



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Downtown SEPA Thresholds (CB 120587)

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LAND USE COMMITTEE

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State Environmental Policy Act

- Requires environmental review of projects likely to have adverse impacts on the environment
- Projects below set thresholds are “categorically exempt” from review
- State Law (RCW and WAC) provides maximum exemption levels
- Highest threshold is tied to anticipated growth under the Comprehensive Plan
- Changes to the WAC allow for increases to the exemption level in areas that have exceed Comprehensive Plan growth estimates

Downtown Seattle

- Residential development has exceeded its growth estimate of 12,000 units in Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan
- Currently SEPA is required for any project with more than 20 residential units
- Any project with 40 or more parking spaces is also required to be reviewed under SEPA

New Residential Exemption Level (CB 120587)

Zone	Number of exempt dwelling units		
	Outside urban centers and urban villages	Within urban centers and urban villages where growth estimates have not been exceeded	Within urban centers and urban villages where growth estimates have been exceeded
Downtown zones	NA	250 ¹	((20)) <u>200</u>

Footnotes to Table A for 25.05.800

NA = not applicable

Urban centers and urban villages are identified in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan

¹ Pursuant to RCW 43.21C.229, new residential development or the residential portion of new mixed-use development located in an urban center or in an urban village is categorically exempt from the State Environmental Policy Act, unless the Department has determined that residential growth within the urban center or village has exceeded exemption limits for the center that the Department has established pursuant to subsection 25.05.800.A.2.i.

Nonresidential Exemption Level (CB 120587)

Zone	Exempt area of nonresidential use (square feet of gross floor area)		
	Outside urban centers and hub urban villages	Within urban centers and hub urban villages where growth estimates have not been exceeded	Within urban centers and hub urban villages where growth estimates have been exceeded
Downtown zones	NA	((12,000¹ or) 30,000(²))	((12,000)) <u>30,000</u>

Footnotes to Table B for 25.05.800

NA = not applicable

Urban centers and urban villages are identified in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan

¹ New non-residential development that is not part of a mixed-use development and that does not exceed 12,000 square feet in size is categorically exempt from the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

² Pursuant to RCW 43.21C.229, new non-residential development that does not exceed 30,000 square feet and that is part of a mixed-use development located in an urban center or in a hub urban village is categorically exempt from SEPA, unless the Department has determined that employment growth within the urban center or village has exceeded exemption limits for the center that the Department has established pursuant to subsection 25.05.800.A.2.i.

Questions?