

**RCW 35.21.940 Failing septic systems—Connection to public sewer systems—Appeals process.** (1) A city with an ordinance or resolution requiring, upon the failure of an on-site septic system, connection to a public sewer system must, in accordance with this section, provide an administrative appeals process to consider denials of permit applications to repair or replace the septic system. The administrative appeals process required by this section applies only to requests to repair or replace existing, failing on-site septic systems that:

(a) Were made for a single-family residence by its owner or owners;

(b) Were denied solely because of a law, regulation, or ordinance requiring connection to a public sewer system; and

(c) Absent the applicable law, regulation, or ordinance requiring connection to a public sewer system upon which the denial was based, would be approved.

(2) If the city has an administrative appeals process, the city may, subject to the requirements of this section, use that process. The administrative appeals process required by this section, however, must be presided over by the legislative body of the city or by an administrative hearings officer.

(3) The administrative appeals process required by this section must, at a minimum, consider whether:

(a) It is cost-prohibitive to require the property owner to connect to the public sewer system. In complying with this subsection (3)(a), the city must consider the estimated cost to repair or replace the on-site septic system compared to the estimated cost to connect to the public sewer system;

(b) There are public health or environmental considerations related to allowing the property owner to repair or replace the on-site septic system. In complying with this subsection (3)(b), the city must consider whether the repaired or replaced on-site septic system contributes to the pollution of surface waters or groundwater;

(c) There are public sewer system performance or financing considerations related to allowing the property owner to repair or replace the on-site septic system; and

(d) There are financial assistance programs or latecomer agreements offered by the city or state that may impact a decision of the property owner to repair or replace the on-site septic system.

(4) If the city, following the appeals process required by this section, determines that the property owner must connect the residence to the public sewer system, the property owner may, in complying with the determination and subject to approval of appropriate permits, select and hire contractors at his or her own expense to perform the work necessary to connect the residence to the public sewer system.

(5) Unless otherwise required by law, a city determination requiring the owner of a single-family residence with a failing on-site septic system to connect a residence to a public sewer system is not subject to appeal.

(6) For purposes of this section, "city" means a city or town.

[2015 c 297 s 1.]