

No New Washington Prisons Comments on SEPA Checklist for 2021 Revised Western State Hospital Master Plan

The proposed expansion to the Western State Hospital (WSH), as outlined in the 2021 Revised Western State Hospital Master Plan (MP), includes significant changes to the existing set of facilities, including a new 350-bed forensic hospital on the property, demolition of several existing buildings on site, a new 18-bed residential cottage at the Child Study and Treatment Center, and a new community 48-bed residential treatment facility, among other infrastructure changes.

The project has so far submitted a revised SEPA checklist to the lead agency for SEPA review, the City of Lakewood. No New Washington Prisons argues that, based on the data collected for the SEPA checklist, this expansion will have major adverse environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. The mitigated determination of nonsignificance published by the City of Lakewood on June 6, 2022 did not adequately address or provide mitigation for the issues outlined below. We believe that a full EIS process should be required to identify areas for increased mitigation before design can begin.

We have included below a list of areas where the SEPA Checklist (Appendix 8 in the Revised Master Plan) has identified areas where the project's impact will adversely impact the environment, or where further investigation and analysis is required to determine the true impact of the project.

Timeline and Project Scope

The timeline and project scope are not adequately defined in the SEPA Checklist, as noted in the following areas:

- The SEPA Checklist **fails to specify the proposed schedule**, only stating that construction “is projected to begin in approximately 6 years” (Appendix 8, p. 2)
- The SEPA Checklist also states that “The initial master plan for the campus was approved by the City in 1998 and is based on a 10-year planning period. An update to the Master Plan was prepared in 2008, and the latest planning efforts were initiated in 2018” (Appendix 8, p. 3); given that the initial 10-year planning period has now been grossly exceeded, **an updated accurate timeline should be required.**
- The SEPA Checklist states that the project does not have any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activity related to or connected with the proposal (Appendix 8, p. 2), which **seems to conflict with information provided** in the Revised Master Plan below:
 - o “A 2018 Campus Essential Electrical Systems assessment of the on-site DSHS distribution system indicated that a substantial portion of the campus essential electrical system is at the end of its useful life. The report recommends replacement of existing equipment to maintain operational redundancies including life safety systems” (MP, p. 51)
 - o “campus electrical upgrades and modification would likely be required downstream of the utility meter to support future growth. Future campus growth and redevelopment should integrate the 2018 report recommendations” (MP, p. 51)
 - o “Given the age of the steam system, the State’s Net Zero policy, and limits on the gas feed to the boiler room (see below), this master plan assumes that future buildings will

not utilize the central steam plant. In the long-term, DSHS seeks to migrate all facilities from the steam boiler facility and retire it” (MP, p. 51)

Parking

The Master Plan includes the addition of 334 new parking spots, and acknowledged **that planned parking capacity for the expansion is expected to violate the Lakewood Zoning Code** (Master Plan, p. 44).

Additionally, according to state law governing electric vehicle-readiness¹, all new buildings that provide on-site parking beginning July 1, 2024 must include electric vehicle charging capability for 10% of spaces provided. While the State Building Code Council has not yet adopted rules to guide these requirements, the long timeline of this project means that **electric vehicle charging capability must be incorporated into the project design** and considered as part of the environmental impact.

Tree Retention

While the Checklist specifies the types of trees that are present (Master Plan, p. 48), **it fails to specify the caliper of each tree, and the accurate location of all tree-drip lines**, as required.

Endangered or Threatened Species

The Checklist identifies golden paintbrush, marsh sandwort, and water howellia as Threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). While the project’s field reconnaissance did not find these species on site, the Checklist states that, “However, the **protocols for identification of ESA plants require multiple field visits conducted over several years** and timed to match the emergence/flowering of the target species. Individual projects in the Master Plan will conduct more comprehensive field studies to determine the presence or absence of ESA listed plants as appropriate” (Appendix 8, pp. 405-406). These **“more comprehensive field studies” should be conducted prior to beginning design**, rather than saying they will be conducted by “individual projects,” which cannot be guaranteed.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Efficiency

The Western State Hospital expansion will be required to comply with two different state policies that regulate greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and energy efficiency:

- **Executive Order 18-01²**, regarding State Efficiency and Environmental Performance, which requires that state-owned facilities undergoing new construction or major renovation facilities be developed as net-zero capable, and that renewable energy sources to achieve net zero should be developed when feasible
- **The 2019 Clean Buildings Act³** requires existing buildings over 50,000 square feet to reduce energy use by 15% from 2009-2018 averages and comply with the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditional Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 100-2018 as a base, as defined by the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 194-50

¹ Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 19.27.540, “Electric vehicle infrastructure requirements – Rules,” (2021) <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=19.27.540>

² Office of the Governor, “Executive Order 18-01: State Efficiency and Environmental Performance,” (2018) https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/18-01%20SEEP%20Executive%20Order%20%28tmp%29.pdf

³ Washington State Department of Commerce, “Clean Buildings,” (2019) <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/buildings/>

The WSH Master Plan fails to adequately address compliance with these policies in the following areas:

- The plan **fails to include renewable energy generation on site**, without proving that this would be unfeasible, as required (MP, p. 52);
- The plan **fails to address the energy use reductions required by the 2019 Clean Buildings Act**; of the four tax parcels included in the Western State Hospital campus, the largest tax parcel (0220321022) includes covered commercial buildings under the act;
- While some emissions from construction equipment are accounted for in the plan, the plan **fails to consider any GHG emissions from operations and maintenance** of the expanded facilities. These emissions include “on-site boilers and certain medical gasses (referred to as Scope 1), those emitted indirectly through purchased electricity (Scope 2), and those emitted in the supply chain through the production of goods and services procured by health systems (Scope 3).”⁴ This is highly problematic, given that the expansion includes:
 - o At least three new buildings for the forensic hospital, residential treatment facility, and the residential cottage; buildings are the second-highest source of GHG emissions in Washington state⁵, and hospitals in particular represent significant sources of GHG emissions⁶;
 - o Demolition of at least 520,000 square feet of building space, which can also result in GHG emissions; and
 - o The addition of 334 new parking spaces, which contradicts the Checklist’s claim that emissions from vehicles “will be negligible” since no modeling has been done to demonstrate the impact of these parking spaces.
- The Checklist states that GHG emissions will not increase, yet the Master Plan states that “with development under this plan... **electrical use is projected to grow by 55%,”** and “based on the master plan building area growth projections, it is expected the **natural gas demand may increase by 30%** for the campus as a whole” (MP, pp. 51-52). While Tacoma Public Utilities’ electricity is 97% carbon free, an increase in electrical use can still result in GHG emissions, and an increase in natural gas use without any significant energy efficiency upgrades or carbon sequestration plans can *only* result in an increase in GHG emissions.

Air Pollution

In addition to emissions of greenhouse gases, the SEPA Checklist is required to account for emissions of air pollutants. Similarly to the lack of analysis of GHG emission increases, the Master Plan **fails to account for air emissions from operations and maintenance**, including air emissions produced by:

- Supply chains, through production of goods and services procured by health systems;
- Demolition of 520,000 square feet of building space;
- Any kind of maintenance;
- Cleaning, including volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from cleaning products in new facilities;

⁴ Matthew J. Eckelman, Kaixin Huang, Robert Lagasse, Emily Senay, Robert Dubrow, and Jodi D. Sherman, “Health Care Pollution And Public Health Damage In The United States: An Update,” *Health Affairs*, Vol. 29, No. 12 (December 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01247>

⁵ Washington State Department of Ecology, “Washington State Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: 1990-2018,” *Publication 20-09-020* (January 2021), <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2002020.pdf>

⁶ Jodi D. Sherman, Andrea MacNeill, and Cassandra Thiel, “Reducing Pollution From The Health Care Industry,” *JAMA*, Vol. 322, No. 11 (August 2019): 1043-1044. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2019.10823>

- Architectural coating (painting), which include VOCs;
- Vehicles occupying the 334 new parking spaces; and
- Combustion of natural gas as a source of heating, water heating, and cooking.

Stormwater Management

The Master Plan acknowledges that “proposed developments will need to provide infiltration systems designed to address both treatment and infiltration requirements of the Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington and other applicable regulations as administered by the City of Lakewood” (MP, p. 55), but **does not specify or disclose these infiltration systems** to ensure they will be provided.

Additionally, the Master Plan states that “Specific engineering of future systems will be included at the project level. Site-specific geotechnical analysis will be required to determine infiltration rates in the native soil and location requirements” (MP, p. 55). **Site-specific geotechnical analysis should be disclosed** as part of the environmental review process prior to project design.

Environmental Health

The Checklist states that “a campus-wide study for environmental health hazards has not yet been completed” (Appendix 8, p. 16). A **study of environmental health hazards must be completed** prior to design in order to determine any potential exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill or hazardous waste, or any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

Additionally, the Checklist claims that the demolition of outmoded structures at the facility will total up to 150,000 square feet, **which is in conflict with the 520,000 square feet of demolition identified in the Master Plan** (MP, p. 39).