



City of Bellevue

Next Right Work: SEPA Exemptions & Unit Lot Subdivision Amendments

City Council Study Session

Nick Whipple, Planning Manager
Development Services

Molly Johnson PE, Development Review Manager
Transportation Department

July 10, 2023



Direction for Council Consideration

Direct staff to prepare the Environmental Procedures Code BCCA and Transportation Development Code BCCA for final action at a future meeting.

AGENDA



Next Right Work Background



January 17 Council Direction



Environmental Procedures BCCA



Transportation Development BCCA



Direction

Next Right Work Background

- Builds upon Affordable Housing Strategy
- July 5, 2022 Council selected five items:
 - Micro-Apartments LUCA
 - Increased FAR for residential
 - Phase 1: Downtown
 - Phase 2: Mixed Use Areas
 - Reduced fees for Affordable Housing
 - Encourage Middle-Scale Housing
 - Phase 1: ADU Reform LUCA
 - Phase 2: Middle-Scale Housing

Tonight:

- Simplify permitting & expedite permitting for Affordable Housing
 - Maximize SEPA categorical exemptions
 - Align City Code for Unit Lot Subdivisions



January 17 Direction

Council direction to:

- **Simplify the permitting process** and expedite permitting for affordable housing projects in coordination with other ongoing projects.

Internal Process Improvement Pilots

- Assigned Project Manager for Affordable Housing
- Expedited permit review for Affordable Housing

Code Amendments

- Maximize SEPA categorical exemptions
- BCCA to align with previous Council action on Unit Lot Subdivisions



Part 1 – Environmental Procedures Code BCCA

Maximize SEPA Categorical Exemptions

State Environmental Policy Act

Background

- SEPA Enacted in 1971
- Intended to maintain and improve environmental quality
- Provides exemptions for permits or actions
- Allows for increases to exemption levels



Environmental Protections

Local exemption levels may increase when SEPA elements are covered by existing regulations:

SEPA Elements	
Natural Environment	Built Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earth• Air• Water• Plants/Animals• Energy/Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Health• Land/Shoreline Use• Transportation• Public Services/Utilities

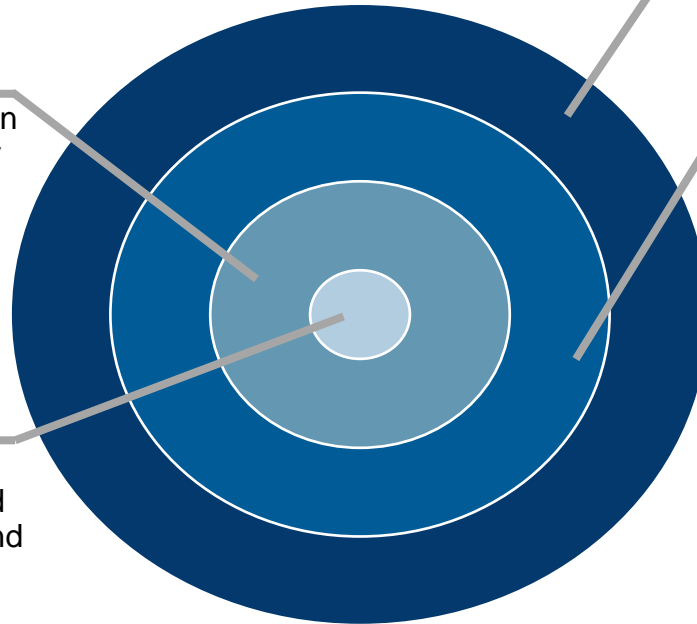
Environmental Protections

There are many regulations that apply to development projects in the City

Environmental protections in other codes

Regional
(e.g., Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, King County Board of Health Code)

Local
(e.g., Critical Areas Ordinance, Clearing and Grading Code, Storm and Surface Water Utility Code)



Federal
(e.g., Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, Endangered Species Act)

State
(e.g., Washington Shoreline Management Act, Fish and Wildlife Code, State Energy Code, Washington Clean Air Act)

Environmental Procedures Code BCCA

Proposed thresholds:

Project Type	Current Exemption Threshold	Max. Exemption Threshold (proposed)
Single-Family Residential	10 units	30 units
Multifamily Residential	10 units	200 units
Commercial, School, Office, Recreational, Service, or Storage Buildings	4,000 square feet and 20 parking spaces	30,000 square feet and 90 parking spaces
Landfill or excavation	500 cubic yards	1,000 cubic yards
Agricultural structures	30,000 square feet	40,000 square feet

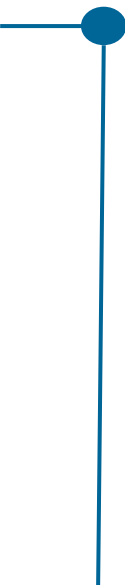
Outcomes:

- Simplify and streamline permit process to further encourage housing
- Shorten permit timelines
- Remove redundant processes

Environmental Procedures Code

BCCA Process

Action	Date
City Council Initiation	January 17
Outreach and Engagement	February-August
Start of 60-day comment period	June 29
City Council Study Session	July 10
End of 60-day comment period	August 29
City Council Action	Future Date



Part 2 – Transportation Development Code BCCA

Streamline and standardize transportation standards for townhouse developments

Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance

- Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance No. 6568 Adopted 2021
- Amendments to the LUC only
- Enabled fee simple townhouses
- Expanded homeownership opportunities



Current Transportation Requirements

- Developed for traditional single-family lot plats with city-owned roads
- Inflexible to address modern urban housing styles
- Different requirements apply to developments with the same needs



*Hazelwood Plat
Lake Washington Blvd SE/ SE 61st Pl*

Code Changes and Standards Change

- Removes code barrier
- Matches needs of development
- Standardizes requirements based on housing type and density



Lario Townhomes, NE Bel-Red Rd

Transportation Development Code BCCA Process

Action	Date
City Council Initiation	January 17
Targeted Engagement	February-July
City Council Study Session	July 10
City Council Action	Future Date



Direction for Council Consideration

Direct staff to prepare the Environmental Procedures Code BCCA and Transportation Development Code BCCA for final action at a future meeting.