



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

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

Project Name: Non-project SEPA review for legislative action to adopt the 2008 Seattle Electrical Code (2008 National Electrical Code with Seattle amendments) and replace the 2005 Seattle Electrical Code (2005 National Electrical Code with Seattle amendments).

Applicant Name: City of Seattle - Department of Planning and Development

Address of Proposal: City of Seattle, State of Washington

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

This is a non-project action that is proposing legislative action to adopt the 2008 Seattle Electrical Code and replace the 2005 Seattle Electrical Code.

It is expected that the City Council will act on the proposed non-project legislation in April 2009.

SEPA - Environmental Determination pursuant to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 25.05

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

BACKGROUND DATA

Proposed Action:

The proposal consists of an ordinance amending Section 22.300.016 of the Seattle Municipal Code, adopting the 2008 Seattle Electrical Code and repealing the 2005 Seattle Electrical Code.

The 2008 Seattle Electrical Code adopts by reference some rules of the Washington State Administrative Code. The 2008 State rules took effect December 31, 2008. Seattle is proposing to adopt new sections that align the administrative section of the code with other construction codes; add a requirement for permit plan sets when applying for an electrical permit to install a renewable energy system; require wiring not pass through one dwelling to supply power to a different dwelling; require that capacity calculations include electric vehicle charging systems and access for outlet power; require ground fault protection testing of new electrical additions before the addition is energized; and include exceptions in selective coordination sections that allow an electrical engineer to design and stamp calculations documenting that overcurrent protective devices are coordinated for fault occurrences having a duration of 0.1 seconds and longer.

Public Review and Comment

Beginning in October 2008, Department of Planning and Development staff distributed proposals for the 2008 Seattle Electrical Code to subscribers of DPD's technical codes mailing list. From October 2008 to November 2008, DPD staff met seven times with a group of electrical industry professionals to review the draft code. DPD staff made a number of revisions in response to issues raised. Additionally, during Construction Codes Advisory Board meetings on January 15, February 5 and 19, DPD staff and Board members discussed the proposals and heard comments from representatives of the electrical and construction industries. Primarily discussion focused on three issues: arc-fault circuit interrupter protection, selective coordination, and electric vehicle charging system requirements.

The Seattle Construction Codes Advisory Board approved most DPD proposals at their meeting on January 15, 2009. The Board approved the remaining proposal, electric vehicle charging system requirements, at their meeting on February 19, 2009.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated February 19, 2009. The information in the checklist and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar proposals forms the basis for this analysis and decision.

Seattle adopts the National Electrical Code which is published triennially. The Washington State electrical review board completed its review of the 2008 National Electrical Code and promulgated rules that were effective on December 31, 2008. This proposal includes adoption of selected rules contained in the Washington State Administrative Code (WAC) that are adopted by reference. The Seattle proposal maintains electrical requirements that are "an equal, higher, or better standard of construction and an equal, higher, or better standard of materials, devices, appliances, and equipment" than those adopted by the State of Washington under the provisions of Chapter 19.28 of the Revised Code of Washington.

It is anticipated that the proposed Seattle amendments will have no significant adverse environmental impact upon the environment.

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 requirement 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 non-project 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).

Signature: _____ (signature on file) Date: February 23, 2009
Colin R. Vasquez, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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