

Environmental Checklist

A. Background

1. Name of proposed project:

Proposed Chapter 20.57 of the Sumas Municipal Code, to establish landscaping regulations applicable to multifamily development.
2. Name of applicant:

City of Sumas
3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

City of Sumas (360) 988-5711
PO Box 9
Sumas, WA 98295

Contact: Rollin Harper, Sehome Planning, (360) 733-6033
4. Date checklist prepared:

January 4, 2019
5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Sumas
6. Proposed timing or schedule:

Public hearing before the City Council scheduled for February 11, 2019.
7. Plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal:

The City development regulations provide the specific regulatory standards that direct land use and development within the City. The development regulations are updated as deemed necessary by the City Council.
8. Environmental information that has been prepared or will be prepared related to this proposal:

EIS for City of Sumas Floodplain Management Plan, 1997.
Fish Habitat Reconnaissance Assessment for City of Sumas, David Evans & Associates, 1998.
Wetlands Inventory for the City of Sumas, David Evans & Associates, 1992.
9. Pending applications for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by this proposal:

None.
10. Government approvals or permits that will be needed for this proposal:

Adoption of ordinance by Sumas City Council.

11. Brief description of the proposal and project name:

Adoption of a new Chapter 20.57 of the Sumas Municipal Code to establish landscaping regulations applicable to multifamily development.

12. Project location:

The proposal applies to land within the city of Sumas, Washington.

B. Environmental Elements

1. Earth

- a. General description of the site:

Predominantly flat with a hill and ridge in the NW corner of town.

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

About 30 percent, associated with the hill. The portion of town within the downtown commercial area is flat with almost no slope at all.

- c. What general types of soils are found on the site?

Predominantly silt loams in the floodplains of Johnson Creek and Sumas River (Brisco silt loam; Puget silt loam; Sumas silt loam; Urban land-Whatcom-Labounty complex). A large amount of the land surrounding Sumas is classified as 'prime farmland'. Most of the soil is classified as Category III, 'prime when protected from flooding'.

- d. Are there surface indicators or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity?

Low strength, mucky soils exist in the west end of town. Buildings in certain areas have subsided. Road cuts on the slope of the hill have also been subject to slides.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

Not applicable.

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

Not as a direct result of this proposal. Erosion may be associated with urban development encouraged by City development regulations. Construction of roads, utilities, and buildings creates associated clearing and grading, which can result in erosion.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction?

The proposal will not result in any impervious surfaces.

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

Sumas has adopted stormwater regulations applicable to the construction and operation phases of development. These guidelines mitigate the impact of erosion. Concentration of development in a compact urban area is expected to minimize the overall extent of erosion experience in rural Whatcom County as a whole.

2. Air

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, describe generally and give approximate quantities if known.

None as a direct result of this proposal. However, emissions are generally expected to increase as population and development increase.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

The site is subject to odors associated with surrounding agricultural and industrial activities. Air quality is also affected by emissions generated in the more densely populated areas to the northwest, in British Columbia, Canada.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

None associated with the proposal. The affected area is within jurisdiction of Northwest Clean Air Agency, and major individual projects would be subject to review.

3. Water

a. Surface

(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.

Sumas Creek flows from the west to meet Johnson Creek in the western part of the city. Johnson Creek flows directly through the city into the Sumas River. The Sumas River is located to the east of current city limits and flows north, over the border, and empties into the Fraser River in Canada. There are numerous wetlands in the planning area, most of which are associated with the streams or are within the 100-year floodplain.

(2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) of the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Not as a direct result of this proposal. It is expected that some development allowed pursuant to these regulations will occur within 200 feet of streams and wetlands.

- (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.

Not applicable

- (4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

No.

- (5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year flood plain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Most of the Sumas area is either within the 100-year or 500-year floodplain. Flooding is a problem inside the current city limits.

- (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.

Not applicable.

b. Ground

- (1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Growth occurring pursuant to the Comp. Plan will result in greater withdrawals of groundwater. Withdrawals may reach 3,700 acre-feet per year, in accordance with the city's water rights.

- (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.

Not applicable.

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater)

- (1) Describe the source of runoff (including stormwater) 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.

Growth occurring pursuant to the Sumas comprehensive plan can be expected to result in larger areas of impervious surfaces (roads, parking lots, buildings). Because of the predominant clay soils and the high water table, infiltration is generally not extensive. Associated runoff will therefore reach the local surface waters (Johnson Creek, Sumas River, Sumas Creek, Bone Creek, miscellaneous ditches). Various collection methods might be used, such as storm drains, ditches, swales, and constructed wetlands.

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

Not as a direct result of this proposal. Waste pollutants picked up by stormwater (fertilizers, pesticides, petrochemicals) might enter ground or surface waters.

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

Implementation of a stormwater program in compliance with the Dept. of Ecology stormwater manual. Stream and wetland buffers protected and enhanced pursuant to the SMP and CAO can be expected to reduce some stormwater impacts.

4. Plants

- a. Check or circle the types of vegetation found on the site

X Deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
X Evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
X Shrubs
X Grass
X Pasture
X Crop or grain
X Wet soil plants
X Water plants
X Other types of vegetation

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

None as a direct result of the proposal.

- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None.

- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

Non-project proposal. Multifamily landscaping regulations increase planting of landscape vegetation and encourage the use of native plant species.

5. Animals

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

Birds:	Mammals:	Fish:
X hawk	X deer	— bass
X heron	— bear	X salmon
X eagle	— elk	X trout
X songbirds	X beaver	— shellfish
X other	— other: coyotes	— other

- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

The Puget Sound chinook listing does NOT apply within the Sumas River basin. The Sumas River basin is included within the listing area of the bull trout.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

Migration route for great blue heron, wintering area for eagle.

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

Concentrating future development within the urban growth area will preserve wildlife habitat in areas outside the urban growth area. Stream and wetland buffers protected as Natural System Protection Areas (designated within Comp. Plan) are designed to serve as habitat. The Shoreline Master Program also protects stream and wetland buffers, thereby preserving habitat.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

- 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.

None as a direct result of this proposal. Future population increase is expected to result in an increased demand for electricity and natural gas.

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, describe generally.

Not applicable.

- 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.

None.

7. Environmental Health

- 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 generally.

None as a result of this proposal.

- (1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None.

- (2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

None deemed necessary.

- b. Noise

- (1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment operation, other)?

Noise from vehicular traffic, occasional construction noise, typical urban-residential noise (music, air conditioners), and industrial noise sources.

- (2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

None associated with the proposal.

- (3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Local and state regulations govern the levels of allowable environmental noise and are enforced by Sumas. Noise in rural areas is expected to remain at current low levels as a result of concentrating future development within the urban growth area.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

Land within the City limits is primarily used for residential, commercial and industrial purposes, with some agricultural areas. Land in Sumas' urban growth area is primarily agricultural, including crop production, dairy farms, and pasture lands.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Yes. Land in and around Sumas has historically been used for pasture and corn, and more recently has been used for berries.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

Numerous residential, commercial and industrial structures exist within the City and urban growth area.

- d. Will any structures be demolished?

Not as a direct result of this proposal.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

A combination of residential, commercial and industrial, with some public and agricultural zoning.

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Similar to zoning.

- g. If applicable, what is the current Shoreline Master Program designation of the site?

Within the city's SMP, Johnson Creek and the Sumas River are designated a mix of urban conservancy and shoreline residential along their various reaches. Outside city limits, both streams are designated

rural in Whatcom County's SMP. The SMP also designates wetlands within the city as either urban or conservancy.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

Much of Sumas and the surrounding growth area is within the 100-year flood plain. There are also scattered wetlands in the city and growth area, as mentioned above.

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

Not applicable.

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

None as a direct result of the proposal.

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any?

None deemed necessary.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

Not applicable.

9. Housing

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

None as a direct result of the proposal.

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

None as a direct result of the proposal.

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

None.

10. Aesthetics

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

Not applicable – Non-project proposal.

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

The appearance of Sumas will be altered as growth occurs. Vacant land will be developed to include new residential structures.

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

Non-project proposal. Multifamily landscaping regulations will enhance aesthetics by increasing the retention and planting of vegetation.

11. Light and Glare

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

None directly as a result of this proposal. The typical light sources found in an urban area (street lights, flood lights, vehicle lights, interior lighting) will grow as a result of development that occurs.

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

Not applicable

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

None

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

None

12. Recreation

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

Three city park facilities, one school playground and field, sidewalks and trails. Local streams.

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

No displacement is planned.

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

The Sumas comprehensive plan includes a parks and recreation section that contemplates new facilities and programs, including trails, a summer recreation program, a ballfield complex, and a fishing pond.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

Old customs building.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

Native-American village site at east end of town, adjacent to Sumas River. This area is not within the area affected by the proposed amendments

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

None.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on the site plans, if any.

Cherry Street and Garfield Street serve the downtown commercial area. Sumas and its urban growth area are served by SR 9 and SR 547. The area is also served by some county collectors, including Halverstick Road and Rock Road. Other main routes into town include Hovel Road.

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transportation stop?

The area is served by a fixed-route service operated by the Whatcom Transit Authority. The closest transit stop is within the area affected by the proposal.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

Not applicable.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

None as a direct result of the proposal. Many new streets and improvements to existing streets are anticipated within the city and UGA in order to accommodate expected development. The streets will mostly be local public streets.

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

Sumas is a major border crossing location, with Burlington Northern rail lines traversing town. Sumas is also close to the Abbotsford, B.C., airport, which operates a growing number of flights.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

None as a direct result of the proposal.

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

None.

15. Public Services

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

Not as a direct result of the proposal. As population and industry increase, the total need for public services is expected to increase.

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

None.

16. Utilities

- a. Circle or check utilities currently available at the site:

x electricity x natural gas x water
X refuse service x telephone X sanitary sewer
X septic system

- b. 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.

Sumas will provide water, sewer, electric, storm sewer, and cable television service within city limits. Cascade Natural Gas will provide natural gas service. Frontier will provide phone service.

Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions

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 proposal is not expected to contribute to any such impacts.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

None deemed necessary.

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

The proposal is not expected to affect plants, animals or marine life.

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

None deemed necessary.

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

The proposal is not expected to deplete energy or natural resources. Development consistent with City development regulations will help conserve natural resources and natural resource industries.

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

None deemed necessary.

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, flood plains, or prime farmlands?

The proposal is not expected to affect these areas.

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 proposal is not expected to affect these types of areas.

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

None deemed necessary

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

The proposal is not expected to affect these facilities or services.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands are:

None deemed necessary.

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

No conflicts have been identified.

SIGNATURE

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 decisions.

Date Submitted: January 4, 2019

Signature: _____


Rollin H. Harper, City Planner