

City of Seattle

ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF
SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

Proposal Name: **Morgan Junction Park Expansion**

Address of Proposal: **Morgan Junction Park, 6317 California Avenue SW, Seattle
WA 98136**

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Seattle Parks and Recreation is proposing to expand the existing Morgan Junction Park in Seattle. The park will be expanded by bridging the site across the Eddy Street right-of-way to develop the landbanked parcel to the south and incorporating it into the existing park. The project includes two phases: soil remediation/grading and park development. The landbanked site was a former convenience store/dry cleaner and gas station; the structure has been removed but there is subsurface contamination which will be addressed prior to park construction. The proposed remedy for the environmental contamination is a targeted source area soil excavation with in-situ remediation, groundwater monitoring, and an environmental covenant. Subsequent park development includes connections to the existing park and creating a gathering space, a play area, an open lawn, a view hill, pathways, and woodlands with plantings on the site. Pedestrian-scaled lighting is also part of the proposal. Curb, gutter, sidewalk, planting, and street trees will be installed along the currently unimproved frontage of Eddy Street.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

BACKGROUND DATA

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) purchased the .28-acre property at 6311 California Ave SW in 2014. This parcel is located north of the existing Morgan Junction Park, across the Eddy Street right-of-way. There was a one-story convenience store/dry cleaner and gas station on the parcel which has been removed. There is known subsurface contamination and SPR is with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) on the remediation.

A portion of the site contains an identified Steep Slope Environmentally Critical Area (ECA) as indicated on the City's GIS database.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The project is an expansion of the existing Morgan Junction Park in Seattle. The park will be expanded by connecting the former convenience store/dry cleaner and gas station parcel across the undeveloped Eddy Street right-of-way to the existing park. The park expansion will include connections to the existing park and creating a gathering space, a play area, an open lawn, a view hill, pathways, and woodlands with plantings on the site. Pedestrian-scaled lighting is also part of the proposal. The streetscape along California Avenue will be updated, and there will be curb, gutter, sidewalk, planting, and street trees along the currently unimproved frontage of Eddy Street. The pedestrian and emergency circulation system for the expanded park is designed and will be constructed for safety, durability, accessibility, and compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The project includes two phases: soil remediation/grading and subsequent park development.

The proposed remedy for the environmental contamination is a targeted source area soil excavation with in-situ remediation, groundwater monitoring, and an environmental covenant. The excavation will be the first phase of the construction project to convert the site into a park. The source area soil excavation removes approximately 1,733 cubic yards of soil. Disposal of unsuitable soils will be at a permitted fill site. Backfill will be with clean fill. Additional earthwork will be required beyond the HAZMAT Soil removal. Beyond the 1,733 cu.yds of removal and replacement associated with the soil remediation, approximate earthwork numbers are 248 cu.yds of cut and 1,303 cu.yds. of fill. Post-excavation groundwater monitoring will be conducted twice a year for five years, with monitoring every other year for up to 25 years afterwards. If there are sufficient consecutive rounds of monitoring (either semiannual or biennial) with no contaminant exceedances, then groundwater monitoring may end. Post-excavation soil gas sampling will also be conducted to ensure that the removal of both the source of vapor and the pavement that trapped it was sufficient to address vapor hazards.

Approximately forty (40) trees will be planted in the park and the surrounding right-of-way. Plantings will include a sentinel evergreen tree and a woodlands area with plant understory. All disturbed areas on the site not receiving new hard surfaces will be restored with erosion control and hydroseeding or new landscaping consistent. All the applicable BMP's for construction site management will be applied to the areas where the work will take place.

ANALYSIS – SEPA

Initial disclosure of potential impacts from this project was made in the applicant's environmental checklist, dated January 26, 2021. The basis for this analysis and decision is formed from information in the checklist, graphics and exhibits attached to it, the lead agency's familiarity with the site and experience with review of similar projects.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 23.05.665) discusses the relationship between the City's code/policies and environmental review. The Overview Policy states, in part, "[w]here City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact; it

shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation". The Policies also discuss in SMC 23.05.665 D1-7, that in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to deny or mitigate a project based on adverse environmental impacts. This may be specified otherwise in the policies for specific elements of the environment found in SMC 25.05.675. In consideration of these policies, a more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts is appropriate.

Short Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by construction activities; potential soil erosion and disturbance to subsurface soils during site work; increased noise and traffic from construction equipment and personnel.

Several adopted codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of construction. Erosion will be prevented by implementation of a required Temporary Erosion Control and Sedimentation Plan. Best Management Practices, such as mulching and seeding will be implemented at the site to minimize erosion during construction. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The Building Code provides for construction measures and life safety issues. The Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the city. Compliance with these codes and/or ordinances will lessen the environmental impacts of the proposed project. While there will be a short-term increase in greenhouse gas emissions during construction, overall usage at the expanded park will not change, and the existing park will remain open during the construction activities.

The impacts associated with the construction are expected to be minor and of relatively short duration. Compliance with the above applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate most adverse short-term impacts to the environment. However, impacts from construction traffic and construction noise warrant further discussion.

Construction Traffic

There are adequate areas on-site for the construction crews and equipment. The site is adjacent to an arterial street which provide convenient truck access consistent with the requirements of the Street Use Ordinance. As noted above, a total of up to 5,000 cubic yards of materials would be excavated, removed and/or imported and graded across the site. There will be limited construction traffic beyond materials, equipment and construction workers entering and leaving the site. The site is two blocks from Fauntleroy Way SW, a City arterial and freight route. Given the proximity of a City arterial, construction access and materials hauling can be accommodated consistent with City requirements and with little or no impacts to the surrounding residential neighborhood. As such, traffic impacts associated with the project construction are not anticipated to be significant and thus no conditioning is necessary or warranted.

Noise

Construction activities will be confined to weekdays. Hours of construction are limited by the Seattle Noise Ordinance, SMC ch. 25.08, to 7:00 a.m. and ten 10:00 p.m. on weekdays (SMC 25.08.425). The reality of the local construction industry is that contractors typically work from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.; the likelihood that any construction activities will occur up to 10 p.m. is slight. The Noise Ordinance also regulates the loudness (dB) of construction activities, measured fifty (50) feet from the subject activity or device. The City has dedicated noise inspectors to monitor construction activities and respond to construction complaints. Compliance with the City's Noise Ordinance will prevent any significant adverse short-term noise impacts and thus no further conditioning is necessary or warranted.

Compliance with applicable codes, ordinances and regulations will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation.

Long Term Impacts

Recreation

With an expanded park and improved access for people of all ages and abilities, Morgan Junction Park can better serve the neighborhood and park visitors. No significant long-term adverse recreation impacts associated with the operation of the expanded park are anticipated, and no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Traffic & Parking

The proposed improvements will expand the park to better serve the neighborhood. The park serves the local neighborhood; very few people will drive to the park. No parking is being provided on site but there is on-street parking to accommodate people that drive to the park. No significant adverse traffic and/or parking impacts associated with the improvements are anticipated and thus no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Upon completion of the project, no long term adverse environmental impacts are anticipated and thus no conditioning is necessary or warranted.

DECISION

This decision was made after the responsible official, on behalf of the lead agency, reviewed a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and final decision on application of SEPA's substantive authority and mitigation provisions. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- (X) Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).
- () Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. AN EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

Signature: _____


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Seattle Parks and Recreation

Date: February 12, 2021