



**City of Seattle**  
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

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**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:** 3015417

**Applicant Name:** Scott Starr, SMR Architects, for DESC Interbay Supportive Housing LP

**Address of Proposal:** 2208 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue W

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a 5-story, low-income disabled residential building with 97 apartment units. Residential services, offices, and parking at the ground level. Existing surface parking lot for 66 vehicles to be demolished. Parking for 10 vehicles will be located within the structure. Six surface parking spaces will be provided on the site.

The following approval is required:

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

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

**BACKGROUND DATA**

**Site and Vicinity Description**

The site is zoned C1-40 and abuts Lowrise 3 (LR-3) on the east. Properties to the north and south and across 15<sup>th</sup> Ave W to the west are all zoned C1-40. The four lots that comprise the development site are currently occupied with surface parking. The site is located across W Boston Street from an extensive Manufacturing and Industrial Overlay district that impinges on Elliott Bay and the two large piers that occupy the south of the Interbay area.

The four parcels front onto 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue W on the southwest portion of the block that extends to 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue W and between W Wheeler Street on the north and W Boston Street on the south. The area directly to the east steadily rises up the western slope of Queen Anne hill and is zoned LR-2 for about 2 and one half blocks before it becomes a multi-block swath of LR-1 zoning.

Directly across 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue W lies a half-block of C1-40 zoning, developed in commercial uses, and beyond that a large area of industrial zoned properties, consisting of large platted lots. Approximately 1000 feet to the west lies the multi-track right-of-way belonging to the BNSF Railroad.

In general, development in the vicinity west of the site is primarily industrial, with a ribbon of commercial uses adjacent to 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue W and running along either side of the arterial. The area to the east, running up the western slope of Queen Anne hill, is primarily residential with a mix of multifamily and single-family structures.

The steepest slope on site rises at approximately 12 percent. There is a grove of trees at the northeast corner of the site, consisting of Douglas fir trees and Western Red Cedar trees that will be preserved. The site lies within the southernmost boundary of a 1000-foot buffer surrounding a previous landfill.

Landscaping will be provided on site per plan and street improvements, including curb, sidewalk and street trees will be required. The selection and placement of the street trees will meet the requirements of the City Landscape Architects Office, Seattle Department of Transportation.

### Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to construct a 5-story residential apartment building, containing 97 residential studio apartments on a site consisting of four platted lots that total approximately 21,000 square feet in size. Approximately 70 percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction is completed. Approximately 2,900 cubic yards of earth will be removed from the site to accommodate the structure. The total quantity of backfill may be as much as 800 cubic yards. Some of the backfill may be soil removed during grading and stored on site.

Sixteen new parking spaces will be provided. Pedestrian access to the residential units and vehicular access to parking will be provided from W Boston Street.

### Public Comments

Five comment letters were received during the public comment period which ended on December 18, 2013. A common thread running through the majority of comments was the suggestion that the subject proposal would overburden the availability of on-street parking in the vicinity.

### ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the annotated environmental checklist dated October 17, 2013, and supplemental information in the project file submitted by the applicant. 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.

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 25.05.665(D), the SEPA Overview Policy, clarifies the relationship among 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. Per SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7, mitigation can be considered for specified limitations and/or circumstances. Therefore, a more detailed discussion of some of the anticipated 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 construction; potential soil erosion during excavation and general site work; increased runoff; tracking of mud onto adjacent streets by construction vehicles; increased demand on traffic and parking from construction equipment and personnel; conflict with normal pedestrian and vehicular movement adjacent to the site; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code (grading, site excavation and soil erosion); Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, obstruction of the rights-of-way during construction, construction along the street right-of-way, and sidewalk repair); Building Code (construction standards in general); and Noise Ordinance (construction noise that is permitted in the city). Compliance with these codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of potential adverse impacts. Thus, mitigation pursuant to SEPA is not necessary for these impacts.

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities, including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials 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.

### Long - Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated from the proposal: increased bulk and scale on the site; minor increase in ambient noise due to increased human activity; increased demand on public services and utilities; and increased energy consumption. Compliance with existing codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of potential adverse impacts. Thus, mitigation pursuant to SEPA is not necessary for these impacts.

### Greenhouse Gas

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project and the projects' energy consumption, are expected to 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.

### Air

The site is in a location that could potentially experience methane emissions from an abandoned landfill, the south edge of which lies some 600 feet north and west of the site. The City of Seattle requires all development occurring within 1000 feet of known previous landfills to include methane mitigation measures or to complete a monitoring study showing that methane migration is not occurring at the site. According to submitted plans, the applicant intends to follow the methane mitigation measures recommended by Geotech Consultants, Inc. letter dated August 21, 2013. These measures will include a below slab vapor barrier and below slab piping for collecting and venting any possible trapped methane directly to rooftop vents. Therefore no mitigation pursuant to SEPA is necessary or warranted.

Traffic and Parking Impacts

The proposal will provide 10 vehicle parking spaces within the structure as well as six at-grade outdoor parking spaces. Bicycle parking spaces, in the quantity required per SMC 23.54.0155.K, will be provided within the garage area. The site qualifies for the transit parking reduction per SMC 23.45.020.F.2.a, and the parking provided is intended adequately to meet the demands for staff parking.

It is noted that there is a high demand for additional parking in the Interbay neighborhood, as there is in other areas of the City. The Interbay Supportive Housing project will not introduce more demand for street parking into the neighborhood, however, since the intended residents, according to figures provided by the housing provider, which has over twenty years experience and currently owns and manages 1,000 units of similar supportive housing units in Seattle, do not own private vehicles. DESC's data indicates that on average DESC residents live on 13% of Average Median Income (AMI), equivalent to \$7,937 per year in 2013. Given the lack of evidence of real impacts on the availability of on-street parking attributable to this proposal, no mitigation is warranted.

Other long-term impacts identified above are typical of neighborhood multifamily development and are not considered significant because they are within the scope of those impacts anticipated by the zoning and/or relatively minor in scope. The use is consistent with the current zoning and compatible with the surrounding residential and commercial uses. Codes and development regulations applicable to this proposed project will provide sufficient mitigation of long term impacts and no further conditioning or mitigation is warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.030).

**DECISION - SEPA**

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency and was based on 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 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of 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 (2)(C).
- [ ] 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(2)(C).

**CONDITIONS**

None.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: April 7, 2014  
Michael Dorcy,  
Senior Land Use Planner