



SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Purpose of checklist:

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants:

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. You may use "not applicable" or "does not apply" only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown. You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for Lead Agencies:

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B plus the [SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS \(part D\)](#). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in Part B - Environmental Elements –that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

A. Background [\[HELP\]](#)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:
City of La Center Frequently Flooded Areas Code Updates

2. Name of applicant:
City of La Center

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:
210 East 4th Street, La Center, WA 98629
(360) 263-7665
Contact: Jessica Nash, Permit Technician

4. Date checklist prepared:
August 28, 2023

5. Agency requesting checklist:
City of La Center

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

This is a non-project action for updates to the La Center Municipal Code (LCMC) Chapter 18.300 pertaining to frequently flood areas/special flood hazard areas as a result of updated FEMA Federal Insurance Study (FIS) mapping and regulatory requirements under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) contained in 44 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 59, 60, 65, and 70. The schedule for the project is as follows:

- July 11, 2023: Planning Commission workshop discussion*
- September 12, 2023: Planning Commission public hearing*
- September 13, 2023: City council workshop discussion*
- October 11, 2023: City Council public hearing*

. The updated FEMA FIS and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) goes into effect on November 2, 2023, which the City is obligated to adopt the updated maps and NFIP regulatory standards by this date.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Not applicable. This is a non-project SEPA checklist for an update to the City's code pertaining to the frequently flooded areas code.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Environmental information prepared is limited to this SEPA checklist.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

Not applicable. This is a non-project action to the City's code pertaining to FEMA FIRM map updates and NFIP regulatory updates in the City's critical areas ordinance, frequently flooded area standards in LCMC 18.300.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The critical areas ordinance, frequently flooded areas code updates to LCMC 18.300 require Planning Commission recommendation and City Council approval.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The City of La Center is updating its code pertaining to frequently flooded areas, also known as special flood hazard areas, which is located in LCMC 18.300 (Critical Areas). The purpose of this code update is to:

- *Adopt the updated FIRM map panels and revised frequently flooded areas code by November 2, 2023, in LCMC 18.300.090(3)(a). The updated map will regulate areas along Brezee Creek north of East 4th Street to a point north to about 7th Street.*
- *Adopt new definitions for “alteration of watercourse”, “base flood elevation”, “flood elevation study”, “floodplain/flood-prone area”, “floodplain administrator”, “floodplain management regulations”, “flood proofing”, “functionally dependent use”, “highest adjacent grade”, “historic structure”, “mean sea level”, and “violation”.*
- *Amend definitions for “flood/flooding”, “Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)”, “flood insurance study”, “floodway”, “new construction”, “structure”, and “substantial improvement”*
- *Eliminate definition of “floodway fringe”.*
- *Amending the established level of review required for uses or activities in critical areas, specifically to frequently flooded areas. These uses and activities would include any development, including any manmade change to improved or unimproved property such as buildings, structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, or storage of equipment or materials within the flood hazard area. These uses and activities would no longer be exempt, but would require review in compliance with NFIP standards.*
- *Amend to specify that SFHAs and their specific use requirements are not subject to code sections “Critical areas review or permit” (LCMC 18.300.050), “Variances” (LCMC 18.300.060), and “Exemptions” (LCMC 18.300.070) since NFIP standards have their own separate floodplain permit review, variance review and standards with no exemptions.*
- *Amend to eliminate permitted uses and exceptions in the floodway and/or floodplain that are not compliant with NFIP standards.*
- *Amend the duties and responsibility of the Local Administrator, including receiving certification for floodway encroachments, records of all variance actions, and improvement and damage calculations and notifying base flood elevation changes to the Federal Insurance Administrator within six months of receiving information and data on such change.*
- *Amending conditions for variances of historic structures in frequently flooded areas/SFHAs upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure’s continued designation as a Historic Structure and the variance is the least necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure.*

- *Adopt provisions for the storage of specific materials and equipment in frequently flooded areas/SFHAs.*
- *Adopt provisions to allow development in the floodway with certain requirements, including requiring the applicant to apply for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) with FEMA.*

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist. *The code update will apply to frequently flooded areas mapped as SFHAs on the FEMA FIRM maps within the City's boundaries. These areas include the East Fork Lewis River and the lower reaches of Brezee Creek. The updated FIRMs specifically update mapping along the lower reaches of Brezee Creek.*

B. Environmental Elements [\[HELP\]](#)

Consistent with WAC 197-11-960, the lead agency (the City of La Center) has determined that completion of Section B is not necessary for this non-project action with the exception of Section B(3)(a)(5).

1. Earth [\[help\]](#)

a. General description of the site:

(circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

2. Air [\[help\]](#)

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.
- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

3. Water [\[help\]](#)

a. Surface Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.
- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.
- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.
- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.
- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

The updated FIRM now maps Flood Zone "A" areas along the lower reaches of Brezee Creek before its confluence with the East Fork Lewis River. This is primarily below and above the 4th Street culvert.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

b. Ground Water: [\[help\]](#)

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the

well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

4. Plants [\[help\]](#)

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

- deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- shrubs
- grass
- pasture
- crop or grain
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.
- wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

- c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:
- e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

5. Animals [\[help\]](#)

- a. List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Examples include:

birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
 mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
 fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other _____

- b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:
- e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

6. Energy and Natural Resources [\[help\]](#)

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.
- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.
- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

7. Environmental Health [\[help\]](#)

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.
- 1) Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.
 - 2) Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.
 - 3) Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.
 - 4) Describe special emergency services that might be required.
 - 5) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:
- b. Noise
- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?
 - 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.
 - 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

8. Land and Shoreline Use [\[help\]](#)

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.
- b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?
- 1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal

business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

- c. Describe any structures on the site.
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
- m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

9. Housing [\[help\]](#)

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

10. Aesthetics [\[help\]](#)

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

11. Light and Glare [\[help\]](#)

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

12. Recreation [\[help\]](#)

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

13. Historic and cultural preservation [\[help\]](#)

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers ? If so, specifically describe.
- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.
- c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.
- d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

14. Transportation [\[help\]](#)

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.
- b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?
- c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?
- d. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).
- e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

15. Public Services [\[help\]](#)

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.


16. Utilities [\[help\]](#)

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____

c. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

C. Signature [\[HELP\]](#)

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature:  _____

Name of signee Ethan Spoo, AICP, _____

Position and Agency/Organization Consulting Planner (WSP USA Inc) _____

Date Submitted: August 29, 2023 _____

D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions [\[HELP\]](#)

(IT IS NOT NECESSARY to use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The FEMA updates are not anticipated to increase discharges to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

No additional mitigation measures are proposed or required.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

The frequently flooded areas code updates would amend FIRM mapping to apply to the lower reaches of Brezee Creek in addition to areas along the East Fork of the Lewis River. The additionally protected areas will place further restrictions on development in SFHAs and will require that development of these areas obtain a floodplain permit. These additional protections and permit requirements will also protect biological and ecological functions of the lower reaches of Brezee Creek for plants, animals, and fish. . Property owners that are now under newly effective FIRM mapping along Brezee Creek required to obtain a floodplain permit for any development within the floodplain. "Development" is as defined in LCMC 18.300.030 and discussed above to limit or minimize damage, downstream chemical releases, and downstream impacts from floods. .

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

Applicants wishing to develop within to frequently flooded areas mapped as SFHAs on the updated FIRM maps will be subject to 18.300 (Critical Areas), LCMC 18.310 (Environmental Policy), LCMC 18.320 (Stormwater and Erosion Control), LCMC 330 (Shorelines), and LCMC 18.350 (Tree Protection), Therefore, the FEMA updates to the frequently flooded areas/SFHA regulations would be expected to better protect plants, animals, and fish. No additional measures are proposed or required.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

The FEMA updates to the frequently flooded areas/SFHA regulations are not expected to deplete energy or natural resources.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

No mitigation measures are proposed or required.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The FEMA updates to the frequently flooded areas/SFHA regulations are not expected to adversely effect wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas. The FEMA updates further protect frequently flooded areas with updated mapping and new NFIP compliant regulations including removing exemptions from permit review that previously existed. There are no wilderness areas or wild and scenic rivers in La Center. Threatened and endangered habitat is regulated by the City's critical areas ordinance, but is expected to be better protected under the updated frequently flooded areas standards. Any development that occurs within or adjacent to frequently flooded areas/SFHAs and

updated FIRMs will be required to comply with the City's archaeological protection requirements, if applicable, in LCMC 18.360. There is no prime farmland in La Center. Therefore, no substantial impacts are anticipated for these resources, but additional protective benefits are expected for environmentally sensitive areas when the overlap frequently flooded areas.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:
No additional mitigation measures are proposed or required.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The frequently flooded areas code update is generally mapping corrections to protect additional mapped SFHAs based on the most recent FEMA mapping and Best Available Science. The FEMA updates would be consistent with the following applicable goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan including Policies 9.1.12, 9.1.16, and 9.1.18, which are to ensure that frequently flooded areas are adequately protected from development and that these areas are clearly defined and identified with updated maps.

Properties included with the current and updated FIRM maps are subject to the LCMC and La Center SMP when developed, which will address and mitigate any compatibility issues.

The City's Comprehensive Plan Map designates additional areas along Brezee Creek as Urban Residential where the primary land use is single-family detached residential. The updated floodplain standards and newly mapped areas would apply as an overlay to these affected properties. This will result in additional restrictions on the development on these lots as discussed above.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

The proposed code update would be compatible with the City's land use and shoreline plans because the newly mapped frequently flooded areas along Brezee Creek would apply as an overlay in addition to land use plans and zoning standards already in place. Existing residential lots in newly mapped areas would be subject to additional regulations when developing within frequently flooded areas. No mitigation measures are proposed or required.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

The proposed frequently flooded areas code updates are not expected to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:
No additional measure are proposed.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

There would be no known conflicts with local, state, or federal laws or requirements created by the proposed updates. The updates to the City's frequently flooded areas/SFHAs are required by FEMA under the NFIP.