SEPA Process

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) was established to ensure that environmental values are considered by local government when making decisions. Decisions include development decisions such as preliminary plats, shoreline substantial development permits, other official actions, as well as certain legislative actions. Agencies must follow specific procedures and processes to assure that appropriate consideration has been given to the environment.

Initial Consultation:
A pre-application conference may be required by the Building Services Department and shall address environmental issues.

Submittal, Preparation and Fee:
An application for SEPA Determination must be associated with a land use or building permit. Upon submittal of an action, the Building Services Department reviews the checklist and all documentation to define the level of direct environmental impact associated with the proposal. The application shall be accompanied by the fee as set forth by resolution. Contact the State of Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the current edition of the SEPA form: https://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/forms.htm

The threshold determination shall be made by the responsible official and shall consist of one of the following: 1) A Determination of Significance (DS), which means that the project represents significant adverse environmental impacts and requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), 2) A Determination of Non-Significance (DNS), which means that the project does not represent significant adverse environmental impacts, 3) A Determination of Non-Significance – Mitigated (MDNS) which lists specific conditions, modifications, or measures to be implemented into the proposal to avoid the significant adverse environmental impact. The responsible official shall complete threshold determinations based upon review of the environmental checklist and other documentation for the proposal within 15 days of the date an application and completed checklist are deemed complete, with exceptions as pursuant to HPMC 16.05.080.

Under SEPA, a project may also be determined categorically exempt. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the responsible official will decide whether an action is categorically exempt within seven days of receiving a completed application. Other actions that the responsible official may take include: 1) Adoption of an existing SEPA document, provided that the adopted document clearly anticipated the stated impact and provided for mitigation of any significant impacts, 2) other actions as outlined in HPMC 11.10.170.

There is a 15-day SEPA comment period, followed by a 14-day appeal period. Appeals shall be conducted for a SEPA determination pursuant to HPMC 16.05.290.

The application for SEPA shall be accompanied by the fee as set forth by resolution.

Applicable Code Titles
HPMC Title 8, Health and Safety
HPMC Title 11, Planning and Development (Comprehensive Plan and Permit Process)
HPMC Title 12, Public Ways
HPMC Title 13, Public Utilities
HPMC Title 14, Boating and Harbors
HPMC Title 15, Building Code
HPMC Title 16, Environment
HPMC Title 17, Subdivisions
HPMC Title 18, Zoning