

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT MITIGATION

PHILOSOPHY:

The Lake Stevens School District No. 4 is responsible for providing public school and educational services at the elementary and secondary levels to students who now reside or will reside within the district boundaries.

Recent and ongoing new residential development within the District adversely impacts it by generating additional students that must be housed in classrooms or related facilities, and may require the District to plan for and construct new school facilities to serve the new development.

Residential development adds new students to the school system for up to one year before new housing can be taxed to support the district. Traditional methods of financing student housing have proven to be ineffective during periods of rapid residential growth. Consequently, financing additional student housing within the current tax structure is often impossible.

Bond proceeds currently available have been voter approved to fund previously identified capital project needs. These proceeds are not available to fund additional student housing needs which have resulted from unforeseen residential development. New bond issues, designed to fund student housing demands resulting from new residential development, are generally approved long after the need for new facilities is apparent. Hence, new bond issues are also an ineffective funding method.

The State Growth Management Act (GMA) authorizes the imposition of impact fees on new development as a part of the financing of public facilities and to ensure that adequate facilities are available to serve new growth and development. The District does not have independent authority to assess and collect impact fees; as such, it relies on the local jurisdictions in which the District sits to assess and collect adequate school impact fees on behalf of the District. In most cases, GMA school impact fees help to address growth-related capacity needs and relieves some of the burden on the District's existing taxpayers. However, in those cases where school impact fees may be insufficient to address growth needs, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides a mechanism for jurisdictions issuing land use permits and approving land use projects to mitigate identified adverse environmental impacts, including those affecting schools and school facilities.

The goal of this policy statement is to establish procedures to identify environmental impacts adverse to the District, and to identify and recommend appropriate and reasonable mitigation measures to be imposed upon approvals given and permits issued to those projects that adversely impact the District. Adverse environmental impacts will be identified in reasonable detail and recommended mitigation measures will be tailored to eliminate or to reduce their severity.

POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Lake Stevens School District that adverse environmental impacts of residential development within the District be identified. Recommendation shall be made to the permitting authority that approval or permit issuance for such development is conditioned on mitigation of those impacts, which may include the collection of school impact fees along with additional mitigation measures.

PROCEDURES:

The adverse impacts that result from residential developments usually include increased numbers of students beyond the District's capacity to provide classroom space for those students. In those cases the District shall:

1. Identify the number of new students expected to result from a residential development;
2. Identify the classroom space available at the time the students are expected to enroll;
3. Identify the cost of providing classroom space and services, including school sites as applicable, for those students;
4. Determine the length of time it will be necessary to provide excess or temporary classroom space before other space provided by traditional funding sources becomes available;
5. Recommend appropriate mitigation measures to be imposed as conditions on permits or approvals for the developers;
 - a. Mitigation measures recommended may include the payment of school impact fees and/or other funds to be expended to reduce the adverse impacts and to finance the facilities and/or associated expenses of providing housing for students added to the District by residential development.
6. As needed, the District will adopt other procedures and regulations necessary to implement this policy.