City of Seattle
Seattle Public Utilities

April 24, 2014

TO: Recipients of the Project SEPA DNS/Checklist

FROM: Betty Meyer, SEPA Responsible Official

SUBJECT: Addendum to the Northeast 93rd Street Culvert Repair Project SEPA Environmental Checklist

PURPOSE OF THIS ADDENDUM

In March of 2013, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) prepared a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Checklist that analyzed environmental impacts of the proposed Northeast 93rd Street Culvert Repair Project. As lead agency, SPU issued a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) for the project on April 4, 2013.

Since then, SPU has completed the construction contracting process and has continued coordinating with project stakeholders. These efforts have led SPU to alter one feature of the project. SPU has prepared this addendum to assess how that change affects the analyses included in the March 29, 2013 Environmental Checklist.

As lead agency, SPU has reviewed the findings and concluded the project change does not substantially alter the analyses of impacts contained in the March 2013 Environmental Checklist and will not result in any significant environmental impacts.

This addendum has been prepared in accordance with the authority provided in SMC 25.05.600 and in accordance with the procedures described in SMC 25.05.625.

UPDATED PROJECT INFORMATION

The Environmental Checklist described the project as potentially disturbing approximately 1,200 square feet of currently paved surface. About 200 square feet of grassy road shoulder would also be disturbed. Construction would also require excavating into the root zone of a large big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) tree, the stem of which lies within approximately 10 feet of the nearest shaft excavation area. That tree is approximately 36 inches in diameter at breast height and thus meets the size threshold of an Exceptional Tree as defined by Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.11 (Tree Protection) and further elaborated by DPD Director's Rule 16-2008. Section B4.d of the Environmental Checklist described a number of measures the project would implement to protect the health of the tree.

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The tree is located in street right-of-way owned and managed by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Since issuance of the project's DNS, SDOT's certified arborist has more closely examined the existing condition of the big-leaf maple and has reevaluated potential impacts of project construction on this tree, consistent with the risk assessment requirements of DPD Director's Rule 16-2008. The arborist observed the tree has significant decay in portions of the trunk and limbs, is leaning toward private property, and that disturbances to the root zone would likely endanger both the stability and health of the tree. Based on these findings, even though the tree meets the size criterion, it does not meet the risk assessment criterion for consideration as an exceptional tree. SDOT's arborist recommends removal of the tree prior to the project's excavation activity, and the adjacent private landowner, SPU, and SPU's contractor have agreed with that recommendation.

As a result, the project is now proposing to remove the tree at the start of project construction. As mitigation, SDOT would require SPU to plant two new trees in the right-of-way at the end of construction. SPU and SDOT are currently negotiating the species, size, and placement of those replacement trees. Replacement trees would likely not be big-leaf maples because SDOT discourages the use of that species as a street tree.

No additional technical reports have been prepared that directly relate to this proposal.

CHANGES TO ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

This proposed change would result in removal of the big-leaf maple tree and its replacement with two new street trees. The change would not alter the area of ground disturbance, cut or fill quantities, or area of replaced impervious surfaces. The number of truck trips and estimated construction greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would increase slightly due to work related to tree removal and the planting and care of two additional trees. The number of vehicle round-trips would be expected to increase from 215 to approximately 225. The original estimated GHG emission amount would be anticipated to increase from 1,450.4 metric tons of carbon dioxide emission (MTCO2e) to 1,451 MTCO2e. The scope change would slightly increase the duration of generated construction noise and would increase construction duration from approximately 20 working days to 22 working days.

Please submit any comments no later than close of business May 9, 2014, to:

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