

**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)
MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE
ADOPTION of EXISTING DOCUMENT**

Proposal: Discovery Road Project – The City proposes to reconstruct Discovery Road from Rainier Street to Sheridan Street by adding curbs, enhanced crosswalks, stormwater drainage and treatment, lighting, and intersection improvements. On the north side of Discovery Road, the project will provide sidewalk and curb ramps. The City received a Ped/Bike Grant from WSDOT and federal funds from Jefferson County to construct a two-way bikeway, sidewalk, curb ramps, pedestrian activated flashing beacons, drainage, and pavement marking improvements on the south side of Discovery Road to improve non-motorized safety.

File Reference: LUP21-084 SEPA; LUP21-083 Critical Areas Permit

Proponent: City of Port Townsend, Engineering Department

Location: That 0.82-mile section of Discovery Road within the City of Port Townsend, from Rainier Street to Sheridan Street. The project lies within Sections 9 and 10, Township 30 North, Range 1 West.

Lead Agency: City of Port Townsend

Document being adopted: The January 4, 2022 NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) issued by the Washington State Department of Transportation is being adopted in its entirety. The CE assessed the environmental impacts of the Discovery Road Project. In accordance with WAC 197-11-610(2), the NEPA CE has been adopted instead of preparing an environmental checklist for the proposal.

Threshold Determination: This is a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance (MDNS). The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment provided the proposal complies with applicable City codes and the mitigation measures set forth in this MDNS. An environmental impact statement is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after independent review of a NEPA Categorical Exclusion Documentation Form and other supporting information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public via the Public Works Project page: <https://cityofpt.us/publicworks/project/discovery-road-bikeway-and-sidewalk-project> Or by appointment at Port Townsend City Hall, Development Services, 250 Madison Street. This MDNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 15 days from the date of issuance.

Comment & Appeal Deadline: Written comments must be received by the Development Services Department no later than 4:00 p.m., February 17, 2022

Responsible Official: Judy Surber

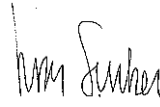
Position/Title: Planning Manager/Interim Development Services Director (Planning)

Address: 250 Madison Street Port Townsend, WA 98368

Staff Contact: (360) 379-5084 jsurber@cityofpt.us

ISSUANCE DATE: 2/2/22

SIGNATURE: _____



TO: All Permit and Review Authorities

ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD

The environmental review consisted of analysis based on the following documents included in the environmental record.

DOCUMENTS/REFERENCES:

- Exhibit A: SEPA Application (LUP 21-084)
- Exhibit B: Critical Areas Application (LUP 21-083)
- Exhibit C: 30% Submittal Design Set prepared by SCJ Alliance (November 8, 2021)
- Exhibit D: NEPA Categorical Exclusion approved 1/4/22
- Exhibit E: Wetland Report and Mitigation Plan prepared by SCJ Alliance (October 2021)
- Exhibit F: Hazardous Materials Technical Memo was prepared by SCJ Alliance (Federal Aid Number: 7627(001))
- Exhibit G: Notice of Application and Pending SEPA Threshold Determination (December 29, 2021)
- Exhibit H: Public Comment Letters
- Exhibit I: 1/25/22 Email from Bryan Murphie, WDFW Wildlife Biologist

City of Port Townsend Comprehensive Plan
City of Port Townsend Municipal Code
City of Port Townsend Engineering Design Standards)
City of Port Townsend Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

Unless otherwise noted, the above information is available via the Public Works Project page:

<https://cityofpt.us/publicworks/project/discovery-road-bikeway-and-sidewalk-project>

Or by appointment at Port Townsend City Hall, Development Services Department, 250 Madison Street Suite 3, between the hours of 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday.

The following information supplements the January 4, 2022 NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) (Exhibit D) issued by the Washington State Department of Transportation and should be read in conjunction with that document.

I. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The City proposes to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety by improving Discovery Road from the roundabout at Rainier Street to Salish Coast Elementary at McClellan Street (Exhibits A, SEPA Application, B. Critical Areas Application, C. 30% Submittal Design Set). Improvements include curbs, enhanced crosswalks, stormwater drainage and treatment, lighting, and intersection

improvements. The City received a Ped/Bike Grant from WSDOT and federal funds from Jefferson County to construct a two-way bikeway, sidewalk, curb ramps, pedestrian activated flashing beacons, drainage, and pavement marking improvements on the south side of Discovery Road to improve non-motorized safety. The City also received a TIB grant which will allow for constructing a sidewalk and curb ramps on the north side of Discovery Road. The TiB grant will also allow for needed roadway improvements such as minor roadway realignment to create a complete street project.

The roadway centerline will be shifted approximately five feet northwesterly, still within the existing right-of-way, to accommodate the new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the south side of Discovery Road. The roadway pavement width (for one travel lane in each direction) remains unchanged at approximately 22-feet. This changes the offset from center of the closest lane to the closest residence by about 10 percent (from approximately 45 feet to approximately 40-feet). Landscape strips will be provided between the roadway and the bicycle/pedestrian lanes. Conceptual plans call for a combination of grassy swales, street trees and clusters of ornamentals. Existing overhead utility lines will be placed underground.

II. PERMITS/APPROVALS REQUIRED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION

The NEPA CE list is accurate.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Notice of Application and Pending SEPA Threshold Determination was posted on-site and mailed to adjacent property owners within 300 feet, consistent with the public notice requirements of Section 20.01.160 of the Port Townsend Municipal Code (PTMC). Notice was published on-line 12/29/21, however notice in the paper was delayed due to inclement weather. Notice was published in the 1/5/22 and the initial 20-day comment period extended to January 25, 2022 (Exhibit G-1, Public Notice). Two public comment letters were received in response to the Notice of Pending Threshold Determination (Ex. H). Letters from Ms. Quinn and Mr. Bertsch provide design suggestions (e.g., speed tables and landscaping). Neither raises concerns regarding impacts/mitigation. Comment letters have been forwarded to Engineering for consideration.

IV. RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL'S AMENDMENTS TO NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The following analysis is intended to supplement the January 4, 2022 NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) issued by the Washington State Department of Transportation and should be read in conjunction with that document.

A. EARTH

All construction will occur within City rights-of-way. Once awarded, the City's project contractor may choose, at their option and request, to negotiate with adjacent property owners for use of their private sites for temporary staging.

Excavation and fill will be necessary to achieve the design elevations and to meet specified quality for roadway sub-grade and top course. Where feasible, soils excavated from any utility trenching will be used as backfill; however, unsuitable materials will need to be removed from the site. Material from approved sources will be imported as necessary to replace unsuitable native soils.

All project activities will be conducted in accordance with the City's Engineering Design Standards which specify:

- All clearing and grading and other land alterations require that erosion and sediment control best management practices ("BMPs") be employed. These BMPs shall be as required by the Stormwater Management Manual ("SWMM").
- A temporary erosion/sedimentation plan is required in conformance with the adopted Stormwater Management Manual.
- Areas disturbed by construction activity which are not to be covered by permanent impervious surfaces shall be landscaped or reseeded.

For work authorized within wetlands/wetland buffers, any specialized erosion and sedimentation control measures needed to prevent impacts will be specified through the subsequent Critical Areas permit. The Critical Areas permit will also identify any specific restoration efforts that are warranted.

The location, access points, and restoration plans for staging areas have not been determined. To address potential adverse impacts related to project staging and earth disturbance, the following mitigation measures are necessary:

- The applicant shall insert language into the project bid documents that require the selected contractor to obtain a City Clearing and Grading permit for any areas of project staging that take place on adjoining private lands. Any such work that will occur must be done via separate agreement between the project contractor and the private landowner(s). Included with any necessary Clearing and Grading permit must be a Temporary Erosion & Sediment Control Plan prepared in accordance with the City's *Engineering Design Standards* (EDS) and the Department of Ecology's *Stormwater Management Manual for the Puget Sound Basin* (SWMM).
- All staging areas must occur on lands that do not contain wetlands and/or wetland buffers.

B. AIR

As per the NEPA CE, the proposal to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities is exempt from Air Quality conformity requirements.

During construction, emissions from heavy equipment and vehicles associated with the road improvements will be created. Upon project completion, vehicle emissions will return to pre-project levels. In accordance with the City's Engineering Design Standards (EDS), water shall be applied as a suppressant should dust become a problem during any grading activity. Vehicle idling during construction will be minimized.

If the City's EDS measures concerning water suppressants and vehicle conditions are adhered to, no adverse impacts to Air are anticipated and no mitigation measures are necessary.

C. WATER

The NEPA CE concerning Water and associated wetland report and mitigation plan (Exhibit E) are adequate for conducting SEPA review. No ground water withdrawals are proposed as part of the road construction project.

Stormwater

Surface runoff from the new pavement and concrete surfaces is being accounted for via engineered stormwater measures designed consistent with the City's Engineering Design Standards (EDS) and the 2005 Stormwater Manual for Western Washington (SWMM). Stormwater features for the project include bioretention swales and piped conveyance to collect, treat and disperse roadway runoff. Ultimately, the runoff will flow to Kah Tai Lagoon and then eventually discharge to Port Townsend Bay.

Wetlands

Proposed Discovery Road improvements result in unavoidable impacts to wetlands and/or wetland buffers within the road right of way. To address impacts to these features, review and approval of a City Critical Areas permit is required. In addition, permits from other state and federal agencies are also required for the planned wetland alterations. A comprehensive wetland mitigation strategy has been developed in accordance with state, federal and local requirements (Exhibits E). This information has been submitted to each permitting agency involved with the project together with necessary permit applications.

In general, the Discovery Road Project will impact two (2) wetlands: Wetland N, on the north side of Discovery Road and Wetland S on the southside. These features and their anticipated impacts are detailed in Exhibit E. Impacts are summarized in the report as follows:

The project impacts will occur only within the public street ROW, but some of the adjacent wetlands on the NW side of the road seep into the outer edge of the ROW at five locations. There is no way to provide sidewalks and bike lanes along this corridor without impacts to wetlands and their buffers. However, impacts were minimized, resulting in 0.033 acres of wetland impacts in Wetland N, and 0.321 acres of the 150 ft wetland buffer impacts for both Wetland N and Wetland S within the ROW.

Although the majority of Wetland N outside of the ROW is forested, the wetland and buffer areas within the ROW are mostly vegetated by herbaceous vegetation or small shrubs. Thus, project impacts are limited to portions of the wetlands and buffers already impacted by proximity to the road and standard road use and maintenance activities, such as periodic mowing of the ROW to preserve safety view corridors and to clean out ditches, as well as narrow public paths that are worn into some of the vegetated roadway margins.

The report includes proposed mitigation:

To mitigate for 0.033 acres of permanent Palustrine Forested, Depressional Category II wetland impacts, between 0.4 (minimum required) and 0.62 acres of wetland will be enhanced (a 12:1 ratio). To mitigate for 0.321 acres of buffer impacts, 0.36 acres of wetland buffer will be enhanced (slightly greater than a 1:1 ratio) – a total of 0.98 acres. This work will be concentrated in publicly owned parcels near the north

end of the wetland. This work will be carried out by removal of weedy vegetation and subsequent interplanting of native plant species in the target mitigation area.

Temporary impacts: Any wetland or buffer areas with temporary impacts from construction will be revegetated with native plants common to the surrounding area.

In sum, a qualified wetlands specialist has assessed potential impacts and recommended a mitigation plan to address anticipated impacts to wetlands/wetland buffers (Exhibit E). Detailed review of the mitigation plan will occur as part of the City's pending Critical Areas permit. Given this and the above, no impacts to Water have been identified and no mitigation measures are necessary.

D. PLANTS

Part 5 of the NEPA CE with regards to Plants, together with information within the project's Wetland Report (Exhibit E), are adequate to conduct environmental review.

As concluded in of the NEPA CE, one federally threatened plant is listed by FWS IPAC as possibly in the area – golden paintbrush (*Castilleja levisecta*). However, this plant primarily occurs in open grasslands and prairies, which is not consistent with the ecosystems onsite. No golden paintbrush was observed or is likely to occur within the project limits. According to the WDFW Priority Habitats and Species mapping tool, priority habitats or species are identified within the project area; however, none were observed within or near the project limits.

To construct the bicycle/pedestrian lands and sidewalks, the proposed project requires unavoidable impacts to approximately 0.033-acres of wetland and 0.321 acres of associated buffer vegetation. The Wetland Mitigation Plan describes the measures designed to mitigate for loss of that wetland and buffer vegetation and other related wetland functions and values. Impacts to wetland vegetation will be addressed through review and approval of the City's pending Critical Areas permit.

Landscaping will be placed in the new roadway project area. Temporary irrigation will be installed to ensure plants receive adequate watering until established.

Given the review and conditions that will result from the Critical Area permit, no adverse impacts related to Plants have been identified and no mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

E. ANIMALS

The NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) description addresses federal listed species and habitat of concern. The CCE concludes there will be No Effect/No Adverse Effect respectively for Federally listed Endangered Species/Essential Fish Habitat. All project impacts are expected to be minor, temporary disturbances associated with construction. After the project is complete, use of the roadway and surrounding areas will not change from the existing conditions.

As noted in the CE, a great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*) nesting area is also identified in a small, forested area approximately 0.2 miles (105.6 feet) east of the project site. Great blue heron rookeries are designated critical areas in the City's Critical Areas Ordinance.

Staff contacted WDFW Wildlife Biologist, Bryan Murphie for guidance. On 1/26, 2022, Mr. Murphie responded "*I visited this forested stand in search of evidence of a heron colony on*

5/28/2021. I didn't find any indication of heron nesting activity, recent or old. The colony account was from 2010. I also spoke with one of the adjacent landowners and he stated that the colony had not been active since 2012 or so. He states that it was a very noisy place when active and he hadn't heard any in recent years.

I reviewed the information for the Discovery Road Project and don't think any special accommodations are needed for herons. As described, the work is to be conducted along existing roadway, very little vegetation will be removed, existing area noise is already pretty high, and the integrity of the habitat is maintained." (Exhibit I).

No adverse impacts to animals are anticipated and thus, no mitigation required.

F. ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Construction equipment will use a range of typical energy sources (i.e., gas, diesel and hydraulic). Following completion, typical electric use for street lighting and mechanized equipment (i.e., gas or diesel) will be used for roadway maintenance. The addition of bicycle and pedestrian lanes will promote walking and biking as an alternative to transportation powered by fossil fuels.

No adverse impacts are anticipated related to Energy or Natural Resources; therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

A Hazardous Materials Technical Memo was prepared by SCJ Alliance (Exhibit F) to assess the potential for hazardous material sites in the vicinity and potential risk for such materials from these sites to cause contamination or be encountered during the proposed project. The report concludes, no hazardous materials impacts are anticipated from nearby contamination and no impacts are anticipated as a result of construction or operation of the Project.

Standard construction practices would be employed to minimize the risk of environmental health hazards including explosion and the release of hazardous materials.

H. NOISE

During construction, surrounding properties would be subject to construction traffic and heavy equipment noise. Construction hours would be limited to 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday –Friday per City Engineering Design Standards. Limited exceptions may be granted by the Public Works Director. These short-term impacts to not rise to the level of significance.

The project is intended to provide traffic calming and a reduction in vehicle speeds. Long-term noise impacts are not considered significant.

I. LAND AND SHORELINE USE

The proposed project lies outside of any regulated shoreline water body but will involve impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and/or their associated buffers. All project-related wetland and/or wetland buffer encroachments will be addressed as part of the pending Critical Areas permit.

Current uses along the Discovery Road corridor consist primarily of single-family residential and vacant land. Property along the corridor is zoned and designated for residential uses (R-II, R-III, R-IV) at various densities. Planned improvements help fulfill and implement the future land use pattern contemplated by the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Infrastructure improvements such as those occurring in the Discovery Road Project are an allowed use in all zoning districts. All the proposed improvements are compatible with existing and planned land uses in the immediate area.

No adverse impacts to Land and Shoreline Use have been identified as part of the project. No mitigation measures are needed.

J. HOUSING

No new housing units are being proposed and none would be removed by the Discovery Road Project. All proposed improvements are compatible with existing and planned land uses in the immediate area.

No adverse impacts to Housing have been identified and no mitigation measures are necessary.

K. AESTHETICS

The project has been designed to provide aesthetic appeal for future users and residents. No adverse impacts to Aesthetics have been identified and no mitigation measures are necessary.

L. LIGHT AND GLARE

This area of the City is accustomed to having little or no light/glare impacts associated with development. For many Port Townsend residents, viewing of the night sky without adverse light pollution impacts has become a desirable aspect of living in the community.

No specific streetlight standard is indicated in the submitted construction drawings. To mitigate for potential adverse impacts involving streetlights of an unknown type, the following measures are warranted:

- All streetlights will be shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillage and pollution. The use of metal halide and mercury vapor fixtures are prohibited. The maximum height of all streetlight poles is 28' unless otherwise approved by the DSD Director. Specification sheets for the light standards chosen shall be presented to the DSD Director for review and approval in consultation with the City Engineer.

M. RECREATION

No recreational facilities would be displaced. When completed, the project will offer bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the entire length of the corridor, connecting to existing pedestrian/bicycle facilities in Rainier Street and along the frontage of Salish Elementary School.

No adverse impacts related to Recreation have been identified from the project and no mitigation measures are warranted.

N. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

The NEPA CE adequately addresses potential impacts to historical/cultural resources. On December 6, 2021, the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation concurred with the determination that the project will have no adverse impact to Historical and Cultural Resources. No mitigation measures are necessary.

O. TRANSPORTATION

This portion of Discovery Road is a 20-foot-wide two-lane road with no shoulder. The right-of-way is generally 60-foot wide and is mostly abutted by single-family homes. There are seven intersections (including Rainier Street and McClellan Street), and most are T-intersections on one-block local access roads with stop signs on the side road only.

There are only five driveways directly accessing Discovery Road. The relatively limited number of intersections and driveways paired with banked roadway curves promote higher vehicle speeds. The posted speed limit is 25 mph but typical vehicle speeds trend closer to 35 mph.

Current traffic volumes average about 5,200 vehicles per day. This volume will likely grow closer to 10,000 vehicles per day in the next couple of decades with potential developments surrounding the corridor.

There are no existing pedestrian/bicycle facilities along Discovery Road within the project limits due to the narrow roadway width.

The project is intended to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. One existing intersection, 14th Street south of Discovery, will be closed because it traverses private property. . Proposed pedestrian/bicycle improvements will connect to existing facilities in Rainier Street and along the frontage of Salish Elementary School.

Consistent with the EDS,

- All work performed within the public rights-of-way shall be done to the satisfaction of the Director and in accordance with the WSDOT/APWA Standard Specifications, any approved plans, and the EDS.
- The contractor shall provide a traffic control plan(s) for review and approval by the City Engineer in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

No adverse impacts to the Transportation system have been identified and no mitigation measures are needed.

P. PUBLIC SERVICES

The project will enhance safe access for non-motorized transportation users. No adverse impacts to Public Services have been identified and no mitigation measures are needed.

Q. UTILITIES

Undergrounding of existing overhead utility lines will be completed as part of the project. Portions of this work involves work within confirmed wetland buffers which will be addressed as part of the pending Critical Area permit.

Subject to review and approval of the associated Critical Area permit, no adverse impacts from the project related to Utilities have been identified and no specific mitigation measures are warranted.

**REQUIRED MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
FILE NO. 21-083
Discovery Road Project (LUP21-083, LUP21-084)**

The environmental review indicates a probability of significant adverse environmental impacts from the proposal, which could be mitigated. The following mitigation measures are intended to mitigate adverse environmental impacts disclosed during SEPA review.

The proponent agrees to the following mitigation measures and therefore it is appropriate for the Lead Agency, the City of Port Townsend, to issue a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance.

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

1. The applicant shall insert language into the project bid documents that require the selected contractor to obtain a City Clearing and Grading permit for any areas of project staging that take place on adjoining private lands. Any such work that will occur must be done via separate agreement between the project contractor and the private landowner(s). Included with any necessary Clearing and Grading permit must be a Temporary Erosion & Sediment Control Plan prepared in accordance with the City's *Engineering Design Standards (EDS)* and the Department of Ecology's *Stormwater Management Manual for the Puget Sound Basin (SWMM)*.
2. All staging areas must occur on lands that do not contain wetlands and/or wetland buffers.
3. All streetlights will be shielded and directed downward to minimize light spillage and pollution. The use of metal halide and mercury vapor fixtures are prohibited. The maximum height of all streetlight poles is 28' unless otherwise approved by the DSD Director. Specification sheets for the light standards chosen shall be presented to the DSD Director for review and approval in consultation with the City Engineer.