



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:** 3009427  
**Applicant Name:** Todd Smith  
**Address of Proposal:** 1732 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a five-story office (24,813 sq. ft.) and storage building (6,579 sq. ft.) with parking for 41 vehicles located in an open garage located at grade.

The following approval is required:

**SEPA - Environmental Determination** - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

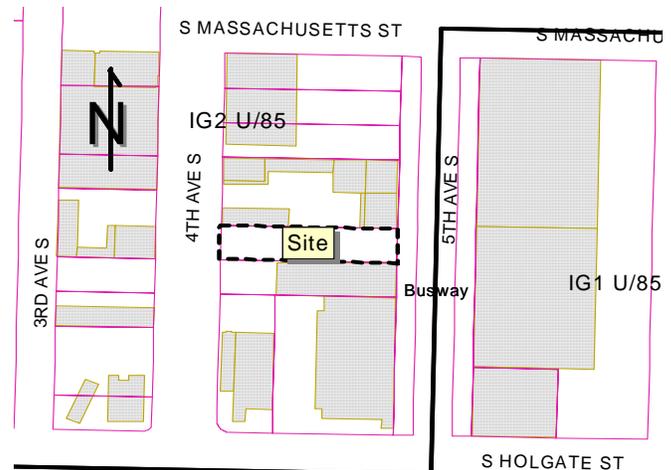
- SEPA DETERMINATION:**  Exempt  DNS  MDNS  EIS
- DNS with conditions
- DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or another agency with jurisdiction.

**SITE & VICINITY**

The 16,200 square foot site is located on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S, between S. Massachusetts St and S. Holgate St. The Metro Busway is located adjacent to the east property line. The subject property is currently vacant and level, with some gravel parking areas and no noticeable vegetation.

All surrounding zoning is Industrial, with IG2 U/85 zoning to the north, south and west, and IG1 U/85 to the east.

Surrounding uses are a mix of industrial and commercial. Sidewalks, curb, and gutter are located adjacent to the west property line of the



subject site. There are no alleys adjacent to the site. Bus service is located nearby, with light rail to start along the Busway in 2009. The nearest light rail stops will be approximately ½ mile to the south (at Lander St) or ½ mile to the north (at Royal Brougham St).

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed development includes construction of a new five-story mixed-use building with parking for 41 vehicles and 8 bicycles at grade, 6,579 square feet of storage in the first floor structure above the parking, and 24,813 square feet of office space in the three upper stories. The proposed parking area would be accessed from a curb cut at 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S. The proposed development would involve up to 600 cubic yards of grading for cut and fill during construction.

### **Public Comments**

Public notice of the application was issued on September 11, 2008. No public comments were offered.

### **ANALYSIS - SEPA**

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the annotated environmental checklist (August 15, 2008), and supplemental information in the project file submitted by the applicant's agent. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information, and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states, in part, "Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation" subject to some limitations. Under such limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D1-7) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

### **Short-term Impacts**

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to increased dust and other suspended air particulates during excavation and construction; increased noise and vibration from construction operations and equipment; and increased traffic and parking demand from construction personnel. These impacts are not considered significant because they are temporary and/or minor in scope.

Compliance with existing ordinances, such as the Street Use Ordinance and the Noise Ordinance will provide sufficient mitigation for most impacts. The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes or conditions are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by conditioning. These impacts are not considered significant; however some of the impacts warrant further discussion and review.

### *Air Quality*

Demolition of structures and surface paving and transport for demolition will create dust, leading to an increase in the level of suspended particulates in the air, which could be carried by winds out of the construction area. The Street Use Ordinance (SMC 15.22) requires watering the site, as necessary, to reduce dust. In addition, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA regulation 9.15) requires that reasonable precautions be taken to avoid dust emissions. Demolition could require the use of heavy trucks and smaller equipment such as generators and compressors. These engines would emit air pollutants that would contribute slightly to the degradation of local air quality. Since the demolition activity would be of short duration, the associated impact is anticipated to be minor, and does not warrant mitigation under SEPA.

### *Construction Impacts*

Construction activities include construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials. These activities themselves result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from this project and do not warrant mitigation under SEPA.

### *Earth/Soils*

The applicant submitted a geotechnical soils report (Geotech Consultants 7/2/2008; Geotechnical Engineering Study, Proposed Multi-story Building, 1732 – 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Seattle, Washington). The report and associated plans are currently under review by a DPD geotechnical engineer with the building permit application (6165892). The building permit will be conditioned as determined necessary for the liquefaction ECA by the DPD geotechnical engineer. Given the existing codes and ordinances, no additional conditioning for geotechnical review is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

### *Noise*

Excavation of the site and construction activities will create additional noise in the area during construction. Surrounding uses consist of primarily industrial and commercial, with no residential uses in the immediate vicinity. Given the existing noise codes and ordinances, no additional conditioning for noise impacts is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

### *Traffic*

In consultation with DPD's Transportation Planner it was determined that the anticipated number of construction vehicle trips would not significantly exacerbate traffic congestion in this area during peak hours of travel. Seattle Department of Transportation will review any sidewalk or street closures and will review construction vehicle staging and travel. Pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC.25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675 B), no additional conditioning is warranted.

### Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of approval of this proposal including: increased bulk and scale on the site; increased traffic in the area; increased demand for parking; and increased demand for public services and utilities.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code which requires on site collection of stormwater with provisions for controlled tight line release to an approved outlet and may require additional design elements to prevent isolated flooding; the City Energy Code which will require insulation for outside walls and energy efficient windows; and the Land Use Code which controls site coverage, setbacks, building height and use and contains other development and use regulations to assure compatible development. Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long term impacts and no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA policies. The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes or conditions are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by conditioning; however some of the impacts warrant further discussion and review.

### Environmental Health

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project and the projects' energy consumption, are expected to result in increases in carbon dioxide and result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant due to the relatively minor contribution of greenhouse gas emissions from this project and do not warrant mitigation under SEPA.

### Height, Bulk and Scale

There will be increased height, bulk and scale on this site due to the proposed project. The proposed development is not located adjacent to a change in zoning height, bulk and scale or a change from industrial to any other use. The proposed development is allowed in this zone and no additional height, bulk, or scale SEPA mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA height, bulk and scale policy.

### Parking

There will be increased parking demand created by the project. Parking for 41 vehicles will be provided in surface parking, accessed from one curb cut on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Parking for 8 bicycles will be located within the parking garage.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Manual indicates that the proposed mix of office and storage uses would generate peak demand for approximately 60 vehicle parking spaces.

The site is located in a fairly dense urban area of the city and includes on-street parking and several public transportation options, including future light rail stops nearby. The ITE Parking Manual is based on suburban assumptions that often do not include nearby on-street parking, pedestrian-oriented environments, bicycle facilities, or mass transportation. People coming to

the site for have the option of walking, cycling, or using mass transportation, which further reduces the anticipated parking demand. For the remaining spillover parking demand of people driving to the site for these uses, there is a sufficient on-street parking space in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The difference between the parking demand shown in the ITE Parking Manual and the off-street parking provided on site would create a minimal impact, since people are able to walk or cycle to the site, use transit options to access the site, and park in on-street parking spaces if necessary. In consultation with DPD's Transportation Planner it was determined that the anticipated parking demand has been determined not to have a significant adverse impact on the existing parking in this area. Thus, the noted parking-related impacts of the proposed completed project are not considered significant and no further mitigation is warranted under SEPA policies.

### Traffic

The applicant has provided a Trip Generation and Trip Distribution Memorandum (Transportation Engineering NorthWest, LLC, January 19, 2009, Re: 1732-4<sup>th</sup> Ave S – Seattle, WA) which states that the proposed development would generate a total of approximately 360 vehicle trips per day and 51 peak hour trips.

The subject property is located in the vicinity of several arterials subject to high volumes of existing traffic. In consultation with DPD's Transportation Planner it was determined that no additional trip generation and distribution information was required, and the anticipated number of vehicle trips has been determined not to have a significant adverse impact on the existing traffic patterns in this area. Thus, the noted traffic-related impacts of the proposed completed project are not considered significant and no further mitigation is warranted under SEPA.

### Summary

The Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the file; and any comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. As indicated in the checklist and this analysis, this action will result in probable adverse impacts to the environment. However, due to their temporary nature and/or limited effects, the impacts are not expected to be significant.

## **DECISION - SEPA**

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.
- [ ] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

**CONDITIONS – None**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature on file) Date: February 26, 2009  
Shelley Bolser AICP, Senior Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

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