

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Office of Planning and Community Development completed an environmental analysis, including review of pertinent and available environmental information and preparation of an Environmental Checklist for the adoption of three proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments as part of the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process. The original SEPA decision, a DNS, was published July 8, 2021. The original SEPA DNS that was published on July 8, 2021, is being withdrawn to reflect changes in the proposal.

If the lead agency withdraws a DNS, the agency shall make a new threshold determination and notify other agencies with jurisdiction of the withdrawal of the DNS and provide notice of the new threshold determination. WAC 197-11-340(3)(c). The Office of Planning and Community Development has completed an environmental analysis, including review of pertinent and available environmental information and preparation of an Environmental Checklist, and is now issuing a new threshold determination for the following proposal:

Project Name: 2021 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Applicant Name: City of Seattle - Office of Planning and Community Development

Address of Proposal: One-half block on the west side of 15th Avenue NE bound by NE 56th Street to the South and NE Ravenna Blvd. to the north.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) is forwarding to the City Council and Mayor proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the annual amendment process. This determination pertains to several proposed Comp. Plan amendments as follows:

The first proposed amendment would expand the boundary of the University District Urban Center to include an adjacent half block on the west side of 15th Avenue NE between NE 56th Street and NE Ravenna Blvd.

A second amendment being recommended to Council, which would amend the future land use map to a multifamily and mixed-use land use designation in the vicinity of the future 130th Street Sound Transit Station, is being analyzed separately through an EIS addendum to the Seattle 2035 EIS.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS
 DNS with conditions
 DNS involving non-exempt grading, or
demolition, or another agency with jurisdiction.

Background

The annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process includes OPCD’s review of proposed amendments that are submitted by the public and agencies. Following an opportunity for the public to submit amendment proposals, the City Council docket amendments that meet certain criteria for further consideration. After proposed amendments are docketed by the City Council for evaluation, OPCD conducts analysis and then makes a recommendation on whether to adopt the proposed amendments (some are not recommended).

The Proposal

The proposal is a future Land Use Map amendment to expand the University District Urban Center to include a half-block immediately adjacent to the current boundaries of the University District Urban Center. The proposed expansion area includes the half block bounded by 15th Avenue NE to the east, NE Ravenna Avenue to the north, NE 56th Avenue to the south, and an alley that is the existing boundary of the University District Urban Center to the west.

Public Comment

The proposed amendments require adoption into the Comprehensive Plan by the City Council. Public comment will be taken on the proposed amendments at a future City Council Public Hearing.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

A threshold determination is required for any proposal that meets the definition of “action” and is not categorically exempt. This proposal is legislation that would amend the City’s Comprehensive Plan, which is defined as a non-project action. This action is not categorically exempt (SMC 25.05.800).

The disclosure of the potential impacts from this proposal was made in an environmental checklist submitted by OPCD dated June 28, 2021. The information in the checklist, the Director’s Report and Recommendation, other information provided by the applicant, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar regulations and proposals form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The discussion below evaluates adverse (e.g., negative) impacts to identified elements of the environment that may arise due to the proposal, including their relative magnitude and potential significance of such identified impacts based on the proposal described above. However, some positive impact implications may be mentioned as well to adequately represent the probable outcomes of the proposed amendments.

ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Adoption of the recommended Comprehensive Plan amendments would result in no adverse short-term environmental impacts because the adoption is a non-project action and it would be speculative at this time to attempt to evaluate short-term environmental impacts that may result from future development that is likely to occur under the new FLUM designation and development regulations. The discussion below evaluates the potential long-term adverse environmental impacts that may result from future development that is likely to occur under the new FLUM designation and development regulations.

Natural Environment

Earth, Air, Water, Plants & Animals, Environmental Health

No significant impacts are identified for this non-project action. The location is developed with housing and contains the type of plants and animals found in a highly urbanized environment. The practical effect of this future land use map amendment will be to allow a marginal increase of permitted FAR (0.2 FAR) and height (10 feet) for apartments. This limited increase in development is not likely to substantially change the potential impact of future development on the natural environment.

Built Environment

Land Use, Height/Bulk/Scale, Housing, Aesthetics, Noise, Light/Glare, Historic Preservation, Energy, Public View Protection, Shadows on Open Spaces

No significant impacts have been identified. The proposed expansion of the University District Urban Center will result in a marginal increase of permitted FAR (0.2 FAR) and height (10 feet) for apartments. Maximum density would remain at 1 dwelling unit for 800 square feet of lot area. Given the small increase in potential development capacity, this proposal is not likely to significantly change the scale or intensity of potential future development. Potential future development under these rules would continue to be consistent with the scale of existing buildings on the site and in the immediate vicinity.

Transportation, Parking, Public Services/Facilities, Utilities

No significant impacts were identified. The proposed FLUM amendment will result in marginal increases in development capacity. It is unlikely that any future development project development under the provisions of this proposal will have a substantially different impacts on transportation, parking, public services/facilities, or utilities than could occur under existing rules.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. 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: _____ Date: August 9, 2021
Geoffrey Wentlandt
Land Use Policy Manager
Office of Planning and Community Development