

* Note: Underlined and ~~struck-out~~ text shows annotations (revisions and additions) made by SDCI staff reviewing this checklist.

SEPA Environmental Checklist*

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Child Care Near You land use code amendments

2. Name of applicant:

City of Seattle Legislative Department

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Seattle City Council Central Staff

Attn: Lish Whitson, AICP

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4. Date checklist prepared:

March 23, 2020

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Seattle

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Amendments to the Land Use Code are anticipated to be considered by the City Council in the summer of 2020.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Additional code changes to support the development of child care centers in areas not addressed by this proposal or using tools not contemplated at this time may be considered in the future pending additional study.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

None identified.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

Individual child care centers are currently seeking approval to build or convert space for new child care facilities in these areas, which are expansive areas covering several zoning designations that would be affected by the proposal's change in zoning regulations.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Code will require approval by the Seattle City Council and the Mayor of Seattle.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

This is a non-project proposal. the proposal would amend various provisions of the Land Use Code (Seattle Municipal Code Title 23) related to child care center uses. The proposal would:

- Remove limits on child care centers in home occupations;
- Allow child care centers as a permitted use in single-family zones;
- Remove dispersion requirements for child care centers in multifamily zones;
- Exempt child care centers from floor area limits in multifamily zones and commercial zones;
- Add code flexibility for child care centers in Seattle Mixed zones; and
- Remove maximum size limits for child care centers in some commercial zones.

The intent of the proposal is to eliminate regulatory hurdles that delay or prevent the creation of new child care centers in the City. In particular, it is likely to lead to an increase in the number of child care centers in Seattle's single-family areas.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

This is a non-project proposal, which would amend various sections of the Land Use Code related to single-family, multifamily, commercial and mixed-use zones. Attachment 1 includes a map of these areas.

B. Environmental Elements

1. Earth

a. General description of the site:

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Slopes exceed 40% in some areas of the city affected by the proposal. Any development that would disturb the ground in areas with a steep slope will be subject to review under the City's Environmentally Critical Areas regulations.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Seattle has a variety of soil types, mostly glacial in nature. There is no prime farmland within the city's boundaries. The proposed legislation is not likely to result in a significant adverse increase in the removal of soils, although future child care facilities that might arise due to the proposal in some cases could result in additional grading of soils depending on the nature of the development – remodels, expansions, or new structures.

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle, including in areas where unstable soils are present. Existing environmentally critical area regulations would apply to any development in areas with unstable soils.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. It is not anticipated that the proposed legislation would significantly adversely increase the amount of filling, excavation or grading that is part of development associated with the creation of child care centers. Grading, excavation, and fill outcomes would relate to building design choices and the location of child care facilities within buildings. In some cases there could be incremental added amounts of grading, excavation, and fill, if child care facilities enlarge building-footprint sizes. However, this would not be assumed to occur for every future child-care related development. Also, for some buildings, remodels related to child care might be a small addition rather than a full floor.

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Existing erosion control measures would continue to apply on sites where construction occurs. Child care centers as a use are unlikely to increase erosion.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

None proposed.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. The proposal will not directly result in emissions to the air.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Off-site sources of emissions or odor exist in locations around the city. The proposal is not likely to increase exposure of developed sites with child care facilities to emissions or odor.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

None proposed. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle and is not likely to increase emissions or result in other impacts to air.

3. Water

- a. Surface Water:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle, including in areas near but not in the immediate vicinity of the Puget Sound, Lake Washington, Lake Union, Green Lake, Bitter Lake and Haller Lake.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Development over, in or adjacent to the described waters

would be regulated under the Shoreline code, which is not affected by this proposal.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

No filling or dredging is anticipated as a result of this proposal.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Some of these parcels are in floodplains, and development on these sites would continue to be managed through the City's environmentally critical areas regulations.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

No.

b. Ground Water:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if

applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

None are likely. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. The City of Seattle is almost entirely served by sanitary sewage systems.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Seattle is served by stormwater systems that include combined, partially separated and separated systems.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

No. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.

No. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

None proposed.

4. Plants

- a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

shrubs

grass

pasture

crop or grain

- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.
- wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. A variety of vegetation can be found throughout Seattle. The proposal is not likely to increase the amount of vegetation removed through redevelopment.

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None known. This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. The proposal is not likely to increase the amount of vegetation removed through redevelopment.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

None proposed. Existing landscaping requirements would continue to apply.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

None known. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

5. Animals

a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Examples include:

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other: Crows, pigeons, doves, starlings, robins, gulls, and house sparrows are common urban species.

mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: Rodents, including mice, rats, squirrels, and raccoons are common urban species.

fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None known. It is conceivable that protected or threatened or endangered species could be present on or near future development sites. The most likely affected animals could be herons, and salmon, to the extent they could be present near future development or in downstream locations potentially affected by future development. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The City of Seattle is within the Pacific Flyway. The Pacific Flyway encompasses the entire Puget Sound Basin.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

None proposed.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Invasive species present in Seattle include European starlings, house sparrows, Eastern gray squirrels, domestic cats and domestic dogs.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Electricity, natural gas, oil and solar energy are all used in Seattle for heating and other typical uses.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

Not likely. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Some structures in multifamily and commercial zones could be larger as a result of the proposal. Regulations related to the siting, height and design structures would be unaffected.

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

None proposed. Current and future-updated City energy codes will provide increasing levels of energy efficiency required of each new structure, which would ensure energy conservation is achieved in future development potentially affected by this proposal.

7. Environmental Health

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal?
If so, describe.

None identified. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

None known. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Contamination exists in some locations in Seattle and would continue to be addressed through existing regulations.

- 2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

None known. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Liquid and gas transmission pipelines exist in some locations in Seattle and would continue to be addressed through existing regulations.

- 3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

None are likely. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

- 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None identified. This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle.

- 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

None proposed.

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Typical city noises, particularly traffic, are present throughout the city. Different properties in various zones could also be exposed to various noise levels depending on the intensities of adjacent uses. This kind of noise issue might be most likely to be present where commercial zones abut neighboring low-density multifamily or single-family zoned properties. In most cases, noise from neighboring uses would not pose a major issue for residential or child care uses. But in rare circumstances certain uses like automobile repair might generate high daytime noise levels where it might not be healthy to have child care outdoor play areas immediately adjacent, in the worst case.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

The following discussion relates primarily to conditions within residential zones because those are zones that are evaluated as more sensitive to activity levels than commercial zones, and have lower noise limits. For example, for a situation where both the sound-generating property and the sound-receiving property are residential, the exterior sound-level limit is 55 dBA (A-weighted decibels); see SMC 25.08.410.

Children playing in the outdoor play areas associated with child care centers approved under the proposed regulations are likely to result in some increased daytime noise impact on abutting neighbors. Daytime hours of childcare operations that could generate noise might range from 7 AM to 7 PM, although outdoor play times would most likely not occur in early morning hours or early evening hours in this range. It is also likely that some noise would be generated by drop-off and pick-up activities at beginning and end of normal care hours. This identified range of

activity types (outdoor play by children, vehicles arriving and departing) would be considered normal activities for residential land uses; individual instances of these activities might be unlikely to exceed daytime noise limits such as 55 dBA. However, the total extent of noise generated by the child care activities would depend on the intensity of the activity (affected by factors such as how many children playing, how many times per day, and how many drop-offs and pick-ups). Degrees of noise impact are evaluated here in relative terms, and are interpreted as being “adverse” but not “significant adverse” in their potential magnitude. One reason for this is that noise generated by a neighboring use such as a child care use could be identified by nearby neighbors as generating “annoyance” even if the noise levels are within noise limits, and even if noise-reducing measures such as fences are in place. Annoyance might relate to the duration of noise experienced on an everyday basis (perhaps multiple play sessions throughout a typical weekday) and its characteristics (for example, regular or semi-regular incidents of yelling, thumping, or clanging noises). The same could be said for noise generated by frequency of pick-up and drop-off activities (loud talk or vehicles honking). Given that these activities would be practically limited to occur during daytime hours (due to the nature of the child care business), it is unlikely that this use would generate incidents or activities that would exceed lower nighttime noise limits. Thus, the potential for adverse nighttime noise impacts is low.

Child care centers are likely to be dispersed across the city and impacts would be localized. To the extent that the proposal ~~would~~ could increase the number of child care centers located in less-dense single-family areas and away from denser commercial and multifamily areas, the number of people affected by noise ~~would~~ might be reduced, in terms of an estimated lower typical prevailing density of neighboring residents in proximity to a given typical childcare facility. This is only an approximate observation, but has some merit if child care facilities alternately would need to locate more often in places where there are more likely to be more multifamily uses nearby. E.g., more residents likely to live closer to outdoor play spaces, and thus potentially subject to annoyance from outdoor activities and pick-ups and drop-offs.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

None proposed. Existing noise-related regulations, including those for home occupations, would continue to apply.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

This is a non-project action that would remove barriers to locating child care centers on parcels throughout Seattle's single-family, multifamily and commercial zones. Uses in these areas include a wide range of residential, commercial, institutional, recreational and other uses typical of a city environment. Child care centers are a necessary component of a residential community and are commonly found adjacent each of these categories of uses. No effects on nearby or adjacent properties have been identified by the applicant.

However, see the discussion above in the response to Question 7.b regarding noise. Future implementation of the proposal would be likely to result in increased numbers of locations where child care activities would occur in low-density residential zones, and potentially more often in closer proximity to neighboring residential occupants, than occurs today. This would likely result in an increase in conditions that could create noise-related annoyances considered to be adverse but not significant adverse noise impacts. This is also interpreted as generating potential adverse land use impacts related to compatibility, in a worst-case scenario. This might be most evident if noise and activity levels from a child care facility are chronically generating annoyance-level noise that might occasionally exceed noise limits, and if other operational activities such as pick-ups and drop-offs are contributing to congested conditions on nearby streets. City rules would continue to provide controls, and such facilities would be subject to code enforcement upon receiving complaints.

- b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

Agriculture was a historic use of some parcels with the City of Seattle but is not currently present in the city

- 1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

No.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. There are a range of structures throughout the areas that would be affected by the proposed zoning changes ranging from small single-family homes to highrise office, apartment and hotel development.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Of the child care centers permitted in Seattle over the last five years, none were the cause of the demolition of structures. The child care center either moved into an existing building or was incorporated into a new mixed-use building that had most of its floor area in other uses.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

The proposed legislation would amend land use regulations that apply in single-family, multifamily, commercial and Seattle Mixed zones.

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

The proposed legislation would apply within urban centers and urban villages, and in single-family, multifamily and commercial areas outside of urban centers and urban villages.

- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle, including in the following shoreline environments: Conservation Management (CM), Conservation Navigation (CN), Conservancy Preservation (CP), Conservancy Recreation (CR), Conservation Waterway (CW), Urban Commercial (UC), Urban General (UG), Urban Harborfront (UH), Urban Industrial (UI), Urban Maritime (UM), and Urban Residential environments.

Childcare facilities are currently permitted on upland lots in the CM, UH and UI environments, everywhere in the UG environment, and under certain conditions on waterfront lots in the UH environment.

No changes are proposed to shoreline master program regulations.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Yes, critical areas have been designated throughout the city. The proposed legislation will not change any critical areas regulations.

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Child care facilities that have been permitted in Seattle over the last five years were designed to serve an average of 72 children, with an average of eight teachers. Assuming a 50 percent increase in child care facilities as a result of this legislation, there could be approximately 200 additional child care teachers added to the City in the next five years over current zoning.

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Over the past five years, most new child care centers have opened in existing community centers and religious facilities, or have converted office or retail space into child care space. A few child care centers have replaced residential uses in single-family houses. If twice as many child care centers replaced residential uses within single-family houses under the proposal, this could result in the voluntary and involuntary displacement of approximately 16 people in six houses, most from houses that were previously owner-occupied (81% of single-family homes are owner-occupied.)

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

None proposed.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

None proposed. ~~Child care is needed by families in Seattle, is appropriately located near homes and workplaces, and is compatible with a broad range of residential, institutional and commercial uses.~~ Existing noise-related and nuisance-related regulations, including those for home occupations, would continue to apply, allowing for enforcement actions that would mitigate the potential for adverse compatibility impacts.

- m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

None proposed.

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

None. This is a non-project action related to the regulation of child care centers on parcels throughout Seattle.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Assuming a doubling in the number of housing units that would be converted from single-family housing to child care centers, approximately six housing units would be eliminated over the next five years. These would be single-family housing units which are generally high or middle-income housing.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

None proposed.

10. Aesthetics

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. No changes are proposed to development standards that would affect the height of structures permitted or exterior building materials

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. No changes are proposed to development standards that would affect views.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

None proposed.

11. Light and Glare

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Child care centers are generally open during daytime hours and are unlikely to produce significant light or glare.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. It is unlikely that light or glare from a child care center would create a safety hazard or interfere with views.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. It is unlikely that there would be off-site sources of light or glare that would affect a child care center, which will primarily be open during daylight hours.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

None proposed.

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Parks and recreational facilities are located throughout the city.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

This is a non-project action that would affect the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Child care centers have located within parts of community centers when space allows. Seattle Parks and Recreation would make the decision whether to continue that process independent of the changes in this bill.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

None proposed.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers ? If so, specifically describe.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. There are buildings that are over 45 years old that are listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, and city preservation registers across the city.

- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Seattle has several landmarks and evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, and cultural importance within its boundaries. In the last five years, child care centers have been successfully incorporated into the rehabilitation of historic structures in Seattle. Any such proposal would require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Seattle Landmarks Board.

- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Any changes to a project site would be reviewed by the City pursuant to existing Historic Preservation regulations. Information regarding historic structures is available through the Seattle Department of Neighborhood's Historic Resources Survey Database and Context Statements.

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

None proposed.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Those parcels are served by a range of different streets, arterials and highways throughout the city's entire street network.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Most of Seattle is served by public transit.

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Child care centers have a parking requirement of 1 space per 10 children or 1 space per staff member, whichever is greater. This parking requirement is waived in urban villages with frequent transit service, in urban centers, and in Station Area Overlay districts. This parking requirement would not change under the proposal.

- d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. ~~Child care centers are generally small and~~ Future possible development of most new child care centers will not likely necessitate improvements to roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, due to the relatively small size of most child care facilities. However, this finding could be subject to review for each child care facility depending on its total size and the nature of the local street network in the site vicinity. Certain locations would be mostly served by local non-arterial streets, which can be subject to varying levels of street-parking and traffic congestion depending on factors such as street width. Also, child care facilities possible under the terms of this proposal could range up to larger facilities that may

generate higher levels of weekday daily traffic volumes. In a worst-case situation, improvements to streets in the form of turning lanes, intersection controls like stop signs, caution signs or lights, or pull-out loading zones could be conceivably concluded as needed to serve future child care facilities.

- e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

No. This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Some child care centers may seek locations in the immediate vicinity of rail transportation (light rail or the Seattle Streetcar) or water transportation (Washington State ferries).

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Generally, child care centers open during the morning rush hours and close ~~during~~ following the evening rush hours. Parents tend to choose child care centers near their home or place of work. Often parents drop their children off at a child care center on their way to work in the morning and on the way home in the evening, which is a kind of linked vehicle trip considered relatively efficient (one trip with multiple destinations), compared to single-purpose vehicle trips. Truck trips are unlikely, except for incidental deliveries of supplies. A reasonable worst-case estimation of vehicle trips per day would be up to two trips per day per student, plus two trips for employees that do not live at the property, plus 6-20 trips per day (depending on size of the child care center) for miscellaneous purposes like deliveries. While highly-local facilities could foster more walking trips by parents dropping off or picking up students, a majority would still likely occur by vehicle trip. See the response to Question D.6 below for further discussion of transportation impacts.

- g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

No.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

None proposed.

15. Public Services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

No. This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Supporting codes to enable more child care facilities distributed around more zones of the city would potentially increase the demand for police and fire/emergency calls to more such facilities. This would occur in a manner not expected to generate significant adverse impacts upon any particular public service provider, due to an expected low call volumes from any given child care facility. Child care use would themselves provide public services with a general relationship to health, human services, and education, thus helping the private sector (and in some cases the public sector) to provide enough supply of services to meet expected demands.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

None proposed.

16. Utilities

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other _____
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

This is a non-project action that affects the uses permitted on parcels throughout Seattle. Child care centers generally use the typical utilities provided throughout the city. Future child care facilities developed after this proposal would demand water and sewer services at levels commensurate with their student enrollment, including water for activities such as food preparation and cleaning. Most facilities may host relatively small enrollments and would not be expected to cause excessive demands on local water and sewer systems. In a worst-scenario, a larger child care facility could conceivably generate water and sewer demands at levels that might challenge local systems' pipe capacities. This depends on highly localized characteristics of pipe sizing and condition across many parts of the city where a new child care

facility could locate. This analysis interprets this kind of impact as an “adverse” but not “significant adverse” impact. New proposals would be subject to review by the City, and local improvements could be required by Seattle Public Utilities on a project-by-project basis.

C. Signature

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____ s/ Lish Whitson

Name of signee _____ Lish Whitson

Position and Agency/Organization Legislative Analyst, Seattle City Council, Central Staff

Date Submitted: April 21, 2020

D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers. By removing regulatory hurdles to opening a child care facility in single family zones, it is likely to result in an increase in child care centers in those zones. Because there is a shortage of child care centers to meet the needs of Seattle’s families, as demonstrated by long waiting lists for child care, an increase in child care centers in single-family zones is not likely to be offset by a decrease in child care centers in other areas.

Because existing regulations regarding lot coverage, landscaping, and drainage and wastewater remain in effect under the proposal, there is not likely to be an increase in discharges to water. This statement by the applicant suggests that, while it is possible that future development activities could occur in relation to provision of more child care services and facilities, the City’s protective regulations would tend to control, limit, and avoid washoff of soil and pollutants during development, and thus avoid adverse pollutant impacts into the City’s natural water systems. The required use of best practices during construction, landscaping requirements, and protections of critical areas such as steep slopes and erosion hazards would also help avoid destabilizing soils and watercourses,

minimize tracking of dirt by construction vehicles onto roads and the creation of fugitive dust, which would help limit construction-related emissions to air.

If child care centers are more easily able to locate within walking distance of the families they serve or are otherwise more accessible to those families, there could be a decrease in the number and length of automobile trips associated with child care drop-off and pick-up trips. This would result in fewer emissions to air.

Child care centers result in human waste and bodily fluids which, under State guidelines, are required to be disposed of properly. Typically, a child care provider will be required to follow more stringent guidelines regarding the disposal or cleaning of soiled materials than a caregiver in a home environment would follow. Child care centers are unlikely to release toxic or hazardous substances to the environment.

Licensed child care centers, which appear to be the most common type of child care center, are required to have outdoor space for play. Noise from children playing in these outdoor areas is likely. This noise is limited to daylight hours but would have impacts on residents of adjacent properties who are at home during the week day. To the extent that the legislation results in more child care centers opening in single-family zones compared to mixed-use or multifamily zones, those impacts would be felt by fewer people. However, if the proposal increases the number of child care centers in single-family zones without reducing the number of centers in other areas, then there would be an increase in noise impacts to occur in more locations in a greater variety of low-density residential zones. See the response to Question 7.b.2 earlier in this checklist, which addresses the nature of noise impacts in more detail.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

None proposed.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers. Child care centers created in Seattle in the last five years have either moved into existing buildings or have been incorporated into larger mixed-use buildings that likely would have been built whether or not the child care center was a component of the project. It is expected that this trend would continue.

Consequently, it is unlikely that there would be any impacts to plants, animals, fish or other marine life. However, if a child care center was to be proposed in a new building under this proposal, existing tree, environmentally critical areas and shoreline regulations would continue to apply to that development, which would tend to protect and avoid substantial adverse impacts from occurring in areas with the greatest animal, fish and marine life habitat value.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

None proposed.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers on parcels throughout the city. According to data from the U.S. Energy Information Association, child care centers use less energy than the average non-residential. To the extent that the legislation results in an increase in child care centers in single-family zones, that could result in an increase in daytime energy use in areas where typical peak energy demand is in the evening and weekends.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

None proposed.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers. Existing regulations regarding environmentally sensitive areas and historic resources would continue to apply to child care centers.

Child care centers created in Seattle in the last five years have either moved into existing buildings or have been incorporated into larger mixed-use buildings that likely would have been built whether or not the child care center was a component of the project. It is expected that this trend would continue and impacts to environmentally sensitive lands should be minimal.

Child care centers have been successfully incorporated into historic structures in such as the Wallingford Center and into contributing buildings to districts such as the Sand Point Naval Air Station Landmark District. Any changes to a designated historic landmark would be reviewed by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board or relevant historic district board.

Other kinds of environmentally sensitive resources listed in this question either are not present, or are unlikely to be substantially adversely affected by future development or operation of child care facilities that are the subject of this proposal.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

None proposed.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers. In particular, by allowing child care centers as a permitted use outright, it would likely increase the number of child care centers locating in single family areas without the conditions in SMC 23.44.022 "Institutions". These conditions include (1) a requirement that institutions be at least 600 feet apart or meet special conditions including a limit on the number of children served; (2) a limit on the demolition of existing residential structures for parking; (3) a requirement that yard standards be met when an institution moves into an existing building; (4) landscaping requirements for centers over 4,000 square feet; (5) 10 foot deep side yard requirements; and (6) requirements for a transportation plan for child care centers over 4,000 square feet.

The proposal does not change development standards in lowrise multifamily zones. It does allow larger child care centers than are currently permitted in Neighborhood Commercial 1 and 2 zones, and exempts child care centers from floor area ratio limits in midrise, highrise, commercial and Seattle Mixed zones. This may result in bulkier buildings in these areas. However, regulations regarding setbacks, building height, and lot coverage would remain in effect and help to mitigate ~~any~~ the potential for adverse building bulk-related impacts.

Seattle's Comprehensive Plan classifies child care centers as "small institutions." Policies are focused on: The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan classifies child care centers as "small institutions" and focuses on compatibility between small institutions and their neighbors:

***LU 3.1** Regulate public facilities and small institutions to promote compatibility with other developments in the area.*

***LU 3.2** Allow public facilities and small institutions to depart from development standards, if necessary to meet their particular functional requirements, while maintaining general design compatibility with the surrounding area's scale and character. Require public facilities and small institutions to adhere to zoned height limits, except for spires on religious institutions. Consider providing greater flexibility for schools in recognition of their important role in the community.*

***LU 3.3** Allow standards to be modified for required off-street parking associated with public facilities and small institutions based on the expected use and characteristics of the facility and the likely impacts on surrounding parking and development conditions, and on existing and planned transportation facilities in the area.*

***LU 3.4** Avoid clusters of public facilities and small institutions in residential areas if such concentrations would create or further aggravate parking shortages, traffic congestion, and noise in the area.*

***LU 3.5** Allow nonconforming public facilities and small institutions to expand or make structural changes, provided these alterations comply with the zone's development standards and do not increase the structure's nonconformity.*

Relationship to land use plan policies:

- These policies encourage small institutions that are compatible with the surrounding area. Recent experience shows that most child care centers occupy existing structures in ways that maintain neighborhood fabric and consistency with community character.
- Removing impediments to opening additional child care centers could result in some additional traffic, parking and noise impacts on areas immediately surrounding new child care centers. ~~However, transportation and parking impacts are likely to be mitigated by allowing child care centers to locate near families' homes, allowing parents to walk their children to child care or link trips to work.~~

- Child care centers are required to have outdoor play areas under Washington State’s regulations. Children playing outdoors make noise. Noise impacts from child care centers would be localized and limited to daylight hours. This noise is unlikely to result in a significantly-impacting residential disturbance in any given future child care facility development or qualify as public nuisance noise under the City’s noise code.

SDCI’s annotations to this SEPA checklist identify a worst-case possibility that future child care facilities based on this proposal would generate adverse but not significant adverse land use compatibility impacts. This might be most evident if noise and activity levels from a child care facility are chronically generating annoyance-level noise that might exceed noise limits, and other operational activities such as pick-ups and drop-offs are contributing to congested conditions on nearby streets. One reason this could occur is because such child care activities could more often locate in low-density residential zones, at greater sizes, and potentially in greater proximity to neighboring residential uses, than occurs today.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

None proposed. City rules would continue to provide regulatory controls, and such facilities would be subject to code enforcement upon receiving complaints.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

Transportation

This non-project proposal would loosen regulations related to child care centers. In particular, it would likely increase the number of child care centers locating in single family areas. By allowing child care centers to open more easily in single family zones, near families, the proposal ~~is likely to reduce demands on transportation. This change~~ could provide greater access to child care to families in locations easily accessible by walking, biking and public transit from their homes or places of work. Parents ~~will~~ would have more opportunities to link child care trips with work trips. This could incrementally reduce the total traffic and parking volumes generated by such facilities, compared to a worst-case impact scenario of 100% of students picked up and dropped off by vehicle.

A reasonable worst-case estimation of vehicle trips per day would be up to two trips per day per student, plus two trips for employees that do not live at the property, plus 6-20 trips per day for miscellaneous purposes like deliveries. While highly-local facilities could foster more walking trips by parents dropping off or picking up students, a majority would still likely occur by vehicle trip. This would generate patterns of short-term parking by parents near the facility around the morning and evening peak hours.

Future possible development of most new child care centers will are not likely to necessitate improvements to roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, due to the relatively small size of most child care facilities. However, this finding could be subject to review for each child care facility depending on its total size and the nature of the local street network in the site vicinity. Certain locations would be mostly served by local non-arterial streets, which can be subject to varying levels of street-parking and traffic congestion depending on factors such as street width. Also, child care facilities possible under the terms of this proposal could range up to larger facilities that may generate higher levels of weekday daily traffic volumes. In a worst-case situation, improvements to streets in the form of turning lanes, intersection controls like stop signs, caution signs or lights, or pull-out loading zones could be conceivably concluded as needed to permit future child care facilities.

Public services and utilities

The proposal is not likely to increase demands on public services and utilities in a significant adverse manner. Child care center operators would need to contract for waste disposal. The projected levels of water, sewer, and energy demand commensurate with typically-sized small, local child care facilities are accounted for in the City utilities' supply and demand models.

Future child care facilities developed after this proposal would demand water and sewer services at levels commensurate with their student enrollment, including water for activities such as food preparation and cleaning. Most facilities may host relatively small enrollments and would not be expected to cause excessive demands on local water and sewer systems. In a worst-scenario, a larger child care facility could conceivably generate water and sewer demands at levels that might challenge local systems' pipe capacities. This depends on highly localized characteristics of pipe sizing and condition across many parts of the city where a new child care facility could locate.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

None proposed. New proposals would be subject to review by the City, and local improvements could be required by Seattle Public Utilities on a project-by-project basis.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The proposal is believed to be consistent with local, state and federal laws. Child care centers are regulated by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families. The proposed code changes ~~do not~~ are not known to conflict with Washington State's licensing regulations, rules and standards.