



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3009082
Applicant Name: Barbara Baker
Address of Proposal: 9801 Martin Luther King Jr. Way S.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application to allow a transportation facility (Bus Base for Starline Luxury Coaches). Project includes a new 20 foot high, 10,875 sq. ft. vehicle maintenance building and renovation of existing office building. Surface parking for 21 autos, 23 coach buses and 48 mini buses to be provided.

The following approval is required:

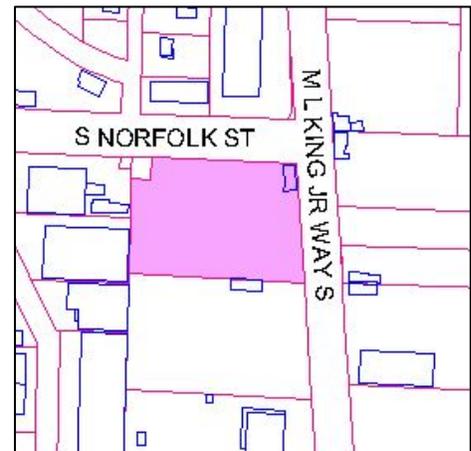
Administrative Conditional Use – to allow Bus Base in an IG2 U/65 zone.
(Seattle Municipal Code 23.50.012)

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS EIS
 DNS with conditions
 DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site Description

The proposed site is 3.15 acres located on the corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. and S. Norfolk street, east of Interstate 5 and just north of the Boeing Access Road. The site has been used as an office/warehouse use and truck terminal since 1985 when it was improved with landscaping, fencing and drainage. The site is zoned Industrial General 2 U/65. The site contains an existing building of 1839 sq. ft., which is to remain.



Description of Proposal

The proposal is to use the site as a bus base/dispatch facility for Starline Luxury Coaches, a private commercial bus carrier. The existing 1839 sq. ft. office building will remain, and a maintenance facility consisting of three bays (10,875 sq. ft.) will be constructed.

Parking for 21 automobiles, 23 coaches, and 48 mini buses is anticipated.



Public Comment

The application was submitted on 6/4/08. Notice of the application was issued on 6/19/08. The comment period ended on 7/2/08. No comments were received.

ANALYSIS - ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

The land use code allows for a bus base within an industrial zone, only if it meets certain general criteria for a conditional use, plus certain specific criteria for a bus base. The criteria, as listed in SMC 23.50.014A, are as follows:

- 1. The use shall be determined not to be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property in the zone or vicinity in which the property is located.***

The use will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or properties in the vicinity.

- Surrounding uses are similar industrial zoning to the subject site.
- The project is located on a major arterial, Martin Luther King Jr. Way S., very near the Boeing Access Road entrance to Interstate 5.
- The location near the Sound Transit Light Rail Line will enable employees (mostly coach drivers) to reach the site by using transit.

- 2. The benefits to the public that would be provided by the use shall outweigh the negative impacts of the use .***

It is the department’s assessment that the benefits of this proposal outweigh the negative impacts, due to the following:

- Starline Luxury Coaches serves the hotel, convention and cruise ship industry as a major provider of transit services. Private coaches provide an alternative to single vehicle tourist travel, potentially reducing the use of fossil fuels, and tourist traffic in and around Seattle.

- Potential impacts of increased bus traffic and occasional traffic delays are offset by the benefits of the services offered by the coaches, and the location in an area that is capable of handling the large size of the buses, with ample sight distance and turning radius'.

3. *Landscaping and screening, vehicular access controls and other measures shall ensure the compatibility of the use with the surrounding area and mitigate adverse impacts.*

- Screening, consisting of chain link slated fencing with razor wire on top is currently in place at the property edge.
- Landscaping along MLK Jr. Way S consists of street trees in the right of way. However, there is no landscaping at the property edge between the sidewalk and the fence, creating a hard, unpleasant edge. The large scale of the use necessitates landscaping at the property/sidewalk edge to buffer the use. Three (3) feet of landscaping on the subject property bordering Martin Luther King Jr.



Way S will be required as a condition of the development. The landscaping shall consist of trees and shrubs and shall be located either:

- outside of the fence, or,
 - if located inside the fence, the fence shall be modified (slats removed) so that the landscaping is visible.
- Landscaping along S. Norfolk Street in the right-of-way consists of one street tree near the corner, and some brush and natural vegetation on a narrow strip of sloped ground as the elevation of the land rises above the street heading west. The frontage along S. Norfolk Street is proposed to be upgraded with a pedestrian walkway, or with a sidewalk as required by code. There is ample room for landscaping at the corner of S. Norfolk Street. To ensure that the conditional use permit criteria regarding screening and landscaping is met, the area at the corner of S. Norfolk Street shall be planted with shrubs and an additional street tree. A street tree shall also be installed west of the entrance to the site in the right of way adjacent to S. Norfolk Street.

4. *The conditional use shall be denied if it is determined that the negative impacts cannot be mitigated satisfactorily. However, adverse negative impacts may be mitigated by imposing requirements or conditions deemed necessary for the protection of other properties in the zone or vicinity and the public interest.*

The potential negative impacts of this proposal are limited as the location is well suited to the use. However, the following impacts are noted and can be addressed by the additions discussed:

- Visual impact – As noted above, additional landscaping is needed at the property edge to buffer the use from the chain link fence with razor wire at the top. If landscaping visible from the sidewalk is added, per the condition above, the impact of the large scale of use will be reduced and the need for screening will be met.
- Traffic. The sound transit line runs at grade past the site, allowing no crossing of the tracks by north-bound traffic, except at the signal at S. Norfolk Street. Currently the light at Martin Luther King Jr. Way S and S. Norfolk Street has a left turn/U-turn signal that is short and causes traffic to stack up during peak hours. With increased traffic to the site, buses will add additional traffic to this signal, causing further delays. As part of the project, the applicant's traffic engineer will be required to evaluate the light timing and make recommendations for changes that keep traffic from backing up at this light.

5. *In areas covered by Council-adopted Neighborhood Plans which were adopted after 1983, uses shall be consistent with the recommendations of the plans.*

- The project is not within the area of a Council-adopted Neighborhood Plan.

In addition to the general conditional use permit criteria, there are specific criteria for a bus base. These criteria, per SMC 23.50.014 B.11, are as follows:

- a. ***The amount of industrial land occupied by the facility shall be minimized. To avoid disruption of the industrial function of the area, the presence of the facility shall not obstruct the operation or likely expansion of existing industrial uses;***

The size of the site has a rational connection to the maneuvering needs of the 23 coaches and 48 mini vans proposed to use the site.

- b. ***The location of the facility shall not result in significant displacement of viable industrial uses or support activities;***

The previous use was not industrial, so no disruption of existing industrial uses is occurring in conjunction with the proposal. The use does provide a valuable adjunct to other uses allowed in industrial zones, including the cruise ships that dock at the seaport, the sport stadium, and the convention and trade center. The industrial location is much more suited to the proposed use than would be a commercial or mixed-use zone where commercial storefronts and residential uses dominate.

- c. ***The amount of land occupied by the facility that has access to industrial shorelines or major rail facilities shall be minimized; and***

The site does not have access to industrial shorelines or major heavy rail facilities.

- d. ***A transportation plan may be required to prevent conflicts with nearby industrial uses. The Director shall determine the level of detail to be disclosed in the plan based on the probably impacts and/or scale of the proposed facility.***

A traffic generation and distribution analysis, dated June 2, 2008, has been completed for the site by Northwest Traffic Experts. The traffic analysis shows that a total of 61 new PM peak hour trips will be created by the project onto MLK Jr. Way S. and S. Norfolk Street. The traffic analysis did not anticipate the lack of turns across the light rail line, and assumes some left turns for traffic heading north on MLK Jr. Way S. The revised traffic study, dated August 4, 2008, takes into consideration the current traffic circulation, and addresses signalization at the intersection of S. Norfolk Street.

DECISION – ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

An administrative conditional use permit to allow the proposed bus base in the IG2 U/65 zone as portrayed in the submitted plans and accompanying documents is **CONDITIONALLY GRANTED**, subject to the conditions detailed at the end of this document.

CONDITIONS – ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONAL USE

Prior to Issuance of a Master Use Permit

1. The final landscaping and architectural plans shall reflect the following:
 - Three (3) feet of landscaping on the subject property bordering Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. The landscaping shall consist of trees and shrubs and shall be located either:
 - outside of the fence, or,
 - if located inside the fence, the fence slats shall be removed so that the landscaping is visible.
 - Landscaping in the right-of-way at the corner of S. Norfolk Street and one tree to the west of the entrance on S. Norfolk Street.

Prior to Certificate of Occupancy

2. The proposed landscaping and street improvements on S. Norfolk Street shall be completed prior to the occupancy.

For the Life of the Permit

3. This conditional use permit shall be tied to the specific plans approved under this permit. The size of the use and related activities shall be limited to that shown on the approved plans.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: August 21, 2008
Holly E. Anderson, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development