposed fire permit fees as pass-through fees to Eastside Fire & Rescue?

### Background

Eastside Fire & Rescue (“EFR”) is a partnership among the Cities of Issaquah, Sammamish, and North Bend, and King County Fire Districts 10 and 38. Through this governance model, EFR provides fire protection, suppression, fire inspection, and plan review services on behalf of partner agencies. EFR also provides contracted fire services to Mercer Island, the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, and Woodinville Fire & Rescue. As one of EFR’s five partner agencies, the City of Issaquah contributes annual partner funding to support regional fire protection, suppression, and prevention services.

Upon completion of fire inspection and plan review services by EFR, the City issues fire permits. Currently, revenue from the fees assessed for fire permits are collected and retained by the City. In 2024 (through September 18), the City collected approximately \$78,062 in fire permit fees. Consistent

with best practices, the City and EFR conducted a periodic review of the fees for fire permit-related review services to ensure fees fully recover costs of service.

During deliberations to balance the EFR 2025-2026 biennial budget, the EFR Board recommended that revenue from fire permit fees starting in 2025 will be collected by the City and remitted to EFR in exchange for the fire permit review conducted by EFR, instead of being retained by the City. The EFR Board also recommended that fire permit fees and fee structures be consistent across all EFR contract agencies and partner jurisdictions. EFR is currently in the process of implementing the Board's direction and is working collaboratively with partners and contract agencies to implement these recommendations.

### Analysis

Historically, fire permitting fees were increased by COLA, and in 2024 by 3.8% to account for inflation, based on the Seattle CPI as was done with the building code and fees. As part of EFR's initiative to standardize fire fees across its jurisdiction, the Fire Marshal Office (FMO) has conducted an in-depth review of all tasks, including the time required for both plan reviews and inspections. Based on this analysis, a formula for calculating fees has been developed to more accurately reflect the actual time and costs involved in FMO services. EFR is recommending that each partner and contract agency review and adopt the revised fees and fee structure to ensure consistency across EFR's service area. The attached Ordinance reflects the recommended changes to the various fire permit fees, consistent with the aforementioned development and review process.

### Impacts – Financial, Policy & Community

Passing fire permit fee revenue to EFR would affect the City's budget. In 2024, the City collected \$78,062 in fire permit revenue. Under the proposed structure, that amount would increase. For example, the proposed fire plan review fee for building permits is set at 15% of the building plan review fee. In 2024, the City collected \$305,238 in plan review fees, which would translate to \$45,786 for EFR under the new structure. By comparison, EFR's actual collection for building permit fire reviews in 2024 was \$19,198. This increase represents the level of work EFR provides in the review process.

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Fire systems permits (sprinklers, alarms, etc.) amounted to \$43,813 in 2024. We have estimated that this number would increase to approximately \$69,796 with the proposal, which is a 28% increase. All increases under this proposal would be borne by the applicant, passed on to EFR, and not retained by the City. An additional 10% administrative fee on the systems permits would be added and retained by the City to account for services provided by city staff.

Permit Fee Type	Collected in 2024	Proposed increase	Difference
Fire review of building permits	\$19,198	\$45,786	\$26,588 (238%)
Fire systems permits (Sprinkler, fire alarm, etc.)	\$43,813	\$69,796	\$25,983 (28%)

**Timing & Next Steps**

Staff is proposing that the PDE Committee recommend advancing the proposed ordinance to the full City Council for reading and adoption at their November 10, 2025 Regular Meeting.



**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON, AMENDING SECTION 16.06.245 OF THE ISSAQUAH MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT UPDATED OPERATIONAL PERMIT FEES FOR PERMITS ISSUED UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE; REPEALING AND REPLACING SECTION 16.06.250 OF THE ISSAQUAH MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO FIRE CODE PERMIT FEES; AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO COLLECT AND REMIT FIRE PERMIT FEES TO EASTSIDE FIRE & RESCUE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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WHEREAS, the City of Issaquah (“City”) is one of five partner agencies of Eastside Fire & Rescue (“EF&R”). Historically, the City provided an annual payment to EF&R for fire protection and suppression, and fire permit inspection and review services, however, staff from both agencies find it is in the public’s interest for the City to collect fire permit review service fees and to remit the same to EF&R in addition to the annual payment to EF&R for fire protection and suppression services; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 16.06 of the Issaquah Municipal Code (“IMC”), the City imposes fees for various permits issued for building, mechanical, fire, and plumbing permits as authorized by RCW 82.02.020; and

WHEREAS, the EF&R Fire Marshal has conducted a review of the permits and associated fees charged under IMC 16.06.250 and has determined that the existing fees are not adequate to cover the administrative costs associated with conducting and processing such permits and that such fire permit related fees have not been updated since 2024; and

WHEREAS, EF&R seeks to update table IMC 16.06.245 to update fees for fire works displays and delete fees for emergency responder radio systems; and

WHEREAS, EF&R and the City seek consistent assessment and collection of fire permit review fees; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to repeal IMC Section 16.06.250 and replace the subject section to include a revised fire permit fee table; and

WHEREAS, the City further seeks to update naming conventions, provide for uniformity related to fire permit fees amongst EF&R jurisdictions, and revise the fire permit fees for all fire permits at an amount adequate to cover the cost of such permits; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ISSAQUAH, WASHINGTON,  
DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. IMC 16.06.245 Amended. Issaquah Municipal Code Section 16.06.245, International Fire Code operational permit fees, is hereby amended as set forth in Exhibit A.

Section 2. IMC 16.06.250 Repealed and Replaced. Issaquah Municipal Code Section 16.06.250 (Fire code permit fees) is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with a new Issaquah Municipal Code Section 16.06.250, Fire code permit fees, which shall read as set forth in Exhibit A.

Section 3. Cost Recovery and Remittance of Fire Related Permit Services Provided by Eastside Fire & Rescue. In recognition of cost recovery of the Fire Marshal and EF&R's fire permit review services, and to ensure EF&R's operational costs for fire permit services are proportionally recovered, the City agrees to collect and remit fire permit fees to EF&R on a quarterly basis. These payments, based on the City's approved permit fee schedule, shall include only the cost of EF&R's fire related permits, excluding all City administrative fees and technology surcharge fees.