



**CITY OF SEATTLE  
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF  
THE SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTIONS**

**Application Number:** 3030870-SD  
**Applicant Name:** Alex Rolluda, Rolluda Arch. for Seattle Public Schools  
**Address of Proposal:** 1410 NE 66<sup>th</sup> St

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

Public School Departure Process to provide less than the required off-street parking (Roosevelt High School).

The following approvals are required:

**Establishment of Development Standard Departure for Public Schools** (Chapter 23.79) Seattle Municipal Code to approve or condition the following departures:

1. To allow less than required off-street parking (60 fewer parking stalls) (SMC 23.51B.002 G)

**BACKGROUND**

**Site and Location**

Roosevelt High School is located at 1410 Northeast 66<sup>th</sup> Street. The project site is bounded by NW 68<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, NE 66<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to the east, and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE on the west. The site is approximately 9.5 acres. There are mapped steep slope environmentally critical areas (ECA) at the site edges where the site has been leveled and retaining walls hold the grade.

**Zoning**

The school is located in a Single Family zone (SF 5000). Surrounding zoning is Single Family SF 5000 to the north and east, Lowrise 3, and Neighborhood Commercial 2 and 3 zones with incentive zoning and pedestrian overlays to the south and west. The Neighborhood Commercial zones vary from 40 feet to 85 feet height limits with incentive zoning for additional height available to developers.

### Proposal Information

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) proposes to place four portable classrooms in the northwest parking lot in addition to six portable classrooms already placed in the same parking lot for a total of 10 portable classrooms. The existing six portables did not receive a development standard departure and so they are included in this proposal magnifying the request for reduced parking. Seattle Public Schools is placing portables to help create classroom space for students who will be moving to Lincoln High School once that school renovation is complete. Expected complete date for Lincoln High School improvements is fall of 2019. SPS proposes removing the 10 portables thus unencumbering the parking spaces once Lincoln High School is open. Information on the project proposal is available in the electronic file at <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/>.

### Previous SEPA Related Actions

The District has exercised its prerogative to act as lead agency for the SEPA review. SEPA documents are available on the Seattle Public Schools websites.

Environmentally Critical Areas (ECAs) review is required for building permit applications. SMC 25.09. Based on a review of the submitted information and the City GIS system, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) concludes that the proposed development appears to not temporarily or permanently encroach within steep slope areas or buffers on and adjacent to the parcel, so the ECA Steep Slope Development Standards are waived for this project as allowed by ECA Regulations, Section 25.09.045E.

### Public Comment

Comment letters were received during the official public comment period. Letters can be viewed in the public electronic file at the following link <http://www.seattle.gov/SDCI/> under the project number, MUP project 3030870. The public comments addressed concerns for decreased amount of parking, , traffic flow in the area, school attendance planning and next steps once student overflow is reduced.

### Development Standard Departure

The Seattle School District submitted a request for departures from Seattle Municipal Code Development Standards for the portable classroom placements which would reduce the required parking on site. The Department of Neighborhoods (DON) is charged with administering the School Departure process per SMC 23.79.004. DON formed the required Advisory Committee of eight voting members with a City staff non-voting Chair. The final Development Standard Departure Report is available in the public electronic file at the following link <http://www.seattle.gov/SDCI/> under the project number.

### **ANALYSIS – Development Standard Departure for Public Schools**

The Development Standard Departure process is conducted pursuant to the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code sections 23.79.002-012. An Advisory Committee was convened, public comment received, and a written recommendation to the Director of SDCI prepared. The Director prepares an analysis and decision per SMC section 23.79.010. The Director will determine the amount of departure to be allowed as well as mitigation measures to be imposed. The Director's Decision shall be based on an evaluation of the factors set forth in Section 23.79.008 C, the majority recommendations and minority reports of the Advisory Committee,

comments at the public meeting(s) and other comments from the public. If the Director modifies the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the reasons for the modification shall be put forth in writing.

Section 23.79.008 directs the Advisory Committee to “gather and evaluate public comment”, and to “recommend maximum departures which may be allowed for each development standard from which a departure has been requested”. It states, “Departures shall be evaluated for consistency with the objectives and intent of the City’s Land Use Code....., to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings”. The Advisory Committee is directed to consider and balance the interrelationships among the following factors in SMC 23.79.008 C 1:

- a. *Relationship to Surrounding Areas: The Advisory Committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:*
  1. *Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area;*
  2. *Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale;*
  3. *Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;*
  4. *Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and*
  5. *Impacts on housing and open space.*

*More flexibility in the development standards may be allowed if the impacts on the surrounding community are anticipated to be negligible or are reduced by mitigation; whereas, a minimal amount or no departure from development standards may be allowed if the anticipated impacts are significant and cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.*

- b. *Need for Departure: The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project’s relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area. Greater departures may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.*

#### Departure Request and Advisory Committee Recommendation

Seattle School District submitted a request for departures from Seattle Municipal Code Development Standards to reduce the amount of onsite parking due to new portable classrooms.

The City initiated the Development Standard Departure Process, pursuant to SMC 23.44.006E, 23.51B and 23.79. The code requires that the Department of Neighborhoods convene an Advisory Committee (Development Standard Advisory Committee) when the School District proposes a departure from the development standards identified under the code. These standards are referred to as the “zoning code”.

The purposes of the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee are: 1) to gather public comment and evaluate the proposed departures for consistency with the objectives and intent of the City’s land use policies to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings; and 2) to develop a report and recommendation to the City Department of Construction and Inspections from the Department of Neighborhoods.

Following completion of the Advisory Committee Report and its transmittal to the City’s Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) will publish the Director’s Decision. The

Director of the Department of Construction and Inspections will determine the extent of departure from established development standards which may be allowed, as well as identify all mitigating measures which may be required. The Director's Decision is appealable to the City hearing examiner.

The Department of Neighborhoods sent notices to residents within 600 feet of the proposed new school and to a list of individuals and organizations that had shown interest in other community issues requesting self-nominations for membership on the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee. The Committee was formed and composed of eight voting members with a City staff non-voting Chairperson.

In order to accommodate the educational program for this project, the District requested the following departure from the Seattle Municipal Code:

**Departure #1 – To allow a reduction of on-site parking.**(SMC 23.51B.002 G) –The code requires the District to provide 172 parking spaces. The District requested a departure to allow 60 fewer spaces for a total of 112 parking spaces on site.

Roosevelt High School enrollment has been increasing yearly and has exceeded the building's capacity. Enrollment projections for the school year 2018-19 is for another increase in enrollment of an additional 98 students, in part due to Lincoln High School renovations. Lincoln opened in 1907 as a high school. Since 1997, it has served as an intermediate site for multiple schools and programs. The project will return the existing Lincoln School campus into a comprehensive high school. The scope includes the modernization of the existing Lincoln School structures and improvements to the site using best practices for high school educational spaces. The renovated and modernized building will accommodate 1,600 high school students to help address projected high school enrollment.

It is anticipated an additional four (4) portable classrooms will be needed to accommodate the increased, temporary student enrollment. Seattle Public Schools is proposing to add these four (4) portable classroom buildings in the NW parking lot of Roosevelt High School adjacent to the current six (6) portable classrooms. The added classrooms are being installed to meet the projected increase in enrollment for the 2018-19 school year. The additional portable buildings are the same size and appearance as the existing portable buildings. They will be located between the existing portables and 12th Avenue NE. When Lincoln High School opens in Fall 2019, enrollment at Roosevelt High School will return to levels that align with the building capacity. The portable classroom buildings are planned for removal in the Summer of 2019.

The Seattle Municipal Code intent is to grant departures from the requirements of the Municipal Code to accommodate the educational needs of the programs to be located in single family zoned neighborhoods. The Seattle School District has demonstrated that it cannot accommodate the program necessary for this area without granting departures for reduced on-site parking.

**Departure #1 – Less than Required Off-street Parking**

1) Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area were considered by the Committee, and they did not have concerns about less than required off-street parking having an impact on its relationship to the surrounding area.

- 2) Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale were considered by the Committee, and they did not have concerns about less than required off-street parking having an impact on the transition in scale.
- 3) Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk were considered by the Committee, and they did not have concerns about less than required off-street parking having an impact on the appearance of bulk.
- 4) Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area were considered by the Committee, and they did have concerns about less than required off-street parking having an impact on traffic, circulation and parking the neighborhood, which were addressed in the recommended conditions.
- 5) Impacts on housing and open space were considered by the Committee, and they did not have concerns about less than required off-street parking having an impact on housing and open space.

The Committee deliberated about the added pressure on the neighborhood and enforcement of existing parking rules in the neighborhood due to the high utilization rate of parking. The Committee discussed ways to make taking the bus and walking to school safe and accessible, so that single and multiple occupancy vehicles needing parking would not be the only safe solution for commuting. Rather than the loss of housing to provide property for additional parking, the Committee recommended that alternative off-site parking solutions be explored such as using existing parking lots. The Committee mentioned the SDOT led Vision Zero street improvements should be put on hold since some parking will be removed with that effort.

The school district's proposal to install field lighting at the school was brought up because evening use of the field may generate additional cars parking at the school. For that project, there is a condition proposed that the field only be used for scholastic events, i.e. Seattle Parks and Recreation cannot use the fields when field lights are in use, until the portables are removed, and all portable-covered parking spaces are made available again.

The Committee was clear that the installation of portables on the school site must be temporary so the school district does not use them as a permanent solution, and the school district reviews future enrollment and school boundaries so over-enrollment such as this does not happen in the future.

One Committee member felt strongly that delaying the Vision Zero project would bring more harm than value and could not support the departure with the proposed conditions for that reason. After consideration of the above, the Committee recommends:

#### Need for Departure

The Committee thoroughly questioned whether the portables would be the solution to the problem of over-enrollment, seeing as there are already six portables and this would add an additional four. There are multiple high schools in the area, and the Committee wanted to understand if those schools could accommodate the additional students and questioned that when Lincoln High School opened would it realistically be able to absorb the growth now and into the

coming years so that all Roosevelt portables could be removed. In the end, the Committee agreed there is a need for classroom space, and that should take priority, but parking and safety in the neighborhood will be further impacted and should be mitigated.

Committee Recommendation – That the departure to allow less than required off-street parking be GRANTED as requested by the Seattle Public Schools without modifications and with the following conditions:

1. Delay the NE 65th Vision Zero Project until portables are removed to maintain current parking spaces.
2. SDOT and the existing Roosevelt High School Safe Routes to Schools Committee should evaluate how students and staff safely arrive and leave the school, and should consider raised crosswalks, signage throughout the neighborhood alerting drivers to speed limits, one-way streets, etc. and should increase parking enforcement.
3. SPS and the transportation consultant team should coordinate with King County Metro to review bus shelters and placement of bus shelters and bus stops, identify necessary improvements to ensure they are convenient for staff and students' use.
4. Removal of all portables by summer 2019. If that is not feasible, a new departure process for the continued removal of parking must be completed.
5. Implement a Transportation Communications and Operations Plan outlining the location and time of parent drop off and pick up and traffic circulation during peak hours. Work with the City's Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Program to find ways to encourage RHS staff to choose commute modes other than driving alone.
6. Seattle Public Schools should explore nearby off-site parking opportunities for staff and students to alleviate parking impacts on the neighborhood while portables are in place.
7. School Safety Committee should thoroughly consider security and protection of the students and portables.

#### Director's Analysis

The Director's decision shall be based on an evaluation of the factors set forth in Section 23.79.008 C a and b, the majority recommendations and minority reports of the Advisory Committee, comments at the public meeting, and other comments from the public.

Section 23.79.008 C 1 a states:

*a. Relationship to Surrounding Areas: The Advisory Committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:*

1. *Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area*
2. *Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale.*

3. *Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;*
4. *Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and*
5. *Impacts on housing and open space.*

**Departure #1– To allow a reduction in on-site parking. (SMC 23.51B.002 G).**

The land use code requires the District to provide 172 on-site parking spaces for this project. The District requested a departure to allow 112 parking spaces on site, for a 60-parking space departure. The District previously placed six portable classrooms which would have required a development standard departure. This permit is retroactively including the reduction in parking request for the first six portables and then, for four new portables for a total of 10 portables resulting in a total parking reduction of 60 spaces.

The departure request to reduce the parking on-site was considered by the Departure Advisory Committee. The Committee members focused on the anticipated increased impacts to traffic and parking in the area due to the increase in school population. The Director agrees that the additional students will increase traffic and parking impacts at the site. However, the applicant, Seattle Public Schools, has stated that the need for the portables is for students who will be attending Lincoln High School in 2019 and is planning to use the portable classrooms until the summer of 2019 when they will be removed. At that time the portable area will return to parking.

The Director agrees with the Committee that there is a need for the Departure per SMC 23.79.008Cb and agrees with the Committee that there will be impacts to traffic and parking due to the portable placement and consequent reduced parking spaces, criteria 4 of SMC 23.79.008Ca4.

The Director accepts the Committee recommendation to approve the departure with conditions. The conditions have been modified by the Director to omit a request to SDOT to put the Vision Zero Project on hold due to its importance for area safety and impracticability to slow down a safety related project, by another city agency, which is in process. The Director also cites comment from SDOT contrary to the recommendation to interrupt the Vision Zero plan on NE 65<sup>th</sup> a block south of the high school. The NE 65th Vision Zero Project began as a collaborative effort to identify traffic calming, signal, and safety enhancements to make 65th a safer corridor for all modes of travel. SDOT implemented short-term safety improvements in 2017 and the project has now reached final design and is on-schedule for implementation in 2018.

Additionally, the Director finds that condition number five of the Committee's list (See DON Advisory Committee Report, Recommendation #1, condition e.) relates to a Roosevelt field lighting permit and the topic has been reviewed, discussed, and appealed under a different permit (3029271) and does not need to be a condition of this project.

After consideration of the Departure Advisory Committee majority recommendations and minority reports, public and agency comments, the Director recommends that the departure to reduce the parking requirement be granted with conditions listed at the end of this document.

Section 23.79.008 C 1 b states:

- b. Need for Departure: The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the*

*surrounding area. Greater departure may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or an integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.*

The Committee discussed the overall need for a departure (SMC 23.79.008C1b) as part of its deliberations. The Seattle Municipal Code provides for granting departures from the requirements of the Municipal Code to accommodate educational needs of programs to be located in proposed buildings. In this case, the Seattle School District stated that placing portables in parking spaces helps further serve the district's students' educational needs as schools are renovated and those standards could not be met as effectively.

The Director balances departure requests through criteria based on the relationship to surrounding areas with need for development standards departures to meet program requirements and finds that the departure request should be allowed.

### **DECISION-DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

The school development standard departure, to allow a reduction of on-site parking, is **GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS.**

### **CONDITIONS –SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

*Prior to building permit final certificate of occupancy*

1. SDOT and the existing Roosevelt High School Safe Routes to Schools Committee should evaluate how students and staff safely arrive and leave the school, and should consider raised crosswalks, signage throughout the neighborhood alerting drivers to speed limits, one-way streets, etc. and should increase parking enforcement.
2. SPS and the transportation consultant team should coordinate with King County Metro to review bus shelters and placement of bus shelters and bus stops, identify necessary improvements to ensure they are convenient for staff and students' use.
3. Remove all portables by summer 2019. If that is not feasible, a new departure process for the continued removal of parking must be completed.
4. Implement a Roosevelt High School Transportation Communications and Operations Plan outlining the location and time of parent drop off and pick up and traffic circulation during peak hours. Work with the City's Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Program to find ways to encourage RHS staff to choose commute modes other than driving alone.
5. Seattle Public Schools should explore nearby off-site parking opportunities for staff and students to alleviate parking impacts on the neighborhood while portables are in place.
6. RHS School Safety Committee should thoroughly consider security and protection of the students using the portables.



Holly J. Godard, Senior Land Use Planner  
Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections

Date: July 12, 2018

HG:drm

K:\Decisions-Signed\3030870-SD.docx

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ISSUANCE OF YOUR MASTER USE PERMIT**

Master Use Permit Expiration and Issuance

The appealable land use decision on your Master Use Permit (MUP) application has now been published. At the conclusion of the appeal period, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance”. (If your decision is appealed, your permit will be considered “approved for issuance” on the fourth day following the City Hearing Examiner’s decision.) Projects requiring a Council land use action shall be considered “approved for issuance” following the Council’s decision.

The “approved for issuance” date marks the beginning of the three-year life of the MUP approval, whether or not there are outstanding corrections to be made or pre-issuance conditions to be met. The permit must be issued by SDCI within that three years or it will expire and be cancelled (SMC 23-76-028). (Projects with a shoreline component have a two-year life. Additional information regarding the effective date of shoreline permits may be found at 23.60.074.)

All outstanding corrections must be made, any pre-issuance conditions met and all outstanding fees paid before the permit is issued. You will be notified when your permit has issued.

Questions regarding the issuance and expiration of your permit may be addressed to the Public Resource Center at [prc@seattle.gov](mailto:prc@seattle.gov) or to our message line at 206-684-8467.