



City of Seattle

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**

Project Name: Utility Landscaping Amendments
Applicant Name: City of Seattle - Department of Planning and Development
Address of Proposal: City-wide application, City of Seattle, State of Washington

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposal is to amend the Seattle Land Use Code to apply new landscaping and screening standards to solid waste transfer stations and utility services uses. These changes are proposed to reduce neighborhood impacts of large utility facilities.

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.

The Proposal

The Land Use Code would be amended to accomplish the following:

- Apply a Seattle Green Factor landscaping standard to solid waste transfer stations. Green Factor is a scoring system for landscape amenities. The proposed language would require generous landscaping including trees and shrubs, with incentives for green roofs and walls, bioretention, permeable paving, and tree preservation.
- Establish minimum setbacks in some zones for fences and free-standing walls around utility services uses, which include electrical substations, combined sewer overflows, pumping stations, and trolley transformers. Landscaping would be required in these setback areas.

- Establish standards for architectural detailing and/or setbacks for utility services use fences/walls in other zones.

Public Comment

Opportunity for public comment and appeal is provided as part of the public notice of this determination. Amendments to the Municipal Code are legislative decisions. A public hearing on the proposed legislation will be scheduled before the Seattle City Council. Notice of a Council public hearing will be provided prior to the hearing.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

This proposal is an adoption of legislation and is defined as a non-project action. This action is not specifically addressed as a Categorical Exemption (SMC 25.05.800), and therefore it must be analyzed for probable significant adverse environmental impacts. A threshold determination is required for any proposal, which 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 applicant dated June 2, 2010. The information in the checklist, the Director's Report and Recommendation, other information provided by the applicant and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

Adoption of the proposed 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.

1. Natural Environment (including Earth, Air, Water, Plants and Animals, Energy, Natural Resources, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Noise, Toxic/Hazardous Materials)

As a non-project action, the proposal would result in no direct impacts to the natural environment. The proposed amendments would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the city. As a result, it is expected that the potential for increased impacts to elements of the natural environment would be minor. The existing regulatory framework i.e., the Land Use Code, the Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and the City's SEPA ordinance will address impacts during review of development proposals on a project-specific basis.

2. Energy and natural resources

The proposed changes are not likely to result in the depletion of energy or natural resources. The proposed amendments would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the city. As a result, the potential for increased depletion of energy and natural resources is minor.

