



## Critical Area Review

### Frequently Asked Questions and Tips

The City of Algona has created customer tip sheets to inform the general public about the City's land use processes, effect of codes and regulations, and commonly asked questions relating to land development and construction projects. These sheets are not intended to be complete statements or advise customers of all applicable codes and regulations.

The codes and regulations may be revised or amended, please consult City staff to confirm your understanding of requirements before beginning work. It is the applicant's responsibility to understand all requirements and ensure the project meets the City's applicable codes and regulations.

### What is a Critical Areas Review?

A Critical Areas Review is a requirement when applying for project permits in critical areas. The process requires identification of critical areas and a professional inventory and survey of the land to precisely understand the critical area's potential hazards, environmental restrictions, and applicable development standards.

### When is a Critical Area Review necessary?

It is necessary anytime a property is located in or adjacent or impactful to a critical area. Once a critical area has been identified, the Critical Areas Review process must be completed prior to any other application approvals.

### How long is the Critical Area Review process?

A Critical Areas Review typically takes four (4) to six (6) months to process and approve. The length of time may vary depending proximity and impact to critical areas and the responsiveness of the applicant.

### What is the application process?

1. Submit the Critical Area Identification form and required materials by email to: [juliek@algonawa.gov](mailto:juliek@algonawa.gov).
2. The city will review the application for completeness within 28 days.
3. The city will determine if property is within, adjacent to, or likely to impact a critical area.
4. If a critical area is likely to be impacted, the applicant will need to submit a Critical Areas Report and hire a third party qualified professional.
5. The Critical Areas Report is submitted to the Mayor or designee where they will determine whether the proposed activity meets the criteria and complies with the applicable provisions of the ordinance.
6. Mayor or designee will prepare a written notice of determination and identify any required conditions of approval.
7. Conditions of approval will be attached to the underlying permit or approval.

### How much does a Critical Area Review cost?

The city's fee schedule for permits is updated on an annual basis. The fee schedule is located in [Chapter 2.50](#) in the Algona Municipal Code (AMC).



**Note: This Tip Sheet does not include all codes and regulations that may be applicable to your project. The applicant is responsible for demonstrating compliance with adopted codes and regulations, whether or not described in this document.**

**For more information: City of Algona | [www.algonwawa.gov](http://www.algonwawa.gov) | (253) 833-2897**

To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please call (253) 833-2897. TTY or STS users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Service.



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www.algonawa.gov | (253) 883-2897

### What do I need to submit?

***All application materials must be submitted in electronic PDF format. Additional materials are potentially required depending on the nature of your application. Please contact the city to confirm if additional materials are anticipated to be required.***

At minimum, a complete Critical Areas Review application should include:

- Complete Critical Areas Identification form
- Critical Areas Report
- Site Plan

### Is a pre-application meeting required?

Any person considering a application for development or use of land that may be regulated as a critical area may request a consultation meeting the mayor or their designee to discuss the requirements, criteria and processes. Recommendations and resources can be offered at this time.

### What is considered a critical area?

The term “critical areas” is adopted by reference into the Algona Municipal Code from the Washington State Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and are defined as:

*An area of land includ[ing] the following areas and ecosystems: (a) Wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas.*

### What are the approval criteria?

The applicant is responsible for demonstrating how the project meets the following approval criteria, listed in [Chapter 16.18A.290 AMC](#).

Approval of a Critical Area Review may only be granted by the city upon the following findings:

1. The proposal minimizes the impact on critical areas through mitigation sequencing;
2. The proposal does not pose an unreasonable threat to the public health, safety, or welfare on or off the development proposal site;
3. The proposal is consistent with the general interest of the public and the critical area;
4. Any alterations permitted to the critical area are mitigated;
5. The proposal protects the functions and values of the critical area;
6. The project is consistent with other applicable regulations;
7. All additional conditions as required by the city; and
8. It must mitigate its impacts or the application will be denied.



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