

City of Seattle

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND:

1. **Name of proposed project, if applicable:**

Amendments to the Seattle Land Use Code to provide general procedures to facilitate the use of development agreements for transit oriented development.

2. **Name of Applicant:**

City of Seattle

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

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, Washington 98124-4019

Contact: Vanessa Murdock, 206-733-2971

4. **Date checklist prepared:**

June 2011

5. **Agency requesting checklist:**

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

6. **Proposed timing or schedule (include phasing if applicable):**

The proposed code amendments will be reviewed by City Council and discussed in public hearings in summer and fall of 2011.

7. **Do you have any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activities related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain:**

The proposal is a non-project action that is not dependent upon any further action. The proposal could enable subsequent development agreement actions that would regulate transit oriented development around regional transit stations. Any subsequent development agreement would be subject to individual SEPA review and approvals.

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

A SEPA environmental checklist and environmental determination and related information are prepared for this proposal.

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:**

This is a non-project action that does not affect any specific individual properties. No other governmental approvals are affected.

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

The proposal requires approval by the City Council. No other agency approvals are anticipated.

11. **Give a brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.**

Proposal Description

The proposal consists of the following actions:

Establish a regulatory mechanism in the Land Use Code a to allow the City to enter into a development agreement pursuant to Chapter 36.70B RCW for real property within an urban center or within the Station Area Overlay District. The development agreement would be required to be on land owned or under control of a regional transit agency, and based on a coordinated development plan or urban design framework. The development agreement may set forth development standards that vary from otherwise applicable development standards within specified limits.

This is a non-project action there is no specific site or development proposal.

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 proposal's affect would be limited to City of Seattle designated urban centers and Station Area Overlay districts on property owned or under control of a regional transit authority. This is a non-project action with no specific location or site.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS:

1. Earth

- a. General description of site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- e. Describe the purpose, type and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction or use? If so, generally describe.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion or other impacts to the earth, if any:**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

2. Air

- a. What type 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.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

3. Water

- a. Surface Water:**
- 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.**
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Ground Water:

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 2) **Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground for 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

c. Water Runoff (including storm water):

- 1) **Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

4. Plants

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

- Deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- Evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- Shrubs, various species as ornamental landscaping
- 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

This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed. The range of sites that could be affected by the proposal could include those plants checked on the lines above.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

5. Animals

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

Birds:

Mammals:

Fish:

Other:

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

None are known. No threatened or endangered animal species are known to be in or near urban centers and station area overlays within the City of Seattle.

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

None are known. Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- d. **Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:**
Not applicable.

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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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:**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 1) **Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. **Noise**

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

No commercial agriculture has taken place on properties owned by regional transit agencies within urban centers and station area overlay districts in the City of Seattle for over 50 years.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed. Zoning of properties owned by regional transit agencies within urban centers and station area overlay districts varies, and includes a variety of mixed use commercial and multifamily zoning.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. This proposal would be limited to designated comprehensive plan urban centers, and in some cases urban villages.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

In order for any development agreement to be approved pursuant to the proposal, the development agreement would be required to be based on an approved plan or urban design framework. Any such plan or framework would be required to be consistent with City Comprehensive Plan policies for land use and other elements.

9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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?

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed. Any development agreement pursuant to this proposal could not include height limits in excess of 85 feet.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

11. Light and Glare

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

12. Recreation

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

13. Historical 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.
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site?
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

14. Transportation

a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe the proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.
Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

All areas potentially affected by this proposal would be in the immediate vicinity of regional transit stations or facilities.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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).

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

All areas potentially affected by this proposal would be in the immediate vicinity of regional transit stations or facilities.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

None are proposed.

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.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

16. Utilities

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

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

- 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:**

Not applicable. This is a non-project action. There is no specific site or project location. No construction is proposed.

C. SIGNATURE

Signature provided following section D below.

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NON-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 the questions, be aware of the extent of 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 proposed changes would result in no direct impacts, and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative impacts related to water, air, noise, or toxic/hazardous substances.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

None proposed.

2. **How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish or marine life?**
The proposed changes would result in no direct impacts and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative impacts related to plant, animal, fish or marine life.

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

None proposed.

3. **How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?**
The proposed changes would result in no direct negative impacts and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative impacts related to energy or natural resources. As a result, the potential for increased depletion of energy and natural resources is minor.

The proposal could enable development agreements for transit oriented development in the immediate vicinity of regional transit facilities. Such development agreements could allow for moderately increased heights and densities of development in the immediate vicinity of transit stations. Transit oriented development can indirectly reduce impacts on energy and natural resources by encouraging more widespread use of transit over automobile travel for those users occupying the transit oriented development.

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

Transit oriented development that may be enabled by this proposal can indirectly protect and conserve energy and natural resources by encouraging more widespread use of transit.

4. **How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive 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?

The proposed changes would result in no direct impacts and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative impacts related to environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection. For natural environmental features listed above, this is due to the fact that the areas potentially affected are already in intensely developed urban environment and no significant environmentally sensitive areas are designated.

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

None are proposed. 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.

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

The proposed changes would continue to allow and encourage land uses compatible with the existing Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plans. The proposal is intended to implement Comprehensive Plan and land use objectives for transit oriented development. Development agreements that could result from the proposal would have the additional requirement of being based on a coordinated development plan or urban design framework. Any such plan or framework would be required to be fully consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other plans.

The proposed changes would result in no direct, immediate impacts on the built environment. The proposal could potentially result in development agreements which could include moderately higher densities or heights in transit oriented developments and/or modifications of certain design and landscaping standards. Any such increase or modification would be in order to accommodate new development in a transit oriented development near a regional transit facility. The indirect, long-term cumulative impacts on land uses would be positive in that such transit oriented development furthers the preferred land use pattern as expressed in Comprehensive Plans, Transportation plans and various policies and goals of the City of Seattle.

This is a non-project proposal, so specific environmental impacts cannot be predicted. In general, the environmental impacts of the proposed changes will primarily be associated with slight increases in housing capacity and commercial capacity in certain areas around regional transit facilities. Negative impacts could include increased noise levels and private view blockage where development occurs, but any difference in the magnitude of these impacts relative to what could occur under existing conditions is minor.

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

None are proposed. Development above SEPA thresholds will continue to be reviewed on a project-specific basis and any land use related impacts identified and mitigated as part of the project's SEPA decision.

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

The proposed changes would result in no direct impacts and are unlikely to result in indirect or cumulative negative impacts related to transportation or public services/utilities. A wide range of uses are allowed in the areas potentially affected by the proposal. The proposal is expected to facilitate transit oriented development in the immediate vicinity of regional transit facilities that may be at a slightly higher density or height than would be allowed without the proposal. Such focused density at regional transit facilities is expected to have an indirect reduction on vehicle transportation demands by encouraging transit use.

It is not practical to predict the number of vehicle trips that would be affected by the proposal. Due to the presence of strong public transportation and a compact walkable environment in the vicinity of the areas potentially affected by the proposal a high mode-split with transit and non-motorized modes of transportation is expected. The proposal is expected to encourage shifts toward more transportation-efficient land uses, along with the restructuring of supporting transportation infrastructure resulting in fewer additional vehicle trips being generated by new development in the vicinity of regional transit facilities.

All areas potentially affected by the proposal are within already urbanized areas with fully developed utility infrastructures. No acute infrastructure deficiencies or particular capacity constraints are known for the areas potentially affected by the proposal.

At the time of any project-specific development proposal, it is the responsibility of the project proponent to sufficiently upgrade existing utility infrastructures to service proposed development. These arrangements must be in place at the time of permit approval for new development.

In sum, the potential for significant adverse additional impacts on transportation and utility infrastructure is negligible.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands are:

None proposed.

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

It is believed that the proposal would not result in conflicts with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for protection of the environment.

SIGNATURE:

I, the undersigned, state that to the best of my knowledge the above information is true and complete. It is understood that the lead agency may withdraw any declaration of non-significance that it might issue in reliance upon this checklist should there be any willful misrepresentation or willful lack of full disclosure on my part.

Signature: On File
Vanessa Murdock
Senior Urban Planner

Date Submitted:

Reviewed by: On File Date: July 6, 2011
Geoff Wentlandt
Senior Urban Planner