

**WOODINVILLE FIRE & RESCUE**  
**Tuesday, October 20, 2020**

**REGULAR JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Collins called the virtual meeting to order at 1700 hours. Roll call was taken and was as follows:

**Roll Call**

Commissioners Derek van Veen, Doug Halbert, Tim Osgood, Mike Millman, and Roger Collins of Woodinville Fire & Rescue; Commissioners Rick Verlinda, Josh Pratt, Don Ellis, Rick Webster, and Dave Maehren of Northshore Fire Department.

Also present were Fire Chief of Woodinville Fire & Rescue and Interim Fire Chief of Northshore Fire Department Greg Ahearn; Deputy Chief Doug McDonald of Northshore Fire Department; Provisional Deputy Chief Peder Davis of Woodinville Fire & Rescue; Chief Administrative Officer Joan Montegary of Woodinville Fire & Rescue; Legal Counsel Matt Paxton of Northshore Fire Department; Board Secretary Nicole Frisch of Woodinville Fire & Rescue, Interim Board Secretary Dawn Killion of Northshore Fire Department; Communications Consultant Liz Loomis of Liz Loomis Public Affairs; and members of the participating fire departments and public.

**Approval of Agenda in Content and Order**

***MOTION:*** Commissioner Ellis moved to approve the agenda in content and order. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Millman. The motion passed 5-0 by the Woodinville Board and 5-0 by the Northshore Board.

**Public Comment**

None.

**1. Merger Next Steps Discussion**

Liz Loomis of Liz Loomis Public Affairs provided an update on the merger communications plan as attached hereto.

Chief Ahearn provided a merger sub-committee report.

Legal Counsel Paxton provided an update on the SEPA process to include the process for adoption of SEPA Rules and Procedures as attached hereto.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Halbert moved to approve Woodinville Fire & Rescue Resolution 2020-07, A Resolution Adopting Guidelines for Compliance with the Provisions and Requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act and Appointing the Fire Chief as the District's SEPA Responsible Official. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Osgood. The motion passed 5-0 by the Woodinville Board.

Chief Ahearn and Commissioner Verlinda provided a contract sub-committee report.

The Boards discussed the November 3, 2020 joint meeting agenda to include sub-committee reports.

## **2. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Halbert moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Webster. The motion passed 5-0 by the Woodinville Board and 5-0 by the Northshore Board.

**The joint meeting adjourned at 1757 hours.**

*Nicole Frisch*

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Nicole Frisch, Board Secretary

*Derek van Veen*

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Derek van Veen, Commissioner, Position 1

*Doug Halbert*

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Doug Halbert, Commissioner, Position 2

*Tim Osgood*

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Tim Osgood, Commissioner, Position 3

Mike Millman  
Mike Millman, Commissioner, Position 4

Roger Collins  
Roger Collins, Commissioner, Position 5



## **REGULAR JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**Tuesday, October 20, 2020**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Meeting will be held virtually, via Zoom. To attend live, click the link below and enter the Meeting ID and Password.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82444328779?pwd=M2pLQ3djS0pPbW54UDIDVEh0enRtZz09>

**To listen live, call 253-215-8782 and enter the Meeting ID and Password.**

Meeting ID: 824 4432 8779

Passcode: 430227

### **AGENDA**

Call to Order/Roll Call

Approval of Agenda in Content and Order

Public Comments (Please submit comment via email to [NFrisch@wf-r.org](mailto:NFrisch@wf-r.org) at least one hour prior to start of meeting. Please limit comments to three minutes.)

#### **Board Business Items**

1. Merger Next Steps Discussion
  - a. Community Communication - Liz Loomis Public Affairs
  - b. Merger Sub-Committee Report
  - c. Contract Sub-Committee Report
  - d. SEPA Rules and Procedure; and WFR Resolution 2020-07
  - e. Next Joint Meeting Agenda Items
2. Adjournment

*Prepare – Prevent – Perform*

[www.wf-r.org](http://www.wf-r.org)

Northshore Fire Department  
Key Messages  
Draft – October 12, 2020

**Thank you for the opportunity to serve.**

Northshore Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 10 square miles, including the cities of Lake Forest Park and Kenmore. Our highly-trained personnel respond to an average of 3,600 emergency calls a year. Emergency services are funded through a property tax levy, a fire benefit charge, and a voter approved bond that built the Kenmore headquarters station and training facility.

**We are always looking for ways to be more efficient for our taxpayers.**

Many fire departments are considering mergers to be more efficient, and we already have a strong partnership with Woodinville Fire & Rescue. We share training programs for emergency personnel, administrative positions (fire chief, deputy chief, and a chief administrative officer) and joint departments, including finance, human resources, IT, and payroll. Both agencies are approximately the same size, and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge. We also share the same financial philosophy of maintaining a strong reserve fund to pay cash for capital items to save taxpayers money instead of financing these purchases. That's why the Northshore Fire Department is considering asking its voters to create a new fire agency by merging with Woodinville Fire & Rescue.

**Merging our fire districts will improve services for residents and businesses.**

Northshore Fire Department and Woodinville Fire & Rescue are both strong operationally and financially. A merger would maintain the same number of emergency personnel, and allow better deployment to provide an improved emergency response for both communities. Each agency also owns specialized apparatus and equipment that the other benefits from when responding to emergency calls. Finalizing the partnership through a merger will provide better training opportunities for firefighters, fire prevention programs in our local schools, community engagement, and economies of scale in purchasing goods and services.

**Property owners in both communities will pay less for emergency services with this merger.**

We anticipate that Northshore taxpayers will see a reduction in the amount they pay for emergency services once the merger is finalized. (This information will be shared when we receive future assessed property values from the county.) In addition, the overall cost to fund future capital items, such as stations and apparatus, would be less for all taxpayers because it is shared by more property owners. There will still be local stations, elected fire commissioners, professional firefighters, and strong involvement in our community. The election would happen April 27, 2021 and, if approved by voters, the merger would take effect July 1 of the same year.

**Commented [EL1]:** This language will replace the more generic first two sentences: It is projected that property owners in Northshore will save \$0.XX per \$1,000 of assessed property value on their annual taxes for fire service (or \$XX for the average homeowner).

## Woodinville Fire & Rescue

### Key Messages

Draft – October 12, 2020

#### **Thank you for supporting Woodinville Fire & Rescue.**

Woodinville Fire & Rescue provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 30 square miles. Our highly-trained personnel respond to an average of 4,000 emergency calls a year. Emergency services are funded through a fire levy paid through property taxes and a fire benefit charge. Our fire district operates under a balanced budget, and has passed all its financial and accountability audits by the state.

#### **We are always looking for ways to be more efficient for our taxpayers.**

Many fire departments are considering mergers to be more efficient, and we already have a strong partnership with the Northshore Fire Department. **We share training programs for emergency personnel, administrative positions (fire chief, deputy chief, and a chief administrative officer) and joint departments, including finance, human resources, IT, and payroll.** Both agencies are approximately the same size, and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge. We also share the same financial philosophy of maintaining a strong reserve fund to pay cash for capital items to save taxpayers money instead of financing these purchases. That's why the Northshore Fire Department is considering asking its voters to merge with Woodinville Fire & Rescue to finalize the partnership.

#### **Merging our fire districts will improve service for residents and businesses.**

Woodinville Fire & Rescue and the Northshore Fire Department are both strong operationally and financially. **A merger would maintain the same number of emergency personnel, and allow better deployment to provide an improved emergency response for both communities.** Each agency also owns specialized apparatus and equipment that the other benefits from when responding to emergency calls. Finalizing the partnership through a merger will provide more training opportunities for firefighters, fire prevention programs in our local schools, community engagement, and economies of scale in purchasing goods and services.

#### **Property owners in both communities will pay less for emergency services with this merger.**

We anticipate that Woodinville taxpayers will see a reduction in the amount they pay for emergency services once the merger is finalized. (This information will be shared when we receive future assessed property values from the county.) In addition, **the overall cost to fund future capital items, such as stations and apparatus, would be less as well because it is shared by more property owners.** There will still be local stations, elected fire commissioners, professional firefighters, and strong involvement in our community. The election would happen April 27, 2021. Because the Northshore Fire Department would merge into Woodinville Fire & Rescue, Northshore voters are the ones who would vote on this ballot measure.

**Commented [EL2]:** This language will replace the first two sentences: **It is projected that property owners in Woodinville will save \$0.XX per \$1,000 of assessed property value on their annual taxes for fire service (or \$XX for the average homeowner).**

Client: Northshore Fire Department/  
Woodinville Fire and Rescue

Project: Merger

Timeline: September 1, 2020-May 31, 2021

Project/ Month & Key Dates	Sep-20	October - 10/6 and 20 10/29 BRB drop dead date.	November - NS Board discusses resolution 11/17	December - NS Board passes resolution 12/1; WF accepts petition (X/XX)	Jan-21	February - Last day to file resolution 2/26; Pro Con Committee Advertising	March	April - Ballots mailed 4/9; Election 4/27	May - Report back on next steps
General Consulting Paid Communications	Intake Call  Key Messages/ Communications Plan	Conference Call Chief Chats/ External Article for WF	Conference Call Chief Chats	Conference Call Chief Chats/External Article for WF	Conference Call Chief Chats	Conference Call Chief Chats/ External Article for WF	Conference Call Chief Chats	Conference Call FAQ Card (NS - Chief Chats Drop 4/9)/ Chief Chats/ External Article for WF	Conference Call
Earned Media		News Release - Talks on track; oportunities for public participation	News Release - Invite public to NS Board meetings (11/10) News Release - NS passes resolution (11/18)	Letter to the Editor - Board thanks public for participating in discussions (12/1)/ News Release - WF accepts petition; measure on Special Election ballot	News Release - Improving community engagement	News Release - Service level improvements	News Release - Cost savings for taxpayers in both jurisdictions	News Release - Reminder: What's on my ballot; cost savings	Letter to the Editor - Chief thanks public, next steps

Client: Northshore Fire Department/  
Woodinville Fire and Rescue

Project: Merger

Timeline: September 1, 2020-May 31, 2021

Social Media	Social Media Updates/Get NS on NextDoor	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates	Social Media Updates
Owned Media	Develop website text	Website Updates	Website Updates	Website Updates	Website Updates	Website Updates	Website Updates	Website Updates
Public Outreach	Develop PowerPoint/ Outreach to city councils	Invite to public meetings	Community Presentations	Community Presentations	Community Presentations	Community Presentations	Q&A Sessions x 2 with both fire districts	



## Northshore Fire Department

### Website Text

#### Draft – October 12, 2020

Many fire departments are partnering with other agencies to improve service and be more cost-efficient for taxpayers. For example, Northshore and Woodinville Fire & Rescue already share training programs for emergency personnel, administrative positions (fire chief, deputy chief, and a chief administrative officer) and joint departments, including finance, human resources, IT, and payroll.

Both agencies are approximately the same size, and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge. We also share the same financial philosophy of maintaining a strong reserve fund to pay cash for capital items to save taxpayers money instead of financing these purchases.

Northshore is considering asking voters to finalize the partnership by merging with Woodinville Fire & Rescue sometime in 2021. A merger would maintain the same number of personnel, but allow better deployment to provide an improved emergency response for both communities. Each agency also owns specialized apparatus and equipment that the other benefits from when responding to emergency calls.

Merging also would provide better training opportunities for firefighters, stronger fire prevention programs in our local schools, increase community engagement, and provide economies of scale in purchasing goods and services. We also anticipate there would be a cost savings for taxpayers in both communities, and will share that information when data from the county is available later this fall.

We will continue to update you as these talks unfold. Thank you in advance for participating in these conversations.

## Woodinville Fire Department

### Website Text

#### Draft – October 12, 2020

Many fire departments are partnering with other agencies to improve service and be more cost-efficient for taxpayers. For example, Woodinville Fire & Rescue and the Northshore Fire Department already share training programs for emergency personnel, administrative positions (fire chief, deputy chief, and a chief administrative officer) and joint departments, including finance, human resources, IT, and payroll.

Both agencies are approximately the same size, and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge. We also share the same financial philosophy of maintaining a strong reserve fund to pay cash for capital items to save taxpayers money instead of financing these purchases.

Northshore is considering asking its voters to finalize the partnership by merging with Woodinville Fire & Rescue sometime in 2021. A merger would maintain the same number of personnel, but allow better deployment to provide an improved emergency response for both communities. Each agency also owns specialized apparatus and equipment that the other benefits from when responding to emergency calls.

Merging also would provide better training opportunities for firefighters, stronger fire prevention programs in our local schools, increase community engagement, and provide economies of scale in purchasing goods and services. We also anticipate there would be a cost savings for taxpayers in both communities and will share that information when data from the county is available later this fall.

Because the Northshore Fire Department would merge into Woodinville Fire & Rescue, Northshore voters are the ones who would vote on this ballot measure. We will continue to update you as these talks unfold.

**WOODINVILLE FIRE & RESCUE  
RESOLUTION NO. 2020-07**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING GUIDELINES FOR COMPLIANCE  
WITH THE PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY ACT AND APPOINTING THE FIRE CHIEF AS THE DISTRICT'S SEPA  
RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL**

**WHEREAS**, the State Environmental Policy Act ("SEPA") sets forth an environmental review procedure in Washington State and requires that the environmental impacts of proposals or actions (both non-project and project actions) be analyzed and, where appropriate, mitigated;

**WHEREAS**, the SEPA applies to state agencies, counties, and municipal corporations, including Districts;

**WHEREAS**, the Washington State Department of Ecology issued uniform statewide rules for carrying out the SEPA, which are codified at Chapter 197-11 WAC;

**WHEREAS**, the District is required to adopt the SEPA policies and procedures that are consistent with the rules adopted by the Department of Ecology (WAC 197-11) and may adopt by reference any or all of the rules contained in Chapter 197-11 WAC;

**WHEREAS**, on October 5, 2020, the District provided public notice of its plan to adopt SEPA policies and procedures and accepted public comments at its regular commission meeting on October 20, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. pursuant to WAC 197-11-904;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to WAC 197-11-918, the SEPA procedures in WAC 197-11 apply as practicable to the actions of the District with regard to the District's SEPA procedures without further action required; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners for the District has determined that it is appropriate to designate the District's SEPA Responsible Official.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, it is resolved as follows:

1. The District adopts the SEPA Procedures and SEPA Policies set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto, as the District's SEPA Procedures.
2. The Fire Chief for the District is hereby appointed as the District's SEPA Responsible Official, and the Fire Chief's designee shall serve as the District's Deputy SEPA Responsible Official, who shall act at the request of the District's SEPA Responsible Official or in the absence or unavailability of the District's SEPA Responsible Official.

ADOPTED AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF  
WOODINVILLE FIRE & RESCUE THIS 20th day of October, 2020

WOODINVILLE FIRE & RESCUE  
COUNTY OF KING, WASHINGTON

Approved as to Form:

/s/ Jeffrey Ganson  
Jeffrey Ganson, District Counsel

Roger Collins  
Roger Collins, Commissioner

Doug Halbert  
Doug Halbert, Commissioner

Derek van Veen  
Derek van Veen, Commissioner

Mike Millman  
Mike Millman, Commissioner

Tim Osgood  
Tim Osgood, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Nicole Frisch  
Nicole Frisch, District Secretary

# **EXHIBIT A**

## **SEPA PROCEDURES**

# SEPA PROCEDURES

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## PART ONE- PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

### SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

**Section 1.1** In broad terms, the SEPA requires the District to consider environmental impacts before making significant decisions, and to consider measures which could be undertaken to avoid or reduce (“mitigate”) the environmental impacts of projects and non-project proposals (collectively, “proposal(s)”).

**Section 1.2** The process the District uses to consider environmental impacts is the “procedural” component of the SEPA. The District’s decision to approve, condition, or reject a Proposal based upon its environmental impacts or to require any mitigation measures under the authority of the SEPA is the “substantive” component of the SEPA.

**Section 1.3** This Resolution contains the District’s SEPA rules and procedures, which detail the environmental review process under the SEPA. This Resolution also contains the District’s SEPA policies, which detail the process for determining if mitigation is required for particular proposals as a result of the SEPA.

**Section 1.4** This Resolution adopts by reference the State’s SEPA rules issued by the Department of Ecology and codified at Chapter 197-11 WAC, with some modifications and additions relevant to District operations. Further, as to project actions, the District adopts the SEPA thresholds for exemptions of the County or City in which the project is located. A copy of Chapter 197-11 WAC shall be available at the office named in Section 5.4 below. Each provision adopted by reference in this Resolution is found in the State rules. Chapter 197-11 WAC should, therefore, be used in conjunction with this Resolution.

**Section 1.5** Authority. This Resolution is adopted under RCW 43.21C.120, WAC 197-11-902 and WAC 197-11-904, and is intended to implement those provisions.

### SECTION 2. SEPA’S APPLICATION TO DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

**Section 2.1** The SEPA requires the District, along with every other public agency, to treat concern for the environment as part of its mission, together with its other responsibilities as a public agency.

**Section 2.2** The SEPA itself does not have any substantive permit requirements. Rather, the SEPA review occurs when the District takes some action on a proposal. This action is called the “underlying governmental action.” The terms “action” and “proposal” are defined as provided in Chapter 197-11 WAC.

**Section 2.3** Because the SEPA applies only when some underlying governmental action is involved, the SEPA supplements or “overlays” the District’s regular planning and decision making. The SEPA provides a basic process for studying and responding to a proposal’s environmental impacts, especially at the planning stages. The exact nature and timing of the SEPA process can vary for each type of underlying governmental action and for each individual proposal.

**Section 2.4** There are other environmental laws besides the SEPA which may apply to specific resources such as laws relating to land, air, water, historic areas, wildlife, and health. These other laws may require studies or serve as the basis for mitigating or denying proposals separate from and in conjunction with the SEPA threshold determination and any mitigating measures.

**Section 2.5** Compliance with other laws and the SEPA shall be coordinated, to the extent the District can do so, to reduce inefficiencies, improve public involvement, and achieve better decisions.

**Section 2.6** Anyone who is not sure how the SEPA applies to a proposal should identify the action (or actions) that the District and any other government agencies must take on the proposal.

### SECTION 3. POLICY FOR CARRYING OUT SEPA

**Section 3.1** The policies for implementing the SEPA, found at WAC 197-11-030, are adopted by reference.

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## **PART TWO- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

### SECTION 4. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE

**Section 4.1** This part covers the basic requirements that apply across-the-board to the SEPA process. The State rules in WAC 197-11-040 through 100 are adopted by reference. They include:

1. Where to find the meaning of the words used in this document (definitions, WAC 197-11-040 and Part 8).
2. Who is responsible for SEPA compliance (lead agency, WAC 197-11-050).
3. When the SEPA process occurs (timing, WAC 197-11-055).
4. What is to be studied (content of environmental review, WAC 197-11-060).
5. What can or cannot be done while environmental review is occurring (limitations on actions during the SEPA process, WAC 197-11-070).
6. What to do in the face of serious uncertainty (incomplete or unavailable information, WAC 197-11-080).

7. What is considered part of the record (supporting documents, WAC 197-11-090).
8. What information applicants can be required to provide (information required of applicants, WAC 197-11-100).

## **SECTION 5. WHO RUNS THE DISTRICT'S SEPA PROCESS**

**Section 5.1 Lead agency.** The agency in charge of carrying out the SEPA's procedural requirements for a proposal is the lead agency. A lead agency is selected for each particular proposal. The District will typically be the lead agency for its proposals, both project and non-project proposals. However, another government agency may be the lead agency for a District project depending on the size of the project, the number of government agencies or departments involved, and the location of the project pursuant to Chapter 197-11 WAC.

**Section 5.2 Responsible Official.** The person or office at the lead agency in charge of the SEPA compliance is the responsible official (the "Responsible Official"). The District's Responsible Official is the Fire Chief. The Responsible Official may consult with the proponents of the proposal concerning the SEPA process. Subject to budgetary authorization, the Responsible Official may retain and consult with such other experts as may be necessary to perform the duties described herein.

**Section 5.3 Alternate Responsible Official.** The Board of Commissioners may, by motion or resolution, appoint an alternate responsible official for any particular proposal or for a period of time, or the Fire Chief may designate a Deputy SEPA Responsible Official. After the date of such appointment, the alternate responsible official shall undertake the duties of the Responsible Official, as provided herein, for the particular proposal or the specified period of time, and the Responsible Official shall thereafter be relieved of any further duties on the proposal or for the specified period of time. The alternate responsible official does not necessarily need to be a District employee. The person designated as the alternate responsible official shall become an "officer" of the District for the purposes of WAC 197-11-788.

**Section 5.4 SEPA Public Information.** The office that routinely handles SEPA public information matters at the District is:

Fire Chief

Subject to the requirements of the Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56, RCW), this office will (i) provide information about environmental documents, (ii) identify the Responsible Official for a specific proposal, (iii) provide the status of the SEPA review for a project or proposal, or (iv) provide direction concerning SEPA compliance. If the official does not know the answer, they can help direct you to the right person or office. There may be a charge for certain documents (WAC 197-11-914).

**Section 5.5 Other Agencies.** Other agencies that have action to take on a proposal are agencies with jurisdiction. Other agencies that know about certain environmental impacts are agencies with environmental expertise. If the District, as lead agency, asks these other agencies to help review a proposal's environmental impacts, those other agencies are required to help without charge and are consulted agencies. The Responsible Official shall be



responsible for coordinating and preparing environmental documents with these other agencies (also see Section 13 below).

**Section 5.6 Federal Coordination.** Federal agencies are directed to cooperate with state and local agencies to the fullest extent possible to reduce duplication between the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") and state and local requirements. The Responsible Official shall make an effort to coordinate environmental review requirements with applicable federal agencies, including combining documents and holding joint scoping, public meetings, and hearings, as directed and encouraged by this Resolution and the federal provision for eliminating duplication (40 CFR 1506.2).

## **SECTION 6. TIMING**

**Section 6.1** In conjunction with WAC 197-11-055, the Responsible Official has discretion to decide the appropriate time for reviewing the environmental impacts of District projects or proposals on an individual, case-by-case basis. For purposes of this section, the terms "final threshold determination" and "final environmental impact statement" include any documents prepared under Part Six below, such as adoption notices, that are used to meet environmental review requirements on a proposal.

**Section 6.2 Typical District Actions.** The SEPA review of typical District proposals shall occur consistent with these procedures, except that environmental review is not required for actions that are categorically exempt under Part Nine and WAC 197-11-305. If required, a final threshold determination or final environmental impact statement shall be completed, within the time periods required by these procedures, prior to Commission approval of:

1. Improvements to be constructed by the District or on District property;
2. Leases or contracts for development by the District or on District property;
3. A change in the use of a facility that involves different environmental impacts than currently exist; or
4. Approval of any non-project action.

**Section 6.3 Applicant Early Review.** If the District's only action on a proposal is a decision on a proposed non-project action, or written approval to an applicant based upon submission of detailed project plans and specifications, the applicant may request, in writing, that the District conduct environmental review prior to the submission of detailed plans and specifications.

**Section 6.4 Preferred Alternative.** The Commission or staff may identify a preferred alternative at any time in the SEPA process orally or in an environmental or other document. The identification of a preferred alternative shall not be construed as an improper commitment to, or as a final decision on, a particular proposal.

## SECTION 7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

**Section 7.1** All supporting documents cited in environmental documents on a proposal shall be considered part of the District's overall record of compliance with the SEPA if the supporting documents are publicly available substantially within any time periods allowed for review or comments. The documents will be available at the office named in Section 5.4 above unless otherwise noted. Economic, business, technical, or other reports or analysis may be prepared, combined with, or appended to, environmental documents even though they are not required under the SEPA.

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## **PART THREE - CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS AND THRESHOLD DETERMINATIONS**

## SECTION 8. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE

**Section 8.1** This part contains the rules for deciding whether a proposal has a "probable significant, adverse environmental impact" requiring an environmental impact statement ("EIS") to be prepared. RCW 43.21C.031. This part also contains rules for evaluating the impacts of proposals not requiring an EIS. The State rules in WAC 197-11-300 to 400 are hereby adopted by reference. They include:

1. Not requiring review for proposals that are categorically exempt (WAC 197-11-305 and Part 9).
2. The requirements to make a threshold determination and deciding whether the impacts are environmentally significant -- for non-exempt proposals (WAC 197-11-310).
3. Use of an environmental checklist for project and non-project proposals (WAC 197-11-315).
4. The process and criteria for making a threshold determination (WAC 197-11-330).
5. How to handle insufficient information on a proposal (WAC 197-11-335).
6. Deciding an EIS is not required and issuing a determination of non-significance ("DNS") (WAC 197-11-340).
7. Including mitigating measures in a DNS (WAC 197-11-350).
8. Deciding an EIS is required and issuing a determination of significance/scoping notice (WAC 197-11-360).
9. When a threshold determination is final (WAC 197-11-390).

## SECTION 9. CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS

**Section 9.1** In deciding whether a proposal is categorically exempt, the rules provide for certain circumstances when potentially exempt actions would not be exempt (WAC 197-11-305).

**Section 9.2** City/County Thresholds. For minor new construction, the SEPA procedures of the city or King County where the proposal is located shall be the exemption levels that apply to the proposal (See WAC 197-11-800(1)). If the proposal is located in more than one city/county, the lower of the applicable city or King County adopted exemption levels shall control. Local ordinances and the local SEPA procedures should also be reviewed to determine if the proposal is located in an environmentally sensitive area under WAC 197-11-908.

**Section 9.3** Proposals With Exempt and Non-exempt Parts. In determining whether a proposal is exempt, the District shall make an effort to be certain the proposal is properly defined (WAC 197-11-060). If a proposal includes exempt and non-exempt actions, the proposal is not exempt and requires environmental review; however, certain exempt aspects of the proposal may nonetheless proceed, before or during the environmental review of the proposal, if the requirements of WAC 197-11-070 are met.

**Section 9.4** Documentation Optional. A decision that a proposal is categorically exempt need not be documented. A memorandum or notation may be placed in the file.

## SECTION 10. MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

**Section 10.1** At the Commission or staff level, mitigation measures may be included in, or added to, a proposal so that environmental impacts are eliminated that might otherwise be significant. Mitigation measures may also serve to reduce significant impacts or to mitigate non-significant impacts (WAC 197-11-350). Changes or clarifications do not require a new environmental checklist (WAC 197-11-350(4)). Mitigation measures for significant impacts that are included in a decision must be documented (Section 19 below). Although public notice is not required by State law, when the District clarifies or changes features of its own proposals in a mitigated DNS (WAC 197-11-350(5)), public and agency notice and a fifteen (15) day waiting period are required for mitigated DNSs on proposals (WAC 197-11-340(2)(a)(iv)) and Section 15 below. Reference to existing laws and/or requiring compliance with existing laws are not required to be included as a mitigation measure.

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## **PART FOUR - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)**

## SECTION 11. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE

**Section 11.1** This part contains the rules for preparing environmental impact statements. The State rules in WAC 197-11-400 to 500 are hereby adopted by reference. They include:

1. Purpose of an EIS (WAC 197-11-400).
2. Ten requirements that apply to the preparation of EISs (WAC 197-11-402).
3. Three types of EISs: Draft, final, and supplemental (WAC 197-11-405).
4. When EISs must be prepared (WAC 197-11-406).
5. How to decide the scope of an EIS through scoping (WAC 197-11-408).
6. Optional expanded scoping (WAC 197-11-410).
7. Who can prepare EIS? (WAC 197-11-420).
8. Style and size of EISs, including page limits (WAC 197-11-425).
9. Format of EISs, including flexibility for different types of proposals (WAC 197-11-430).
10. A 1-2 page cover memo that highlights issues for decision makers, but is not used to determine adequacy (WAC 197-11-435).
11. EIS content, including the required five sections: the fact sheet, table of contents, summary, and two main sections of text (WAC 197-11-440).
12. Rules on the content of EISs on non-project proposals, such as proposed plans (WAC 197-11-442).
13. Rules on the content of EISs on proposed projects when there has already been a non-project EIS (WAC 197-11-443).
14. The various elements of the environment, consisting of the natural and built environment (WAC 197-11-444).
15. The relationship of EISs to other considerations in planning and decisions, such as economic, social, or technical factors (WAC 197-11-448).
16. The relationship of EISs to quantified cost-benefit analysis, (WAC 197-11-450).
17. The procedures for issuing a draft EIS (WAC 197-11-455).
18. The procedures for issuing a final EIS (WAC 197-11-460).

**Section 11.2 Scoping.** The Responsible Official shall decide the scoping method and deadline for a given proposal, consistent with WAC 197-11-408. Special attention should be given to writing scoping notices in plain English and avoiding technical jargon. Scoping techniques can vary by proposal, and may include commenting by telephone. If a consultant is

preparing an EIS, the consultant's contact should make provisions for possible changes in the scope of the EIS based upon the scoping process.

**Section 11.3 Additional Scoping.** The expanded scoping provisions in WAC 197-11-410 may be used without formally designating the process as "expanded scoping." In keeping with the intent of the State rules, the Responsible Official is encouraged to be innovative and shall have very broad discretion in developing creative scoping methods. A scoping process may also be used before a threshold determination (or at any other time in the SEPA process) to assist in identifying impacts and alternatives, including mitigation measures. If so, the form of the scoping notice shall be revised accordingly so that agencies and members of the public understand the purpose and process being used.

**Section 11.4 EIS Preparer.** An EIS may be prepared by District staff, consultants on contract to the District, or other private entities under the direction of the Responsible Official. District staff or an applicant may consult with the Responsible Official prior to final selection of consultants to help ensure that the highest quality EIS is prepared. The Responsible Official shall have the discretion to design the EIS process and carry out the responsibilities set forth in WAC 197-11-420.

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## **PART FIVE - COMMENTING**

### **SECTION 12. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE**

**Section 12.1** This part explains how to comment and respond on all environmental documents under the SEPA, including rules for public notice and hearings. WAC 197-11-500 to 600 are hereby adopted by reference. They include:

1. The purpose of the commenting provisions and list of notice and time requirements (WAC 197-11-500 and 502).
2. Making environmental documents available (WAC 197-11-504).
3. Filing with State SEPA REGISTER (WAC 197-11-508).
4. Giving reasonable public notice (WAC 197-11-510), as further specified below.
5. Public hearings and meetings procedures (WAC 197-11-535).
6. The effect on agencies and the public of not commenting on environmental documents (WAC 197-11-545).
7. Specific commenting requirements (WAC 197-11-550).
8. Response to comments on EISs (WAC 197-11-560).
9. Prohibiting consulted agencies from charging lead agencies for assistance under the SEPA (WAC 197-11-570).

### SECTION 13. DISTRICT SEPA COMMENTS TO OTHER AGENCIES

**Section 13.1** The Responsible Official shall be responsible for coordinating and preparing District comments to other agencies on the environmental documents of other agencies. This Responsible Official shall also be responsible for coordinating consultation requests under the SEPA from other agencies to the District. The Responsible Official, or his/her designee, shall sign written comments from the District and may establish deadlines for responses from offices within the District in order to meet commenting deadlines established by law or by other agencies in their requests.

### SECTION 14. COSTS FOR DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

**Section 14.1** Normally, the District will charge its actual cost of printing for its environmental documents (or its normal per page copying charge as adopted pursuant to RCW 42.56). There will be no charge for other agencies to which the District is required by law to send the documents. The District may make documents available without charge. The District will, if requested, reduce or waive charges for a document provided to a public interest organization. The Responsible Official may establish internal policies or procedures or make determinations on an individual basis.

### SECTION 15. PUBLIC NOTICE

**Section 15.1** In addition to the circulation requirements to other agencies and affected tribes, the District will give public notice in the manner noted below.

**Section 15.2** Required Notice. For threshold determinations that require notice under WAC 197-11 scoping notices, EISs, and public hearings, the District shall:

1. Publish the notice in a newspaper of general circulation in King County, Washington as designated by the Commission;
2. Provide notice in the same manner as required for the announcement of regular District Commission meetings;
3. Furnish notice to anyone who has specifically requested to be notified about the particular proposal or about the type of proposal being considered;
4. Post a notice on the main bulletin board, if any, at the District's administrative offices;
5. File the documents required by WAC 197-11-508 with the State Department of Ecology for publication of notice in the SEPA REGISTER; and
6. (For EISs only.) Notify the local news media where the proposal is located that an EIS is available.

**Section 15.3** Additional Optional Notice. For any environmental documents or public meetings, the District may:

1. Publish notice in District newsletters, if any, that might facilitate commenting;
2. Notify the news media orally or by press release, including neighborhood newspapers or trade journals;
3. Post the property for site specific proposals;
4. Post a notice on the main bulletin board, if any, at the city or county council or planning department where the proposal is located;
5. Create or maintain a mailing list for a particular proposal or type of proposal, which may include the identification of citizen and public interest organizations, and send notice to those on the mailing list; or
6. Use other reasonable methods appropriate to a particular proposal.

**Section 15.4 Notice for Appeals.** For judicial appeals, the District shall use the notice procedures for the Notice of Action set forth in RCW 43.21C.080, unless other appeal procedures are used under Part Seven below.

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## **PART SIX - USING EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS**

### **SECTION 16. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE**

**Section 16.1** This part contains rules for the District's use of existing environmental documents for its SEPA compliance. The documents might be prepared by the District or by local, State, or federal agencies under SEPA or NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act, 43 USC 4321 et seq.). The State rules in WAC 197-11-600 through 640 are hereby adopted by reference. These rules include:

1. When to use existing environmental documents (WAC 197-11-600).
2. Use of NEPA documents, including environmental assessments (WAC 197-11-610).
3. Procedures for supplemental EIS (SEIS) (WAC 197-11-620).
4. Procedures for addenda (WAC 197-11-625).
5. Procedures for adoption of an existing environmental document (WAC 197-11-630).
6. Procedures for incorporation by reference of existing material (WAC 197-11-635).
7. How to combine the SEPA and other documents (WAC 197-11-640).

## SECTION 17. ADDENDA

**Section 17.1** If monitoring reports are part of mitigation commitments, the required monitoring reports may be labeled as an addendum to the original environmental documents (the DNS or EIS). If subsequent environmental design, detail, or other environmental analysis is necessary or desirable, and an SEIS is not required (it does not meet the two criteria in WAC 197-11-600(3)(b)), then an addendum may be used to conduct or document the analysis. An addendum may be used to add to any kind of environmental document, and may be used at any time in the SEPA process.

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## **PART SEVEN- SEPA AND AGENCY DECISIONS**

## SECTION 18. PURPOSE/ADOPTION BY REFERENCE

**Section 18.1** This part contains rules and policies for SEPA's substantive authority, such as decisions to mitigate or reject proposals as a result of SEPA. This part also contains procedures for appealing SEPA determinations. The State rules in WAC 197-11-650 to 680 are hereby adopted by reference. They include:

1. Purpose and implementation of decision making under SEPA (WAC 197-11-650 and 655).
2. Substantive authority and mitigation (WAC 197-11-660).
3. Appeals (WAC 197-11-680).

## SECTION 19. SEPA DECISION DOCUMENT

**Section 19.1** After its decision on any proposal not exempt under the SEPA, the District shall make available to the public a document that states the decision. The document shall specify any mitigation or monitoring that will occur or will reference the appropriate documents where any mitigation or additional monitoring is described. The document may be a resolution, letter, or other document used by the District to convey its decision. The document may incorporate by reference relevant portions of environmental documents. (WAC 197-11-660(1)(b)).

**Section 19.2** Private Projects. To the extent the District conditions or denies proposals of applicants under the SEPA, the document required by the preceding section shall cite the District's SEPA policy (from Section 20 below) that is the basis for conditioning or denying the proposal. If the District wishes to deny an applicant's proposal, the decision document shall also contain the findings required by WAC 197-11-660(1)(f) that significant adverse impacts have been identified in the EIS and that reasonable mitigation measures are insufficient to mitigate the identified impact.



## SECTION 20. DISTRICT SEPA POLICIES

**Section 20.1** The District adopts by reference the State environmental policy as set forth in the SEPA: RCW 43.21C.020. Specifically, in order to carry out the policy set forth in the SEPA, it is the District's continuing responsibility to use all practicable means and measures, consistent with other essential considerations of State policy, to improve and coordinate plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the District, the State, and its citizens may:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
2. Assure for all people of Washington State safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, including from hazardous waste or other toxic substances, or other undesirable or unintended consequences;
4. Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage;
5. Maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
6. Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities;
7. Plan for providing levels of service at standards established by local City and County governments, or at national standards in the absence of such standards being established locally, provided that the planning for providing such services is not a guarantee that such services can be delivered at such standards nor is such a duty undertaken by the creation of such a plan, nor is such a plan implementable based on potential financial and operational limitations.
8. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources;
9. Manage public waterways and adjacent lands, fisheries, and other natural resources wisely; and
10. Mitigate probable adverse environmental impacts resulting from proposals, particularly significant impacts, to the extent of the District's authority and guided by the policies stated above and in the SEPA and the District's other statutory responsibilities and limited authority, recognizing the land use regulatory authority of local City and County governments.

## SECTION 21. APPEALS

**Section 21.1** There shall be no administrative appeals of District SEPA determinations (including appeals of any conditions or denials by District staff under RCW 43.21C.060).

**Section 21.2 Informal Reconsideration.** Any person may formally request the Responsible Official to reconsider a SEPA determination orally or in writing. The Responsible Official shall reconsider the determination and provide a written response. However, this is not to be considered a formal appeal within the meaning of RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 197-11-680. The Responsible Official is not required to make a record or furnish reasons for the decision. Such a request shall not cause a comment period to be delayed, nor cause a delay in any District decision, unless the SEPA determination is withdrawn prior to a District Board of Commission decision being made on the proposal.

**Section 21.3 No Exhaustion of Remedies.** Because there are no administrative appeals, a person is not required to request informal reconsideration prior to filing a lawsuit under the SEPA.

**Section 21.4 Judicial Review.** When the Land Use Petition Act, Chapter 36.70C RCW, (“LUPA”) applies to a District proposal, all judicial appeals must be brought under the applicable LUPA statute of limitations. If LUPA does not apply, the District may commence the SEPA statute of limitations for its proposals by filing a Notice of Action under RCW 43.21C.080. The District may decide in a particular situation to use any other procedure allowed by RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 197-11-680.

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## **PART EIGHT- DEFINITIONS**

### **SECTION 22. UNIFORM USAGE AND DEFINITIONS**

**Section 22.1** This part contains uniform usage and definitions of terms under the SEPA. WAC 197-11-700 to 799 are hereby adopted by reference, unless the definition is inconsistent with the definitions herein.

1. **Alternate Responsible Official.** “Alternate Responsible Official” means the person designated by the Commission or the Fire Chief to act as a Responsible Official for a particular proposal or for a particular period of time.
2. **Commission.** “Commission” means the Commission of the District.
3. **Preferred Alternative.** “Preferred alternative” means a preference for a particular alternative course of action, at the time the preference is expressed. A preferred alternative is not an action or decision within the meaning of WAC 197-11-070.
4. **Responsible Official.** The “Responsible Official” is the person designated by the Commission responsible for SEPA procedural and substantive compliance by the District. The Responsible Official does not necessarily need to be a District employee. The person designated as the Responsible Official shall become an “officer” of the District for the purposes of WAC 197-11-788.
5. **Staff.** “Staff” means the Fire Chief of the District and his designees, not the Commissioners.

## **PART NINE - CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS**

### **SECTION 23. ADOPTION BY REFERENCE**

**Section 23.1** The categorical exemptions provisions in WAC 197-11-800, 880 and 890 are hereby adopted by reference and shall be applied in conjunction with Section 9- CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS above and WAC 197-11-305. They include:

1. Categorical exemptions for all agencies (WAC 197-11-800).
  2. Emergencies (WAC 197-11-880).
  3. Petitions to the Department of Ecology (WAC 197-11-890).
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## **PART TEN - AGENCY COMPLIANCE**

### **SECTION 24. ADOPTION BY REFERENCE**

**Section 24.1** The provisions in WAC 197-11-914 through 955 are hereby adopted by reference. They include:

1. SEPA fees and costs that may be charged (WAC 197-11-914).
2. The list of agencies with environmental expertise (WAC 197-11-920).
3. The rules for determining lead agency (WAC 197-11-922 through 943).
4. The effective date and application of the statewide rules and this Resolution to District activities (WAC 197-11-916 and 955).

### **SECTION 25. TRANSITION TO NEW RULES**

**Section 25.1** EISs, which are issued after this Resolution is effective, shall follow the format and requirements of Part Four above. Environmental documents and notices issued prior to the effective date of this Resolution, including draft, final, or supplemental EISs, do not require revision or re-issuance to meet the requirements of this Resolution or the State rules (WAC 197-11-916).

### **SECTION 26. REVISION OF SEPA POLICIES OR PROCEDURES**

**Section 26.1** The District may amend its SEPA policies or procedures from time-to-time as may be necessary. The Responsible Official may provide additional guidance and procedures to carry out this Resolution.

## SECTION 27. INTERPRETATION

**Section 27.1** If any provision of this Resolution or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Resolution or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

**Section 27.2** The captions and titles herein are for convenience and reference purposes only and in no way define, limit or describe the meaning, scope or intent of this Resolution.

**Section 27.3** The use of any gender or neutral term shall include all genders, and the use of any terms shall be construed as singular or plural, as the case may be.

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## **PART ELEVEN - FORMS**

### SECTION 28. FORMS

**Section 28.1** The forms in WAC 197-11-965 through 990 are hereby adopted by reference as applicable to the District and the procedures adopted herein.

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