

# City of Stevenson

## Ordinance No. 2026-\_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF STEVENSON, WASHINGTON, AMENDING CHAPTER 13.08 OF THE STEVENSON MUNICIPAL CODE (SMC), AS ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE NO. 2025-1224 ON JULY 17, 2025, TO CLARIFY SEWER CONNECTION REQUIREMENTS; PROVIDING FOR FAIR, CLEAR, AND WORKABLE STANDARDS FOR EXISTING AND NEW DEVELOPMENT; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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### WHEREAS

The City adopted Ordinance No. 2025-1224 on July 17, 2025, amending Chapter 13.08 SMC relating to sewer service; and

The City Council desires to ensure fair treatment of existing property owners, maintain public health protections, and align cost allocation with **actual system use and proportional benefit received**;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STEVENSON DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

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### SECTION 1 – AMENDMENT TO SMC 13.08.010 (Purpose and Policy)

SMC 13.08.010 is amended to add:

- Equitable distribution of costs shall be based on **actual use of the system and proportional benefit received**.
  - Charges shall not be imposed on properties that are not connected to the public sewer system.
  - The City shall encourage connection through **voluntary participation and appropriate incentives**, not coercive triggers.
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## ● SECTION 2 – AMENDMENT TO SMC 13.08.060 (Certain Facilities)

SMC 13.08.060 is amended to read:

On-site sewage systems (OSS) are permitted where allowed under applicable state and county health regulations, except where connection to public sewer is required under SMC 13.08.070 as amended herein.

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## ● SECTION 3 – REPLACEMENT OF SMC 13.08.070

### Public Sewer – Requirements to Connect

#### A. General Requirement

Connection to the public sewer system shall be required only as provided in this section.

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#### B. New Development

The following development shall connect to the public sewer system where available:

- Commercial / Industrial
  - Multi-family (3 or more units)
  - Land division creating three (3) or more lots
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#### C. Existing Development

- Connection is **optional**
- Existing OSS may continue indefinitely if compliant

Connection shall be required **only if ALL of the following apply**:

- The on-site sewage system has failed; AND
  - The system cannot be reasonably repaired or replaced; AND
  - Sewer service is directly available to the property
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## **D. Definition of Failure**

“Failure” means a documented condition resulting in discharge, backup, or violation of health regulations that cannot be corrected through reasonable repair or maintenance.

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## **E. Reconstruction / Replacement**

Reconstruction, replacement, or substantial improvement of an existing structure:

- Does NOT trigger mandatory sewer connection
- Shall be treated as existing development

Unless wastewater demand exceeds septic capacity and cannot be reasonably supported.

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## **F. What Does NOT Trigger Connection**

Connection shall NOT be required due to:

- Sale or transfer of property
  - Continued lawful occupancy
  - Routine maintenance or minor repair of an OSS
  - Reconstruction or replacement of an existing structure
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## **G. Distance**

Physical proximity to a sewer main, including specified distances, shall NOT by itself require connection.

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## **H. Land Division**

- Land divisions of three (3) or more lots → connection required
  - Land divisions of one (1) or two (2) lots → connection optional
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## ● SECTION 4 – LIMITATION ON SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CHARGES (SDCs)

### A. Applicability of SDCs

Wastewater System Development Charges (SDCs) shall apply only to:

- New construction;
  - Development that increases wastewater demand beyond prior use; or
  - Subdivision or land division creating additional dwelling units.
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### B. Exemption for Existing Development

SDCs shall **NOT** be imposed on existing residential development connecting to the public sewer system, including:

- Voluntary connection; or
  - Connection required due to on-site sewage system failure.
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### C. Definition

For purposes of this section, “existing development” means any legally established structure in existence prior to the availability of public sewer service.

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### D. Intent

This section clarifies that SDCs are intended to allocate costs associated with **new demand on the sewer system** and shall not be applied to existing homes transitioning from on-site sewage systems.

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## ● SECTION 5 – INCENTIVES FOR VOLUNTARY CONNECTION

The City may offer incentives to encourage voluntary connection to the public sewer system, including but not limited to:

- Financial assistance programs
  - Phased implementation options
  - Other voluntary participation measures
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## **● SECTION 6 – PROHIBITION ON CHARGES FOR NON-USERS**

No fees, charges, or assessments shall be imposed on properties that are not physically connected to the public sewer system.

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## **● SECTION 7 – CONTINUATION OF EXISTING REGULATIONS**

All provisions of Chapter 13.08 not amended herein shall remain in full force and effect.

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## **● SECTION 8 – SEVERABILITY**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions.

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## **● SECTION 9 – EFFECTIVE DATE**

This ordinance shall take effect as provided by law.