DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City of Renton

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

ERC MEETING DATE:	August 9, 2010
Project Name:	Sunset Area Planned Action/EIS
Applicant:	City of Renton, CED Department
Contact:	Erika Conkling, AICP x6578
File Number:	LUA10-052
Project Manager:	Erika Conkling, AICP x6578
Project Summary:	Environmental Review file for the Sunset Area Planned Action/EIS which includes review of multiple projects, including: programmatic review of neighborhood redevelopment through public and private investment; project level review of the redevelopment of Renton Housing Authority's Sunset Terrace public housing project; design improvements to Sunset Boulevard; and a master drainage plan for stormwater control for the neighborhood.
Project Location:	Sunset Area of the Renton Highlands. The area is generally bounded by NE 21st Street to the north, Edmonds Ave NE to the west, NE 7th St to the south, and Monroe Ave NE to the east.
STAFF RECOMMENDATION:	**Staff recommends that the Environmental Review Committee issue a Determination of Significance and request for comments on environmental review scope.**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / BACKGROUND

Proposed Sunset Terrace Redevelopment. The project includes redevelopment of the Sunset Terrace public housing community, a Renton Housing Authority property of approximately 100 existing units in 50-year old, two story structures, located at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Harrington Avenue on approximately eight acres. The Renton Housing Authority also owns another approximately 3 acres of vacant land along Edmonds Avenue NE, Glenwood Avenue NE, and Sunset Lane NE and intends to purchase additional property adjacent to Sunset Terrace along Harrington Avenue NE for housing and associated services. Conceptual plans propose redevelopment of Sunset Terrace and adjacent properties with mixed-income, mixed-use residential and commercial space and public amenities. It is expected that, with the Sunset Terrace property and associated properties owned or purchased by Renton Housing Authority, that up to 200 additional new affordable housing units and potentially 300 new moderate income to market rate housing units could be created. There would be a 1-to-1 unit replacement for all 100 existing public housing units. Public amenities would be integrated with the residential development and may include the following: a community gathering space or "Third Place"; a new recreation/community center; a new library; a new park/open space; retail shopping and commercial space; and/or green infrastructure.

Adjacent Area. As a result of the Sunset Terrace redevelopment, it is expected that private redevelopment in the neighborhood will be catalyzed. Supporting both Sunset Terrace and neighborhood redevelopment will be civic investments including: planned or anticipated upgrades to Sunset Boulevard (SR 900) and other local streets, stormwater drainage systems, parks and recreation facilities, education facilities, and a new public library. Sunset Terrace's redevelopment provides the opportunity to evaluate the neighborhood as a whole and

determine what future land use redevelopment is possible and what public service and infrastructure improvements should be made in order to make this a more vibrant and attractive community for residents, businesses and property owners. The EIS will address Sunset Terrace area redevelopment as well as neighborhood redevelopment and supporting services and infrastructure improvements.

SEPA Planned Action. The City is also proposing to adopt a Planned Action Ordinance for the neighborhood including Sunset Terrace. A Planned Action Ordinance, if adopted pursuant to WAC 197-11-164 to 172, would indicate that the completed EIS adequately addresses significant impacts of the proposed action, and that future projects consistent with the analyzed projects and parameters of the Planned Action Ordinance would not require future SEPA threshold determinations or EISs. Therefore, comment during this Scoping period is encouraged.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPING

Due to the extensive nature of this proposal, it may have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required and will be prepared under the State Environmental Policy Act and implementing regulations (RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c), WAC 197-11) and the National Environmental Policy Act and US Department of Housing and Urban Development ((HUD) implementing regulations (42 USC 4321, 24 CFR 58). Materials indicating likely environmental impacts can be reviewed at the City's website or at City offices; see Contact Person below.

This EIS will be a joint SEPA/NEPA document, intended to satisfy requirements of both state and federal environmental statutes. Through Federal legislative authorization, the City of Renton has assumed responsibility for compliance with NEPA (40 CFR 1508.12) and the related Federal laws and authorities that would otherwise apply to the HUD. Pursuant to SEPA, the City of Renton is the lead agency for the proposed action. This combined SEPA/NEPA EIS scoping notice is being published to achieve efficient documentation and coordination of notices and pertinent meetings. A NEPA Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS will also be published in the Federal Register.

Alternatives: The alternatives to be considered in the EIS will include the proposed action, a no action alternative, and a redevelopment alternative to the proposed action. The redevelopment alternative will be finalized after the scoping meeting and conclusion of the comment period. It may address alternative land use mixes, infrastructure options, or other features.

EIS Issues: The following areas have been preliminarily identified for discussion in the EIS: aesthetics; air quality, including greenhouse gas emissions; earth; energy; environmental health; environmental justice; historic/cultural resources; housing; land use; noise; parks and recreation; plants and animals; public services, including public education, safety, health, and social services; socioeconomics, including demographic, employment, and displacement; transportation; utilities, including wastewater, stormwater, water supply, telecommunication, natural gas, power, electrical; and water resources, including groundwater and surface water.

Scoping: Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public will be invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. They may comment on alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. A written comment period will be extended until **5 p.m. September 13, 2010**. A scoping meeting will be held on **September 1, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.** at the Highlands

Neighborhood Center, 800 Edmonds Ave NE, Renton, WA 98056. Written and oral comments will be taken at this meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION APPEAL PROCESS

Environmental Determination Appeal Process: Appeals of the environmental determination must be filed in writing on or before 5:00 PM, August 27, 2010.

Renton Municipal Code Section 4-8-110.B governs appeals to the Hearing Examiner. Appeals must be filed in writing at the City Clerk's office along with a $75.00 application fee. Additional information regarding the appeal process may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, Renton City Hall - 7th Floor, 1055 S. Grady Way, Renton WA 98057.

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City of Renton

Sunset Area Community EIS Scoping Document

The City of Renton, in cooperation with the Renton Housing Authority, intends to issue an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing future redevelopment of the Sunset Area Community. This EIS will be a joint State Environmental Policy Act/ National Environmental Policy Act (SEPA/NEPA) document, intended to satisfy requirements of state and federal environmental statutes. Through Federal legislative authorization, the City of Renton has assumed responsibility for compliance with NEPA (40 CFR 1508.12) and the related Federal laws and authorities that would otherwise apply to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Pursuant to SEPA, the City of Renton is the lead agency for the redevelopment and infrastructure proposal detailed below.

The purpose of this document is to present background information and proposed environmental topics to be included in the EIS under preparation for the Sunset Area Community. This document presents the proposal, a description of the EIS topics, and how the City intends to solicit comments. A scoping notice issued by the City of Renton on August 13, 2010 should be read in conjunction with this scoping document. Scoping Notices are available on the City of Renton website (www.rentonwa.gov) or by contacting the Contact Person listed below.

Background

What is the Proposal?

The proposal is to redevelop the Sunset Terrace public housing community, encourage neighborhood redevelopment, and implement public service and infrastructure improvements.

Proposed Sunset Terrace Redevelopment. The project includes redevelopment of the Sunset Terrace public housing community, a Renton Housing Authority property of approximately 100 existing units in 50-year old, two story structures, located at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Harrington Avenue NE on approximately eight acres. The Renton Housing Authority also owns another approximately three acres of vacant land along Edmonds Avenue NE, Glenwood Avenue NE, and Sunset Lane NE and intends to purchase additional property adjacent to Sunset Terrace along Harrington Avenue NE for housing and associated services. Conceptual plans propose redevelopment of Sunset Terrace and adjacent properties with mixed-income, mixed-use residential and commercial space and public amenities. It is expected that, with the Sunset Terrace property and associated properties owned or purchased by Renton Housing Authority, up to 200 additional new affordable housing units and potentially 300 new moderate income to market rate housing units could be created. There would be a 1-to-1 unit replacement for all 100 existing public housing units. Public amenities would be integrated with the residential development and may include the following: a community gathering or "Third Place"; a new recreation/community center; a new

public library; a new park/open space; retail shopping and commercial space; and/or green infrastructure.

Adjacent Area. As a result of the Sunset Terrace redevelopment, it is expected that private redevelopment in the neighborhood will be catalyzed. Supporting both Sunset Terrace and neighborhood redevelopment will be civic investments including: planned or anticipated upgrades to Sunset Boulevard (SR 900) and other local streets, stormwater drainage systems, parks and recreation facilities, education facilities, and a new public library. Sunset Terrace's redevelopment provides the opportunity to evaluate the neighborhood as a whole and determine what future land use redevelopment is possible and what public service and infrastructure improvements should be made in order to make this a more vibrant and attractive community for residents, businesses and property owners. The EIS will address Sunset Terrace area redevelopment as well as neighborhood redevelopment and supporting services and infrastructure improvements.

SEPA Planned Action. The City is also proposing to adopt a Planned Action Ordinance pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). A Planned Action Ordinance, if adopted, would not require future SEPA threshold determinations or EISs when future projects are consistent with the Sunset Area Community EIS assumptions and mitigation measures.

What is the study area?

Sunset Terrace is generally bounded by Sunset Lane NE and Glenwood Avenue NE on the north, NE 10th Street on the east, NE Sunset Boulevard on the south, and Edmonds Avenue NE on the west. The proposed planned action neighborhood study area is generally bounded by NE 21st Street on the north, Monroe Avenue NE on the east, NE 7th Street on the south, and Edmonds Avenue NE.

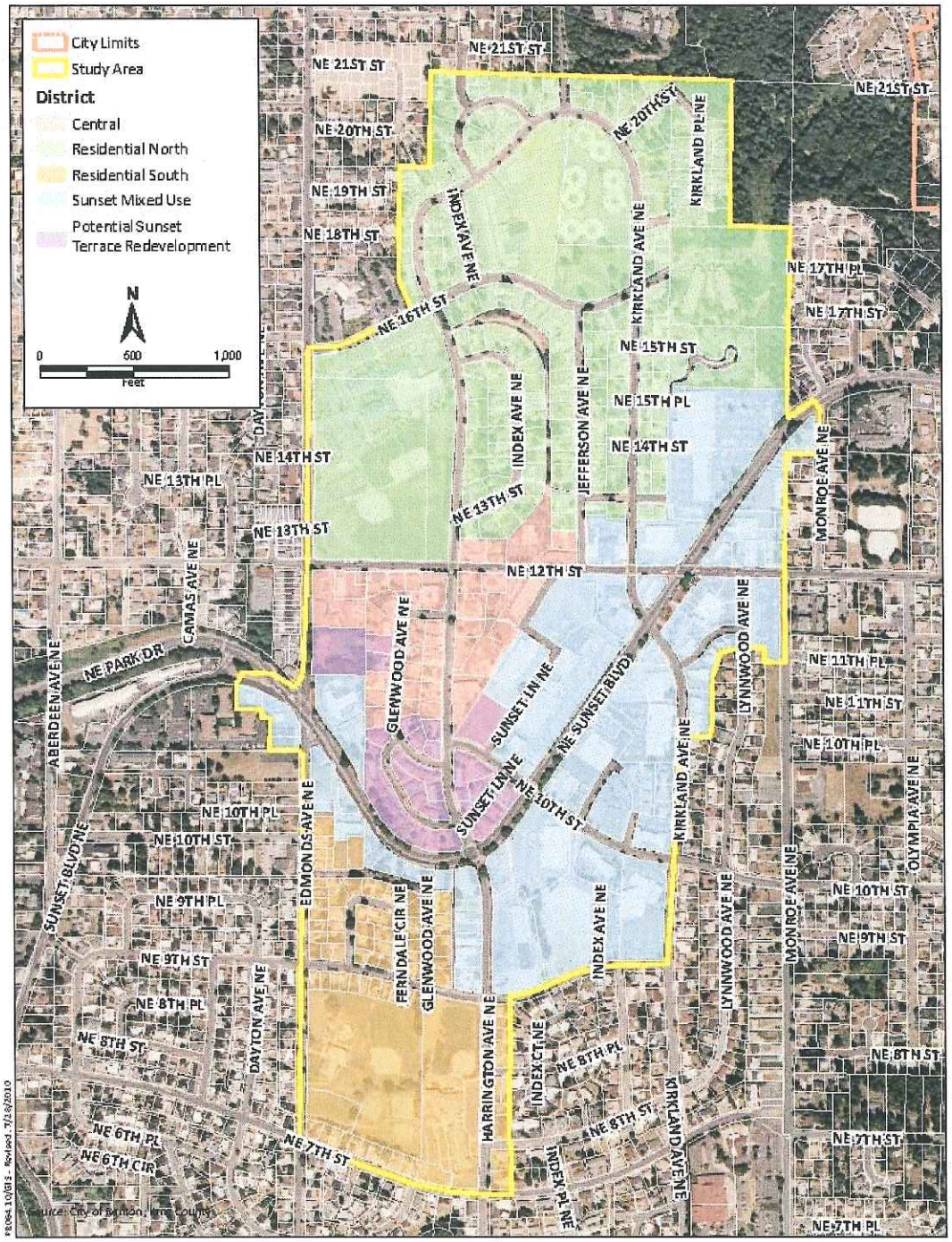

Figure 1
Sunset Area Planned Action/EIS Study Area
City of Renton Sunset EIS

What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?
An EIS is an informational document intended to allow for citizen and agency comment and assist agencies make informed choices about proposals. An EIS contains descriptions and analysis of:

- The proposed action and alternative actions
- Existing conditions of the built and natural environment (i.e., the affected environment or setting)
- Impacts to the built and natural environment that may occur if the proposed action or an alternative action were implemented (direct, indirect, and cumulative)
- Mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate impacts of the proposed action, and
- Summaries of impacts found to be significant, unavoidable, and adverse (meaning residual impacts of the proposed action despite mitigation measures).

What is a Planned Action?
The Planned Action designation by a jurisdiction reflects a decision that adequate environmental review has been completed and further environmental review under SEPA, for each specific development proposal or phase, will *not* be necessary if it is determined that each proposal or phase is consistent with the development levels and mitigation measures specified in a Planned Action Ordinance. Although future proposals that qualify as Planned Actions would not be subject to additional SEPA review, they would be subject to application notification and permit process requirements. Because a Planned Action is contemplated for the Sunset Area Community proposals, public comment during the EIS process is encouraged.

What is scoping?
Scoping is a process intended to ensure that the EIS focuses on and addresses all relevant issues. The City is required to notify agencies, tribes, and the public when an EIS is under preparation and to solicit comments on the range of alternatives and impacts to be discussed in an EIS. Public comment is being solicited in a scoping process through September 13, 2010. See "How do I comment on the EIS" below.

What will the EIS study?

Elements of the Environment to Be Addressed
The City of Renton has identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS: aesthetics; air quality, including greenhouse gas emissions; earth; energy; environmental health; environmental justice; historic/cultural resources; housing; land use; noise; parks and recreation; plants and animals; public services, including public education, safety, health, and social services; socioeconomics, including demographic, employment, and displacement; transportation; utilities, including wastewater, stormwater, water supply, telecommunication, natural gas, power, electrical; and water resources, including groundwater and surface water. More information is described below under "Environmental Topics."

Conceptual Alternatives
The alternatives to be considered in the EIS will include the proposed action, a no action alternative, and a redevelopment alternative to the proposed action. The redevelopment alternative will be finalized after the scoping meeting and conclusion of the comment period. It may address alternative land use mixes, infrastructure options, or other features.

How do I comment on the EIS?
Public comment is being solicited in a scoping process through September 13, 2010 including written comments and a scoping meeting.

Send written comments to the contact person listed under "How can I get more information?"

A scoping meeting will be held on September 1, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at the Highlands Neighborhood Center, 800 Edmonds Ave NE, Renton, WA 98056. Written and oral comments will be taken at this meeting.

The public will also be invited to comment during the comment period on the Draft EIS after it is published, and during a public hearing regarding the Planned Action. Notifications about the Draft EIS publication and public meetings and hearings will be made in accordance with adopted City procedures. Interested parties who sign up on mailing lists or contact the City with a request to receive notices will also receive notices. See "How can I get more information" below.

How can I get more information?
The City's web site will have updated information on documents and public meetings – see www.rentonwa.gov. Check it often so you'll know what's happening. Or email or call our contact person.

Contact Person
Erika Conkling, AICP
Senior Planner
City of Renton Department of Community and Economic Development
1055 S. Grady Way
Renton, WA 98057
(425)430-6578 voice (425)430-7300 fax
econkling@rentonwa.gov

Environmental Topics

Potential Environmentally Significant Issues

The following is a summary of the elements of the environment that have been identified as being potentially impacted by the proposal, and therefore, will be addressed in the EIS. Impacts, mitigation measures, and impacts that cannot be mitigated will be identified in the EIS.

Topic	Proposed Environmental Analysis Approach
Earth	Describe the geologic setting and simplified geologic character of the study area. Rely primarily on narrative description using soils reports from recent constructed projects – public and private. Conduct a limited field surface assessment of the Sunset Terrace site. Discuss the degree and nature of potential soil/geotechnical impacts encouraged by the proposal and alternatives.
Air	Prepare an analysis of air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. Determine if the proposal and alternatives would result in additional air pollutant emissions. Summarize existing air quality conditions and compare growth levels and potential Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) based on the transportation model. Prepare a focused review of greenhouse gas emissions using the King County greenhouse gas emissions worksheet to determine the potential for alternatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions compared with dispersed development patterns.
Water	Assess current conditions and potential impacts regarding groundwater and surface water. Describe change in impervious surfaces and water quantity and quality taking into account current surface water, drainage, and soils conditions, proposed drainage master plan, and low impact development techniques.
Plants and Animals	Since the study area is largely developed the primary topics to be addressed are water quality and runoff effects on adjacent natural systems outside of the study area. Review available information and conduct limited site reconnaissance visits of the Sunset Terrace sites. (No habitat or wetland surveys or assessments will be conducted.) Prepare a technical report that: describes the existing conditions for wildlife habitat, habitat features, and potential use by Federal or State listed threatened, endangered, candidate, or priority species. Summarize existing City and state inventories and contacts with representatives from other agencies that may have wildlife information relative to the study area. Describe application of federal state, and local regulations that apply. Assess the potential for proposed low impact development standards, regional drainage systems, and other features to minimize impacts. Document findings. It is anticipated that the conclusion for NEPA purposes will be a letter of no effect regarding federal listed species.

Topic	Proposed Environmental Analysis Approach
Energy and natural resources	Describe energy sources and consumption, changes in demand for energy as a result of the proposal and alternatives, and mitigation measures to reduce demand such as energy code requirements, proximity to transit services, etc. Estimate Sunset Terrace site-wide energy usage by direct space heating, electricity usage, and vehicle usage. Use the Energy Star Target Finder model to forecast baseline energy usage, natural gas consumption, electricity usage according to geographic area and facility type. Calculate vehicle-related energy consumption by considering project-specific VMT forecasts, which are based on the facility's mixed-use land use goals. For a neighborhood level analysis, use the King County GHG spreadsheet to estimate energy usage and supplement it with estimates of vehicle-related fuel consumption. Evaluate potential energy reductions achievable by using more stringent energy codes and by adopting LEED energy-conservation design goals.
Environmental health hazards	Assess potential soils contamination in the study area based on contamination and cleanup data as available from the City, state and other readily available sources. Based on available information concerning historic land uses in the study area, identify the risk of potential contamination in the study area. Describe federal and state laws and specific mitigating measures to address potential contamination if found.
Environmental justice	Describe the potential of the proposal and alternatives to have a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations and provide appropriate mitigation.
Noise	Describe the overall noise character of the study area based on existing uses, and for Sunset Terrace based on noise monitoring. Conduct 48-hour mid-week noise monitoring at one monitoring location (Sunset Terrace). As part of the noise monitoring conduct site visits to the Sunset Terrace site to identify site-specific noise sources such major roads, commercial facilities, and airports (addressing facilities within 15 miles). Review the FAA Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study for Renton Airport to evaluate how existing and future airport noise levels will affect the Sunset Terrace and the planned action area. Determine future noise levels based on U.S. Department of HUD Noise Assessment Guidelines and use of the traffic

Topic	Proposed Environmental Analysis Approach
	model volumes and other noise programs. Describe existing ambient noise levels and potential increases in noise levels due to increases in traffic. Describe mitigation measures such as the energy code and other noise abatement practices.
Land use	Assess land use compatibility including the proposed amount, types, scale and pattern of uses in comparison with the existing land use pattern and adjacent development. Analyze conformance with applicable federal, state, county, and local plans and regulations, such as the Renton Comprehensive Plans and Zoning/Development regulations.
Housing	Calculate the number of housing units that would be provided and those potentially eliminated, with estimates of housing type (attached, detached, etc.) and affordability (extremely low, very low, low income, etc.). Describe plans for replacement of current housing and relocation of the occupants including whether replacement facilities or housing units are available within the community or in nearby neighborhoods and effect of the relocation of families on these neighborhoods
Aesthetics and Light and glare	Use existing photos, maps, aerials, and text to describe the overall aesthetic character of the study area. Describe site and neighborhood character in terms of visual quality and coherence, character and design of existing buildings, and building height, bulk and scale. Using conceptual plans developed for the Sunset Terrace and other example developments indicative of zoning allowances, describe the degree and nature of changes due to the proposal and alternatives and potential effects on surrounding visual character, height and bulk, and shade/shadow.
Recreation	Address amount and type of designated and informal parks and recreational program opportunities in the vicinity, operators, and baseline of existing facility capacity and programs. Describe proximity of parks and recreation facilities to current and future residents. Determine who currently uses the facilities (youth, adults, seniors) and who may use the facilities in the future as a result of the proposal. Describe the demand for parks and recreation services, types of facilities/amenities that may be needed. Develop mitigation including opportunities to add parks and recreation facilities, or to address inter-agency

Topic	Proposed Environmental Analysis Approach
	agreements to optimize available facilities.
Historic and cultural preservation	Historic Resources: Conduct a literature search for the study area and vicinity to identify the presence of any known historic resources. Notify the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and affected tribes by letter about the project and the pending cultural resources investigation, as necessary, and invite them to participate and contribute information to the project. Conduct a reconnaissance-level historic resources survey of built environment resources 45 years of age or older on Sunset Terrace (approximately 31 buildings) and along SR 900 (one parcel deep, approximately 18 buildings). Inspect the integrity of these resources to evaluate their potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Collect information about their architectural character and physical integrity of each resource, including photographs, and prepare a Washington Historic Property Inventory form for each resource surveyed. Archaeological Resources: Conduct a literature search and coordinate with agencies as described for historic resources. Conduct an archaeological survey limited to Sunset Terrace and SR 900 to identify previously recorded and/or unrecorded archaeological resources where ground-disturbing activities are expected to take place. Inspect the ground surface at Sunset Terrace to find exposed ground surface, any exposed cultural materials, and areas that have high probability for having buried deposits that could contain cultural materials. In areas where project-related ground-disturbance is expected, excavate shovel test pits to reveal the nature of the subsurface deposits and whether or not buried cultural materials are present. If required, selected probes will be made along SR 900 in readily accessible landscaped areas to confirm the area's disturbance and likely lack of resources. All probes will be backfilled upon completion. Any newly identified archaeological sites will be mapped, photographed, and recorded on Washington State Archeological Inventory forms.
Socioeconomics	Address demographic character changes, present and future employment and income patterns, and potential displacement and relocation associated with the proposal and alternatives.
Transportation	Perform traffic analysis to determine roadway design

Topic	Proposed Environmental Analysis Approach
	parameters and potential traffic related environmental impacts. Prepare an operational analysis, and an assessment of safety, transit, non-motorized modes.
Public services	Address the following services: • Public Safety (police, fire, and emergency medical services) • Educational Facilities (K-12 schools, early childhood education) • Health Care (e.g. regular and emergency dental and medical care) • Social Services (e.g. family counseling centers, day care centers; services for senior citizens and the handicapped; nutrition centers, meals on wheels; income maintenance and man power programs, etc.). Prepare a demand analysis based on population, housing, and employment estimates and service providers' adopted levels of service.
Utilities	Describe current conditions and potential need for improved facilities as a result of growth and redevelopment for the following services, wastewater, stormwater, water supply, telecommunication, natural gas, power, and electrical.

Inapplicable Environmental Topics

The following topics referenced on NEPA or SEPA checklists or guidance documents are considered inapplicable to the Sunset Area Community:

- Agricultural Lands. The study area is highly urbanized and is not used for agricultural purposes.
- Flooding. The study area does not appear to contain any streams, and flood hazards have not been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Coastal and shoreline issues. The study area is not located along shorelines.
- Airport Runway Clear Zone or Clear Zone Disclosure. The study area is not adjacent to the Renton Airport.
- Exposure to hazards from stationary aboveground storage tanks that contain materials of an explosive or flammable nature. At this time, above ground storage tanks are not located in the study area due to its residential and retail character.