



DATE: Sept. 21, 2020

TO: Recipients of the State Environmental Policy Act Determination of Nonsignificance (SEPA DNS) for West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project

FROM: Fred Podesta, SEPA official

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has determined that the final SEPA environmental checklist dated August 2020, meets our environmental review needs for the current proposal to make improvements to the south field at West Seattle High School under Building Excellence V (BEX V) capital levy funding. Project construction is scheduled to be completed by February 2021.

After conducting an independent review, SPS has determined that the project does not have significant adverse impacts on the environment as documented in the checklist and the enclosed DNS.

The final SEPA checklist discusses the potential environmental impacts that could result from the project. A draft of the checklist was released for public comment from June 11, 2020 to July 13, 2020. Comments received informed revisions to the final SEPA checklist on which the DNS is based. The responses to written comments received are summarized in the SEPA Public Comments and Seattle Public Schools Responses, included as Attachment A to the SEPA checklist.

Thank you for your participation in the SPS SEPA process. Your involvement has helped to make the West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement proposal a much better project.

Fred Podesta, Chief Operations Officer

P.O. Box 34165, MS 22-183, Seattle WA 98124 * 206-252-0102

**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)
WEST SEATTLE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL**

Date of issuance: Sept. 28, 2020
Lead agency: Seattle Public Schools
Location of proposal: West Seattle High School, 3000 California Ave. SW, Seattle, WA
(Section 11, Township 24, Range 03 E, tax parcel no. 8702100050)

Description of proposal – Seattle Public Schools (SPS) is proposing to add a 3,900 square feet covered batting cage and convert the existing natural grass athletic field to a new synthetic turf field to the existing south field area at West Seattle High School. The field improvements would be used by high school sports teams as well as physical education students. The new synthetic turf field will be constructed with natural cork and sand infill and involve excavation to one foot and installation of a drainage system. A prefabricated batting cage with a roof would be installed with three batting stations on the west side of the field. The batting cage structure would be approximately 78 feet long by 50 feet wide by 17 feet tall. The batting cage would be for school use only and would be locked at 9 p.m. during the school year. Noise barrier blankets would be installed on the south and east outer chain-link walls of the batting cage and extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides. The new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' activities nor by the general public. It would have lighting inside the batting cage during use and 24-hour exterior security lighting. The field would not be lighted. There would be no changes to parking and access. The athletic field improvements are funded by the BEX V Capital Levy.

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it will not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request at the following location: John Stanford Center, 2445 3rd Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98124-1165 (Attn: Conrad Plyler, Phone: 206-252-0662) and online at: <http://www.seattleschools.org/sepa>

This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal prior to Oct. 13, 2020 (at least 15 days from the issuance date listed above). This DNS may be appealed by written notice setting forth specific factual objections received no later than Oct. 13, 2020 (at least 15 days), sent to:

Superintendent
Seattle Public Schools
P.O. Box 34165, MS 32-151
Seattle, WA 98124-1165

Name of agency making threshold determination: Seattle Public Schools
Responsible Official: Fred Podesta, Chief Operations Officer, Seattle Public Schools
Phone: 206-252-0102
Address: MS 22-183, P.O. Box 34165, Seattle, WA 98124-1165

Date: 9/28/2020 **Signature:** Fred Podesta



West Seattle High School, Athletic Field Improvement Project

Final SEPA Checklist and Determination of Non-Significance

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For questions and more information about this document, please contact the following:

Jeanette Imanishi
Senior Project Manager
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While the West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project Final State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Checklist and Determination of Non-Significance are accessible and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, the attached figures and

appendices that support the checklist contain complex material that are not accessible. The following is a description of what is contained in the figures and appendices:

- **Figure 1, West Seattle High School Vicinity, Seattle, Washington**

Figure 1 is an aerial photograph of the West Seattle High School site and its surrounding neighborhood to within an approximately three-block radius. The athletic field for which the improvements are proposed is outlined in red.

- **Figure 2, Site Plan – West Seattle High School, Seattle, Washington**

Figure 2 is a close-up aerial view of the athletic field showing where the proposed improvements will be installed. This shows the locations of the batting cages and the new synthetic turf field.

- **Appendix A: Traffic Impact Analysis**

Appendix A consists of a report titled, “West Seattle High School – Batting Cage & Exercise Area – SEPA Checklist – Transportation Element” prepared by Heffron Transportation, Inc. dated May 4, 2020. The report provides a project description; background conditions related to the transportation network, traffic volumes, level of services, parking, traffic safety, transit facilities and non-motorized facilities. The report addresses impacts of the proposed project on the same and concludes with a summary and recommendations. Attached to the end of the report is Figure 1, which shows the Proposed Site Plan.

- **Appendix B: Environmental Noise Assessment**

Appendix B consists of a report titled, “West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project – Environmental Noise Assessment” prepared by ESA, dated Sept. 10, 2020. The report describes the existing noise environment surrounding the project site, assesses the noise anticipated from the use of the improved field and batting cage and details the project elements proposed by Seattle Public Schools to ensure that adverse noise impacts would not occur as a result of the project.

This concludes the final SEPA checklist.

**West Seattle High School
Athletic Field
Improvement Project
FINAL SEPA Checklist**

September 2020

PREPARED FOR:

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2445 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH
SEATTLE, WA 98134

PREPARED BY:

ESA
5309 SHILSHOLE AVENUE NW, STE. 200
SEATTLE, WA 98107

PREFACE

The purpose of this Final Environmental Checklist is to identify and evaluate probable environmental impacts that could result for the *West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project* and to identify measures to mitigate those impacts. The *West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project* would add a batting cage and make improvements to an existing field area south of the school. The field improvements would be used by high school sports teams as well as PE students. The project would install a pre-fabricated batting cage with roof and 3 batting stations as well as convert the existing natural grass field to a synthetic turf field constructed with natural cork and sand infill.

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (Chapter 43.21C of the Revised Code of Washington) requires that all governmental agencies consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before the proposal is decided upon. A Draft SEPA Environmental Checklist was prepared on June 11, 2020 and included a public comment period from June 11-July 13, 2020. This Final SEPA Environmental Checklist has been prepared in compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act; the SEPA Rules, effective April 4, 1984, as amended (Chapter 197-11 of the Washington Administrative Code); Seattle Public Schools SEPA Policy No. 6890; and the Seattle City Code (25.05), which implements SEPA.

This document is intended to serve as SEPA review for the site preparation and installation of the batting cage and turf field for the *West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project*. Analysis associated with the proposed project contained in this Environmental Checklist is based upon the design plans for the project, which are on file with Seattle Public Schools. The design plans accurately represent the height, location, and configuration of the batting cage and turf field and are considered adequate for analysis and disclosure of environmental impacts.

This Environmental Checklist is organized into three major sections. *Section A* of the Checklist (starting on page 1) provides background information concerning the *Proposed Action* (e.g., purpose, proponent/contact person, project description, project location, etc.). *Section B* (beginning on page 3) contains the analysis of environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project, based upon review of major environmental parameters. This section also identifies possible mitigation measures. *Section C* (page 24) contains the signature of the proponent, confirming the completeness of this checklist.

Attached to this Environmental Checklist is the Draft SEPA Checklist Comments and Responses. Appendices to this Environmental Checklist include: *Transportation Technical Memorandum* (Heffron Transportation, Inc., May 4, 2020) and *West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project - Environmental Noise Assessment* (ESA, September 10, 2020). Copies of these documents are available from Seattle Public Schools upon request at: SEPAComments@seattleschools.org or calling 206-252-0990.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of the proposed project, if applicable:

West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvements Project

2. Name of Applicant:

Seattle Public Schools (SPS)

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

Conrad Plyler
Seattle Public Schools
2445 3rd Ave S
Seattle, WA 98134
206-252-0662

4. Date checklist prepared:

September 2020

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Seattle Public Schools (SPS)

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

Construction is scheduled to be complete by February 2021.

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

There are no future additions, expansions or further activities related to or connected to this proposal.

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

Building Excellence Phase V Program Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, ESA, June 2018

West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvements Project, Cultural Resources Assessment, Seattle, King County, WA, ESA, January 2020

West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvements Project – Environmental Noise Assessment, ESA, September 10, 2020

Transportation Element Technical Memorandum: West Seattle High School – Batting Cage & Exercise Area, Heffron, May 4, 2020

Geotechnical Engineering Investigation Proposed Athletic Field Upgrades West Seattle High School, Krazan & Associates, Inc., December 12, 2019

Addendum Letter – Stormwater Infiltration Feasibility West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvements, Krazan & Associates, Inc., January 2, 2020

West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvements Drainage Report, LPD Engineering, PLLC, June 3, 2020

- 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.**

There are no other applications known to be pending for the subject property.

- 10. List any governmental approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known:**

Permits and approvals that will be needed for the project include:

- Grading
- Building/Mechanical
- Stormwater Control

- 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.**

SPS is proposing to add a batting cage and conduct other field improvements at West Seattle High School. The proposal includes improvements to the existing south field area located at the northwest corner of the SW Hanford Street / 42nd Avenue SW intersection, south of the school. The field improvements would be used by high school sports teams as well as PE students. The project would convert the existing natural grass athletic field to a new synthetic turf field constructed with natural cork and sand infill. This would involve excavation to 1-foot and installation of a drainage system.

A pre-fabricated batting cage with roof would be installed with 3 batting stations on the west side of the field. The batting cage structure would be approximately 3,900 square feet, consisting of roughly 78 feet long by 50 feet wide by 17 feet tall. The batting cage would be for school use only and would be locked at 9 p.m. during the school year. Noise barrier blankets would be installed on the south and east outer chain-link walls of the batting cage. Noise barrier blankets would be sourced by SPS from a manufacturer that specifies sound reduction characteristics and appropriate application for the batting cage use. The blankets would be integrated with the batting cage facility design to extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides. The new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' activities nor by the general public. It would have lighting inside the batting cage during use and 24-hour exterior security lighting. The field would not be lighted. There would be no changes to parking and access.

The athletic field improvements are funded by the BEX V Capital Levy.

- 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 project site is located at 3000 California Ave SW, in Seattle, Washington, 98116 (Section 11, Township 24 North, Range 3 East) as shown on Figure 1. The project site is located immediately south of Hiawatha Playfield and Community Center in the West Seattle neighborhood. The site is located on King County Parcel 8702100050. The legal description of the site is "TULLS 2ND ADD TO W S "PARCEL A" SEATTLE LOT BOUNDARY ADJUST NO 2401073 REC NO 20050316 900014 BEING A POR OF SW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 STR 11-24-03."

Figure 1 shows the project area and vicinity. Figure 2 shows the site plan.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

A geotechnical investigation was performed at the project site by Krazan & Associates in October 2019 (Krazan & Associates, 2019). The work included reviewing existing geologic literature for the property, conducting 2 soil borings on the project site, and performing geologic studies to assess subsurface sediments and shallow groundwater on the project site. Information from this report is summarized in this section and incorporated throughout the SEPA Checklist, as appropriate.

a. General description of the site (underline):

Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

The site is characterized by generally very gentle sloping to flat topography and was graded to its current configuration during previous site development. The topography within the vicinity of the proposed addition is generally flat to very gently sloping down to the west and east.

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

The site is flat and no slopes on the site meet applicable definitions as Steep Slope areas according to Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 25.09.020.

- 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.**

Soil explorations generally encountered native soils primarily consisting of very dense silty sand with gravel to a depth of about 5.0 feet, underlain by medium dense to dense sand to the depths explored. The soil in the site vicinity consists of Urban Land – Alderwood complex soils (0 to 5 percent slopes) (Krazan & Associates, 2020).

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

There are no potential slides, known slides, or liquefaction areas mapped by the City of Seattle on or near the project site (City of Seattle, 2019).

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

Approximately 700 cubic yards would be excavated. Approximately 700 cubic yards of clean fill would be required and would be obtained from a source approved by the City of Seattle.

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

Construction activities could cause temporary erosion on the site. Erosion potential would be reduced through an erosion control plan consistent with City of Seattle standards (SMC 22.800) and implementation of best management practices (BMPs). BMPs could include installation of a rock construction entrance, catch basin filters, interceptor swales, hay bales, sediment traps, and other appropriate cover measures.

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

The school parcel is approximately 72% impervious surface. The athletic field project area is currently a natural grass field. The proposed project would cover the project area with synthetic turf constructed with natural cork and sand infill and permeable aggregate under the field. Impervious pavement would be used in the batting cage. After completion of the project, impervious surface coverage of the school parcel would be approximately 77%. Per the City's 2016 Stormwater Manual, under-drained natural or synthetic fields are considered to be pollution-generating hard surfaces and are modeled as 100% impervious.

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

The project will require enhanced water quality treatment in accordance with Seattle Municipal Code. Temporary erosion and sedimentation control BMPs and construction water quality treatment measures would be installed to minimize erosion and to treat stormwater runoff during construction. BMPs specific to the site and project would be specified by SPS in the construction contract documents that the construction contractor would be required to implement.

2. Air

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.

During construction, there would be a small increase in exhaust emissions from construction vehicles and equipment and a temporary increase in fugitive dust due to earthwork for the project. Construction employee and equipment traffic to and from the site would also generate minor increases in exhaust emissions.

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

There are no off-site sources of emissions or odors that would affect the proposed project.

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

To reduce fugitive dust emissions from construction vehicles leaving the site, the contractor may be required to establish dust control measures as appropriate.

3. Water

a. Surface Water:

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.

There are no surface water bodies on or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The National Wetland Inventory (USFWS, 2019) shows a stream starting approximately 1,000 feet northeast of the new batting cage and field. City of Seattle (2019) does not show a stream in this location but has a wetland mapped further to the north. Several blocks of developed parcels are located between West Seattle High School and the mapped

stream. The proposed project would have no impact on this stream or wetland.

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.**

The project would not require any work over, in, or adjacent to any surface water bodies.

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.**

The proposed project would not require any work in or near surface water, and it would not place any amount of fill or dredge material in surface waters or associated wetlands.

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

The proposed project would not require any surface water withdrawals or diversions.

5. **Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

The proposal is not located within a 100-year floodplain.

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.**

The project would not involve the discharge of waste materials to any surface waters. All waste materials from the project, including grading spoils and demolition debris, would be transported off-site to appropriate disposal facilities.

b. Ground Water:

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.**

No groundwater would be withdrawn as part of the project and no water would be discharged to groundwater. The geotechnical subsurface exploration did not encounter groundwater. However,

perched groundwater could develop at the project site. Perched groundwater occurs when surface water infiltrates through less dense, more permeable soils and accumulates on top of a relatively low permeability soil layer. Perched water tends to vary spatially and is usually dependent upon the amount of rainfall (Krazan & Associates, 2019).

Excavation is anticipated to be approximately 1-foot and thus groundwater would not likely be encountered during construction.

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.**

No waste material would be discharged into the ground. The project would not utilize septic tanks.

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.**

The new athletic field would generate additional stormwater due to its less-pervious nature. Stormwater generated from the field will be routed into an on-site water quality treatment system before entering the City's existing storm drainage system. The project will comply with all City and state code requirements for stormwater discharge, see section 3.d.

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

It is unlikely that sediment generated during field construction could leave the site with the implementation of construction best management practices. The proposed synthetic turf field will be constructed with natural cork and sand infill. Once the field and batting cage are constructed, the surrounding area would be restored to existing conditions.

Measures to control contamination entering the stormwater system are discussed below in Section 3.d.

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

The project would not alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site.

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

The project is required to implement on-site Stormwater Management to the extent feasible as it includes more than 1,500 square feet (SF) of new plus replaced hard surface. Additionally, the project will require enhanced water quality treatment. The project will comply with Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) and City of Seattle stormwater discharge requirements.

4. Plants

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

Vegetation on the site is limited to grass and landscaping trees associated with the school and its field.

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

No trees or shrubs would be removed or impacted during construction. Existing lawn grass would be replaced with synthetic turf with cork and sand infill.

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

No threatened or endangered plant species or critical habitat are known to be on or near the site (WDFW, 2019; WDNR, 2019).

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

Existing trees nearby would be protected if needed using tree protection measures including, but not limited to, use of tree protection fences. There would be no landscaping.

- e. **List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.**

Tansy Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*) is mapped on the school property (King County, 2019). Tansy Ragwort is a regulated Class B noxious weed. Appropriate precautions will be taken to avoid the spread of this plant.

5. Animals

- 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:**

Animals observed on the site are restricted to typical urban animals and birds.

Fish: not applicable

Amphibians: none known

Reptiles: none known

Birds: species adapted to urban areas such as gulls, American crow, rock pigeon, chickadee, robin, Steller's jay.

Mammals: species adapted to urban areas such as Norway rat, raccoon, opossum

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

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database lists all known occurrences of threatened or endangered species and critical habitat. The database shows there are no threatened or endangered species or critical habitat in the project area (WDFW, 2019).

A biodiversity area and corridor is mapped approximately 500 feet to the north east of the school site, and approximately 1,000 feet from the athletic field.

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

The project site is located within the Pacific Flyway, which is a flight corridor for migrating waterfowl and other avian fauna. The Pacific Flyway extends from Alaska south to Mexico and South America. No portion of the proposed project would interfere with or alter the Pacific Flyway.

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

The proposed project is not expected to result in any impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitat. The athletic field area does not provide quality habitat for wildlife: shrub and vegetated areas of the site are isolated habitat patches within a larger matrix of residential buildings, pavement, and cleared areas at the existing school and surrounding residential neighborhoods. These small vegetated areas do not provide a contiguous connection to other habitat areas and do not function as a wildlife corridor. Wildlife using the site and surrounding areas are accustomed to ambient urban lighting from the surrounding

residences, street lights, and the existing school. Wildlife using the site and surrounding area are also accustomed to current noise levels from surrounding residence and the existing school, making it unlikely that noise from the proposed batting cage and field would present an issue. Wildlife could temporarily avoid the area while the field and batting cage are in use.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

Invasive animal species likely to be in the area include rats and opossums, typical of an urban area.

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.

Electricity would be required to operate the new lighting for the batting cage.

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

The new batting cage would not block the use of solar energy by adjacent properties. No other aspect of the project would interfere with solar energy use by others.

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:

Energy conservation features would include those required to meet or exceed the requirements of the Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol, which is equivalent to LEED Silver or better, and the Seattle Energy Code. Energy needs of the project are limited to lighting and light emitting diode (LED) lighting and plug load controls would be used.

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.

Accidental spills of hazardous materials from equipment and vehicles could occur during construction. However, a spill prevention and control plan would be developed to prevent the accidental release of contaminants into the environment.

1. Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

According to Ecology's Facility/Site(s) database, no known contaminated sites are located on the West Seattle High School site. The school

facility is mapped as a Hazardous Waste Generator (Ecology, 2019). According to Ecology's Cleanup Site Search there is contamination history at the site (Cleanup Site ID: 633, Facility Site ID 19294194). Since July 2001 it has had a status of No Further Action (Ecology, 2020a). The school is also within an area that may have been contaminated with heavy metals due to the air emissions origination from the Tacoma Asarco smelter. The area has a predicted arsenic concentration of 20 parts per million (ppm) to 40 ppm (Ecology, 2020b). In these areas Ecology recommends soil samples be analyzed for arsenic and lead following the Tacoma Smelter Plume Model Remedies Guidance (Ecology, 2019b). SPS collected soil samples and tested for arsenic and lead (Krazan & Associates, August, 2020). Samples did not exceed the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) action levels for unrestricted use sites. A copy of the results will be submitted to Ecology for inclusion in their database.

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.

No hazardous chemicals or conditions are expected to affect the project development and design because changes would only be made to an exterior athletic field and no underground utilities are expected to be encountered. The contractor would coordinate with utility purveyors to locate all existing utilities prior to proceeding with construction activity.

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.

Chemicals stored and used during construction would be limited to gasoline and other petroleum-based products required for maintenance and operation of construction equipment and vehicles.

4. Describe special emergency services that might be required.

No special emergency services would be required.

5. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Site-specific pollution prevention plans and spill prevention and control plans would be developed to prevent or minimize impacts from hazardous materials.

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

There are no existing sources of noise in the area that would adversely affect the proposal. West Seattle High School is located along California Ave SW which is an arterial street in the neighborhood, that generates traffic noise.

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.

Vehicle and equipment operation during construction could cause noise impacts to nearby residents. Construction hours and noise levels would comply with the City of Seattle noise standards.

Maximum permissible sound levels in residential communities are not to exceed 55 A-weighted decibels (dB(A)s) as measured as an equivalent continuous sound level (Leq) within any 1-hour period. However, construction activities are permitted to exceed the established maximum level by 25 dB(A) by the Seattle Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 25.08.425). Maximum permissible sound levels established in SMC 25.08.425 may be exceeded by construction activities between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekends.

When conducting a noise analysis, one must first look at the existing sources of noise. The largest existing source of noise is the traffic along the arterial SW Hanford Street directly south of the project site. Other noise sources include other nearby roadways, overhead air traffic, other activities associated with the high school, and typical domestic and commercial noise common to urban environments.

The project will install a batting cage with three batter boxes in a small field next to the school. The interior of the batting cage would be lit and potentially used by students as late as 9:00 p.m. during the school year. Use of the batting cage would be limited to student use, thus summer use would be limited. Due to the unique nature of the proposed batting cage facility, including provision of three batter's boxes within the batting cage so that potentially three individuals could be practicing simultaneously, and the potential for reflection of noise from the high school building directly to the north, SPS proposes as part of the project inclusion of noise barrier blankets for the south and east fencing surrounding the batting cage. The blankets would be integrated with batting cage facility design to extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides

(refer to Appendix B, Environmental Noise Assessment, for further discussion).

The addition of the batting cage facility and the expanded duration of use during the school year would cause an increase in sound from human voices and the crack of bats in the immediate vicinity. Increases in noise would be variable and short-term.

The changes to the athletic field and addition of a batting cage is anticipated to result in a change in the character of noise over existing conditions. SPS was unable to obtain sound level measurements from batting cages as they are currently not open due to the COVID pandemic. However, it is possible to analyze the potential for noise by extracting information from sound level measurements from an outdoor batting practice. While the nature of noise from a batting cage is inherently different from an outdoor batting practice, the information gleaned from these measurements is instructive. Sound level measurements in August 2019 at a separate SPS athletic field (Whitman Middle School baseball field in the Crown Hill neighborhood) recorded the noise associated with hand-pitched batting practice, with individual cracks of the bat measured at approximately 46 dB(A) at 370 feet from the batter. This would suggest noise associated with individual cracks of the bat of approximately 56 dB(A) with a setback of 115 feet (the approximate distance from the proposed batting cage batter's boxes to the nearest residential property line, to the south). If there are several batters practicing at the same time, there is a potential that the noise output would increase. While individual noise events from batting practice could exceed the 55 dB(A) level established by Seattle noise code, discrete exceedances of this noise level are allowed by SMC 25.08.410(B). Only when the equivalent continuous sound level (Leq) exceeds the limit within any one-hour period would an exceedance of the Seattle noise code occur.

Numerous factors, including the duration and intensity of batting practice within any given hour, would influence the level of noise from use of the batting cage that is experienced by surrounding properties. Because the intensity and duration of the batting practices is currently unknown and would likely vary from day to day and season to season, it is not clear whether the noise from the batting cages would cause an exceedance of the noise code, even if noise barrier blankets were not included. SPS proposes as part of the project inclusion of noise barrier blankets for the south and east fencing surrounding the batting cage. These noise barrier blankets are standard for many batting cages and are often used to attenuate noise in this situation. Proposed noise barrier blankets, as described in detail in response b.3. below, will ensure that noise from use of the batting cage will remain below the 55 dB(A) 1-hour Leq limit established by SMC 25.08 when measured at the

property line of the nearest residences, even during periods of higher intensity use during the high school baseball season.

It should be noted that all noise resulting from the project improvements would be contributing to existing environmental noise within an urban environment, such as traffic which would continue to be a large contributing factor of noise. In an urban environment, changes in environmental noise resulting from the project may be less perceptible, especially with incorporation of proposed noise barrier blankets. Based on typical noise levels from arterial streets like SW Hanford Street, it is anticipated that vehicular traffic noise would continue to be the dominant noise source for residences surrounding the project site.

3. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Construction activities would be restricted to hours and levels designated by SMC 25.08.425. If construction activities exceed permitted noise levels, SPS would instruct the contractor to implement measures to reduce noise impacts to comply with the Noise Control Ordinance, which could include additional muffling of equipment. While construction noise is permitted during evenings and weekends, construction would generally occur between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays.

In response to neighbor concerns, the batting cage will not be used any later than 9:00 p.m. As part of the project, SPS proposes installation of noise barrier blankets on the south and east outer chain link walls of the batting cage. Noise barrier blankets would consist of exterior-appropriate materials, with vinyl and/or polyester exterior layers around interior fiberglass batting. Noise barrier blankets would be sourced by SPS from a manufacturer that specifies sound reduction characteristics and appropriate application for the batting cage use. The blankets would be integrated with batting cage facility design to extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides. Surrounding the south and eastern sides of the batting cage with noise barrier blankets will provide assurance that all noise associated with batting practice activities would occur consistent with SMC 25.08 limits. Refer to Appendix B for further discussion.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

- 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.**

The West Seattle High School building was opened in 1917. The site currently holds the original two-story school building which was renovated and expanded in 2002 to include gymnasium, theater and commons spaces. Outside features include a grass field, courtyard, and a parking lot.

The school is located in a single-family residential neighborhood with low-rise housing to the south and east of the school. California Ave SW runs north-south on the west side of the school. The California Ave corridor is zoned Mixed-Use zone where both residential and commercial development are allowed. Properties immediately to the west of the school are commercial businesses. Additionally, south of the school, are multifamily residential buildings and a church. Hiawatha Playfield is located to the north of the school.

The project would not affect current land uses. The site has been used as a school and would continue to be used as a school.

- 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?**

The site is not currently and has not been previously used for working farmlands or working forest lands. No agricultural or forest land would be converted to other uses.

- 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:**

No working farm or forest lands are located near the proposed project, so the project would not affect or be affected by farm or forest land operations.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.**

Structures on the site include the original two-story school building which was renovated and expanded in 2002 to include a gymnasium, theater and commons spaces. Outside features include a grass field, courtyard, and a parking lot.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?**

No structures would be demolished as a result of this project.

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

The current zoning classification of the school site is Single Family Residential, 5,000 square-foot lots (SF 5000) (City of Seattle, 2019). Public schools are permitted uses in this zone.

The Seattle Municipal Code contains development standards for public schools in residential zones in SMC 23.51B.002.

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

The current comprehensive plan designation for the site is Single Family Residential (City of Seattle, 2016).

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The project site is not within a shoreline jurisdiction; therefore, there is no applicable shoreline master plan designation.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Review of the City of Seattle DCI GIS mapping database for environmental critical areas indicated that there are no critical areas on the site (City of Seattle, 2019).

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

No people would reside in the completed project. Enrollment for the 2019-20 school year is reported at 1,119 students (SPS, 2019). There would be no change to the number of students or staff as a result of the project.

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

The completed project would not displace any people.

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

No displacement would occur; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

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

The project is consistent with existing land use regulations and plans. SPS would comply with the requirements of the Master Use Permit (MUP).

- m. **Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:**

The project is not located near any agricultural or forest lands, so no measures to ensure compatibility are required.

9. Housing

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

No housing units would be provided as part of the project.

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

No housing units would be eliminated.

- c. **Describe proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any.**

The project would not cause housing impacts; therefore, mitigation measures to control housing impacts would not be required.

10. Aesthetics

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

The highest point of the existing school building is 54 feet. A pre-fabricated batting cage structure with roof would be approximately 3,900 square feet, consisting of roughly 78 feet long by 50 feet wide by 17 feet tall. The highest point of the new batting cage would be 17 feet at the roof peak.

The existing school building includes brick masonry and concrete. The exterior of the batting cage would be black vinyl coated chain link fence with black posts. Noise barrier blankets consisting of vinyl and/or polyester exterior layers will be installed on the south and east outer chain link walls of the cage.

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

The new batting cage, safety lighting and synthetic turf field would be visible from SW Hanford Street. Views from private residences are not protected under the City of Seattle's Public View Protection policy (SMC 25.05.675.P). Residences to the south and east of the project would have views changed from seeing a field to seeing a turf field, security lighting and, batting cage. The batting cage would not be taller than the existing school building directly to the north of the batting cage. The batting cage would comply with setback regulations for

construction in residential zones; the new batting cage are set back a minimum of 10 feet from the property line.

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

The project would not cause aesthetic impacts; therefore, mitigation measures to control aesthetic impacts would not be required. The new batting cage would comply with zoning requirements for structures in residential zones.

11. Light and Glare

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

Lighting on the site would consist of interior lighting for the batting cage and exterior building perimeter\area lighting. The batting cage may be used until 9:00 p.m. and there would be an increase in light when in use during after school hours. However, the batting cage would predominately be used during daylight hours and during daylight would not be visible from surrounding properties.

The interior batting cage lighting will be designed to minimize off-site glare and minimize views of the light fixtures from offsite locations. The lighting will be mounted to the underside of the roof structure and be directed down to light the batting area. The lighting will not produce spill light off site, meeting current City of Seattle guidelines. Small amounts of reflected glare from the synthetic turf surface and interior batting cage surfaces would be visible off site depending on views into the site.

There would be minor exterior site lighting provided for safe access to the batting cage. Lighting would consist of a limited quantity of low wattage full cutoff light fixtures mounted on the exterior of the batting cage. The lights would be shielded, directed down and not offsite. The exterior lighting would be similar to existing lighting on the school site and designed to meet City of Seattle energy codes. All lighting will be designed following recommended practices to minimize negative lighting impacts into the adjacent community.

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

Exterior batting cage and property lighting from the completed project would not be a safety hazard and would not interfere with views.

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

No off-site sources of light or glare would affect this proposal.

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

Both interior lighting would be connected to and scheduled by a building automation lighting control system. Interior batting cage lighting will not be turned on when not in use. Exterior lighting will be designed to provide minimal lighting for safety.

12. Recreation

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

Recreational opportunities on the project site currently include a grass field. The nearest City of Seattle park, Hiawatha Playfield is located immediately to the north of the school. Hiawatha Playfield is a green space with a community center, playground, wading pool, lighted fields including: ballfield, football field, soccer field, and tennis courts.

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

The existing grass playfield on the south side of the school would be converted to synthetic turf with batting cage. Temporary displacement of field users will occur during field replacement.

The amount of open space on the site would be slightly reduced, but the improvements to recreational facilities would provide more usable, recreation facilities.

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

There would be no net loss of recreation, the existing playfield would be converted to a synthetic turf area with batting cage.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

A Cultural Resources Short Report for the West Seattle site was developed by ESA (ESA, 2020). Cultural resources reports are exempt from public disclosure under RCW 42.56.300, but a redacted version can be acquired from the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Information from the review is summarized in this section.

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 located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.

West Seattle High School opened in 1917 and is the only Romanesque style high school in the District. It is designated a City of Seattle Landmark. The school has

not been recorded on a historic property inventory form, nor has it been evaluated for its potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Additions were designed in 1924, 1954, 1959, and 2002. There are no existing buildings in the batting cage/field area (ESA, 2020).

- 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.**

The project is located within the traditional territory of the Southern Coast Salish people, whose members include but are not limited to the Duwamish and Suquamish people. Oral traditions support the presence of Southern Coast Salish people in this portion of Puget Sound since time immemorial. One published Indigenous place name was identified near the study area: dəxʷqutəb, or “place of disease” for a depression “a mile or more inland from Duwamish Head” on the top of the ridge. West Seattle High School is approximately 1.30 miles inland from Duwamish Head.

No previously recorded archaeological sites, cemeteries, or traditional cultural properties are located within the study area. ESA considers the project area to be low risk for containing subsurface precontact-era archaeological resources due to past development of the site (ESA, 2020).

- 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.**

ESA conducted a literature review and reviewed the geotechnical report. The literature review study area examined for this review included the parcel containing the school and those immediately adjacent. Information reviewed included any previous archaeological survey reports, ethnographic studies, historic maps, government landowner records, aerial photographs, regional histories, geologic maps, soils surveys, and environmental reports. These records were reviewed in order to determine the presence of any potentially significant cultural resources, including Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs), within the project area. Relevant documents were examined at Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), the University of Washington Libraries, online, and within ESA’s research library (ESA, 2020).

- 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.**

No impacts to historic or cultural resources are anticipated. SPS developed an inadvertent discovery plan (IDP). The IDP sets forth procedures and protocols to

follow in the event of an archaeological resources discovery, including discovery of human remains. The IDP stipulates pre-construction briefings and on-call response if required. SPS would provide tribal representatives, including those of the Duwamish Tribe, with one-week advance notification of the project schedule and invite them to observe construction. Based on the results of the cultural resources technical report, no on-site archaeological monitoring is recommended during project construction.

14. Transportation

A *Transportation Technical Memorandum* for the project was developed by Heffron Transportation, Inc. (Heffron, 2019; Appendix A). Information from the technical report is summarized in this section.

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.

West Seattle High School is located at 3000 California Avenue SW in the West Seattle neighborhood. The school site is located on a parcel on the south half of the block bounded by California Avenue SW to the west, SW Hanford Street to the south, Walnut Avenue SW to the east, and SW Lander Street to the north. The school building is located on the eastern portion of the parcel. On the western portion of the parcel, there is a surface parking lot with 191 striped spaces accessed from two one-way driveways (enter at the south and exit at the north) on California Avenue SW. The north half of the block is occupied by the Hiawatha Playfield and Community Center, which is owned and operated by the City of Seattle Parks and Recreation (Seattle Parks) department.

Existing site access is from California Ave SW; There would be no changes to site access.

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?

King County Metro Transit (Metro) provides bus service in the site vicinity. The closest bus stops are located about along California Avenue SW. The northbound stop is located just north of the intersection with SW Hanford Street and the southbound stop is located just north of the intersection with SW Stevens St. The site is served by routes 50 and 128.

c. How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?

The proposed project would not add or eliminate parking spaces.

- 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).**

The proposal would not require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities.

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

The project would not use or occur in the immediate vicinity of water, rail, or air transportation.

- 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 non-passenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?**

The proposed new facilities would be used only by students and staff already on site at West Seattle High School. The batting cage facility could result in some students or staff staying at the site longer or later in the day. However, the proposed project is not expected to generate any new or additional trips to and from the site nor any new parking demand. Since the new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' scheduled activities nor by the general public, no new non-scholastic traffic or parking demand is expected to be generated by the new facilities. No adverse traffic or parking impacts are expected as a result of the project. (Heffron Transportation, Inc., 2019).

The excavation and grading effort are estimated to consist of about 1,400 cy of haul material. Assuming an average of 20-cubic yards per truck (truck/trailer combination), this would relate to about 70 truckloads. The transport of material is expected to occur between November 2020 and February 2021; the earthwork elements could be completed in about a week. This could result in up to 14 truckloads on each day and 1 to 2 truckloads per hour over an eight-hour day (or 2 to 4 truck trips—reflecting one truck trip in and one out for each load).

The project would also generate some limited employee and equipment trips to and from the site. It is anticipated that construction workers would arrive at the construction site before the AM peak traffic period on local area streets and depart the site prior to the PM peak period; construction work shifts are usually from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with workers arriving between 6:30 and 6:45 a.m. The number of workers at the project site at any one time would vary depending upon the element being implemented.

- 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.**

There are no agricultural or forest product uses in the immediate site vicinity and the project would not interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural or forest products.

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

SPS would require the selected contractor to follow best management practices and address traffic and pedestrian control during construction, as needed.

15. Public Services

- 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.**

The proposed project would not increase the number of students using the site and thus there would be no increased need for public services.

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

An increased need for public services is not anticipated; therefore, mitigation to reduce impacts to public services is not proposed.

16. Utilities

- a. Underline utilities currently available at the site:**

Electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other

In addition to those utilities indicated above, cable and internet services are also available at the site.

- 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.**

Electricity, telephone, and natural gas would continue to be provided to the school. SPS would work with Seattle City Light, to coordinate the extension of utilities to the batting cage, if needed.

The contractor would coordinate with utility purveyors to locate all existing utilities prior to proceeding with construction activity. Any active underground pipes encountered would be protected. Should undocumented piping or other utilities be encountered, the utility purveyor would be immediately contacted prior to resuming construction activity near the utility. Storm drains would be maintained and protected as catch basins.

C. 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 decision.

Signature: Conrad Plyler

Name of signee: Conrad Plyler

Position and
Agency/Organization: Project Manager, Capital Seattle Public Schools

Date Submitted: September 14, 2020

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FIGURES

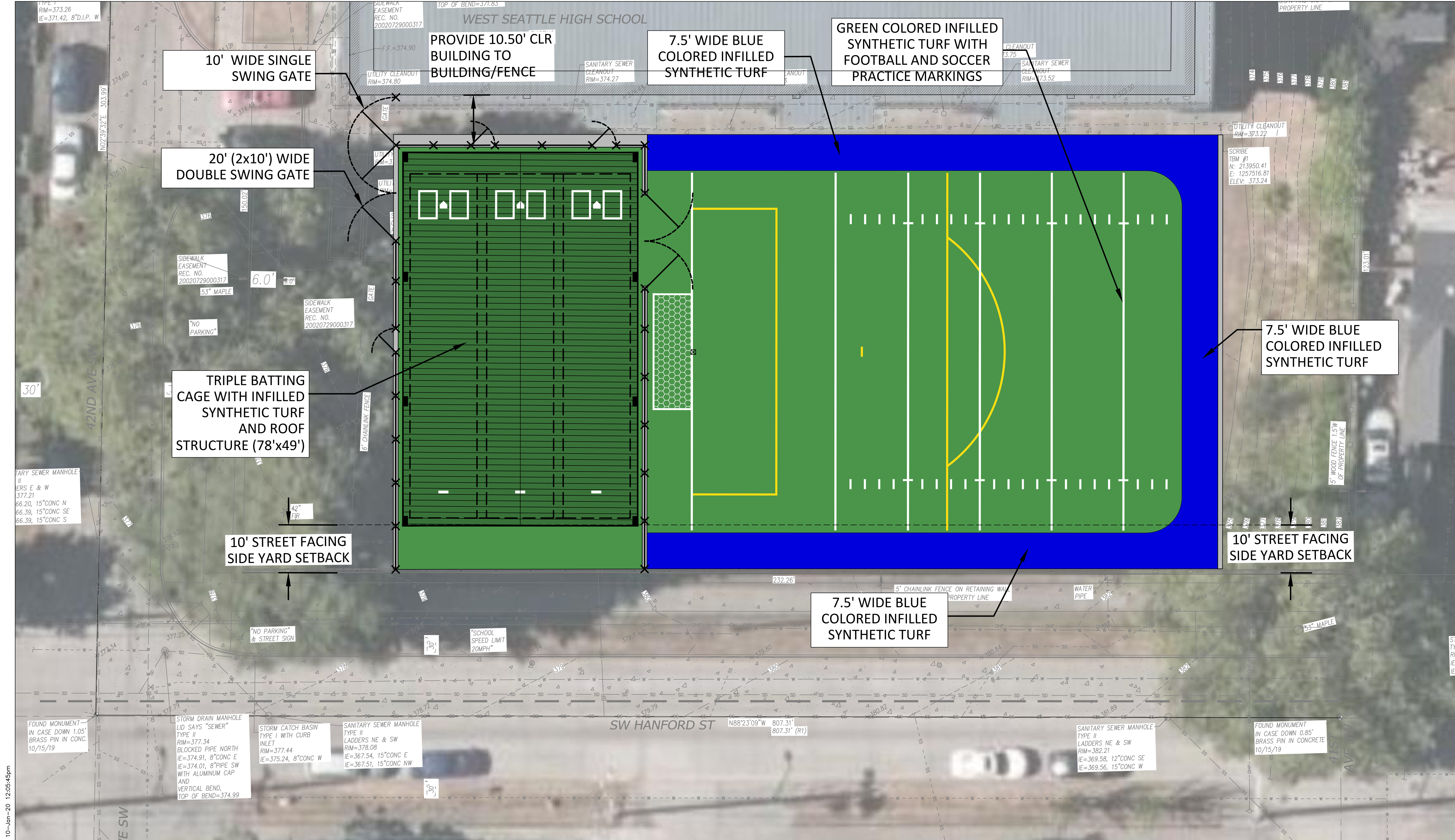


SOURCE: King County, 2017; OSM, 2018; ESA, 2020

D190891 SPS Athletic Fields

Figure 1

West Seattle High School Project Area and Vicinity
Seattle, Washington



File: F-0.1 West Seattle HS CURRENT 24x36.dwg Plotted by: CorneilW Date: 10-Jun-20 12:05:45pm

LAYOUT LEGEND

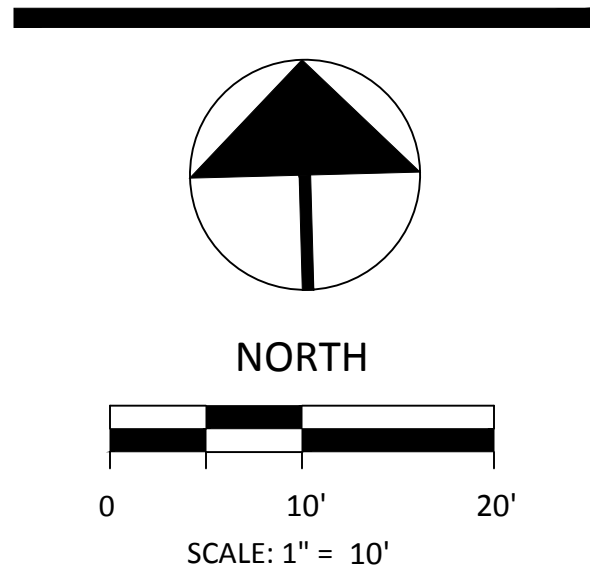
	BLUE COLORED SYNTHETIC TURF AND PERMEABLE AGGREGATE		CHAINLINK FENCE AND CONCRETE CURB
	GREEN COLORED SYNTHETIC TURF AND PERMEABLE AGGREGATE		CHAINLINK FENCE
	BATTING CAGE BUILDING		CONCRETE CURBING
			LIMIT OF SYNTHETIC TURF AND CONCRETE EDGE ANCHOR

Figure 2
West Seattle High School Site Plan
Seattle, Washington

REVISION	DATE



ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENTS AT MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL & WEST SEATTLE HIGH SCHOOL



PROGRESS SET	
DATE	1-10-20
SCALE	1"=10'
DRAWN	CPW
CHECKED	JAB/ DLA
COPYRIGHT © 2019 D.A. HOGAN & ASSOCIATES	

**WEST SEATTLE
HIGH SCHOOL**
3000 CALIFORNIA AVE SW,
SEATTLE, WA 98116

COLOR LAYOUT PLAN

SHEET
WS-1.0

ATTACHMENT A: DRAFT SEPA CHECKLIST COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project

SEPA Public Comments and Seattle Public Schools Responses

SEPA regulations recommend that public comments on draft Checklists be considered and responded to but provides flexibility in how the comments are presented. The comment period on the Draft SEPA Checklist for the West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project was from June 11 to July 13, 2020. Sixteen (16) individual comment letters, emails, or postcards were received from the 14 individuals listed below.

1. Matt Carson
2. Tod Hansen
3. Chris Jackins (mail and fax)
4. Robert Kelly
5. Rich Koehler
6. Beatrice Metzelaar
7. Karen Nakon
8. Karen Nakon and Edward Gorski
9. Sarah Peck
10. Katelynn Piazza (Washington State Department of Ecology)
11. Phoebe Russell
12. Matt Smith
13. Kevin St. Louis
14. Debra Stern (email and postcard)

For efficiency, the comments have been summarized and similar comments have been grouped together and responded to below. Following each comment, the numbers in brackets refer to the commenter number (above) who submitted a similar comment. Any person interested in reading the individual comments may contact SPS for access to them.

1. **Determination of Significance (DS)/EIS Preparation.** Project has significant adverse environmental impacts. Further detailed environmental review should be provided through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). [Commenter 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14]

The SPS SEPA Responsible Official is reviewing the revised SEPA Checklist and taking all comments received on the Draft SEPA Checklist into consideration in making a determination of the significance of impacts from the West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement project.

2. **Future notification.** I want to be added to the list for future notification related to the project. [Commenter 2, 7, 9, 13, 14]

SPS will provide future notifications to all parties who live within a two-block radius of the project, and who have requested to be included on future notifications

3. **Inadequate Comment period and Public Notice.** Comment period was too short and should be extended until COVID restrictions are lifted. The community was not provided adequate notice regarding the SEPA Checklist. Received a postcard about June 29th but the comment period started on June 11. We didn't receive a notice from SPS. [Commenter 3, 4, 8]

As is standard practice, SPS mailed postcards to all residences within a two-block radius of the school. In addition, notice of the Draft SEPA checklist was published in the Daily Journal of Commerce (DJC) on June 18th, 22nd, 30th and July 1st. This is the District's standard protocol for project and document release notification. The cards were mailed on June 2, 2020 to notify recipients of document availability. West Seattle High School was identified on the top of the notice and mailed to all residences within a two-block radius. The comment period was June 11 – July 13, 2020. SPS conducts a 30-day comment period on draft SEPA Checklists and incorporates comments into a Final Checklist and Determination. The issuance of a Draft Checklist is not a SEPA requirement and is conducted by SPS to solicit public input. COVID-related closures and distancing requirements are not believed to have impacted the review and commenting process. All documents are available online or mailed from the District upon request.

4. **No Public Meeting.** SPS has held public meetings for other similar projects. Why was no public meeting held? [Commenter 3, 4]

Public meetings are not a requirement for SEPA Checklists under WAC 197-11.

5. **Reproduce Public Comments.** The Final Checklist should include copies of public comments received. [Commenter 3]

As stated above, SPS has summarized the comments for efficiency and included a list of commenters. Comments are identified by commenter number herein in each summarized comment and response. Access to the individual public comments can be obtained by contacting SPS at SEPAComments@seattleschools.org or calling 206-252-0990.

6. **General Disapproval.** There is general disapproval and lack of support for the project.
[Commenter 1, 11]

SPS reviews and incorporates all comments and feedback received on the project and will take that into consideration prior to making a determination.

7. **Vegetation and Wildlife.** The project converts a natural grass field to artificial plastic turf that results in long term impacts to the environment, including groundwater and wildlife.
[Commenter 3, 8, 12]

The proposed synthetic turf would be constructed with natural cork and sand infill and permeable aggregate under the field. Stormwater generated from the field will be routed into an on-site water quality treatment system before entering the City's existing storm drainage system. The project will comply with Washington State Department of Ecology and City of Seattle stormwater discharge requirements.

8. **Environmental Health.** The Cleanup Site Search database shows a contaminated site on California Ave, with no Further Action as of 2001. Additionally, the school is within the area that may have been contaminated with heavy metals from the old Asarco smelter in north Tacoma. Ecology recommends sampling be conducted and if contamination above MTCA cleanup levels found that the site enter the Voluntary Cleanup Program. [Commenter 10]

The text of the SEPA checklist has been revised to include the prior site contamination information. SPS collected soil samples for the presence of lead and arsenic. Samples did not exceed the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) action levels for unrestricted use sites. A copy of the results will be submitted to the Washington State Department of Ecology for inclusion in their database.

SEPA Document Reference: B.7.a.1

9. **Noise.** Increased noise from the batting cage and related activities will impact nearby residences and will occur during evening hours, further impacting residences. This would be a significant impact. Please provide aa noise study. [Commenter 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 14]

Due to the unique nature of the proposed batting cage facility, including provision of three batter's boxes within the batting cage so that potentially three individuals could be practicing simultaneously and the potential for reflection of noise from the West Seattle High School building directly to the north, SPS proposes as part of the project inclusion of noise barrier blankets for the south and east fencing surrounding the batting cage. These noise barrier blankets are standard for many batting cages and are often used to attenuate noise in this situation. Proposed noise barrier blankets will ensure that noise from use of the batting cage will remain below the 55 dB(A) 1-hour Leq limit established by SMC 25.08 when measured at the property line of the nearest residences, even during periods of higher intensity use during the high school baseball season.

The Draft SEPA checklist noted that minor long-term noise impacts would result from batting practice and other activities at the new cage and field. At the request of commenters, SPS conducted additional analysis in the SEPA Checklist to support its

conclusion (refer to Appendix B). SPS was unable to obtain sound level measurements from batting cages as they are currently not open due to the COVID pandemic. However, it was possible to analyze the potential for noise by extracting information from sound level measurements from an outdoor batting practice. While the nature of noise from a batting cage is inherently different from an outdoor batting practice, the information gleaned from these measurements was instructive. The additional noise assessment confirms the finding in the Draft SEPA checklist that noise is anticipated from use of the new batting cage and field improvement.

Increased noise would occur only during the school year, as only SPS high school students would be using the batting cage and field. Noise from batting practice, including the 'ping' of metal bats and the 'crack' of wooden bats as well as associated talking and cheering, is anticipated to be the loudest new noise. Hours of increased noise would be during the school year, generally after school, and would cease by 9:00 p.m. In response to public concerns, the hours of batting cage use have been reduced and will cease by 9:00 p.m. Noises would be intermittent and variable from one day and one season to the next. Noise during athletic activities would likely be perceptible at adjacent receptors (residential properties) – especially those immediately to the south of the site.

As explained in the revised noise assessment in the SEPA checklist, numerous factors, including the duration and intensity of batting practice within any given hour, will influence the level of noise from use of the batting cage that is experienced by surrounding properties. Because the intensity and duration of the batting practices is currently unknown and will likely vary from day to day and season to season, it is not clear whether the noise from the batting cages, even if noise barrier blankets were not installed, would cause an exceedance of the Seattle noise code. While individual noise events from batting practice could exceed the 55 dB(A) level, discrete exceedances of this noise level are allowed by SMC 25.08.410(B). Only when the equivalent continuous sound level (Leq) exceeds the limit within any one-hour period would an exceedance occur.

It should also be noted that all noise resulting from the project would contribute to existing environmental noise within an urban environment. Other existing noise sources include SW Hanford Street directly south of the project site, other nearby roadways, overhead air traffic, other activities associated with the high school, and typical domestic and commercial noise common to urban environments. Within the context of the existing noise environment surrounding the project site, changes in environmental noise resulting from the project may be less perceptible to neighboring residences.

As noted above, SPS proposes as part of the project use of inclusion of noise barrier blankets for the south and east fencing surrounding the batting cage, which will ensure that noise from use of the batting cage will remain below the 55 dB(A) 1-hour Leq limit established by SMC 25.08 when measured at the property line of the nearest residences, even during periods of higher intensity use during the high school baseball season.

The City of Seattle further restricts environmental noise during the nighttime period (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) to acknowledge additional human sensitivity during these hours. As noted in the SEPA Checklist, all practice activities within the batting cage would end by 9:00 p.m. (with batting cage lighting programmed to turn off at 9:00 p.m.) to avoid nighttime hour impacts on adjacent receptors. The adjacent field area will not be lit.

SEPA Document Reference: B.7.b.

10. Light. Light and glare from the batting cage will impact nearby neighbors and will shine into nearby houses. This would be a significant impact. [Commenter 3, 4, 7, 8, 12]

City of Seattle guidelines recommend that athletic field spill light not exceed 1.0 foot-candles at residential property lines. Lighting for the project would be designed to not exceed this guideline, and the field area will not be lit.

Interior lighting within the batting cage will be directed to shine directly down and not off site. The batting cage interior lights will also be mounted high on the underside of the roof structure to minimize direct views from off-site locations.

Exterior batting cage perimeter lighting consists of low wattage full cutoff lights mounted to the outside of the batting cage. These lights will be directed to shine directly down and not offsite. These lights will not generate spill light offsite and will not generate large amounts of glare visible offsite.

SEPA Document Reference: B.11

11. Recreation. The current site is not properly maintained. Why would you develop when there is garbage, long grass/weeds, graffiti, and illegal parking? [Commenter 6]

The photos submitted with the comment appear to be taken around the Hiawatha Community Center. The Community Center is owned and maintained by the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. The proposed batting cage would be located on the south side of the West Seattle High School parcel.

12. Recreation. Disappointed in the loss of public open space, the batting cage should be open to the public including to younger kids. [Commenter 5, 11]

The Booster Club has provided the funding for this school facility. The batting cage will be for SPS use only, and SPS does not plan on renting the facility to clubs or the general public.

13. Open Space. SPS has been removing outdoor field and playground space through construction at other schools. To mitigate, SPS is scheduling more intensive use at existing open space which creates further impacts. An EIS should evaluate other alternatives, such as retaining and acquiring more open space. [Commenter 3, 5, 11]

The proposal will not remove any recreation space from the school. As stated in A. 11, field improvements would be used by high school sports teams as well as PE students. The improvements are being made to support the school's athletic program and limit the distance students have to travel to utilize batting cages for baseball and softball use.

SEPA Document Reference: A.11 and B.11

- 14. Archaeological Resources. The project is likely to have significant adverse impacts to Archeological resources, calling for an EIS. A redacted version of the short-report should be provided to the public and the full version should be released to the Duwamish tribe. Due to the closure of the Duwamish Longhouse from COVID-19 the comment period should be extended to allow the tribe to access and examine the cultural resources short report. The comment period on the project should also be extended to a point in time where the coronavirus sanctions have been lifted. This seems especially appropriate, to allow consideration as the impacts are in an area the Duwamish people called a “place of disease.” [Commenter 3]**

The likelihood of the Project resulting in any effect to archaeological resources is very low. Construction of the original school facility, specifically the excavation for the stepped terrace design involved cutting deeply into the natural glacial hillslope. This previous disturbance has dramatically lowered the likelihood of encountering archaeological features or artifacts relating to human use of the Project Area prior to the school's construction. Based on this documented past disturbance and the lack of significant Holocene period mineral deposition in the Project Area, further archaeological survey is not recommended.

Cultural resources assessment reports for Seattle Public Schools projects are uploaded to the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's (DAHP's) Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Database (WISAARD), the state's on-line repository for architectural and archaeological data. Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Cultural Resources Specialists, and other WISAARD users authorized by DAHP are able to access and download these records at no cost. The Duwamish Tribe is on the District's mailing list and receive a hard copy of the final SEPA checklist and threshold determination.

SEPA Document Reference: B.13

- 15. Traffic and Parking. Use by high school sports teams will result in new constant traffic and parking impacts, including late at night. [Commenter 3, 13, 14]**

The proposed batting cage and field would be used only by students and staff already on site at West Seattle High School. The batting cage could result in some students or staff staying at the site longer or later in the day. However, the proposed project is not expected to generate any new or additional trips to and from the site nor any new parking demand. Since the new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' scheduled activities nor by the general public, no new non-scholastic traffic or parking demand is expected to be generated.

SEPA Document Reference: B.14 and Appendix A.

16. Corrections and omissions. A few corrections were made to the text of the SEPA checklist to correct inaccuracies and omissions.

Section B.7.a.1 has been modified to include information of prior site contamination.

Section B. 7. B. has been revised to better describe potential noise impacts and mitigation.

Section B. 11 has been revised to better describe the lighting associated with the project.

APPENDIX A: TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Project: West Seattle High School – Batting Cage & Exercise Area

Subject: SEPA Checklist – Transportation Element

Date: May 4, 2020

Author: Tod S. McBryan, P.E. – Principal 

This technical memorandum presents supporting transportation analysis for Seattle Public Schools' SEPA Checklist being prepared for the construction of batting cages and a small exercise area on West Seattle High School Campus. It evaluates the transportation-related impacts of the proposal.

1. Project Description

1.1. Existing School and Improvement Site

West Seattle High School is located at 3000 California Avenue SW in the West Seattle neighborhood. The school site is located on a parcel on the south half of the block bounded by California Avenue SW to the west, SW Hanford Street to the south, Walnut Avenue SW to the east, and SW Lander Street to the north. The school building is located on the eastern portion of the parcel. On the western portion of the parcel, there is a surface parking lot with 191 striped spaces accessed from two one-way driveways (enter at the south and exit at the north) on California Avenue SW. The north half of the block is occupied by the Hiawatha Playfield and Community Center, which is owned and operated by the City of Seattle Parks and Recreation (Seattle Parks) department.

According to information published in *Building for Learning, Seattle Public Schools Histories, 1862-2000*,¹ West Seattle High School opened in 1917 with 38 classrooms, an auditorium, a library, a gymnasium, and offices. An addition for 500 more students opened in 1924 and an annex with eight classrooms and a study hall was added in 1930 (replacing seven portables). By the mid-1950s, enrollment was about 2,000 students. From 2000 to 2002, an addition and renovation of the 1917 and 1924 buildings was completed. That project added a gymnasium and upgraded the school to meet seismic requirements and current teaching standards. Enrollment for the 2019-20 school year is reported at 1,119 students.²

As part of the most recent renovation, a small (approximately 90 by 185 foot) natural turf area was created on the south side of the new addition at the northwest corner of the SW Hanford Street / 42nd Avenue SW intersection. This surface area is fenced with an access gate on SW 42nd Street near the school building and is used by students for exercise and as a small play area or warm-up space for physical education (P.E.) classes and other athletics.

¹ Nile Thompson and Carolyn J. Marr; *Building for Learning, Seattle Public Schools Histories, 1862-2000*; 2002.

² Seattle Public Schools, P223 Enrollment Data for Basic Enrollment report, October 2019.

1.2. Proposed Project

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) proposes improvements to the existing south field area at the northwest corner of the SW Hanford Street / 42nd Avenue SW intersection (described in the previous section). The project would construct a new covered batting cage on the western portion of that space and would install a synthetic turf practice area on the eastern portion. The improvements are intended to supplement existing PE and scholastic athletic activities for West Seattle High School students. The new facilities would be used only by the school and would not be part of the joint-use agreement between Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Parks.³ West Seattle High School students would use the new facilities as part of existing athletics programs (baseball and softball team practice in the batting cages and football and soccer practice activities on the small field) and for PE classes. The batting cages could be used by students until 10:00 P.M.; after that time, they would be closed and locked by the custodian or athletics staff. Figure 1 (attached) shows the proposed site plan and improvements.

The project would remove the existing natural turf surface and would install the new facilities and synthetic field surface. Calculations for the excavation and grading are estimated to involve a cut/removal (export) of 700 cubic yards (cy) and fill (import) of 700 cy of material. These quantities, which could total 1,400 cy of material transport.⁴

2. Impacts to Traffic and Parking

2.1. Construction

Construction is planned to occur from November 2020 to February 2021. The excavation and grading effort are estimated to consist of about 1,400 cy of haul material. Assuming an average of 20-cubic yards per truck (truck/trailer combination), this would relate to about 70 truckloads, which could occur in about a week. This could result in up to 14 truckloads on each day and 1 to 2 truckloads per hour over an eight-hour day (or 2 to 4 truck trips—reflecting one truck trip in and one out for each load).

The project would also generate some limited employee and equipment trips to and from the site. It is anticipated that construction workers would arrive at the construction site before the AM peak traffic period on local area streets and depart the site prior to the PM peak period; construction work shifts are usually from 7:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M., with workers arriving between 6:30 and 6:45 A.M. The number of workers at the project site at any one time would vary depending upon the element being implemented.

While the traffic and parking activity may be noticeable to residences that live adjacent to the site along SW Hanford Street and the truck access location, construction-related trips would not result in adverse operational impacts to the surrounding roadway network.

2.2. Use and Operation

The proposed new facilities would be used only by students and staff already on site at West Seattle High School. The batting cage facility could result in some students or staff staying at the site longer or later in the day. However, the proposed project is not expected to generate any new or additional trips to and from the site nor any new parking demand. Since the new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' scheduled activities nor by the general public, no new non-scholastic traffic or parking demand is expected to be generated by the new facilities. No adverse traffic or parking impacts are expected as a result of the project.

³ *An Agreement for the Joint Use of Facilities between The Seattle School District No.1 and Seattle Parks and Recreation 2016 – 2019*, Jointly prepared by: Seattle Parks and Recreation and the Seattle School District No. 1, January 31, 2017.

⁴ Email from E. Gold – D.A Hogan, December 4, 2019.

3. Findings & Recommendations

The excavation and grading effort for the project are estimated to require up to 70 truckloads during construction between November 2020 and February 2021. Although this activity may be noticeable to residences that live adjacent to the site along SW Hanford Street, the construction-related trips would not cause adverse operational impacts to the surrounding roadway network.

The proposed new facilities would be used only by students and staff already on site at West Seattle High School. No new or additional trips to and from the site nor any new parking demand is anticipated and no adverse traffic or parking impacts are expected as a result of the project.

Attachment: Figure 1. Proposed Site Plan

WSHS Batting-Exercise - Transp Tech Memo - FINAL



SPS West Seattle High School Athletic Facility Improvement

Proposed Site Plan

Figure 1

APPENDIX B : ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE ASSESSMENT



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memorandum

date September 10, 2020

to Conrad Plyler, Seattle Public Schools

from Aaron Booy and Madeline Remmen, ESA

subject West Seattle High School Athletic Field Improvement Project –Environmental Noise Assessment

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) is proposing to install a batting cage and conduct other field improvements at West Seattle High School. West Seattle High School is located at 3000 California Ave SW in the North Admiral neighborhood of Seattle. The field proposed for improvements is located on the south side of the school near the intersection of SW Hanford St and 42nd Ave SW. The project would convert the existing natural grass athletic field to a new synthetic turf field. The improved field and batting cage would be used by high school sports teams as well as PE students.

A pre-fabricated batting cage with roof would be installed with 3 batting stations on the west side of the field. The batting cage structure would be approximately 3,900 square feet, consisting of roughly 78 feet long by 50 feet wide by 17 feet tall. The batting cage would be for school use only and would be locked at 9 p.m. during the school year. When not in use for school associated activities, the batting cage would remain locked. Noise barrier blankets would be installed on the south and east outer chain-link walls of the batting cage. The blankets would be integrated with the batting cage facility design to extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides. The new facilities are not expected to be used for Seattle Parks' activities nor by the general public. It would have lighting inside the batting cage during use and 24-hour exterior security lighting. The field would not be lighted. There would be no changes to parking and access.

A noise analysis was conducted in the draft SEPA Checklist. The purpose of this memorandum is to document the existing noise environment surrounding the project site, assess noise anticipated from use of the improved field and batting cage, and detail the project elements proposed by SPS to ensure that adverse noise impacts would not occur as a result of the project. The results of this memorandum confirm the conclusions in the draft SEPA Checklist.

Existing Noise Environment

The largest existing source of noise is the traffic along the arterial SW Hanford Street directly south of the project site. Other noise sources include nearby roadways, overhead air traffic, other activities associated with the high school, and typical domestic and commercial noise common to urban environments. For the existing grass field area and surrounding residential properties to the south and east, the existing early evening noise environment is moderate. Noise levels within the field and along

the front yard property lines are anticipated to range from 50 to 55 Leq (dBA), with gradual reduction in environmental noise during later evening hours¹. After 9 p.m. the existing noise environment is quiet, with noise levels anticipated around 40 Leq (dBA).

Anticipated Noise and Potential Effects

The City of Seattle Noise Ordinance (SMC Chapter 25.08) regulates noise in the City. Noise is typically defined as an unwanted sound that can disrupt quality of life (EPA, 2016). The City sets exterior sound level limits according to the land use of both the property generating the noise (the source) and the property receiving the noise (Table 2; SMC Chapter 25.08.41). From one property to another when both properties are within a residential district, the maximum allowable noise during weekday daytime and evening hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) is limited to 55 Leq (dBA). This is the maximum noise that may be generated from a specific property that is experienced by another property (not the cumulative noise from all surrounding properties and activities). Normal vehicular traffic, including garbage trucks and buses, are exempt from the noise requirements set forth in SMC 25.08.

The code further regulates noises considered “unreasonable” including “loud and raucous, and frequent repetitive or continuous sounds made by the amplified or unamplified human voice” between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. During these nighttime hours, maximum allowable noise from one property to another within residential districts is reduced to 45 Leq (dBA). West Seattle High School, including the athletic field and proposed batting cage, surrounding residences, and the church across 42nd Avenue SW to the west are located within residential districts per City of Seattle Zoning.

Table 1. Exterior Sound Level Limits

District of Sound Source	Residential Receiving Property (Experiencing the Noise)	
	7a.m. – 10 p.m. Limit (Leq)	10 p.m.– 7a.m. Limit (Leq)
Residential	55 dBA	45 dBA
Commercial	57 dBA	47 dBA
Industrial	60 dBA	50 dBA

Source: SMC Chapter 25.08.410

For noise sources that are not continuous, higher levels are allowed for short durations. The code specifies that shorter duration noises up to 15 dBA above the continuous limit are allowable, as long as the hourly Leq exterior sound level limit is not exceeded (SMC 25.08.410.B).

Increased noise would occur only during the school year or during other school sponsored athletic activities, as only SPS students would be using the batting cage. Noise from batting practice, including the ‘ping’ of metal bats and the ‘crack’ of wooden bats as well as associated talking and cheering, is

¹ • Noise is typically measured in units called decibels (dB). For the purposes of environmental analysis noise is commonly quantified as “A weighted” decibels (dBA), which corresponds to the frequencies that are audible to the human ear. Use of the dBA frequency is consistent with SMC 25.08.090. Leq or the “equivalent sound level” is used to describe noise over a specified period of time in terms of a single numerical value. The Leq of a time-varying signal and that of a steady signal are the same if they deliver the same acoustic energy over a given time. The Leq may also be referred to as the average sound level.

anticipated to be the loudest new noise. Hours of increased noise would be during the school year, generally after school, and would cease by 9:00 p.m. Noises would be intermittent and variable from one day and one season to the next. Noise during athletic activities would likely be perceptible at adjacent receptors (residential properties) – especially those immediately to the south of the site across SW Hanford Street.

SPS was also unable to obtain sound level measurements from existing batting cages at a different Seattle athletic field, as they are currently not open due to the COVID pandemic. However, it is possible to analyze the potential for noise by extracting information from sound level measurements from an outdoor batting practice. While the nature of noise from a batting cage is inherently different from an outdoor batting practice, the information gleaned from these measurements is instructive. Sound level measurements in August 2019 at a separate SPS athletic field (Whitman Middle School baseball field in the Crown Hill neighborhood) recorded the noise associated with hand-pitched batting practice, with individual cracks of the bat measured at approximately 46 dB(A) at 370 feet from the batter. This would suggest noise associated with individual cracks of the bat of approximately 56 dB(A) with a setback of 115 feet (the approximate distance from the proposed batting cage batter's boxes to the nearest residential property line, to the south). If there are several batters practicing at the same time, there is a potential that the noise output would increase.

While individual noise events from batting practice could exceed the 55 dB(A) level established by Seattle noise code, discrete exceedances of this noise level are allowed by SMC 25.08.410(B). Only when the equivalent continuous sound level (Leq) exceeds the limit within any one-hour period would an exceedance of the Seattle noise code occur.

Numerous factors, including the duration and intensity of batting practice within any given hour, would influence the level of noise from use of the batting cage that is experienced by surrounding properties. Because the intensity and duration of the batting practices is currently unknown and would likely vary from day to day and season to season, it is not clear whether the noise from the batting cages would cause an exceedance of the noise code, even if no mitigation measures were included with the proposal.

It should be noted that all noise resulting from the project improvements would be contributing to existing environmental noise within an urban environment, such as traffic, which would continue to be a large contributing factor of noise. In an urban environment, changes in environmental noise resulting from the project may be less perceptible, especially with incorporation of proposed noise barrier blankets. Based on typical noise levels from arterial streets like SW Hanford Street, it is anticipated that vehicular traffic noise would continue to be the dominant noise source for residences surrounding the project site.

Noise Barriers

As part of the project, SPS proposes to install noise barrier blankets on the south and east outer chain link walls of the batting cage. Including noise barrier blankets on these two sides of the batting cage will provide noise attenuation between the cage and the nearby noise sensitive residential receptors, across SW Hanford Street to the south and immediately east of the improved field on the north side of SW Hanford Street to the east. Noise barrier blankets would consist of exterior-appropriate materials, with vinyl and/or polyester exterior layers around interior fiberglass batting. Noise barrier blankets would be sourced by SPS from a manufacturer that specifies sound reduction characteristics and appropriate application for the batting cage use. The Sound Reduction Class (SRC) rating for the noise barrier

blankets used should be SRC 20 or higher. The blankets would be integrated with batting cage facility design to extend consistently from the ground surface to the overhead roof structure for both the south and east sides. Surrounding the south and eastern sides of the batting cage with noise barrier blankets will provide assurance that all noise associated with batting practice activities would occur consistent with SMC 25.08 limits.

These noise barrier blankets are standard for many batting cages and are often used to attenuate noise in similar situations. Proposed noise barrier blankets will reduce noise from use of the batting cage, NS anticipated noise levels will remain below the 55 dB(A) 1-hour Leq limit established by SMC 25.08 when measured at the property line of the nearest residences, even during periods of higher intensity use during the high school baseball season.

The City of Seattle further restricts environmental noise during the nighttime period (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.) to acknowledge additional human sensitivity during these hours. To ensure that noise impacts do not occur to adjacent noise sensitive receptors during late evening hours or the nighttime period, practice activities within the batting cage would end by 9:00 p.m. (with batting cage lighting programed to turn off at 9:00 p.m.).