



CU-26001

City of Sumas

FEB 18 2026

Received

CITY OF SUMAS  
Public Works Department  
**Conditional Use Permit Application**

The following information or material must accompany this conditional use permit application. If any of this information is missing or incomplete, processing of the application will not begin.

- Filing fee of \$500 -Includes eight hours of staff time; additional billed actual
- Completed SEPA checklist (non-refundable fee of \$250 may apply for Review/ Determination)

\*\*Fee Schedule established in Section 3.030.010 SMC

- Complete answers to the 6 questions that are attached. If additional space is needed use a separate sheet of paper.
- A map, drawn to scale, of the location of the proposed conditional use showing existing buildings, street(s) and property lines, as well as any proposed new structures, roads, parking areas, landscaping, or other improvements. If the map is larger than 11" X 17", submit 3 copies. The map must clearly outline the property included in the conditional use request and must state the area (sq. ft.) of the property.
- Self-adhesive address labels preaddressed to the latest recorded real property owners within three hundred feet (300') of the property affected by the application, as shown by the records of the Whatcom County Assessor

Applicant(s) Name(s): Gertrude James

Mailing Address: 1559 Fruitland Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226

Phone Number: 360-441-3954

Address of Affected Property: 540 2nd Street, Building A, Unit 1-2, Sumas, WA 98295

Assessor's tax parcel number for affected property: 410435-092213-0000

Legal Description of affected property: Tract A, Candlewood Lot Line Adjustment, according to the plat thereof, recorded August 5, 1998, under Auditor's File No. 1980800546, records of Whatcom County, Washington

Current use of property: Rental

Proposed conditional use of property (briefly describe): Short-term rental (Airbnb-style lodging for the downstairs unit(s)).

Provide the following information:

\*If more space is needed, please continue on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Describe how the conditional use will be harmonious and consistent with the general and specific objectives of the Sumas Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed conditional use—short-term rental occupancy at 540 2nd Street, Building A, Units 1 and 2—is harmonious and consistent with the City of Sumas Comprehensive Plan for the following reasons:

- **Public Safety and Risk Reduction:** The lower units are located in a historically flood-prone area and have experienced repeated flood impacts, including the 2025 historic flood event. Converting these units from long-term occupancy to short-term rental use reduces continuous habitation in the most vulnerable portion of the structure, supporting hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness objectives.
- **Adaptive and Responsible Land Use:** This request reflects responsible adaptation of existing housing stock. It supports continued productive use of the property and reinvestment, helping prevent vacancy or blight in a flood-impacted area.
- **Neighborhood Compatibility:** The building remains residential in scale, footprint, and appearance. No industrial or high-impact commercial activity is introduced, and regular maintenance supports neighborhood stability.
- **Economic Stability and Community Vitality:** Short-term rental use provides a sustainable path to maintain the property and contributes to local spending and community activity.
- **Balanced Housing and Community Benefit:** The lower units are increasingly unsuitable for stable long-term tenancy due to flood risk. Short-term rental use reduces repeated tenant displacement while preserving residential function.
- **Infrastructure and Service Impacts:** Demand on utilities, roads, and services remains consistent with typical residential use, and the owner will comply with all City operational requirements.

2. Describe how the use will be designed, and operated so as to be compatible with the character of the neighborhood. For new construction, provide elevations and a site plan, drawn to scale.

The proposed short-term rental use is designed and will be operated in a manner fully compatible with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood.

**Design Showcasing Residential Quality:** No expansion of the building footprint, increase in density, or exterior changes are proposed. The units have been restored following flood damage with modern residential upgrades, including updated finishes, new appliances, full kitchens, in-unit laundry, and upgraded bathroom fixtures.

**Operational Controls:** Occupancy limits, guest rules, quiet hours, and active owner management will ensure respectful operation. Guests will also be informed of flood safety and evacuation procedures.

**Neighborhood Benefit:** Maintaining a high-quality property reduces vacancy risk and supports neighborhood appearance and stability.

3. Describe in detail the impact of the use upon public facilities, including streets (e.g. number of trips generated by employees and customers, size and type of vehicles), water system (water used per month), sewer systems, storm drainage system (amount of impervious surface, police and fire services, refuse disposal service, school system).

The proposed short-term rental use is expected to have minimal impact on public facilities and services, remaining consistent with standard residential demand.

**Traffic:** Guest travel is limited to arrivals and departures in standard passenger vehicles. No additional commercial traffic is anticipated.

**Employees:** Part-time service providers (cleaner, lawn care, handyman) will visit periodically as needed.

**Water & Sewer:** Usage remains within normal residential levels and may be reduced due to vacancy between stays.

**Storm Drainage:** No changes to impervious surface area are proposed.

**Police/Fire:** Impacts remain consistent with residential use due to house rules and owner oversight.

**Refuse Disposal:** Waste remains typical of residential use and will be managed through regular service.

**Schools:** No school impacts are expected as guests do not establish residency.

4. Describe hours of operation; number of employees; type of product service rendered; processes, activities, materials, chemicals, equipment, and conditions of operation.

The proposed use is short-term residential lodging within an existing dwelling and does not operate as a storefront or event venue.

Hours: Guest access is 24 hours, with check-in after 4:00 PM and check-out by 11:00 AM.

Quiet hours

will be enforced from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.

Employees: Approximately three part-time service providers support cleaning, lawn care, and maintenance.

Service Rendered: Temporary lodging with standard household amenities.

Materials/Equipment: Only normal household appliances and cleaning products are used.

Conditions: Occupancy limits, no parties/events, and active management will be maintained.

5. Describe associated noise, fumes, glare, dust, odor, smoke, mechanical vibration, and radio or television interference.

The proposed use will not generate noise, fumes, glare, dust, odor, smoke, mechanical vibration, or interference beyond what is typical of a residential dwelling. Quiet hours will be enforced.

6. If applicable describe how natural, scenic, or historic features will be maintained and protected from destruction, loss, or damages.

No land disturbance, grading, or expansion is proposed. Existing natural features, scenic character, and any historic resources will be preserved, as the use is limited to residential occupancy and routine maintenance.

**DECLARATION:**

I (we) the undersigned hereby declare under penalty of perjury that:

- a. The property affected by this application is exclusively owned by the applicant(s) or has been submitted with the consent of all owners of the affected property;
- b. The project permit application materials contain no known misrepresentation of fact or proposed action or design that, if completed would result in a structure, improvement, lot or condition in violation of the Sumas Municipal Code; and

Signature of Applicant(s):

Gertrude James

Date of Submittal:

02/18/2026

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY BELOW THIS LINE**

Date of Notice of Completion to Applicant (mailed): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Notice of Application to the Public (mailed, published): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Close of Comment Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Administrator's Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Notice of Decision to Public (mailed, published): \_\_\_\_\_

