

City of Seattle

ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

Proposal Name: **Gas Works Park Comfort Station Replacement**

Address of Proposal: **Gas Works Park, 1901 North Northlake Way, Seattle,
Washington 98103**

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Seattle Parks and Recreation is proposing to replace an existing comfort station (restroom & concessions structure) with a new comfort station (4 restroom stations) in the same location with a reduced footprint. Existing pathways and ADA parking will also be renovated from the park's East Entry and parking facility to the new comfort station and picnic barn plaza areas. A new accessible ramp will also be installed along with a portion of the Burke Gilman Trail between Northlake Way and the east entry. All replaced and renovated facilities will incorporate accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as enhancing access to this major regional landmark park/open space. In addition, lawn areas adjacent to the pathway improvements will be improved with better draining soil for ease of maintenance, and irrigation and landscape improvements constructed.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Determination of Non-Significance (DNS)

BACKGROUND DATA

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) owns and operates Gas Works Park as a public park. The park is the site of a former manufactured gas plant; there are areas of known contamination. The uplands are the subject of a Consent Decree with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The sediments and pathways to the sediment are the subject of an Agreed Order and Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and the City of Seattle are actively pursuing a remedy under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) for these areas and contaminants of concern. Gas Works Park is also a City Landmark and on the National Register of Historic Places.

The main entrance pathway from the parking lot to the comfort station, areas within the parking lot adjacent to the entrance pathway and the comfort station do not meet accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Additionally, the comfort station is in need of significant repairs. SPR is proposing to make improvements to the main entrance pathway and rebuild the comfort station, with associated ADA improvements to make these areas more pleasant and functional for people of all ages and abilities. Ecology has reviewed and approved of this proposal. The City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board is currently reviewing the proposed improvements.

The site is within an identified Environmentally Critical Area (ECA) as indicated on the City's GIS database –Liquefaction Prone Area which includes most of the Rainier Valley.

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

SPR will regrade and repave the entrance pathway to lessen the grade to meet ADA requirements. Additional improvements will be made adjacent to the entrance pathway to accommodate handicapped parking. The existing concrete comfort station, built in 1974, will be demolished and rebuilt in the same location as the existing structure, paved areas will be repaired and/or repaved and the ramp down to the picnic area will be replaced in an improved location. Additional grading is proposed on the west side of the main pathway, just north of the trestle structure. This area has drainage issue, the soil drains poorly and it is difficult to mow. Approximately 12-inches of soil will be removed and replaced with well-draining soil and reseeded. Approximately 400 cu.yds of cut and 200cu.yds of fill is proposed associated with the pathway re-grading and the soil replacement to address poor drainage. All work will occur within the already developed area of the park and is merely an improvement of the existing facilities. When completed, the park will have a new comfort station, the subject entrance pathways and parking will meet current ADA requirements and an area of poorly draining soil will be improved. The park will look the same except for the new comfort station. 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 7, 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 of the park will not change, and the bulk of the park will remain open during the construction activities. Temporary restroom facilities will be provided while the comfort station is being replaced.

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 600 cubic yards of materials would be excavated, removed, 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 adjacent to North Northlake Way, 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 industrial/commercial/residential neighborhood to the north. 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 a new comfort station, and improved access for people of all ages and abilities, Gas Works Park can better serve park visitors. No significant long-term adverse recreation impacts associated with the operation of the new park are anticipated, and no mitigation is warranted or necessary.

Traffic & Parking

The proposed improvements will enhance park user experience while at Gas Works Park, but they are not anticipated to change the parking demand and/or traffic patterns associated with park visitors. Facilities within the park are already rented and scheduled; the improved walkways, parking and comfort station will not change the usage at the park. There is existing on-site 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.

Historic Preservation

As noted in the Checklist, Gas Works Park is on both the National Register of Historic Places and is designated as a City Landmark. The trestle is part of the original gas plant construction and is included as part of the Landmark designation. Once the grading work is completed and grass reseeded, the area will appear as it does today with no changes or impacts to the trestle or its surroundings. The comfort station is a concrete masonry unit building that was constructed in 1974 as part of the park development. It was designed by a local architect who designed a number of other facilities within the City's park system. The new comfort station has been designed with an industrial character to blend in with the surrounding historic structures. Replacement of the comfort station is not anticipated to have a significant Historic Preservation related environmental impact. This proposal is in the process of being reviewed by the City's Landmarks Preservation Board and must receive a Certificate of Approval from the Board before any construction activities can be commenced. Any requirements that come out of that review and approval will be incorporated into the project design. No significant adverse Historic preservation impacts 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: January 25, 2021