

**CITY OF SEATTLE
SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Removing Code Barriers to Urban Agriculture

2. Name of applicant:

City of Seattle – Department of Planning and Development

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Andrea Petzel - DPD
700 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

(206) 615-1256
andrea.petzel@seattle.gov

4. Date checklist prepared:

April 1, 2010

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

The exact timing is unknown at this time. The City Council may deliberate on the proposal and hold a public hearing in the second or third quarter of 2010.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

No.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

None

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

Development applications by individual property owners are on-going.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The City Council must adopt the proposed amendments to the Land Use Code.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

This is a non-project proposal to remove code barriers to urban agriculture.

The proposed legislation includes the following:

1. Add and/or clarify the definition of agricultural use and the following key terms, as categories of agricultural use: horticulture, aquaculture, animal husbandry, community gardens (including P-Patch community gardens), and urban farms. These refined definitions are used in proposed amendments to development regulations.
2. Allow community gardens (including P-Patch community gardens) as outright permitted uses in all zones, with some limitations in industrial zones. Currently, community gardens may be allowed as parks and open space. The proposed use provisions would allow them in all zones, whether or not they would fall within the definition of parks and open space, but on industrial-zoned land in designated manufacturing and industrial centers they would be limited to rooftops and vertical surfaces. Currently, a community garden that is not a parks and open space use may be a horticulture use, which is allowed only in commercial zones and downtown zones, and not in any residential or industrial zones.
3. Allow urban farms in all zones as follows:

Commercial/Downtown/Seattle Mixed: Allow urban farms outright as a principal or accessory use, without size limit. Horticulture uses are currently limited to 10,000 sq. ft. in NC1 zones and 25,000 sq. ft. in NC2 zones; there are no size of use restrictions in NC3 or C zones. In commercial zones, urban farms and horticulture uses are measured by planting area and floor area of a structure. In the Downtown and Seattle Mixed zones, all agricultural uses are permitted outright.

Industrial: Allow urban farms outright as an accessory or principal use outside of designated MICs, and on tops and sides of buildings in all industrial zones. Currently, horticulture uses are not allowed in industrial zones, and DPD proposes no change to this provision as based on the new definition of a horticulture use.

Residential: Allow urban farms up to 4,000 sq. ft. of planting area outright as an accessory use, without any use permit required, and larger urban farms as an accessory use, subject to an administrative conditional use permit process. Currently, agricultural uses are not allowed in residential zones.
4. Allow rooftop greenhouses a 15 foot exception to height limits as a rooftop feature, if the greenhouse is dedicated to food production in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones.
5. Add farmers' markets to the definition of a "multipurpose retail sales" use.
6. Increase the number of domestic fowl allowed on a lot from three to eight, continuing the provision allowing additional fowl for lots larger than the minimum lot size or larger than 5,000 sq. ft. where there is no minimum lot size. DPD also proposes to add that roosters are not allowed in any zone. There are no additional changes proposed for regulations on keeping of animals.
7. Allow existing urban horse farms greater than ten acres to operate as a permitted use in single-family zones. Current regulations allow farm animals based on lot size, and there are no proposed changes to animal husbandry regulations. Allowing horse farms greater than 10 acres to be a permitted use would allow for building accessory buildings that are not permitted to be built under existing regulations for nonconforming uses.

12. **Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic**

map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

The proposed code changes would be applicable citywide.

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT: EVALUATION FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. General description of the site (circle one):

Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

All types of terrain are present in Seattle's zones (includes flat, rolling, hilly and steep slopes).

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

This non-project proposal would apply to all zones and is not site-specific.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

This non-project proposal would apply to all zones and is not site-specific. Almost all soil types that exist in Seattle can be found in single-family residential areas, including silt, sand, gravel, clay, peat, till, hardpan, sandstone, debris, and slag.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

This non-project proposal would apply to all zones and is not site-specific. Soil conditions vary throughout Seattle and unstable soils do exist in some areas.

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of filling or grading depends upon existing site conditions.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Indirectly, clearing, soil disturbance and erosion related to future agricultural or gardening activity and to development of structures related to these uses could occur.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. This proposal does not increase structural lot coverage standards. The amount of impervious surface coverage will depend on existing site conditions and the site design of individual projects.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of erosion depends upon existing site conditions and the site design of individual projects. Projects that may be built as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be individually evaluated at this time in terms of measures to reduce or control erosion or other impacts to the earth.

Established policies and regulations that limit the potential of erosion and landslide impact of specific development proposals would not be changed by this proposal. Individual projects will need to comply with the City's Stormwater & Drainage Control Ordinance and Grading Ordinance, as applicable, and with the Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) Ordinance in the case of parcels containing an environmentally critical area or buffer. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on surface water resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions. Individual project actions will also be subject to environmental review unless categorically exempt.

2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. No changes to odor standards are proposed. Indirect effects of this non-project proposal to air resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

Determining whether greenhouse gas emissions associated with a proposal are likely to have a significant adverse impact upon the maintenance of a healthy, global atmosphere is problematic because there is scientific uncertainty regarding appropriate methodologies to make such a determination. For that reason, information and analysis necessary to make that determination cannot reasonably be developed in the context of this proposal.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Off-site sources of emissions or odors could exist in the vicinity of individual projects that may use the provisions of this proposal.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

There are established standards and regulations to minimize or prevent adverse air quality impacts of specific development projects. The Puget Sound Clean Air Authority is responsible for setting standards and regulating development to achieve regional air quality control. Seattle's Street Use Ordinance, Land Use Code, Building Code, ECA Ordinance and SEPA policies relevant to project level review would address many of the potential air quality impacts caused by operation of an urban farm, or construction of buildings associated with agricultural uses.

3. Water

a. Surface:

- 1) **Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

There are several water bodies in and around the city of Seattle including Elliott Bay, Lake Union, Green Lake and Lake Washington.

- 2) **Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

The Shoreline Master Program generally prohibits “agricultural” uses in most environments but allows them outright in the Urban Industrial (UI) designation (SMC 23.60.850). Agricultural uses will be limited in industrial zoning inside designated Manufacturing and Industrial Centers (MICs), some of which are found in the UI designation. The City of Seattle Shoreline Master Program is currently under revision and will regulate all uses within a Shoreline District, including agricultural uses.

- 3) **Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The proposal is unlikely to result in fill or dredge material being placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands as part of an individual project. Further, zoning and development regulation changes in this proposal are unlikely to affect filling or dredging of surface water or wetlands as compared to that allowed under existing regulations. Projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of the amount of fill and dredge material.

- 4) **Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects that are developed may use some surface water to water agricultural uses, however the proposal is unlikely to result in significant surface water withdrawals or diversions as part of an individual project that may be developed. Approximate quantities for withdrawal are unknown at this time, but further zoning and development regulation changes in the proposal are unlikely to affect surface water withdrawal or diversion as compared to that allowed under existing regulations.

- 5) **Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

This proposal is a non-project action, is not site specific, and does not involve construction or development activity. Project actions for individual projects that may use the provisions of this proposal and that may be in a 100-year floodplain will be subject to environmental review (if not categorically exempt). The City’s ECA Ordinance and other requirements may also apply.

- 6) **Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

There is no direct discharge to water as a result of this proposal; indirect effects of this non-project proposal on surface water resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

b. Ground:

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. However, daily operations of agricultural uses could use ground water for crop irrigation, and it is possible that runoff could seep to ground water sources and quantities are unknown at this time. Agricultural uses that are allowed under this proposal will need to comply with stormwater control standards, as well as environmental review if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review, the City's critical areas ordinance, and other regulatory requirements designed to protect water resources.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals ...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

The proposal is a non-project action that involves an area almost entirely served by sewer mains. The proposed legislation will not change existing regulations on septic tanks or waste material discharge. If an agricultural use allowed as a result of this proposal involves a facility discharging sewage, it will need to include adequate sanitary sewer controls. Development will be required to comply with the City's stormwater and drainage requirements, and project actions will be subject to environmental review if not categorically exempt.

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including stormwater) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of runoff and method of collection would depend upon existing site conditions, site design and operations of future individual projects that may use the provisions of the proposal. The sources of runoff could be rainfall, watering and irrigation.

Urban farms in residential zones will be required to provide an erosion and sediment control plan if they exceed 4,000 sq. ft. of planting area. Urban farms and community gardens will be subject to the City's Stormwater and Drainage Control Ordinance. Under SMC 22.802.030, the following discharges are generally permitted: discharges from irrigation runoff, including irrigation water from agricultural sources that is commingled with stormwater and that does not contain prohibited substances.

Project actions will be subject to environmental review if not categorically exempt. If necessary, future development projects will need to meet treatment requirements prior to connection to City storm sewer systems. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal related to water runoff are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal may be subject to following, as

applicable: the City's ECA ordinance, the City's stormwater, grading and drainage requirements, and environmental review. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal related to water runoff are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. There are established policies and regulations to protect wetlands, riparian corridors, lakes, drainage basins, wildlife habitats, slopes, and other property from adverse drainage impacts of specific development projects. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will need to comply with all applicable provisions of the City's Stormwater & Drainage Control Ordinance and Grading Ordinance, and provide for mitigation of erosion, if required. Agricultural uses that may be developed will also be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt.

4. Plants

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

- deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- shrubs
- grass
- pasture
- crop or grain
- wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk- cabbage, other
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

Most terrestrial vegetation types listed above could be found in single-family residential areas in the City.

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of vegetation removed would depend upon existing site conditions and individual project site designs. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of the proposal will be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt, and may be subject to the City's critical areas ordinance and other regulations. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on vegetation are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

This is a non-project proposal. Individual projects that may be allowed under the provisions of this proposed legislation will be subject to the City's environmentally critical areas ordinance, if applicable, which requires identification of threatened or endangered species that may be near individual project sites.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects would be subject to landscaping development standards that

support the use of native plants and other vegetation where appropriate. Individual projects that may be built as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of landscaping or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation. Individual projects will be subject to environmental review if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review, and will be subject to the City's existing requirements for screening and buffers.

5. Animals

- a. **Check any birds and animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:**

- birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other: _____

- mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: _____

- fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other: _____

Birds observed in Seattle include hawk, osprey, great blue heron, eagle, songbirds, crow, starling, seagulls, pigeons, heron, waterfowl and other birds. Mammals typically observed include squirrels, raccoons, possum, coyotes, and small rodents, and household pets.

- b. **List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

This proposal is a non-project action and individual development sites have not been determined. Some zones have edges that are generally at or near Lake Washington or Puget Sound where several endangered or threatened species are known to be found, including: Chinook salmon, Bull trout, bald eagle, Oregon spotted frog, long-eared myotis, long-legged myotis, northwestern pond turtle, olive-sided flycatcher, and Pacific Townsend's big-eared bat. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on animals are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

- c. **Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.**

Seattle is within the Pacific Flyway, one of the four principal north-south migration routes for birds, including Canada Geese, heron, and other birds, in North America. The Pacific Flyway encompasses the entire Puget Sound Basin. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of impacts on migration routes.

- d. **Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Policies and regulations are in place to encourage the maintenance of fish and wildlife habitat where appropriate. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of measures to preserve or enhance wildlife. Project actions will be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt and, where applicable, the City's critical areas ordinance for habitat protection.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

- a. **What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing,**

etc.

The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of energy requirements. Project actions will be subject to subsequent environmental review if not categorically exempt. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal are unlikely to require different types of energy sources under the new code provisions than under the existing provisions.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of impacts to adjacent properties.

However, one recommendation is to allow rooftop greenhouses a 15' exception to height limits as a rooftop feature, if the greenhouse is dedicated to food production in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones. A 15-foot height allowance for greenhouses allows for the use of a stacked hydroponics growing system in addition to the traditional single-tier, flat growing beds. A 15-foot height limit would also allow a longer span, single-slope greenhouse.

Protecting solar access for adjacent properties is also important; and increased heights may contribute to shading of adjacent properties, thereby impacting a neighbor's ability to develop solar energy uses. Although greenhouses are generally transparent they may have a shading impact on adjacent properties. To limit impacts, any proposed greenhouse would need to adhere to setbacks to the north (where impact is greatest) to protect solar access for the adjacent properties.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of energy conservation features or measures to reduce or control energy impacts. Project actions will be subject to environmental review if they are not exempt. New structures will need to meet the City's energy code requirements. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on energy resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

7. Environmental Health

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Zoning or development regulation changes in the proposed legislation are unlikely to result in environmental health hazards as part of the site development for an individual project. Potential impacts to health could arise from produce grown in contaminated soil, in particular in industrial lands.

Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will be subject to the following, as applicable: City's critical areas ordinance, environmental review if there is a project action that is not categorically exempt, and other code requirements.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to result in an increased need for emergency services. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to result in an increase of environmental health hazards. Specific project actions will be subject to environmental review if not categorically exempt. Building code, and other public health and safety requirements, may apply. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

b. Noise

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment operation, other)?

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity in a specific location that would be impacted by existing noise.

2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. However, Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of noise impacts. Possible impacts include noise from farming equipment, vehicles operated in connection with farms, and customer traffic. Project actions will be subject to environmental review if not categorically exempt. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Existing noise standards and regulations in the Land Use Code would be retained and would not change as part of this proposal. Individual projects that may be built as a result of this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control noise impacts. Project actions will be subject to project-specific environmental review if not categorically exempt.

In order reduce potential noise impacts in residential zones, property owners desiring an urban farm of any size generally would have to meet the following requirements:

1. No heavy mechanical equipment may be used except such as may be used for domestic or household purposes.
2. Retail sales and all other public use no later than 7:00 pm every day of the week.

3. Commercial deliveries and pickups limited to one per day (onsite sales are not considered commercial pickup).
4. No more than two motor vehicles, each with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or less can be use for farm operations.

In residential zones urban farms over 4,000 sq. ft. will be required to obtain an administrative conditional use (ACU) permit, subject to additional review and conditions for implementation in residential zones. Given that larger planting areas may need to rely on greater use of mechanical equipment, larger urban farms may, in some circumstances, be allowed greater use of such equipment, including, but not limited to a large rototiller or a small tractor. Impacts would need to be disclosed and evaluated as part of the ACU review process.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

This proposal is a non-project action relevant to most of the area in the City of Seattle. Use patterns in the city encompass almost every relationship between residential, non-residential, commercial and industrial use that can be imagined, with widely-varying topography. This includes areas generally described as low-density residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, mixed-use neighborhoods, industrial or formerly industrially used areas, vacant lands and under-utilized edge and naturally vegetated areas.

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

This proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific. No areas are known to be used for agriculture with the exception of Seattle P-Patches and Marra Farm, which are small, community-run gardens, and other isolated portions of the city, including for example, a certain lightly-occupied hilltop area near Rainier Beach and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way S. In recent months there have been several new urban farm businesses that have begun to develop small backyard sites on borrowed/leased land.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

This proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

This is a non-project action that does not involve any demolition activity. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal may include the demolition of existing structures.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

The proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific. This proposal impacts all or nearly all zoning designations in the city.

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

This proposal impacts areas within all of the comprehensive plan designations in the city.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

This proposal is not site-specific. Specific projects will be subject to the regulations for the shoreline master program for a specific shoreline designation.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally critical" area? If so, specify.

The City has designated Environmentally Critical Areas; however, this proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal

must comply with the City's ECA ordinance, if applicable. Project actions will also be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt.

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?**
None identified at this time. This is a non-project proposal. Individual projects that require environmental review will be able to provide this information on a site-specific basis.
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?**
None identified at this time. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase the rate and extent at which existing residences are displaced. Urban farms in residential zones will need to be an accessory use to a permitted or conditionally-permitted principal use.
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:**
None identified at this time. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase the rate and extent at which existing residences are displaced.
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:**
The proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans. In commercial zones, horticulture uses are currently permitted. In order to limit the impacts related to competition for scarce industrial land, DPD recommends that within designated Manufacturing and Industrial Centers (MICs) horticulture uses be limited to locations on the rooftops/sides of buildings. Urban farms would be allowed on industrial zoned land that is outside the boundaries of designated MICs.

In residential zones urban farms up to 4,000 sq. ft. are proposed to be allowed outright as accessory uses and urban farms greater than 4,000 sq. ft. are proposed to be allowed as accessory uses, subject to an administrative conditional use permit process.

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**
This non-project proposal is not related to housing provision.
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**
This proposal is a non-project action and does not include housing construction, demolition or development activity. A net loss in housing capacity is not expected as a result of this proposal. Agricultural uses in residential zones will be allowed as an accessory use to a permitted use, similar to how home occupations are permitted. Other permitted uses in residential zones that could have urban farms as accessory uses include parks and open space, and public schools meeting development standards.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:**
This proposal is a non-project action and does not include construction, demolition or development activity. Individual projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot presently be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control housing impacts. DPD proposes to allow rooftop greenhouses a 15 foot exception to height limits as a rooftop feature, if the greenhouse is dedicated to food production in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones and greenhouses will not compete with space potentially dedicated to housing.

10. Aesthetics

- a. **What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

This is a non-project proposal. One of the proposed recommendations is to allow rooftop greenhouses a 15 foot exception to height limits as a rooftop feature, if the greenhouse is dedicated to food production in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones. Other rooftop features including solar panels, play equipment, mechanical equipment, and communication utilities, are allowed to extend above required height limits (15 feet above in commercial zones). Greenhouses will also be required to adhere to setback requirements on the north side of the building to protect the solar access of adjacent properties.

- b. **What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

This proposal is a non-project action and does not include construction or development activity. The recommendation to allow rooftop greenhouses a 15 foot exception to height limits as a rooftop feature if the greenhouse is dedicated to food production in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones could have some impact on views. The Land Use Code currently allows many rooftop features that have similar potential for impacts on views.

- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:**

The proposal provides standards that specifically limit a rooftop greenhouse (which can exceed height limits of the zone by 15 feet) in MF/C/I/SM/Downtown zones to 50% rooftop coverage.

Accessory structures on vacant lots in residential zones are proposed to be limited to 1,000 square feet (total), gross floor area, and must meet the other development standards of the zone. Signs in residential zones will also be limited to 64 square inches, which is consistent with what is allowed for bed and breakfast uses in multifamily zones.

11. Light and Glare

- a. **What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

This is a non-project proposal. Existing light and glare standards are not proposed to be changed by this proposal. Any project actions for development that may be allowed as a result of the proposal will be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt, and environmental review would include light and glare impacts.

- b. **Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

This is a non-project proposal. Larger greenhouses allowed on rooftops, or structures accessory to urban farms, allowed under the proposal could cause some reflection and additional glare. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will be subject to applicable regulations and any project actions will be subject to environmental review if they are not categorically exempt, including review for light and glare impacts.

- c. **What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

This is a non-project proposal that is proposed citywide. This proposal does not reference any specific site that would be impacted by existing sources of light or glare.

- d. **Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any.**

This is a non-project proposal. Established policies and regulations to minimize or prevent hazards and other adverse light and glare impacts of individual projects will not change. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will be subject to regulations for light and glare impacts [where are those?] and any project actions will be subject to environmental review if they

are not categorically exempt. In residential zones, the Director would review potential light and glare impacts for urban farms over 4,000 square feet and could condition permits to limit these impacts.

12. Recreation

- a. **What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**
This proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific. Recommendations to allow community gardens citywide could increase recreational opportunities for people to share common gardening space.
- b. **Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**
No. It is unlikely that [Agricultural uses that may be developed](#) as a result of this proposal would displace any existing recreational use. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on recreational opportunities are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.
- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:**
This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time; at this time impacts cannot be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

- a. **Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**
The proposal is a non-project action and is not site-specific.
- b. **Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.**
This is a non-project proposal. Agricultural uses that may be developed as a result of this proposal will be subject, where applicable, to the City's historic district and landmarks regulations. Project actions will be subject to environmental unless exempt.
- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any.**
The indirect impacts of this non-project proposal on historic and cultural resources are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions. There are established policies and regulations to maintain and preserve significant historic sites and structures and to provide the opportunity for analysis of archaeological sites during review of individual development projects. Projects involving structures or sites which have been designated as historic landmarks are subject to compliance with the City's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance.

14. Transportation

- a. **Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**
This proposal is a non-project action that is not site-specific.
- b. **Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**
This is a non-project proposal. Potential sites are served by transit to varying degrees.

- c. **How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?**

None identified. The direct and indirect effects of this non-project proposal are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

- d. **Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private)**
No. This proposal is a non-project action and is not expected to require new roads or streets.

- e. **Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

This proposal is a non-project action. Indirect effects of the proposal are not likely to affect water, rail or air transportation.

- f. **How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

Because this policy proposal is not site-specific, the direct and indirect effects of this non-project proposal on vehicle trips are unknown at this time.

- g. **Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any.**

None identified. This proposal is a non-project action.

15. Public Services

- a. **Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

None identified. The proposed amendments are not expected to change potential demand for public services. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on public services are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

- b. **Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

None identified. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity.

16. Utilities

- a. **Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.**

This is a non-project proposal and is not site-specific.

- b. **Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.**

None identified at this time. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on utilities are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

- C. **Signature.** The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____ on file _____

Date Submitted: _____

This checklist was reviewed by:

_____ On file
John Shaw, Senior Land Use Planner, DPD

Any comments or changes made by the Department are entered in the body of the checklist and contain the initials of the reviewer.

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS
(Do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The long-term indirect effects of this proposal on local and citywide use patterns are unlikely to generate significant adverse impacts; DPD does not expect any substantial increase of discharges to water, emissions to air, production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances, or significantly increase levels of noise. This is interpreted in relation to the low-intensity nature of the potential activity compared to the size of the city and the urban nature of its neighborhoods. This conclusion also is based upon the probable continued application of City regulations, policies and standards in a manner that would reasonably ensure low levels of these environmental impacts from individual agricultural or garden uses related to this proposal.

The storage and use of chemicals such as fertilizers or pesticides could increase. Sprayed herbicides or pesticides have adverse environmental effects if emitted; impacting air and water quality by the release of hazardous substances. Potential impacts include negative consequences to environmental health, as well as decreased water quality and impacts to habitat and flora/fauna.

There is the potential for an increase in water usage, and therefore potentially increased runoff, during specific times of the year when plants are irrigated. However, the City Stormwater Code generally prohibits any discharge into the storm drainage system and to receiving waters of irrigation water or stormwater that includes pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizer, among other substances. Larger farms in residential zones will be reviewed for impacts related to erosion and sediment control, parking and traffic, and disclosure of any intent to use agricultural chemicals as part of the conditional use permit process. Given that larger planting areas may need to rely on greater use of mechanical equipment, larger urban farms may, in some circumstances, be allowed greater use of such equipment, subject to the discretion of the Director, and may cause more impacts from noise. Additional requirements for disclosure and mitigation are addressed below.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

For individual projects in all Midrise, Highrise, NC1 NC2 and NC3 zones outside of urban centers, urban farms over 4,000 sq. ft. will be subject to individual SEPA review and possible mitigation for impacts. Within those zones, but inside urban centers and station area overlay districts (for light rail), as well as C1, C2, SM and Industrial zones, urban farms would be subject to individual SEPA review and possible mitigation for impacts if they are over 12,000 sq. ft. Urban farms will be subject to existing odor and emissions requirements currently contained in the Land Use Code and promulgated by the Puget Sound Clean Air Authority.

In addition to the proposed measures to avoid or reduce the potential increases described above, the existing regulatory framework, i.e., the Land Use Code (as proposed to be amended), The Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, the Seattle Stormwater Code, and the City's SEPA ordinance, and the Seattle Grading Code will address impacts during review of development proposals requiring permits, and through general compliance requirements.

To limit impacts, DPD recommends that urban farms must meet the following requirements:

A. In residential zones:

1. No mechanical equipment may be used except as is customary for domestic or household purposes.
2. The urban farm may be open to the public no later than 7:00 pm every day of the week.
3. Commercial deliveries and pickups shall be limited to one per day. Onsite sales are not considered commercial pickup.
4. A maximum of two passenger vehicles, vans and similar vehicles each not exceeding a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds shall be permitted to operate in connection with the urban farm.
5. No more than two motor vehicles, each with a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less may be used for farm operations.
6. Farm shall be located on the same lot as the principal use to which it is accessory or on a lot where the planting area is within 800 feet of lot where the principal use is located.
5. Lots with no principal structure are limited to accessory structures for urban farm use that may not exceed a total gross floor area of 1,000 square feet, 12 feet in height, and are otherwise subject to the development standards of the zone.

B. In all zones:

1. No offensive odors or fumes related to an urban farm shall be allowed to escape into the open air in such amounts as to be at any time disagreeably noticeable from locations more than 200 feet from the premises whence said odors or fumes would emanate.

To further limit impacts in residential zones, DPD recommends that urban farms greater than 4,000 sq. ft. be subject to a conditional use process. Applicants would be required to disclose the following information:

1. A site plan.
2. The type of equipment necessary or intended for use in each season and the frequency and duration of anticipated use.
3. Disclosure of any intent to spray or otherwise apply agricultural chemicals or pesticides, frequency and duration of application, and the plants, diseases, pests or other purposes they are intended for.
4. Disclosure of whether the operation of the farm would involve 750 square feet or more of land-disturbing activity, or would otherwise require drainage approval.
5. A proposed sediment and erosion control plan.

The ACU permit would potentially be subject to the following mitigation requirements:

1. Impacts of irrigation run-off on adjacent properties, water bodies and environmentally

- critical areas, and proposed sediment and erosion control measures.
2. Impacts related to the number of staff onsite during work hours, and the number of potential visitors regularly associated with the site.
 3. Visual impacts relating to the proposed nature, location, design, and size of proposed features, structures and activities, including the location of composting activities and planting areas, and any existing or proposed screening.
 4. Impacts related to the location on the lot of the proposed urban farm, any trash or compost storage areas, any farm stand or additional accessory structure, and any other noise-generating or odor-generating equipment and practices.
 5. Impacts related to the use of chemicals.
 6. Impacts related to the operation of equipment, including noise, odors, and vibration.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

As discussed in question 1, one of the possible impacts is potential impacts to species and habitat from runoff contaminated with agricultural chemicals/fertilizers. DPD does not anticipate significant adverse impacts associated with agricultural chemicals. Given the competition for space, planting areas for urban farms are likely to be small, and managed without extensive use of pesticides or fertilizers.

In some instances planting urban farms or community gardens could replace or compete for space with native plant species in greenbelt areas. Conversely, planting for food could help clear potential planting areas of invasive species such as English ivy.

DPD proposes increasing from three to eight in the number of domestic fowl permitted to be kept on any lot, retaining the provision allowing one additional fowl allowed for each 1,000 square feet above minimum lot size (or over 5,000 s.f. where there is no minimum). There is the potential that more chickens allowed would increase the opportunity for predatory wildlife, coyotes and raccoons in particular, to inhabit residential areas.

Planting areas for food could also replace impervious area, such as rooftops. In some instances, planting areas for food could replace open space/park area that is currently covered with lawn or turf that has been traditionally used as open space. Removal of lawn and/or other ground cover such as impervious surfaces for food production could improve habitat quality for some insects, especially pollinators like bees, a species that would benefit more from garden/farm vegetation than traditional lawns.

Given that any permit for an agricultural use to be located in or a critical area would have to go through environmental review, the existing regulatory framework is otherwise believed to be sufficient to avoid or minimize the potential for significant adverse impacts to endangered plants or animals that might arise with future farm/garden development that would be indirectly related to this regulatory proposal.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

As discussed above, the potential indirect impacts of this non-project proposal is expected to be minor. The existing regulatory framework (Land Use Code, as proposed to be amended; the Shoreline Master Program; Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance; Grading Code; Stormwater Code; and the City's SEPA ordinance), as applicable, will address impacts during review of individual projects requiring permits on a project-specific basis. As addressed in

Question 1, a sediment and erosion control plan for urban farms over 4,000 sq. ft. in residential zones is proposed as measure to disclose and mitigate for any impacts through discharge to water, which could potentially impact fish or marine life.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

There are no proposed changes that would likely deplete energy or natural resources. An agricultural use on land that has previously been vacant would require energy for preparing and cultivating, including the possible use of machinery powered by fossil fuels. However, impacts are expected to be minimal, and compared to other possible uses the relative energy intensity would be less than a commercial or industrial use. However, it should be noted that commercial and industrial uses would not be allowed in residential zones.

One of the outcomes of city policies that support the production of local farming is that it that local food production contributes to lowering the costs, including costs that relate to climate change from greenhouse gas emissions, of food transportation. Allowing the growing and selling of produce in residential zones would offer greater opportunity for people to purchase produce closer to home. Although this legislation will not eliminate the need for car trips to make purchases at grocery stores, providing the option to grown and sell food in residential zones is an important first step for creating a local food system. A local food system provides more local food production and helps reduce impacts on national/international transportation costs and depletion of natural resources elsewhere.

There is the potential for increased energy use for greenhouses that would be permitted to extend 15 feet beyond the allowed height in MF/Downtown/SM/Commercial/Industrial zones. An increased demand for energy would occur in winter months when it is necessary to provide more height and light for plants to survive.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

None are proposed beyond the existing regulations.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally critical areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

It is unlikely that the proposal would adversely affect environmentally critical areas or areas designated for governmental protection that are identified in this question, except where there would be authorized uses such as community gardens or urban farms within public park lands. Given that any agricultural use that propose to be located in a critical area would have to go through environmental review, significant adverse impacts to environmentally critical areas related to this regulatory proposal are not considered likely.

Agricultural uses could also potentially be located in floodplains, or in proximity to shorelines/wetlands, but would need to be reviewed according to current regulations and policies prior to their authorization. Such farm/garden uses would also need to abide by minimum buffer requirements associated with wetlands and shorelines, if such features are nearby.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

As discussed above, the potential for indirect impacts of this non-project proposal is expected to be minor. The existing regulatory framework (Land Use Code, as proposed to be amended, the Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, the Grading Code, the

Stormwater and Drainage Code, and the City’s SEPA ordinance), will address impacts during review of individual projects that require permits and to which the respective codes and ordinances apply, subject to applicable exemptions.

Floodplain areas have been substantially identified through the Seattle Floodplain Development Ordinance, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps, and mapping activities undertaken by Seattle Public Utilities; however, additional areas meeting the designation criteria may exist and are subject to ECA regulation. Flood-prone areas identified on FEMA maps are regulated through the Floodplain Development ordinance as well as the ECA code.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The Shoreline Master Program generally prohibits “agricultural” uses in most environments but allows them outright in the Urban Industrial (UI) designation (SMC 23.60.850). This proposal does not involve any change to the Shoreline Master Program, SMC Ch. 23.60, and thus would not allow any use or development now prohibited by that Chapter. The proposal does not involve any construction or development activity that would likely be incompatible with shoreline uses. As discussed in question 1, the City and other regulatory agencies have existing regulations to protect shorelines from runoff impacts.

In industrial shoreline areas, where water dependent industrial uses dominate and are a priority, there is no proposed change to regulation of horticulture uses, which are not permitted. To further limit impacts on industrial uses and to limit competition for industrial land, DPD proposes that community gardens and urban farms within designated manufacturing and industrial centers be permitted only on rooftops and vertical farming on land.

Urban farms and community gardens are considered to be uses highly compatible with residential zones. Parks and open space, which are similar in concept to community gardens, are currently allowed outright in all zones, but do not address (or qualify as) urban agriculture or community gardens as a use. Urban farms would introduce an agricultural use with a commercial element by allowing produce to be grown and sold on lots in residential zones.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

The existing regulatory framework (Land Use Code, the Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, Landmarks Preservation Ordinance, and the City’s SEPA ordinance), are largely sufficient to address direct use impacts of future development that might result from this legislation. However, DPD recommends that urban farms must meet the following requirements in residential zones:

1. Permitted to sell only produce or plants that have been grown onsite.
2. Signs are limited to an identification sign, 64 square inches, which may or may not be illuminated.
3. Administrative Conditional Use permit for any farm with a planting area over 4,000 square feet.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

Parks & Recreation

Currently, there is an overwhelming demand for P-patch community gardens as a public recreational resource, managed by the Department of Neighborhoods. Allowing community gardens citywide (with some exceptions for industrial zones), allows citizens to meet that demand for shared community space by using private resources, including land, to create shared community space and help accommodate presumed future increases in demand over time, either due to popularity of the activity, population growth, or both.

Public Utilities

Potentially, there could be an increased demand for water, which is the responsibility of Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). The increased demand could be twofold; for new services/hookups to existing water lines, or increased water use (or both). However it's unlikely that the water demands of an urban farm will exceed what's required to maintain a traditional lawn/ornamental landscaped lawn, which is very water-intensive.

It is unlikely that there will be any increased demand on transportation services.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

Providers of utility and public services regularly review the effects of increased development and propose enhanced services as part of their planning for future service needs.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

No conflicts are identified with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for protection of the environment.