

## City of Seattle

### ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### A. BACKGROUND:

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

Capitol Hill light rail station area sites development agreement and site-specific design guidelines:

A development agreement between City of Seattle and Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) for the Capitol Hill light rail station properties and amendment to the Capitol Hill neighborhood design guidelines to include site-specific design guidelines for the Capitol Hill light rail station properties.

##### 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:

May 2013

##### 5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

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

The proposed legislation will be reviewed by City Council and discussed in public hearings in the summer of 2013.

##### 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 would establish regulations and design guidelines for future transit oriented development on the Capitol Hill light rail station sites only. Sound Transit is the owner of all properties addressed by the development agreement. Subsequent project actions will be brought forward by private entities to construct buildings on the Capitol Hill station area sites, which will be subject to individual project level 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. A SEPA environmental checklist and environmental determination for legislation specifically authorizing development agreements for transit oriented development on these Capitol Hill properties was prepared during July of 2011.

**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 known. This is a non-project action that affects the future development of properties acquired by Sound Transit to construct the Capitol Hill light rail station. These properties will eventually be surplus to Sound Transit's needs and made available for development. No proposals have been made for these properties. No other governmental approvals are affected.

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

The development agreement portion of the proposal requires approval by the City of Seattle City Council and the Sound Transit Board. The site-specific design guidelines portion of the proposal requires approval by the Seattle City Council. No other agency approvals are anticipated. See also Question 7.

**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 is composed of two elements:

1. Consider and potentially approve a development agreement, to be entered into between the City of Seattle and Sound Transit, pursuant to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 23.61.016 and Chapter 36.70B RCW. The development agreement would set certain standards to regulate future development that vary from otherwise applicable development standards within specified limits. The development agreement would apply only to sites owned by Sound Transit within immediate proximity to the Capitol Hill light rail station. The proposed development agreement includes but is not limited to requirements for affordable housing, regulations for open space and building setbacks, modifications to height limits, and regulations related to distribution of green factor landscaping requirements.

2. Establish site-specific design guidelines for the areas subject to the development agreement, to be appended to the Capitol Hill neighborhood design guidelines.

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

- 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.**

Five properties owned by Sound Transit within direct proximity to the Capitol Hill light rail station. (See attached Sound Transit coordinated development plan, and attached Urban Design Framework for figures depicting the location of the properties).

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS:**

### **1. Earth**

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

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are relatively flat.

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

There is an approximate 5% slope to the east between Broadway and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

- 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.**

This is a non-project action. Soils will be studied at the time of proposed development and subject to project –level environmental review.

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

This is a non-project action. Soils will be studied at the time of proposed development and subject to project –level environmental review.

**e. Describe the purpose, type and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

This is a non-project action. The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently under construction to build the Capitol Hill light rail station and a portion of the underground tunnel serving the future light rail facility. Filling and grading associated with that construction has already been evaluated and permitted. Future filling or grading associated with future development on these Sites will be subject to project-level environmental review.

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

This is a non-project action. Potential erosion associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review.

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

The coordinated development plan for the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement anticipates almost all of the Sites to be covered with buildings, sidewalks, pass throughs or plazas. The amount of impervious cover envisioned by the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from the impervious cover likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

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

This is a non-project action. Potential erosion associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review. The proposed development agreement requires a combined Green Factor score that exceeds the minimum required by the Seattle Land Use Code. Different methods to achieve the same score may be proposed at a project level, but the minimum overall green factor score must be met or exceeded.

**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.**

This is a non-project action. The air emissions associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Potential emissions associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review.

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

This is a non-project action. There are no known sources of emissions or odor in the proximity of the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement.

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

None.

**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.**

There are no surface water bodies on or in the immediate vicinity of the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement.

**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.**

No.

**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.**

None.

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

No.

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

No.

**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.**

This is a non-project action. It is not anticipated that future development on the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement will discharge waste materials to surface water; no such discharge will differ significantly from the discharge resulting from future development of the Sites without the development agreement. Project level review of future development will address such discharge if it 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.**

This is a non-project action. The groundwater effects associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Engineering details including potential groundwater withdrawal or discharged to groundwater will be studied at the project level.

**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.**

This is a non-project action. Engineering details including potential waste discharge will be studied at the project level.

**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.~~ The source of water runoff, its method of collection, and its disposal will be studied and evaluated at the project level of future development subject to the proposed development agreement. The proposed development agreement requires a combined Green Factor score that exceeds the minimum required by the Seattle Land Use Code. Different methods to achieve the same score may be proposed at a project level, but the minimum overall green factor score must be met or exceeded. Within the

context of future construction activities, localized on-site stormwater runoff on exposed earth surfaces would be possible, but chances of adverse impacts from such phenomena would likely be reduced through implementation of standard construction controls that would reduce the potential for off-site movement of sediments into drains, for example. Post-construction, normal drainage requirements of development would be expected to control and direct runoff toward available stormdrains/sewage systems.

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

This is a non-project action. The emissions of waste materials associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. The potential for waste materials entering groundwater will be studied and evaluated at the project level of future development subject to the proposed development agreement, but is generally considered to be a low potential due to the lack of nearby surface waters and the presence of urban stormwater control systems.

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

None.

**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. No vegetation is currently on site because the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently under construction to build the Capitol Hill light rail station and a portion of the underground light rail tunnel.

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

None.

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

None known.

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

This is a non-project action. Proposed landscaping including plant material type will be evaluated at a project level.

**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:**

A variety of animal/bird species can be found in Seattle. The immediate area in which the five Sites subject to the proposed development agreement is located is developed and urban in character. Typical animals and birds to be found in this area include rats, mice, squirrels, seagulls and other birds.

Birds:

Mammals:

Fish:

Other:

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

Bald eagles are known to exist within the City limits. No other threatened or endangered species are known to be on or near the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement.

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

The Sites are not known to be part of a migration route.

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

None. The wildlife impacts associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. However, future development subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to project-level environmental review.



## **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.**

This is a non-project action. Areas generally within Seattle are served by electric and natural gas utilities. Future development subject to the proposed development agreement would be likely to use these sources of energy. The energy use associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

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

This is a non-project action. Building height limits would be raised from the current 65' to 85' on some Sites within the affected area, and building height limits would be raised from 40' to 85' on some Sites within the affected area. The effect of this height increase on the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties in this dense urban environment cannot be assessed at this time, but is not expected to be significant. Future development subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to project-level environmental review.

- 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:**

This is a non-project action. The site-specific design guidelines included in the proposal encourage the consideration of sustainable design opportunities. Additionally, future development subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to project-level environmental review.

## **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.**

This is a non-project action. The environmental health hazards, if any, associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Future development subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to project-level environmental review.

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

This is a non-project action. In general, emergency service providers including the Fire and Police Departments will review the effects of future development, including any development that is subject to the proposed development agreement.

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

None.

**b. Noise**

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

This is a non-project action. The noise in the area will affect future development of these Sites in the same way with or without the development agreement.

**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.**

This is a non-project action. The proposed development agreement envisions a moderate increase in residential density than otherwise allowed which could result in a slightly more noise associated with urban living. Given the location of the Sites above and adjacent to a light rail facility, the increase in ambient noise associated with ridership of said facility (evaluated in a separate environmental determination) is likely to be greater than the increase in noise resulting from a modest increase in residential density. The noise impacts associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

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

None.

**8. Land and Shoreline Use**

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

The Sites are currently being used to construct Sound Transit's Capitol Hill light rail station and a portion of the underground light rail system tunnel.

**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.**

Current structures are temporary, construction-related structures.

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

This is a non-project action. Any demolition of current, construction-related structures will be unaffected by the development agreement.

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

Zoning of properties that would be affected by the proposal include Neighborhood Commercial 3 40 (65) in a Pedestrian designated zone (NC3P-40(65)) and Neighborhood Commercial 3 40 (NC3-40), within a station area overlay district. A portion of one of the properties lies within the Major Institution Overlay of the Seattle Central Community College with a height limit of 105 feet for institutional or institutionally related uses (MIO-105).

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

Capitol Hill Urban Center.

**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.**

No part of the site has been identified as environmentally sensitive.

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

The proposed development agreement envisions the Sites developed with a variety of uses, mostly housing with some lower-level non-residential uses. It is not currently possible to estimate the number of those who would work on the Sites after they are developed consistent with the proposed agreement. The likely maximum number of people residing on the Sites after they are developed consistent with the agreement and other applicable development regulations would be accommodated by approximately 440 units.

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

The Sites are currently used for construction, so no new displacement will result from future development with or without the proposed development agreement.

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

None.

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

The proposed development agreement is informed by and consistent with an urban design framework developed through a community involvement process and a coordinated development plan based on that framework. The urban design framework and coordinated development plan are consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and the adopted Capitol Hill Neighborhood Plan. With or without the development agreement, future development of this site would be consistent with existing and projected uses of this dense, urban area of the City. No additional measures are proposed.

**9. Housing**

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

Approximately 440 housing units are anticipated to be provided on the Sites subject to the proposed development agreement. The proposed development agreement would require approximately 35% of those units be made affordable to individuals earning between 60 and 80 % of Area Median Income.

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

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently used for construction, so no new displacement will result from any future development of the Sites, with or without the proposed development agreement.

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

The proposed development agreement would require approximately 35% of the total number of residential units be made affordable to individuals earning between 60% and 80 % of Area Median Income. No such requirement would likely exist without the proposed development agreement.

## 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?**

Any development proposal subject to the proposed development agreement could not exceed 85 feet.

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

Any development proposal subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to any required future environmental review and Design Review. Residential areas to the immediate east of the proposed Sites are currently zoned Lowrise 3 which has a building height limit of 40 feet. Those properties would experience an altered view facing west as the allowable building height in the proposed development agreement is 85 feet and the minimum height is 74' 11".

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

Some of the terms of the development agreement and site-specific design guidelines are intended to improve the aesthetics of the future development including setbacks, modulation, and landscaping. Additionally, any development proposal subject to the proposed development agreement will be subject to Design Review and the proposed site-specific design guidelines developed specifically for these properties.

## 11. Light and Glare

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

This is a non-project action. The light or glare associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Light and glare associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review.

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

See response to Question 11a.

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

None known.

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

None.

## 12. Recreation

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

There is a large public park, Cal Anderson Park, adjacent to the areas being affected by the proposal.

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

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently used for construction, so no new displacement will result from any of the development of the Sites, with or without the proposed development agreement.

### c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

None.

## 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.

No. The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently used for construction.

### b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site?

None known, except Cal Anderson Park is of cultural significance and is next to some of the Sites.

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

None.

## 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.**

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are adjacent to and served by Broadway, Broadway East, East Denny Way, East John Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, and Nagle Place. (Please see attached Sound Transit coordinated development plan, and attached Urban Design Framework for figures depicting the location of the properties).

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

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement proposal would be served by King Country Metro bus service, future Seattle streetcar service and future Sound Transit light rail service.

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

The Sites subject to the proposed development agreement are currently used for construction and as such no parking spaces would be eliminated. The proposed development agreement places a maximum of 0.7 vehicular parking stalls per residential unit, which may reduce the number of stalls that would likely be featured in future development of the Sites without the development agreement. The development agreement would require a greater number of bike parking stalls than otherwise required by the Land Use Code. The number of retail vehicular parking stalls is not regulated through the proposed development agreement although the coordinated development plan indicates the capacity for 78 retail stalls.

- 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).**

The coordinated development plan anticipates a north/south private street to be built between East John Street and East Denny Way to provide emergency and vehicular access through the site. This street will be restricted to fire access, Sound Transit maintenance access, and adjacent building service and access.

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

This is a non-project action. The transit use associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Transportation use associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review. The site is in direct adjacency to the light rail station.

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

This is a non-project action. This is a non-project action. Given the proximity to high capacity transit and a required maximum number of residential parking stalls in the proposed development agreement, the number of vehicular trips associated with future development consistent with the proposed agreement is anticipated to be less than a typical mixed-use development of this size, such as would be the case for future development of the Sites without the proposed agreement. Trip generation estimates were based on analysis in the Capitol Hill Station Transit Oriented Development Transportation Analysis by Heffron Transportation, Inc. (March 14, 2011). Vehicular trip forecasts for the current proposal were adjusted downward from the Heffron estimates to account for a reduced development site. The proposal is expected to generate approximately 790 vehicle trips on a typical day; 53 of these trips would occur during the AM peak hour, and 73 during the PM peak hour.

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

None.

**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.**

This is a non-project action. The public service demands associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement. Public service demands associated with future development on these Sites will be evaluated in project-level environmental review.

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

None.

**16. Utilities**

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

The listed utilities (except septic system) are currently available to the Sites.



**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:**

This is a non-project action. In general, utility providers, such as Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, and review probable future development needs and propose enhanced services as necessary as part of their planning for future service needs. The utility needs associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

**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 proposal is unlikely to result in such increases. The impacts at issue in this question associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

**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 site is currently a construction site, with little plant or animal life. The flora and fauna impacts associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

**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 depletion of energy and natural resources associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement is not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

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

None 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, floodplains, or prime farmlands?**

The areas potentially affected are already in an intensely developed urban environment and contain no designated environmentally sensitive areas. Sites affected by the proposal were previously developed, and are currently vacant and being used as staging for construction of a light rail transit line. The impacts on sensitive areas associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

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

None proposed.

**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 proposal could result in development at a moderately higher density and height limit than would otherwise be allowed by existing development regulations. Building height limits would be raised from the current 65' to 85' on some Sites within the affected area, and building height limits would be raised from 40' to 85' on some Sites within the affected area, and associated development regulations per the Seattle Municipal Code would accompany the changed limits. Such moderate increases to allowable building height and associated standards would create small increases in the intensity of land use. The transit oriented development, which is expected to span at least five separate Sites, is anticipated to accommodate approximately 440 new housing units. (See attached Sound Transit coordinated development plan, and attached Urban Design Framework for concept level analysis of potential development to be enabled by the Development Agreement.)

Any such increase or modification would be in order to accommodate new development in a transit oriented development near a regional transit facility, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. 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, and would be mitigated by other elements of the development agreement as described below.

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. The development

agreement is based on an urban design framework which has undergone substantial community review and comment and has been evaluated for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The minor variations from existing regulations still fit within the relevant Plan policies for this dense urban environment.

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

Numerous elements within the development agreement are included to mitigate potential minor increases in intensity of development within the affected area. Measures include requirements for a publicly accessible plaza/open space, certain building setbacks and pedestrian corridors, and public amenities such as a festival street. These elements and others are intended to balance and mitigate the impact of minor increases in height and density allowed for portions of the affected area. Additionally, the site-specific design guidelines portion of the proposal is a mitigation measure for slightly increased land use intensity on portions of the affected area. The site-specific design guidelines provide direction for specific design features that could be included to mitigate potential land use impacts.

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

A wide range of uses is 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. 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.

See the response to question 14f , earlier in this checklist, for an estimation of worst-case vehicle trip generation from future development based on past work by Heffron Transportation and DPD staff. This estimate is for approximately 790 vehicle trips on a typical day, of which approximately 53 trips would occur during the AM peak hour, and approximately 73 trips during the PM peak hour.

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. The utility impacts associated with future development of the Sites pursuant to the development agreement are not likely to differ significantly from what is likely to result from future development of these Sites without the development agreement.

In sum, the potential for significant adverse additional impacts on transportation and utility infrastructure is evaluated as minor, and dependent upon the nature, timing and uses that would be associated with future development. 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.**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Vanessa Murdock  
Senior Urban Planner

Date Submitted: May 7 2013

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: May 7, 2013  
Gordon Clowers  
Senior Planning and Development Specialist

(Note: Mr. Clowers' annotation comments are included as underline and strike text in this document.)

Attachments:

1. [Capitol Hill light rail station sites development agreement](#)
2. [Capitol Hill light rail station sites design guidelines](#)
3. [City of Seattle Capitol Hill Light Rail Station Sites Urban Design Framework](#)
4. [Sound Transit Coordinated Development Plan](#)