

FAQ

What thresholds are changing?

- SEPA environmental review thresholds for specific urban centers, and urban villages: Northgate, South Lake Union, North Rainier, North Beacon Hill, Rainier Beach. The changes are shown in the following tables:

In Northgate, South Lake Union, North Rainier, North Beacon Hill, Rainier Beach:

Changes to Exemptions for Residential Uses			
Zone	Number of exempt dwelling units		
		<u>OLD THRESHOLDS</u> Within urban centers or urban villages containing SAODs	<u>NEW THRESHOLDS</u> Within urban centers or urban villages containing SAODs
SF, RSL		4	4
LR1		200	20
LR2		200	20
LR3		200	20
NC1, NC2, NC3, C1, C2		200	20
MR, HR, SM, SM-SLU, SM-D, SM-NR		200	20
Changes to Exemptions for Non-Residential Uses			
Zone	Exempt area of use (Square feet of gross floor area)		
		<u>OLD THRESHOLDS</u> Within urban centers or urban villages containing SAODs	<u>NEW THRESHOLDS</u> Within urban centers or urban villages containing SAODs
SF, RSL, LR1		4,000	4,000
LR2, LR3		30,000 in mixed-use buildings	12,000
MR, HR, NC1, NC2, NC3		30,000 in mixed-use buildings	12,000
C1, C2, SM, SM-SLU, SM-D, SM-NR		30,000 in mixed-use buildings	12,000

When do they change?

- Monday November 16th.

FAQ

Why change now?

- The City has been engaged in the *Seattle 2035* comprehensive plan update process since 2014.
- State rules required Seattle to update its citywide residential growth projections this year in its Comprehensive Plan.
- As of November 16, 2015, the City is updating parts of the Plan but is not completing the full Plan update until 2016.
- The City must establish a full set of new 20-year growth estimates in the Comprehensive Plan in 2016 before it may again set the higher level of SEPA environmental review thresholds.
- Washington State rules say that the City must compare our growth to a formal goal. At this time, the City cannot assign new growth estimates for urban villages until 2016.

Why only these places?

- The higher SEPA thresholds applied to all urban centers and urban villages with light rail station areas until they met their Comp Plan growth targets. In four of the six urban centers, and most of the urban villages, growth targets had already been met, so the higher thresholds no longer applied. As noted in the first question, this current change will now affect two urban centers and three urban villages.
- The current changes apply to the remaining areas with higher thresholds.

Can I submit my application now under the larger SEPA thresholds?

- Yes, through Friday November 13th.

Please refer to the vesting provisions of [SMC 23.76.026](#). Generally, projects vest to regulations at the time a completed building permit application is accepted by the Department.

For more information, contact Gordon Clowers at (206)-684-8375 or gordon.clowers@seattle.gov.