



City of Seattle
Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
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**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Project Proposal: Fire Station Amendments

Project Sponsor: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

Location of Proposal: The proposal is a non-project action that would apply throughout the city, wherever police or fire stations are existing or permitted.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposal is a non-project action that would allow temporary relocation of fire and police stations city-wide, allow resumption of existing permitted uses that are temporarily interrupted or displaced by a permitted temporary use; and amend certain development standards..

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
 involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND

Proposal Description

The City of Seattle Fleets and Facilities Department and the Fire Department are proposing a number of new fire stations for various City neighborhoods to replace existing fire station facilities. While new fire station structures are being constructed on the existing fire station sites, fire fighting facilities must be temporarily relocated to other sites within the neighborhoods served. Several minor changes to the Land Use Code are proposed to address the temporary relocation of fire stations. The changes would also apply to police stations, although there are no current proposals for replacement of police stations.

The proposed amendments would accomplish the following:

- Extend the time limit allowed for temporary use of a site as a fire station from 12 to 24 months;
- Allow resumption of existing legally established uses on a site (if those uses are temporarily interrupted or displaced by all temporary uses as permitted under the regulations for intermittent and temporary uses, including temporary fire stations); and
- Change existing development standards, including curb cut width and location, for emergency vehicles.

Up to fifteen fire stations may eventually be proposed for redevelopment. In some of these cases, temporary facilities for fire stations may be established on site, but other station sites have size constraints requiring temporary relocation of facilities to another site during reconstruction. To the extent that these sites are known, they are primarily located in non-residential zones and on sites that are not within Environmentally Critical Areas. As noted above, existing legally established uses on sites that are displaced by temporary uses will be allowed to resume, except that existing uses in structures that must be demolished to accommodate the temporary use will be allowed to resume only under current Land Use Code standards. While some of the probable sites of temporary fire stations are occupied by uses that may be nonconforming to development standards, it does not appear that many nonconforming uses will be affected by the proposals.

The proposed amendments are consistent in policy intent regarding the current treatment of public facilities in the Code, while providing greater flexibility for providing and upgrading these important City services.

Public Comment

City Council consideration will include at least one public hearing.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

This proposal is an adoption of legislation and is defined as a non-project action. This action is not specifically listed as a Categorical Exemption (SMC 25.05.800); therefore it must be analyzed for probable significant adverse environmental impacts. A threshold determination is required for any proposal that meets the definition of “action” and is not categorically exempt.

The disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in an environmental checklist submitted by the proponent, dated April 4, 2008. The following describes the analysis conducted to determine if the proposal is likely to have a *probable significant adverse environmental impact*. This threshold determination is based on:

- *the proposal*, as described above and in memoranda;
- the information contained in the *SEPA checklist*;
- additional information, such as analyses prepared by City staff; and
- the experience of DPD analysts in reviewing similar documents and actions.

This is a substantive change to the Land Use Code, to allow temporary relocation of fire and police stations city-wide, as well as to allow resumption of existing permitted uses that are temporarily interrupted or displaced by a permitted temporary use. This amendment may result in potential impacts and warrants further discussion.

ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Adoption of the proposed Land Use Code amendments would result in no immediate adverse short-term impacts because the adoption would be a non-project action. The discussion below evaluates the potential long-term impacts that might conceivably result from differences in future development patterns due to the proposed amendments.

Natural Environment

Earth, Air, Water, Plants and Animals, Energy, Natural Resources, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Noise, Releases of Toxic or Hazardous Materials

The proposed changes would result in no direct impacts, and are unlikely to result in significant indirect or cumulative adverse impacts related to earth, air, water, plants/animals, fisheries, energy, natural resources, sensitive areas, noise, or releases of toxic/hazardous substances. The proposed amendment is a non-project action that would allow temporary relocation of fire and police stations city-wide, as well as allow resumption of existing permitted uses that are temporarily interrupted or displaced by a permitted temporary use. Since the amendments apply city-wide, it is possible that elements of the natural environment on future sites identified for temporary use could be impacted. Development of specific projects on individual sites is subject to the City's existing regulations, such as the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Ordinance, the Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and Noise Ordinance, and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

Built Environment

Land & Shoreline Use, Height/Bulk/Scale

The intent of the proposal is to allow temporary relocation of fire and police stations city-wide, as well as to allow resumption of existing permitted uses that are temporarily interrupted or displaced by a permitted temporary use. The temporary relocation of fire and police facilities would not involve construction of permanent structures. The regulations proposed to allow resumption of existing permitted uses after termination of an approved temporary use would not allow any expansion or change of these uses and, in the event of demolition of structures, the previous uses would not be allowed to resume without conforming to current standards of the Land Use Code. Development of specific projects on individual sites is subject to the City's existing regulations and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review). It is unlikely that any projects will be proposed within the Shoreline District. Thus, any direct or indirect impacts to land and shoreline use or height, bulk, and scale are expected to be minimal.

