



Part I: Code Amendments at a Glance – Environmental Policy (SEPA) (Chapter 19.43):

A. What is it?

The State Environmental Policy Act ([RCW 43.21C](#)), commonly referred to as “SEPA”, was passed in 1971. Rules to implement SEPA are the duty and function of the Washington State Department of Ecology, which can be found at [WAC 197-11](#).

SEPA requires the city to adopt rules for the integration of the policies and procedures of SEPA. It appears that the city’s first ordinance implementing SEPA was adopted in 1976 ([Ord. 406-76](#)). Since that time, various SEPA ordinances have repealed or amended previous versions. The city’s current SEPA ordinance is codified in Title 20 in Chapter 4 (see [EMC 20.04](#)).

With Rethink Zoning, the city’s SEPA ordinance is proposed to be moved into the Unified Development Code and codified in EMC 19.43. The changes to the ordinance are limited as set forth further below.

B. Type of revision drafted:

- Minor revision to an existing chapter(s)
- Rewrite of existing chapter
- New chapter

C. Key changes from existing code:

Proposed changes to the existing SEPA ordinance:

- 1) The categorical exemption from SEPA would be expanded to exempt residential development of up to 200 dwellings in the Urban Residential 4 (UR4) zone and all Mixed Urban zones. This exemption is currently available in all of Metro Everett, and up to 100 residential units is exempt from SEPA in the E-1 MUO zone.
- 2) The requirement to make all projects which exceed the SEPA thresholds for categorical exemptions subject to Review Process II (posting and notice) is eliminated as it is not required by state law and adds additional burden on staff.