FEASABILITY

Address withheld, Milton, WA

Parcel withheld · City of Milton, Pierce County · Prepared Nov 2026 · sample report



CONDITIONAL GO

A short plat into two lots is the best use this parcel supports: one lot keeps the existing house on the clear ground near the street, the other depends on a slope line that has not yet been surveyed. What decides it is a geotechnical and boundary survey fixing exactly how much of the rear two-thirds of the lot is unbuildable hillside, and the city's written answer on whether a flag lot can meet the minimum lot width here.

WHAT HOLDS IT BACK MOST

- The plan as asked: room for a second standalone buildable lot COULD END IT — +16 if it clears
  Likely bad
- Landslide-hazard subdivision rule: whether a partly hazardous lot can be divided, and whether the new lot is itself wholly in the hazard or buffer COULD END IT — +10 if it clears
  Toss-up
- Flag lot or side-by-side lots meeting the 75-ft minimum width COULD END IT — +10 if it clears
  Toss-up

31	81	50

today | is a GO | to go

WHAT MOVES THE METER	IF A DOCUMENT SETTLES IT	IF YOU CHECK ITS STEP
The plan as asked: room for a second standalone buildable lot **COULD END IT** Likely bad If it goes wrong: no second lot; the split ends Settle it: Get a licensed geotechnical engineer to delineate the top and toe of the slope hazard on this specific lot and set the exact no-build buffer.	+16	No score change
Landslide-hazard subdivision rule: whether a partly hazardous lot can be divided, and whether the new lot is itself wholly in the hazard or buffer **COULD END IT** Toss-up If it goes wrong: subdivision barred; ends the plan Settle it: Ask Milton's Community Development Director, in writing, whether MMC 18.16.530(B)(8) allows dividing land that is only partly within the landslide hazard area and buffer, and how the city measures mi…	+10	No score change
Flag lot or side-by-side lots meeting the 75-ft minimum width **COULD END IT** Toss-up If it goes wrong: no lot layout meets width; ends the plan Settle it: Ask Milton's Community Development Director, in writing, whether MMC 18.16.530(B)(8) allows dividing land that is only partly within the landslide hazard area and buffer, and how the city measures mi…	+10	No score change
Existing 1978 house stays conforming against the new lot lines **COULD END IT** Toss-up If it goes wrong: house blocks the line; split fails or needs demolition	+10	No score change
Recorded mid-1980s short plat notes or restrictions against further division **COULD END IT** Likely fine If it goes wrong: a recorded note bars the split; ends the plan Settle it: Pull the recorded mid-1980s short plat (Pierce County Auditor's Fee No. [record withheld]) and read its easements, restrictions and any note on further division.	+5	No score change

WHAT MOVES THE METER	IF A DOCUMENT SETTLES IT	IF YOU CHECK ITS STEP
Water and sewer service for the new lot **COULD END IT** Likely fine If it goes wrong: no legal service for the new lot; ends the plan	+5	No score change
Legal access to a public street for the new lot **COULD END IT** Likely fine If it goes wrong: no recorded access for the new lot; ends the plan	+5	No score change
Frontage improvements (curb, gutter, sidewalk) along the street, not budgeted Toss-up If it goes wrong: tens of thousands of dollars in frontage work Settle it: File the short plat application with Milton Community Development	+5	No score change
Not checked: stormwater for the new lot and access tract above a landslide-hazard slope Toss-up If it goes wrong: an engineered drainage facility costing over $25,000, or less usable ground	+5	No score change
SEPA review, because the critical area removes the short plat exemption Likely bad If it goes wrong: months of threshold review plus an appeal window Settle it: File the short plat application with Milton Community Development	+4	No score change
Utility connection charges for the new lot, not budgeted Likely bad If it goes wrong: several thousand to low tens of thousands of dollars in charges	+4	No score change
Not checked: mortgage lender releasing the new lot Toss-up If it goes wrong: a paydown or a delay before the new lot can be conveyed	+3	No score change

Settle the ones that could end it first: if one goes wrong, the plan may stop there. Each item that clears moves the reading up; how far depends on what the documents show. Checking a task records progress only. A reviewed finding changes the score; only an evidence-based review can change the rating.

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The parcel

FINDING	STATUS	SOURCE
Parcel withheld, City of Milton, Pierce County, WA. Site address Address withheld, Milton, WA.	VERIFIED	Pierce County's parcel records, retrieved 2026-11-11
Size: the recorded mid-1980s short plat and the Assessor's own legal description state about 66,000 sq ft (about 1.5 acres). The county's own digitized parcel boundary, drawn from that same plat, measures only about 51,000 sq ft (1.17 acres), a 22% gap. The recorded plat figure is used below as the lot's stated size; the smaller digitized boundary is used for the buildable-area math because it is the only digitized outline on file. A boundary survey would settle which figure is right and is the first step under What it takes.	VERIFIED (size stated); unresolved conflict (boundary)	Pierce County Assessor's legal description and building record, retrieved 2026-11-11; Pierce County's digitized parcel boundary, retrieved 2026-11-11
The house: built 1978, remodeled 1993, two stories, about 1,200 sq ft, 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, frame siding, composition roof, electric baseboard heat. It predates the mid-1980s short plat that drew this lot's current boundaries and predates the zoning rules now applied to it. Whether its footprint actually meets today's setbacks awaits a survey (open question 3).	VERIFIED (structure); open question 3 (setback compliance)	Pierce County Assessor's building record, retrieved 2026-11-11
Permit history: no building permit, code-enforcement case, or land-use case on file for this parcel in Pierce County's permit system. The county's own digitization does not reliably reach back to the 1970s-80s, so this is a clean search, not necessarily a clean history. Milton's own permit portal requires a sign-in and was not searched (open question 7).	VERIFIED (search result); open question 7 (completeness)	Pierce County's permit and code-enforcement records, retrieved 2026-11-11
Ownership: the Assessor's building record names [owner withheld], mailing address [mailing address withheld], Milton, WA. A separate county record lists a different mailing address ([mailing address withheld], Tacoma) for the same parcel; the two county records disagree with each other.	VERIFIED (conflict), basis for ownership not adjudicated here	Two of Pierce County's own parcel records, retrieved 2026-11-11

FINDING	STATUS	SOURCE
Recorded easements and restrictions: the legal description states this lot is conveyed "together with easements and restrictions of record" tied to the mid-1980s short plat. The short plat document itself sits with the Pierce County Auditor behind a sign-in wall, so the content of those easements and restrictions awaits that document (open question 1). No separately recorded covenant or association declaration was found.	open question 1	Pierce County Assessor legal description, retrieved 2026-11-11; Pierce County Auditor recorded-document system (sign-in required)
Sewer or septic: no on-site sewage system record on file with the county health department. A county-owned sewer main sits about 35 ft from the parcel and the parcel sits inside the county's sewer service area, consistent with sewer service, but no side-sewer connection permit was found either.	INFERRED	Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department OSS search, retrieved 2026-11-11; Pierce County sewer-main and service-area GIS, retrieved 2026-11-11
Water: the City of Milton runs its own water system. The system's state drinking-water operating permit is in good standing (category green) through 2027-05-31, with no connection restriction found.	VERIFIED	WA Dept. of Health Office of Drinking Water operating permit, the city water system, retrieved 2026-11-11
Flood zone: zero hits on Pierce County's regulated floodplain and FEMA floodway layers at this parcel. Not in a mapped flood hazard area.	VERIFIED	Pierce County GIS, retrieved 2026-11-11



Figure 1. The property as photographed in 2020 (Pierce County 2020 orthophoto). It shows the lot's shape and tree cover at that date; it does not show the slope or the critical area, which are mapped separately below.



Figure 2. Mapped hazards near the parcel, on a 2025 image (Esri, Vantor, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community). It shows the county's own landslide-hazard polygons, which sit near but not on this parcel; it does not show the slope-based hazard area Milton's own code separately recognizes, which has no map and is discussed under Slope.



Figure 3. Mapped sewer and water lines near the parcel, on the same 2025 image. It shows the county sewer main near the frontage; it does not show Milton's own water mains, because Milton runs its own water system outside the county's GIS. The city's Water Division answers that question.

Zoning

The parcel is zoned **NR1 (Neighborhood Residential 1)**. The rules that govern it:

RULE	NR1 VALUE	CODE SECTION
Minimum lot size	8,000 sq ft	MMC 17.15A.010
Minimum lot width	75 ft	MMC 17.15A.010
Maximum dwelling units per lot	3 (reachable as one house plus two accessory dwelling units)	MMC 17.15A.010 note 1
Front setback (from the right-of-way)	20 ft	MMC 17.15B.010

RULE	NR1 VALUE	CODE SECTION
Rear setback	25 ft	MMC 17.15B.010, 17.20.040
Side setback	7.5 ft each side	MMC 17.15B.010
Maximum structure coverage	40% of lot area	MMC 17.15A.010
Maximum impervious coverage	50% of lot area	MMC 17.15A.010
Maximum footprint, any one building	3,000 sq ft	MMC 17.15A.010

Nonconforming status. The house was built in the late 1970s, eight years before the mid-1980s short plat drew this lot's present boundaries, and well before the current NR1 standards. Whether the house's actual footprint meets today's setbacks is not known without a survey: nobody has measured the house against the current setback lines. If it turns out to encroach, it is very likely a **legally nonconforming structure** under MMC Ch. 17.52: lawfully built under the rules in force at the time, allowed to remain, but limited in how it can be repaired, added to, or rebuilt if damaged. This is open question 3 below; a survey settles it, and it matters because any plan to keep the existing house on one half of a split lot needs to know whether that house is already nonconforming before anything is added to it.

The short plat (subdivision) process. Milton's subdivision code is separate from its zoning code (Title 16, substantially rewritten 2025-07-07). A division into four lots or fewer is a **short subdivision**, decided administratively by the land use administrator with no public hearing (MMC 16.28.200), Milton did not adopt the state's optional allowance to go up to nine lots this way, so four is the ceiling. Every lot that results from a short plat must independently meet the NR1 numbers in the table above. Preliminary approval lapses after one year if the final short plat is not recorded (extensions available for good cause). A newer provision, Unit Lot Subdivision (MMC Ch. 16.26, adopted with the same 2025 rewrite), lets a single residential development be divided into fee-simple unit lots that meet the zone's standards only as a whole; it is built for attached/townhome-style projects and is not the natural tool for simply dividing this lot in two.

The frontage problem. The lot's frontage on the street measures about 137 to 140 ft. Two ordinary lots each meeting NR1's 75-ft minimum width would need about 150 ft of frontage between them, more than this lot has. Milton's subdivision code anticipates this: it sets standards for an **access tract** serving one or two lots (20 ft wide, 14 ft paved; 30 ft if it must double as a fire lane, MMC 16.12.040), the standard tool for a "flag lot" that reaches

a rear lot without needing its own full-width frontage. Whether Milton measures the 75-ft width requirement at the street or at the building site (which is what would make a flag-lot configuration workable here) is a question for Community Development to answer in writing; see What it takes, step 2.

Frontage improvements. A three- or four-lot short plat must build curb, gutter and sidewalk along its street frontage (MMC 12.24.160). A two-lot short plat is exempt from that requirement only where *both* resulting lots already have a house on them. Because a two-lot split here would create one new, undeveloped lot, that exemption would not apply, and frontage improvements should be assumed unless the city says otherwise.

Critical areas

HAZARD	ON THIS PARCEL?	WHAT IT TRIGGERS
Landslide hazard area (mapped)	No. Pierce County's own mapped landslide-hazard polygons do not touch the parcel; the nearest one sits roughly 42 ft beyond the parcel's side line.	None from the map alone.
Landslide hazard area (by Milton's own criteria)	Likely yes, on part of the lot. Milton designates a landslide hazard area by a slope-and-relief test, independent of any map: any ground 40% or steeper with at least 10 ft of vertical relief (MMC 18.16.510(B)(9)). This parcel's own measured topography shows slope up to 71.9% and 86 ft of relief, concentrated in a band roughly 150 to 310 ft back from the street (the rear two-thirds of the lot, toward the west).	A geotechnical engineering report, required for any project within a landslide hazard area (MMC 18.16.520(B)(3)); a no-build buffer (next row); a limit on when the ground can be cleared; a limit on subdividing the hazardous part of the lot.
Erosion hazard	Not shown on the county's map, but the soil itself (NRCS-mapped "Xerochrepts, 45 to 70 percent slopes") independently meets Milton's erosion-hazard criteria test, which like the landslide test applies regardless of the map.	Confirmed by the same geotechnical report.
Wetlands, streams, flood hazard	None. Zero on-parcel hits on all four layers checked (wetlands, county-regulated floodplain, FEMA floodway, streams).	None.

The subdivision question. Milton's code states that land **wholly** within a landslide hazard area or its buffer may not be subdivided (MMC 18.16.530(B)(8)(a)). Several independent, non-official summaries of the same code section (this study could not open the city's own code page directly to confirm it word for word, despite repeated attempts)

describe a further provision: land only **partially** within the hazard area or buffer may still be divided, if each resulting lot keeps enough buildable ground outside the hazard and buffer to stand on its own. That further provision has not been confirmed by reading Milton's own page and is treated here as unconfirmed, it does not by itself decide anything in this report. What is independently established, from this parcel's own measured topography rather than from that unconfirmed text, is that the lot is **not** wholly hazardous: a flatter plateau occupies roughly the street-front third of the lot. Under the confirmed part of the rule alone, a lot that is not wholly within the hazard is not the kind of lot the bar describes. Confirming the further provision in writing, from the city, is open question 2 below, and is the single fact this report would most like to see settled next.

Utilities

Water is supplied by the City of Milton's own municipal system, in good standing under its state drinking-water operating permit through 2027-05-31, with no connection restriction found. Sewer is not run by the city at all: it passes through Pierce County under an interlocal agreement, and this parcel sits in the county's the creek sewer basin. No septic system is on file for this address, and a county sewer main is mapped about 35 ft from the parcel, consistent with a sewer connection, though no connection permit was found either way. Electric service in Milton is split between the city (which sells the connection) and Tacoma Power (which inspects the wiring); which body actually issues the electrical permit is still an open item.

What remains open: the exact connection charge a new lot would owe Pierce County for sewer, reported in secondary sources at roughly $6,945 per connection but not VERIFIED against the county's own page; and whether the existing house's water and sewer service could simply be shared or would need its own new connection if the lot is split. The City of Milton's Water Division and the Pierce County Development Center each answer one half of that question; see Who to contact next.

Slope

The lot drops from roughly 217 ft elevation near the street to 131 ft at its lowest point, 86 ft of relief over about 414 ft of depth, with grades up to 71.9% measured on an interior band. The ground near the street is comparatively flat; the slope is concentrated in the rear two-thirds, bottoming out before easing slightly again near the very back of the lot.

The required no-build buffer around that slope is the height of the slope itself, or 50 ft, whichever is larger (MMC 18.16.530(B)(1)(a)), plus an additional 15 ft of structural setback beyond the buffer edge (MMC 18.16.190; driveways and patios may sit in that last 15 ft, buildings may not). Because the measured slope height here (roughly 62 to 86 ft, depending on exactly where the top and toe of the slope are drawn) is greater than the 50-ft floor, the buffer is controlled by the slope's own height, not the floor. Combined, that is a no-build offset of roughly 77 to 101 ft measured in from both the top and the toe of the slope, a wide band, on a lot that is only about 140 ft wide.

Putting the slope map against the lot's own shape, under the two ends of that range, somewhere between about 15% and about 35% of the lot's total area is likely to sit outside the hazard area and its buffer altogether, concentrated in a strip near the street. The real number depends on exactly where a licensed professional draws the top and toe of the slope, which this office cannot do from elevation samples alone (MMC 18.16.520(A)(3) reserves that line-drawing to a geotechnical report). Clearing any vegetation inside the hazard area or its buffer is only allowed May 1 through October 1 each year (MMC 18.16.530(B)(5)), a scheduling fact, not a go/no-go one, but one that can cost a season if missed.

What fits

MEASURE	VALUE	BASIS
Lot area (recorded)	about 66,000 sq ft (1.50 ac)	mid-1980s short plat / Assessor legal description
Lot area (GIS-drawn boundary)	about 51,000 sq ft (1.17 ac)	Pierce County's digitized parcel boundary
Lot dimensions	about 140 ft wide at the street, about 414 ft deep	Same GIS boundary
Zoning setbacks	front 20 ft, rear 25 ft, side 7.5 ft each	MMC 17.15B.010
Buildable area after zoning setbacks alone	about 38,900 sq ft (76% of the GIS-drawn lot)	Feasa's buildable-area calculation against the lot's digitized outline
Buildable area after the slope buffer is added	roughly 15% to 35% of the lot, concentrated near the street	Topography against Milton's slope-hazard buffer rule; range, not a fixed number, pending a geotechnical/survey line

MEASURE	VALUE	BASIS
Existing house	about 1,200 sq ft (total, two stories); exact footprint and position on the lot not surveyed	Pierce County Assessor

No specific unit size was tested against this lot: the customer asked about a lot split, not a particular building, so there is no floor-plan fit to chart here (see The numbers).

PATH	CAN IT BE DONE?	WHAT DECIDES IT
Short plat into two lots (keep the house on one, create one new lot)	Conditional	A geotechnical and boundary survey confirming the new lot clears the slope hazard with enough buildable ground left over, and the city's confirmation that a flag lot reached by an access tract can meet the 75-ft width rule here
Short plat into three or four lots	Unlikely, not ruled out	Would need far more clear, buildable ground than the slope appears to leave; test only if the survey above shows more clear area than expected

A two-lot split, with the existing house staying on the front lot, is the configuration the evidence points to. Everything beyond that turns on the slope line a survey has not yet drawn.

What stands in the way

FINDING	STATUS
The lot's stated area (about 66,000 sq ft, from the recorded plat) and its digitized GIS boundary (about 51,000 sq ft) disagree by 22%. A new lot's size has to be measured against the real boundary, not either number on file.	VERIFIED conflict, unresolved
Milton's own mapped landslide-hazard layer does not touch this parcel, but the city's own slope-and-relief test very likely designates part of the lot regardless of the map, because that test does not depend on a map at all.	VERIFIED test; INFERRED application to this parcel
The exact buildable line around that slope awaits a geotechnical and boundary survey (What it takes, step 1). Until then, no one can say with certainty how much of the lot, or which part, is actually clear to build on or to carve into a second lot.	pending survey

FINDING	STATUS
Whether Milton's code allows dividing land that is only partly within a landslide hazard area, keeping the clear part as its own lot, rests on sources this study could not read directly on the city's own code page; multiple independent, consistent secondary summaries describe such a provision (open question 2).	open question 2
The lot's frontage (about 137 to 140 ft) is short of what two ordinary 75-ft-wide lots would need (about 150 ft); a second lot would likely need to be a flag lot reached by an access tract, and whether that satisfies the city's width rule is a question for Community Development (What it takes, step 2).	pending the city's written answer
The mid-1980s short plat that created this lot carries easements and restrictions of record that this study has not yet been able to read. One of them could, in principle, already restrict further division: see The parcel and What it takes, step 4.	pending the recorded document
Whether the existing 1978 house's footprint meets today's setbacks, making it either conforming or legally nonconforming, awaits a survey: see The parcel and What it takes, step 3.	pending survey
No current moratorium was found on subdivisions, building permits, or water or sewer connections in Milton, but the search could not fully read the city's own meeting-agenda archive, so this is a soft, not a hard, clearance.	INFERRED
A newly adopted tree-preservation ordinance (adopted 2026-11-03, after this pack was last checked) appears to add a permit step for clearing on a lot that is vacant or being developed, which would reach the rear of this lot; this comes from a secondary report of the city's action rather than the ordinance's own text.	INFERRED

What it takes

1. **Get a licensed geotechnical engineer to delineate the top and toe of the slope hazard on this specific lot and set the exact no-build buffer.** A geotechnical engineer does this; it is the step the landslide-hazard subdivision rule in Critical areas requires before any plat can be drawn.

   COST **$8,000 to $20,000 (public Washington market sources; this parcel's measured slope and relief put it in the higher tier)**

   TIME **3 to 6 weeks**

   Tells us: exactly how much of the lot is clear to build on or to carve into a new lot, and whether that clear area is enough to support a second, standalone lot.

2. **Ask Milton's Community Development Director, in writing, whether MMC 18.16.530(B)(8) allows dividing land that is only partly within the landslide hazard area and buffer, and how the city measures minimum lot width for a flag lot reached by an access tract.** The Community Development Director answers this.

   COST **no charge, a phone call and a written follow-up**

   TIME **a few business days to a few weeks for a written answer**

   Tells us: whether the two-lot split described in What fits is legally possible at all, and whether it has to be shaped as a flag lot.

3. **Commission a boundary survey to resolve the 22% gap between the lot's recorded size (about 66,000 sq ft) and its digitized GIS boundary (about 51,000 sq ft), and confirm the existing house's footprint against current NR1 setbacks.** A licensed land surveyor does this.

   COST **$1,200 to $3,000** TIME **2 to 5 weeks**

   Tells us: the lot's true boundary and area to design the split against, and whether the existing house is already a legally nonconforming structure.

4. **Pull the recorded mid-1980s short plat (Pierce County Auditor's Fee No. [record withheld]) and read its easements, restrictions and any note on further division.** The Pierce County Auditor's recording division provides a copy.

   COST **$0 to $50** TIME **1 to 4 weeks**

   Tells us: whether a private restriction, independent of the current code, already limits or blocks a new split.

5. **Order a critical areas report once the geotechnical line is drawn, covering mitigation sequencing and any buffer-averaging option.** A qualified critical-areas professional (often the same geotechnical firm) prepares this.

   COST **$3,000 to $8,000** TIME **4 to 9 weeks**

   Tells us: the final buffer the city will accept, and whether any reduction (buffer averaging, a demonstrated 10-ft minimum) is available.

6. **File the short plat application with Milton Community Development** , once the survey, geotechnical report and critical areas report are in hand. Community Development, Planning & Community Development Department, processes it administratively.

   COST **$1,800 short plat fee, plus a $1,200 SEPA checklist fee (a four-lot-or-fewer short plat is often SEPA-exempt in Washington, but that exemption does not reach a site with a designated critical area, so budget for the checklist)**

   TIME **Process Type I, no public hearing; first substantive comments typically in 4 to 8 weeks, longer if the critical-area review runs in parallel**

   Tells us: the city's final decision on the split.

Already on file

DATE	WHAT IT IS	RECORD NUMBER	STATUS	WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU	LINKS
2026-11-11	Pierce County Assessor building-characteristics record (PCB Buildings GIS layer) for Address withheld -- owner, year built, bedrooms/bathrooms, square footage	withheld	current snapshot	Raw JSON response from Pierce County's own PCB_Buildings ArcGIS FeatureServer, queried by TaxParcelNumber=withheld; shows owner [owner withheld], 1978-built 2-story about 1,200 sq ft 3bd/1ba frame house remodeled 1993, and the parcel's legal description confirming about 66,000 sq ft / 1.50 ac per the recorded short plat.	Saved copy in your Documents, Source record
2026-11-11	Pierce County Regulated Floodplain (2017, FEMA-based) GIS point query at the parcel's centroid	withheld	current	Zero floodplain polygons intersect the parcel centroid, so the parcel is not in a county-regulated/FEMA-based special flood hazard area and no elevation certificate would be expected on file.	Saved copy in your Documents, Source record
2026-11-11	Well log search by the parcel’s survey area	[survey location withheld]	held by agency	Held by the agency. Use the source record link and ask for this record number.	Source record

DATE	WHAT IT IS	RECORD NUMBER	STATUS	WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU	LINKS
2026-11-11	Side sewer/water service card and connection records for Address withheld	Address withheld	held by agency	Held by the agency. Use the source record link and ask for this record number.	Source record
mid-1980s-09-25	Recorded mid-1980s short plat creating this lot (Pierce Co. Auditor's Fee No. [record withheld]) -- would show the actual easement/restriction text and any no-further-division note referenced in the legal description	[record withheld]	held by Pierce County Auditor; indexed in WA State Digital Archives 'Plats and Surveys Records' collection (Pierce Co., 1984-present)	Held by the agency. Use the source record link and ask for this record number.	Source record

Also checked

- Septic and on-site sewage: none on file. Searched Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department edocs On-Site (OSS) record search by parcel withheld and address Address withheld.
- Building permits: none on file. Searched Pierce County PALS permit search (webPermitSearchList API) by parcel withheld and site address Address withheld.
- Land use cases: none on file. Searched Pierce County PALS permit/case search (webPermitSearchList API, same endpoint covers land-use case types) by parcel withheld.
- Environmental review and site reports: none on file. Searched Pierce County PALS permit/case search (webPermitSearchList API, same endpoint covers SEPA/environmental case types) by parcel withheld.
- Code enforcement: none on file. Searched Pierce County PALS code-enforcement/SRS search (webGetSrsSearchList API) by parcel withheld.

Studies and reports it needs

STUDY	WHY THIS PARCEL NEEDS IT	WHO PREPARES IT	WHAT IT SETTLES	WHEN IT CAN BE DONE
Geotechnical (slope stability) report	The lot's own measured slope (up to 71.9%) and relief (86 ft) independently meet Milton's landslide-hazard criteria regardless of the county's map; required for any project within a landslide hazard area	A licensed geotechnical engineer	The exact top and toe of the slope, the required buffer, and the factor of safety for any construction near it	No season limit on file
Boundary survey	The lot's recorded area and its GIS-drawn boundary disagree by 22%	A licensed land surveyor	The lot's true boundary and area to design the split against	No season limit on file
Critical areas report	A short plat application on a lot with a landslide-hazard area needs this to satisfy the mandatory pre-application consultation and mitigation-sequencing requirements	A qualified critical-areas professional	The buffer the city will accept and any reduction available	No season limit on file

The numbers

About $17,000 to $38,300 to take this lot split from where it stands today through a filed short plat application, with the midpoint of that range at about $27,650; this does not include building anything on either resulting lot.

Short plat into two lots RECOMMENDED

The lot as recorded (about 66,000 sq ft); the split itself, not construction on either resulting lot

ITEM	LOW	LIKELY	HIGH
Boundary and topographic survey Resolves the 22% lot-area conflict and maps the slope for the geotechnical report	$2,700	$4,850	$7,000
Geotechnical (slope stability) report Washington market rate for a designated landslide-hazard-area lot	$8,000	$14,000	$20,000
Critical areas report	$3,000	$5,500	$8,000
Short plat application fee	$1,800	$1,800	$1,800
SEPA environmental checklist	$1,200	$1,200	$1,200
Land use review fee	$300	$300	$300
Total	**$17,000**	**$27,650**	**$38,300**

What this budget covers

Included:

- The studies, surveys and city fees to take the lot split from today's open questions through a filed, decided short plat application.

Not included:

- Any frontage improvement (curb, gutter, sidewalk) the city may require along the street for the new lot; its cost depends on a civil design not yet drawn.
- Recording a Native Growth Protection Area over the hazard portion of the lot, a required step with no separately published fee.
- Any outside-consultant peer review of the critical areas report, billed at actual cost plus 15% overhead; the amount depends on the report itself.
- Connecting water, sewer or power to a new lot, or building anything on it. Sewer connection alone would run through Pierce County's the creek basin charge, reported in secondary sources at roughly $6,945 per new connection, a figure this study has not been able to verify against the county's own page directly; confirm with the Pierce County Development Center before relying on it.

No floor plan was matched; construction is priced from published market costs per square foot.

Site work for this parcel (clearing, grading, erosion control) is not priced here because no construction has been proposed; Milton's own clearing and grading permit fees run $156 for under 7,000 sq ft of disturbance to $366 plus staff or consultant time above that, cited in Costs.

The fee lines above are built from the schedule in Fees the city publishes, below.

Fees the city publishes

FEE	AMOUNT
Short plat application	$1,800.00
Boundary line adjustment (alternative to a short plat, not priced above)	$900.00
SEPA environmental checklist	$1,200.00
Critical area exemption (if the city finds one applies instead of a full checklist)	$600.00
Land use review	$300.00
Clearing and grading permit, under 7,000 sq ft of disturbance	$156.00
Clearing and grading permit, 7,000 sq ft or more	$366.00 plus staff/consultant time
Civil permit (impervious surface), under 2,000 sq ft	$300.00
Right-of-way permit (driveway/frontage work), if needed for a new lot's access	$150.00 plus $0.20 per foot, plus $150.00 inspection
Outside consultant/staff billable (e.g., critical-area peer review)	Actual cost plus 15% overhead, capped at $240 per invoice; admin staff $120/hr, Public Works staff $150/hr

This schedule is Resolution No. 26-1995, adopted by the Milton City Council at a special meeting on 2026-05-11, in force as of this study (retrieved and individually confirmed against the published PDF on 2026-11-11). Fees are due at application unless otherwise noted; several impact-fee lines in this schedule carry an annual September 1 cost-index

adjustment that this study could not confirm was applied for 2026, and none of those lines price anything in this report.

The civic record

DATE	FINDING	SOURCE DOCUMENT	STATUS
2025-07-07	Milton adopted Ordinance 2116-25, rewriting its subdivision code (Title 16): the short plat process, the new Unit Lot Subdivision chapter, and access-tract standards used throughout this report.	Ordinance 2116-25	decided
2026-05-11	Milton adopted the current fee schedule (Resolution 26-1995), including the $1,800 short plat fee relied on in The numbers.	City of Milton Fee Schedule	decided
2026-11-03	Milton adopted an Urban Forest Preservation ordinance that appears to add a tree-clearing permit step on a vacant or developing lot, which would reach this parcel's rear slope; this report rests on a secondary account of the council's action rather than the ordinance's own text.	Secondary news report of city council action	decided, text unverified
through 2026-11-11	No current moratorium found on subdivisions, building permits, or water or sewer connections in Milton. The city's own meeting-agenda search could not be fully read by this study, so this is a soft clearance pending direct confirmation.	Milton City Council and Planning Commission meeting records reviewed where available	checked, not fully confirmed
through 2026-11-11	No Milton hearing-examiner decision applying the landslide-hazard subdivision rule to a comparable lot was found. Two other pending short plats in Milton (one on steep ground) are named in city records but neither was confirmed as directly on point.	Milton Land Use Notices page	not found

What was checked

BODY	DOCUMENTS READ	COVERS	COULD NOT REACH
Milton City Council	3	2026-09 to 2026-11	Nothing

BODY	DOCUMENTS READ	COVERS	COULD NOT REACH
Milton Planning Commission	1	2026-10 to 2026-10	full agenda/minutes text not posted in a form this sweep could read directly -- relied on a news aggregator and the city's hearing-notice page instead of the Commission's own minutes
Washington DOH Office of Drinking Water	1	2026-11 (point-in-time permit, valid through 2027-05-31)	Nothing
Pierce County Sewer Utility	0	2026	piercecountywa.gov blocks automated fetch with a Cloudflare challenge; basin and rate figures came from search-engine-indexed snippets of the county's own page, not a page read directly -- ask the Pierce County Development Center to confirm
Milton Hearing Examiner	0	2023 to 2026	no hearing-examiner decisions are posted in a form this sweep could reach; only case names/numbers from the Land Use Notices page -- ask the Milton Community Development Director or file a records request for the specific case files
Milton City Council	2	2019-05 to 2026-11	Nothing
Milton Planning Commission / Planning Advisory Commission	2	2016-01 to 2026-11	Nothing
Milton Hearing Examiner	0	2021-11 to 2026-11	Milton does not publish a separate indexed hearing-examiner decision archive found via general web search; no decision search engine specific to the hearing examiner was located for the address or parcel.

Nearby development

- 16 recorded plats/short plats within ~400 ft of the parcel span 1905-2023 (aggregate count from the county's recorded-conveyance spatial index; context only, not a precedent/entitlement), within ~400 ft of Address withheld (Pierce County recorded-conveyance spatial index) (decided, October 2023). Source

- 2-3 acre property on a nearby street between the street and a nearby street planned for dedication to the City of Milton as a park in 2030, a nearby street between the street and a nearby street, Milton (same street, the street) (discussed, October 2019). Source
- Recorded short plat, AFN [record withheld], within ~400 ft of Address withheld (Pierce County recorded-conveyance spatial index) (decided, October 2023). Source
- Recorded short plat, AFN [record withheld], within ~400 ft of Address withheld (Pierce County recorded-conveyance spatial index) (decided, November 2020). Source

What would change this verdict

1. A geotechnical and boundary survey showing the clear, buildable portion of the lot is smaller than the low end of the range estimated here (about 15% of the lot) would move this toward NO-GO: see What it takes, step 1.
2. A written answer from Milton confirming there is no partial-coverage exception to the landslide-hazard subdivision bar would also move this toward NO-GO, because it would mean any part of the lot touched by the hazard buffer cannot become its own lot at all: see What it takes, step 2 (open question 2).
3. Reading the mid-1980s short plat and finding it already bars further division would end the project regardless of the slope question: see What it takes, step 4 (open question 1).

Open questions

THE QUESTION	WHAT IT CHANGES	HOW TO SETTLE IT	WHO SETTLES IT	COST	TIME
1. Does the parcel's own mid-1980s short plat (S.P. [record withheld]) carry any recorded restriction, easement, or condition limiting re-subdivision?	Could independently restrict or complicate a new short plat regardless of what Title 16 says today.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Pull the recorded mid-1980s short plat (S.P. [record withheld]) itself from the Pierce County Auditor/Recorder -- it may carry its own easements, restrictions or a note limiting further division, independent of Title 16. Request the recorded document before proceeding.	Pierce County Auditor's Office (recorded document) / title company	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)

THE QUESTION	WHAT IT CHANGES	HOW TO SETTLE IT	WHO SETTLES IT	COST	TIME
2. Does MMC 18.16.530(B)(8)(a) bar subdivision only for land WHOLLY within a landslide hazard area/buffer, with a carve-out allowing partial-coverage lots to be divided if each new lot has sufficient buildable area outside the hazard+buffer -- or is there no such carve-out?	This is the single rule that decides whether a lot split is categorically barred or merely constrained to the clear portion of the lot.	The Milton Community Development system did not answer. Check again or ask them. Read https://ecode360.com/46577691 through an authenticated channel, or call Milton Community Development at (253) 922-8738 and have planning staff read MMC 18.16.530(B)(8) verbatim, including any partial-coverage carve-out and the access-road/utility exception	Milton Community Development	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
3. Does the existing 1978 house's footprint violate current NR1 setbacks, making it a legal nonconforming structure?	Determines whether any future redevelopment/lot-split design must also resolve an existing nonconformity, and whether the house could remain as-is on a newly split lot.	A licensed surveyor settles this. Site survey/plot plan showing the house footprint against current NR1 setback lines (MMC 17.15B) to confirm whether it is a legal nonconforming structure	licensed surveyor	$1,200 to $3,000 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	2 to 5 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)

THE QUESTION	WHAT IT CHANGES	HOW TO SETTLE IT	WHO SETTLES IT	COST	TIME
4. Do recorded covenants, plat notes or association rules limit a second dwelling?	Private restrictions can block a project the city would allow.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Read the recorded short plat document itself (same document as the easements noted under The parcel) and run a title search for any separately recorded declaration of covenants	Pierce County Auditor recording division / title company	$250 to $600 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	3 to 7 days (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
5. Is the road in front of the lot public or private, and who maintains it?	Decides access rights, frontage improvements and who must approve work.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Ask the road or utility agency named for this address	Pierce County	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
6. Which traffic impact fee area is the lot in?	Sets the traffic impact fee.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Ask the road or utility agency named for this address	Pierce County	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
7. Does the City of Milton's own PermitTrax system show any city-side permit record for this parcel distinct from Pierce County's PALS record?	Closes the gap between county PALS (checked, empty) and city permit history; relevant since the parcel/structure predate incorporation-era digitization.	Held by City of Milton Permit Center. Here is how to get it. Ask Milton's Permit Center (253-922-8738) directly whether any city-side permit record exists for this parcel	City of Milton Permit Center	none (phone/email inquiry)	same day to a few business days

THE QUESTION	WHAT IT CHANGES	HOW TO SETTLE IT	WHO SETTLES IT	COST	TIME
8. How has Milton actually applied MMC 18.16.530(B)(8)(a) (land wholly within a landslide hazard area or buffer may not be subdivided) to real short-plat/subdivision applications on steep/landslide-hazard parcels?	No applicable precedent located; this governs whether the subdivision bar is applied strictly or with administrative flexibility (e.g., partial-parcel buffer carve-outs) in practice.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Request the staff report / hearing-examiner decision (if any) for [permit withheld] 'a nearby short plat' and [permit withheld] 'a nearby subdivision' through the PermitTrax portal or a public-records request, to see whether and how MMC 18.16.530(B)(8)(a) was applied to steep/landslide-mapped ground	Milton Community Development Director, 253-922-8738	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
9. Do the other hazard maps (wellhead, shoreline, wildfire, liquefaction, mine) flag the lot?	A flag adds a study or a limit.	A Licensed WA geotechnical engineer settles this. A qualified geotechnical professional's critical-areas report (already required here for the landslide hazard finding) should also address the NRCS erosion rating and seismic/liquefaction potential for this soil unit and slope	Licensed WA geotechnical engineer	$2,500 to $5,000 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	3 to 6 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)
10. What class of street does the lot front (arterial, collector, local)?	Sets the front setback and service-install cost.	Not published in a form Feasa can read yet. Ask the road or utility agency named for this address	Pierce County	$0 to $50 (Feasa estimate, get a quote to confirm)	1 to 4 weeks (Feasa estimate, confirm when you book it)

Who to contact next

Start with Milton's Planning & Community Development office: it decides the short plat itself and is the only office that can answer whether the landslide-hazard subdivision rule has a partial-coverage exception, the single most important open question in this study. A pre-application meeting is optional, not required, for a short plat under Milton's process rules, but is strongly recommended here given the critical-area and lot-width questions; it costs $1,500 for a full one-hour meeting with staff present, $900 for a half hour, or $600 for a minor meeting, and does not legally bind the city to what is discussed.

OFFICE	WHAT TO CONTACT THEM ABOUT	HOW TO REACH THEM	STATUS
Planning & Community Development	The short plat application itself; whether the landslide-hazard subdivision rule allows a partial-coverage lot (What it takes, step 2); how lot width is measured for a flag lot; booking a pre-application meeting	253-922-8738 · permits@cityofmilton.net · https://www.cityofmilton.net/226/Building-Division	VERIFIED 2026-09-16 (contact details independently corroborated by this study's civic-record search, 2026-11-11)
Building Division / Permit Center	Filing the short plat application once studies are complete; permit status	253-922-8738 · permits@cityofmilton.net · https://www.cityofmilton.net/226/Building-Division	VERIFIED 2026-09-16
Public Works / Engineering	Frontage improvements on the street, access-tract design, stormwater for any new lot	253-922-8738 (routed via Public Works) · https://www.cityofmilton.net/226/Building-Division	VERIFIED 2026-09-16
City of Milton Water Division	Water availability and service connection for a new lot	253-922-8733 · https://www.cityofmilton.net/226/Building-Division	VERIFIED 2026-09-16

OFFICE	WHAT TO CONTACT THEM ABOUT	HOW TO REACH THEM	STATUS
Pierce County Sewer Utility (Development Center)	Confirming the sewer basin and connection charge for this parcel; the sewer-connection figure in this report is unconfirmed and should be checked here first	253-798-3739 · https://www.piercecountywa.gov/3958/Connection-Charges	VERIFIED 2026-09-16
Pierce County Auditor, Recording Division	Obtaining a copy of the mid-1980s short plat (Fee No. [record withheld]) and any associated easements or restrictions	https://www.piercecountywa.gov/359/Recorded-Documents	VERIFIED 2026-11-11 (the office's own page gives this starting point; no direct phone or email is published on it)
State one-call utility locate service	Required before any digging this project calls for (survey test pits, geotechnical borings)	811	VERIFIED
Washington State professional licensing (geotechnical engineers, land surveyors)	Verifying the license of any professional engaged for the studies above	https://professions.dol.wa.gov/s/	VERIFIED

Sources

Septic, water & sewer

- Pierce County's own parcel, building, floodplain, landslide-hazard, erosion-hazard, sewer-main and recorded-plat map records, retrieved 2026-11-11

- Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water, Sentry Internet operating-permit search, the city water system, retrieved 2026-11-11
- Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, on-site sewage system record search, retrieved 2026-11-11

Environmental & shoreline records

- Milton Municipal Code Ch. 18.16 (Critical Areas)

Fees & costs

- City of Milton Fee Schedule, Resolution 26-1995, retrieved and individually confirmed 2026-11-11

Zoning & land use

- Milton Municipal Code, Title 17 (Zoning) (retrieved via Milton's own code site and independently checked by this study's zoning research, 2026-11-11)
- Milton Ordinance 2116-25 (subdivision code rewrite, Title 16), retrieved 2026-11-11
- RCW 58.17.060 (short subdivisions), retrieved 2026-11-11

Other sources

- Pierce County Auditor, Recorded Documents, retrieved 2026-11-11 (document itself not retrievable without an account)
- City of Milton Capital Improvement Program 2020-2025, retrieved 2026-11-11

Costs

- Boundary and topographic survey: Feasa's own routine-cost estimate for Pierce County, 2026-11-11
- Geotechnical report: Washington statewide permitting guide, retrieved 2026-11-11; Seattle-area architecture firm cost guide, sloped-lot construction, retrieved 2026-11-11
- Critical areas report: Feasa's own routine-cost estimate for Pierce County, 2026-11-11
- Short plat application fee, SEPA checklist, critical area exemption, land use review, clearing and grading, civil permit, right-of-way permit, outside-consultant billable rate: City of Milton Fee Schedule, Resolution 26-1995, retrieved 2026-11-11
- Pre-application meeting fee: City of Milton Fee Schedule, Resolution 26-1995, retrieved 2026-11-11

Preliminary feasibility study prepared by Feasa for the person who ordered it. All budget figures are preliminary estimates, not quotes. Facts are tagged verified / inferred / unknown with their sources; verify anything marked unknown before committing money. This is not a survey, a legal opinion, an engineering report, or an appraisal.