



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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**TYPE I HISTORICAL DESIGN REVIEW
STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION**

To: Planning Commission (serving as the Historical Design Review Board per SMC 17.35.055)

From: Allison Kirk, AICP, Associate Planner

Date of Report: April 07, 2026

Date of Hearing: April 20, 2026

Project Name: 8050 Shipping Container

Site Address: 8050 Railroad Ave SE

Parcel Number: 7849200496

Project Number: DRB2026-0004

BACKGROUND:

The City of Snoqualmie (“City”) received an application for Type I Historical Design Review, dated March 17, 2026. The City determined the application to be complete on April 7, 2026, pursuant to SMC Section 14.30.050. The project is located at 8050 Railroad Ave SE and is within the Downtown Historic Overlay District (“Overlay District”) and the Historic Downtown Commercial Landmark District (“Landmark District”).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This historical design review permit is for the placement of a shipping container located to the rear of the lot behind the existing building (“non-contributing,” *or non-historic*).¹ The shipping container received approval for temporary placement under building permit COM2025-016. The applicant is applying for Historical Design Review to allow the structure to be permanently placed on the property to be used as an ancillary use to the primary business. The shipping container is located less than 10’ from the primary structure, pursuant to SMC 17.55.060.B.4, the structure is considered an addition to the primary structure.

The container will be outfitted with large windows, double entry doors, window/door trim, and exterior lighting. The rear façade of the existing building and the shipping container will be painted consistent with the Approved Exterior Color Palette. Exterior lighting will be installed to match the existing lighting on the primary façade of the building. A cedar fence will be installed along the property line and will help screen the structure from Falls Avenue SE.

¹ SMC 17.35.040(Y) defines “noncontributing building or site” as any building or site not specifically designated as a contributing building or site in a landmark district.

The following materials are provided in support of the Historical Design Review application: Application form (Attachment 1); Design Review Proposal (Attachment 2); Downtown Snoqualmie District and Overlay Map with Landmarks (Attachment 3); Approved Exterior Color Palette (Attachment 4).

OTHER PERMITS REQUIRED:

In addition to this Historical Design Review approval, permanent placement of the shipping container will require a building permit. If any new signs are proposed in the future, the applicant will need to submit materials for Historical Design Review again and obtain a Sign Permit. Fencing shall be installed consistent with SMC 17.55.130. Fencing taller than 6' will require a building permit. The construction of commercial buildings under 10,000 sq. ft. is exempt from SEPA in accordance with Washington Administrative Code ("WAC") Subsection 197-11-800(1)(b)(iv) and SMC 19.04.110.A.3.

SCOPE OF AUTHORITY:

The Overlay District and the Landmark District are two separate (but overlapping) districts established in Chapter 17.35 SMC – Historic Overlay Zones and Landmarks. SMC 17.35.150(A) allows the director to refer review of a Type I project to the Historical Design Review Board. SMC 17.35.055 authorizes the Planning Commission to serve as the Historical Design Review Board.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The site is located between Railroad Avenue SE and Falls Avenue SE. The site and existing structure are considered “non-contributing,” or non-historic. Figure 1 below shows the sites location in relation to the Overlay District and the Landmark District.

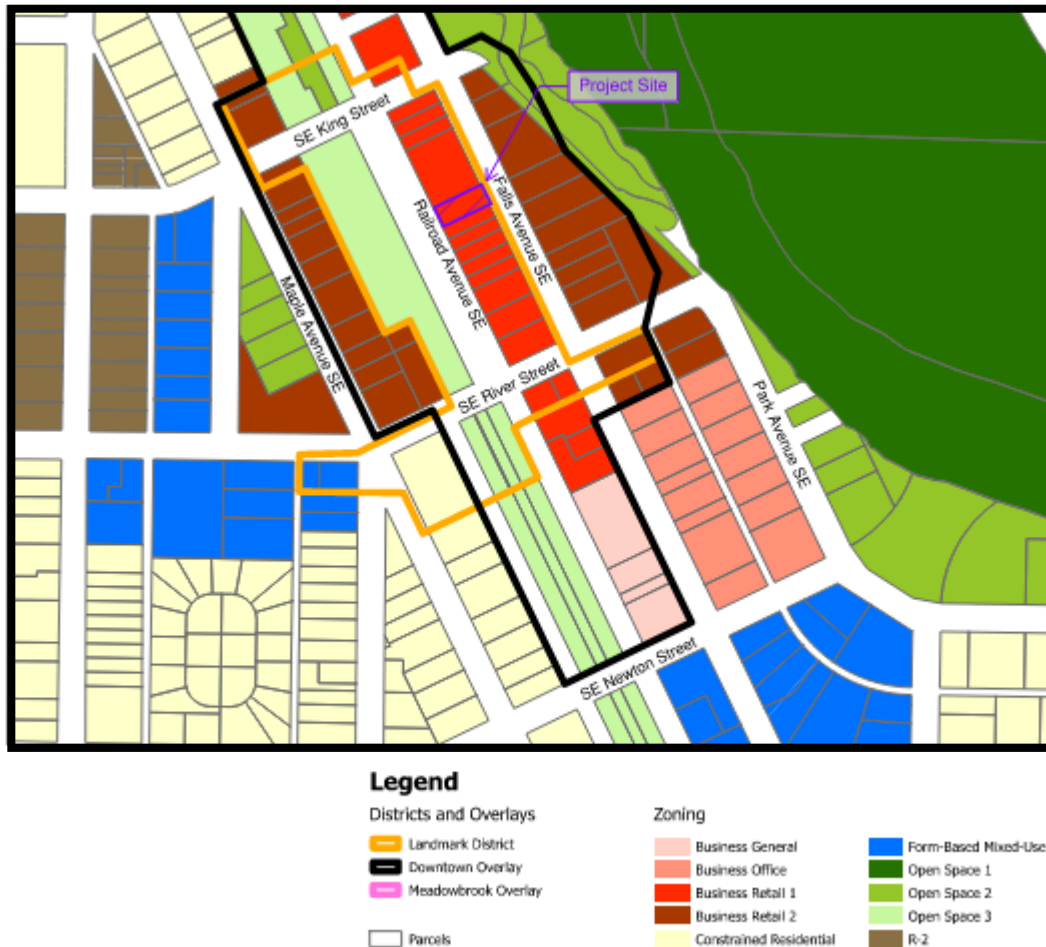


Figure 1: Map of the Snoqualmie Historic Downtown Commercial Landmark District

REVIEW CRITERIA

Use, Bulk and Dimensional Regulations:

The Site is located within the Business Retail 1(BR-1) zoning district. Pursuant to SMC 17.55.020, the existing use, Retail Sales, is permitted within the district. The proposed addition will provide ancillary office space and storage for the primary retail use. Dimensional standards for commercial districts are provided in SMC 17.20.040. The following dimensional standards apply to all new structures and additions within the BR-1 zoning district.

	Standard	Proposed
Minimum Front Yard	0'	N/A
Minimum Side Yard Setback	0'	0'
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	0'	3'
Maximum Height of Structure	35'	9' 6"
Maximum Impervious Surface	100%	100%

Historic Design Review:

Type I Historical Design Review for this proposal is considered relative to conformance with the following sections of the Snoqualmie Municipal Code: SMC 17.35.180 – Objectives and Principles of Historic Design Review, SMC 17.35.190 – Standards of General Applicability, and SMC 17.35.210 – Architectural Design Standards. The standards within these subsections are established to ensure that development activities meet the objectives and principles of the Overlay District and Landmark District. The majority of the standards provided in these subsections apply to the maintenance, modification, and construction of contributing buildings (“contributing” *or historic*)². The standards that apply to non-contributing buildings aim to ensure that construction activities are designed to enhance, but not mimic, the historic character of the downtown.

Staff Response: As proposed, the scope of work is generally consistent with the applicable standards provided in SMC 17.35.180; 17.35.190; and 17.35. 210. The proposed addition is located at the backside of the existing building and is not visible from the primary street frontage (Railroad Avenue). The proposed fence will reduce the visibility of the shipping container along Fall Ave SE. The proposed shipping container will not alter the existing roof line or significantly alter the massing of the site. The addition has been designed to include windows, window and door trim, and lighting consistent with the style of the existing building’s primary façade. The rear façade of the existing building along with the addition will be painted with colors selected from the Approved Exterior Color Palette (rear façade: Rookwood Dark Green – SW 2816; and accent/trim: Black – BM 2132-10).

² SMC 17.35.040(J) defines “contributing building or site” as a building or site located within a landmark district as defined herein, which is of historical significance and has substantially retained its original appearance, and is identified as such in the landmark designation report.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the application is substantially consistent with the design guidelines for construction within the Overlay District and Landmark District described by SMC 17.35. Staff recommends **APPROVAL** for Historical Design Review DRB2026-0004, **with the following condition:**

1. If any additional work to the front or rear structures is proposed, for example new signs, the applicant shall apply for the necessary permits prior to any work being completed.
2. Fencing shall be installed consistent with 17.55.130. Fencing over 6’ tall shall obtain building permit prior to installation.

The Historical Design Review Board may approve or approve with conditions the proposed development. If approved with conditions, the Historical Design Review Board may require that such conditions be fulfilled prior to the issuance of a building or occupancy permit, where appropriate. The Historical Design Review Board may deny the proposed development plans if they do not satisfy the requirements of Chapter 17.35 SMC.

APPEAL:

Pursuant to SMC 17.35.170, The findings and decision of the historic preservation officer for a Type I project, and the findings and decision of the historical design review board for a Type II or Type III project, may be appealed to the hearing examiner by filing a notice of appeal as specified in Chapter 14.40 SMC. The hearing examiner shall render their decision on the appeal per Chapters 2.14 and 14.40 SMC.

Pursuant to SMC 14.10, all appeals shall be filed within 14 days of the Notice of Decision. Appeals must be received by the community development department prior to 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the appeal period.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The Historical Design Review Board adopts the staff report above as its findings and conclusions for this project, DRB26-0004, and adopts the conditions above as conditions of approval.

Andre Testman
 Chair, Planning Commission
(sitting as the Historical Design Review Board per SMC 17.35.055)

Date

Attachments.

1. Application form, dated 03/17/2026;
2. Design Review Proposa, dated 03/17/2026;
3. Downtown Snoqualmie District and Overlay Map with Landmarks;
4. Approved Exterior Color Palette 2025;