

City of Seattle

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND:

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Proposed revisions to Land Use Code regulations regarding sidewalks and pedestrian-related improvements.

2. Name of Applicant:

City of Seattle

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

Cheryl Sizov
Department of Planning and Development

4. Date checklist prepared:

June 20, 2007

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

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

The proposed Land Use Code revisions were presented at a public open house in March 2007, and will be forwarded to the Mayor in June, 2007.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activities related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain:

Yes, the proposal represents Phase I of a two phase project to address Land Use Code requirements for pedestrian-related improvements. In addition, approval of these possible amendments could result in additional analysis and decisions pertaining to the topics of the amendments.

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:

It is likely that there are pending applications for construction or other government approvals within the area addressed by this proposal, including Urban Centers, Urban Villages, and properties adjacent to arterials throughout Seattle. However, the recommended outcome of this proposal is not expected to substantially alter decisionmaking on any individual pending application.

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

The proposed Land Use Code amendments will require approval by the City Council prior to their adoption.

11. **Give a brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.**

Amendments to the Land Use Code (portions of chapters 23.22, 23.47, and 23.53) for the purpose of requiring pedestrian improvements in the form of sidewalks in association with all projects located within Urban Centers, Urban Villages, and adjacent to arterials; lowering the threshold to three (3) or more units of housing for those improvements within all other areas of the city; and eliminating all but two (2) exceptions to these requirements. Exceptions to remain include projects which are additions to, or remodels of, existing structures. The proposal would apply to all Urban Centers and Urban Villages within the city, and all principal, minor, and collector arterials as designated by the Department of Transportation.

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.**

The proposed amendments would affect all properties located within Urban Center and Urban Village boundaries, and all properties adjacent to designated arterials (principal, minor, and collector).

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS:

1. Earth

- a. **General description of site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other.**
Ranges from flat to hilly.
- b. **What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?**
Not applicable.
- 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.**
Not applicable.
- d. **Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**
Not applicable.
- e. **Describe the purpose, type and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**
Not applicable.
- f. **Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction or use? If so, generally describe.**
No.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?
Not applicable.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion or other impacts to the earth, if any:
None.

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.

New sidewalks would typically only be added in conjunction with development activity; the difference between impacts of a project with and without sidewalks—in terms of emissions—is likely to be unmeasurable.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.
None.

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.

Several water bodies in and around the city of Seattle.

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.

Some additional sidewalks could be constructed adjacent to described waters, however any impacts would be addressed or mitigated through the permit process. Exemption from sidewalk requirements is also possible if necessary.

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.

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.

None.

b. Ground Water:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

None.

- 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.

None.

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.

None.

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

None.

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

_____ 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

The area addressed by the proposal includes a variety of trees and landscaping in street rights-of-way, landscaping associated with private development sites, and vegetation in public parks.

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

If any vegetation is removed in association with sidewalk construction, it is expected to be minimal and only enough to allow for a walking surface for pedestrians.

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

None.

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

Street trees and other landscaping to prevent erosion and comply with landscaping requirements of the Land Use Code.

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:

Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other: _____

Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: _____

Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other: _____

Other: _____

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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.

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

No.

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:

None.

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.

No.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

Not applicable.

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)?

None.

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.**

None.

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?**

A range of land uses and densities, including residential, commercial, and industrial, throughout the city of Seattle.

b. **Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.**

Not applicable.

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

Includes a variety of structures across the city of Seattle that are related to the land use listed above.

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

None anticipated.

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

Multiple zoning classifications for this citywide proposal.

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

Urban center and urban village, and a variety of other designations for the properties adjacent to arterials.

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

If applicable, all designations in any urban village or adjacent to any arterial.

h. **Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.**

Yes, as mapped in the City's critical areas mapping.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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:**

Review and approval by elected decisionmakers.

9. Housing

- a. **Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**
Not applicable.
- b. **Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**
Not applicable.
- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:**
None.

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.
- b. **What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**
Not applicable.
- c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:**
None.

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.
- b. **Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**
Not applicable.
- c. **What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**
Not applicable.
- 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?**
Not applicable.
- b. **Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**
No.
- 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.**

It is likely there are some historic resources located within the areas affected by this proposal.

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

Not applicable.

- 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.**

Entire street network citywide.

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

Many of the arterials and other streets within Urban Centers and Urban Villages are served by transit.

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

Not applicable.

- 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).**

Yes, the proposal is for new sidewalks adjacent to development.

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

Yes, new sidewalks may be required to be constructed within the vicinity of rail or water transportation.

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

None.

- 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.**

Additional public sidewalks may need future maintenance beyond that which is required of adjacent property owners.

- 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.**
All utilities citywide .

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:**
None.

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 proposed Land Use Code amendments could increase the likelihood of a slight increase in stormwater runoff discharged into storm drains and/or collected on-site for each property which is required to construct a sidewalk, by virtue of adding additional impervious surface to an area which currently is unpaved. No other impacts of the nature listed above are expected.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Measures include requirements to comply with existing drainage standards for stormwater runoff.

2. **How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish or marine life?**
The potential for environmental impacts to plants, animals, fish or marine life is low as a result of these proposed changes, as they mainly would affect areas that are already of high urban densities.

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 potential for environmental impacts to energy and natural resources is low as a result of these proposed changes. By increasing areas for pedestrians, there is potential for the proposed amendments to preserve energy and/or natural resources through a reduction in the use of vehicles in favor of walking thereby having a positive impact on those resources.

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

The proposal itself can be viewed as a measure to protect or conserve energy and natural resources as noted in #3 above.

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 area affected by the proposed changes may overlap with locations that are designated riparian corridors, creek watersheds, wetlands, and/or landslide and steep slope areas. In any case where such an overlap exists, the proposal would be subject to compliance with the Environmentally Critical Areas regulations.

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 proposed changes are intended to further the positive impacts of concentrating growth and infrastructure within designated areas identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The change are, therefore, entirely compatible with existing plans.

The impacts on land use are likely to be largely positive. At a minimum, construction of more sidewalks within areas of existing density and pedestrian traffic are likely to make existing pedestrians feel safer. In the long term, it is hoped that the numbers of people walking will steadily increase as the pedestrian network fills in over time. In turn, more pedestrian traffic is likely to assist in the creation of safer and more vibrant communities, economic diversity within mixed-use areas, and less dependence upon the automobile for mobility needs.

Proposed code amendments which are likely to have a positive effect on land use are summarized as follows:

- **SMC 23.53.006 Pedestrian access and circulation**
A new code section stating that pedestrian access and circulation shall be provided along all streets in all zones within Urban Centers, Urban Villages, and adjacent to arterials, and lowering the threshold for sidewalk requirements in all other areas. Creating a new section of code for pedestrian-related improvements provides clarity and visibility within the code for these requirements, and ensures that the needs of pedestrians are addressed with every proposal, leading to an increase in the number of sidewalks built and added to the city's network of pedestrian walkways.
- **SMC 23.22.052 and 23.22.100 Dedications required and Design standards.**
Revised to include sidewalks and pedestrian access among the required items for dedication with the creation of new subdivisions and lots.
- **SMC 23.47.034 Sidewalk requirements.**
Revised to require sidewalks where none exist.
- **SMC 23.53.015 and 23.53.020 Improvement requirements for existing streets in residential, commercial, and industrial zones.**
Revised to add references to the new Pedestrian Improvements section of the code, to delete existing references where no longer applicable, and to amend exception thresholds as per the sidewalks proposal.

, and/or the potential for desired development to be slowed in response to these new requirements. These costs and impacts are expected to be minimal if at all.

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

None proposed.

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

The proposed changes could increase demands on transportation to the extent that better pedestrian walkways would encourage more people to use sidewalks to reach transit stops, but otherwise is not likely to affect transportation. The proposed change could also increase demands on stormwater drainage facilities by increasing the amount of impervious surface through sidewalk construction. In situations where drainage is handled on-site, there would not be an increased demand on stormwater drainage facilities.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands are:

Increased demand for transit is a positive impact and would need no mitigation measures. No other measures proposed.

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

To the best of my knowledge, 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.

Cheryl Sizov
Senior Planner, Department of Planning and Development