



# **Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 15.04 Amendments for Voluntary Transportation Improvements**

**Seattle, Washington**

**SEPA Checklist**

**October 17, 2016**

## STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA) ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

### A. BACKGROUND

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

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 15.04 Amendments for Voluntary Transportation Improvements

**2. Name of applicant:**

City of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

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

Heather Marx  
SDOT  
P.O. Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
(206) 615-0801

**4. Date checklist prepared:**

October 17, 2016

**5. Agency requesting checklist:**

SDOT

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

The legislation may be transmitted to City Council in the 3rd quarter of 2016. Amendments to SMC Chapter 15.04.100 are slated to take effect January 1, 2017.

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

Not applicable.

**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.**

None.

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

The proposed code amendment legislation will require adoption by the City Council. Individual projects in the public rights-of-way will require a Street Use permit.

**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.)**

The legislation amends the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 15.04.100 to permit the crediting of use fees for voluntary transportation improvements. The non-project action proposes to encourage partnerships between SDOT and other entities through voluntary improvements of rights-of-way that are in the best interests of both the project and public.

The current SMC 15.04.100 authorizes the granting of exceptions from paying fees, making an indemnity deposit, posting a surety bond, or providing liability insurance in certain instances, such as environmental remediation or public transportation related infrastructure projects.

The proposed amendments to SMC Chapter 15.04 that may take effect in January 2017 include the following:

- The Director of Transportation may credit up to \$300,000 in use fees from an individual project in exchange for voluntary transportation improvements of equal value;
- Permitted improvements include transportation-related infrastructure installations or improvements to existing infrastructure beyond what is required by local, state, or federal requirements;
- Requirement for improvements to be located in the immediate area of the project that the use fees have been credited;
- Encouragement of partnerships between entities and SDOT for improvements in the best interests of both the project and public; and
- The \$300,000 limit shall be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index.

**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.**

This is a non-project proposal that would apply within the City's rights-of-way.

**B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

**1. Earth**

**a. General description of the site:** *[Check the applicable boxes]*

Flat       Rolling       Hilly       Steep Slopes       Mountainous  
 Other: (identify)

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

This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way where slopes generally range from flat to 10 percent.

**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 agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.**

This non-project proposal applies to the City's rights-of-way which contains variety of soil types, mostly glacial in nature.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity and applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate the source of fill.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity and applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity and applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity and applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

## **2. Air**

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

## **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.**

Seattle contains numerous creeks, streams, and other bodies of water near City's rights-of-way, including the Duwamish Waterway, Ship Canal, Lake Union, Lake

Washington, and Puget Sound.

- 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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

- 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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

- 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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**b. Ground:**

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

- 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.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**c. Water runoff (including stormwater):**

- 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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**4. Plants**

**a. Types of vegetation found on the site: [Check the applicable boxes]**

- |  |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deciduous trees:                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Alder   | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple     | <input type="checkbox"/> Aspen   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (identify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evergreen trees:                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fir     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cedar     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pine    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (identify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shrubs                             |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grass                              |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pasture                                       |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crop or grain                                 |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops |                                  |                                    |                                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wet soil plants:                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Cattail | <input type="checkbox"/> Buttercup | <input type="checkbox"/> Bulrush | <input type="checkbox"/> Skunk cabbage     |

- Other: (identify)  
 Water plants:      water lily    eelgrass    milfoil    Other: (identify)  
 Other types of vegetation: (identify)

Deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs and grasses may be found in the planting strip or other unpaved portions of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**5. Animals**

**a. Birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site: [Check the applicable boxes]**

**Birds:**            Hawk        Heron        Eagle        Songbirds  
 Other: (identify): Crows, pigeons, doves, starlings, and house sparrows are common urban species that may be found in the rights-of-way.

**Mammals:**        Deer        Bear        Elk        Beaver  
 Other:(identify): Rodents, including mice, rats, squirrels, and raccoons are common urban species that may be found in the rights-of-way.

**Fish:**            Bass        Salmon    Trout        Herring  
 Shellfish    Other: (identify)

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**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, herons, and other birds) in North America. The Pacific Flyway encompasses the entire Puget Sound Basin.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**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 to this non-project proposal.

**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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

**4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**b. Noise**

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. Ambient noise typical of urban areas exists in Seattle's public right-of-way.

**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 to this non-project proposal. This proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**8. Land and shoreline use**

**a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**b. Has the site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or non-forest use?**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how?**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**c. Describe any structures on the site.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way. City rights-of-way are located in all City zoning designations.

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

This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way. City rights-of-way are located in all City Comprehensive Plan designations.

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

This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way. City rights-of-way are located in all City Shoreline Master Program designations.

**h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.**

This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way. Some City rights-of-way are located in or are adjacent to environmentally critical areas.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**m. Proposed measures to ensure that the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**9. Housing**

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

## **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 to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

## **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 to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**12. Recreation**

**a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

There are parks and other designated and informal recreational opportunities within and near the City's rights-of-way.

**b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal applies to all of the City's rights-of-way.

**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 to this non-project proposal.

**13. Historic and cultural preservation**

**a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites located on or near the project site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers? If so, specifically describe.**

There are seven historic districts and over 350 designated landmarks within the city. The City's rights-of-way lie within historic districts and contain or abut designated landmarks.

**b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use of occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

**c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance of resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

#### **14. Transportation**

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

This non-project proposal will apply to all of the City's rights-of-way.

- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

This non-project proposal will apply to all of the City's rights-of-way.

- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or non-project proposal eliminate?**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The proposal does not involve construction activity.

- d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

This non-project proposal will apply to all of the City's rights-of-way.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and non-passenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The proposal does not involve construction activity.

- g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. This non-project proposal will apply to all of the City's rights-of-way.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The purpose of the SMC amendments is to facilitate transportation related improvements that are in the best interests of projects and the public. Improvements of existing City rights-of-way will be evaluated on an individual project basis through the Street Use permit.

## 15. Public services

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal. The proposal does not involve construction activity.

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

Not applicable to this non-project proposal.

## 16. Utilities

- a. Utilities currently available at the site, if any: [Check the applicable boxes]**

None  
 Electricity       Natural gas       Water       Refuse service  
 Telephone       Sanitary sewer       Septic system  
 Other (identify): other communication services, cable television, and internet access.

- 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 to this non-project proposal. Potential utility connections will be addressed during review of Street Use permit applications on a project-specific basis.

**C. SIGNATURE**

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

Signature:  .....

Date Submitted: 9-26-2016

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

**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?**

This non-project proposal will not increase discharges to water or the production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances.

Approval of proposed construction in the rights-of-way subject to the provisions of this non-project proposal may result in negligible impacts to emissions to air and noise production during construction.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Improvements of existing City rights-of-way will be evaluated on an individual project basis through the Street Use permit. Projects will also be required to comply with the City of Seattle Noise Code (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.08).

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

This non-project proposal will not affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life.

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

No measures are proposed.

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

This non-project proposal will not deplete energy or natural resources.

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

No measures are proposed.

**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, flood plains, or prime farmlands?**

This non-project proposal will not affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; including parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, flood plains, or prime farmlands.

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

No measures are proposed.

**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?**

This non-project proposal will not affect land and shoreline use, and would not allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans.

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

No measures are proposed.

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

This non-project proposal will not result in an increase in demand on transportation or public services and utilities. Approval of projects subject to the provisions of this non-project proposal may result in changes to existing street and sidewalk surfaces and utilities in the City rights-of-way. Projects will be evaluated on an individual basis through the Street Use permit.

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

No measures are proposed.

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

This non-project proposal will not result in conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.