NOLS Sequim Library Renovation and Expansion – Project Narrative

To	City Of Sequim Hearings Examiner
From	CUP Applicants
Date	May 3, 2023

The North Olympic Library System (NOLS) Sequim Branch Library has served the community in this location for 40 years. Approving this proposal for the renovation and addition to the existing building will allow the library to serve the evolving needs of Sequim for decades into the future. The increased building area would accommodate additional library collections, a community meeting room and gathering spaces not available in the existing building, a teens area, and a larger children's area with dedicated outdoor space. The renovation also improves accessibility for all populations, with lower shelving, accessible restrooms, and pathways from the parking lot to the building entry. An elective full-building sprinkler system ensures occupant safety.

The proposal focuses on reducing environmental harm through intentional design decisions. The efficient building envelope and improved mechanical systems increase thermal comfort for patrons while reducing energy use. Windows and skylights are located to allow sunlight in during winter months, while blocking direct sun in summer months.

The renovation maintains portions of the existing building and focuses on reusing concrete, which has high embodied carbon compared to most building materials. Concrete left-in-place and reused in the remodel represents a reduction to the overall carbon footprint of the building. The west walls and northernmost portion of the proposed building are comprised of existing concrete walls left in place and reused. Walls at the south side of the existing building are to be replaced with tall windows that maximize south-facing solar access.

Vehicular circulation and the fire lane are proposed north of the building, allowing the south to be people-focused spaces with direct relationship to library interior through the south-facing windows. An accessible pedestrian path from North Sequim Avenue safely directs patrons visiting by car, foot, or bike to the main building entry, then continues south along a planted meadow to connect to the east plaza, performance stage, and additional parking stalls.

The parking lot design complies with the standards of SMC18.48. The vehicle access driveway allows for adequate stacking of vehicles and for adequate sight clearances per chapter 1340 of the WSDOT Design Manual.

The proposal accommodates Clallam County public transit vehicles, delivery trucks, and other large vehicles typical to the community. There is 56'-0" clear turn-around space allowing for easy maneuvering by county public transit and paratransit vehicles, large pickup trucks, NOLS book vans, and other delivery vehicles even with other patrons using the curbless drop-off area. The trash area is located at the far east end of the drive aisle away from public view and will be screened with a wood fence.

NOLS representatives corresponded with Clallam County Transit and Sequim School District regarding the library renovation, including involvement in stakeholder meetings in the fall of 2022 to discuss project goals. The proposed turn-around area meets transit needs; no additional transit stops are proposed. Based on internal studies and experience at NOLS, there is no expectation the proposed building renovation would increase vehicular visits enough to affect traffic in any noticeable way.

The existing stormwater management system is to be replaced with a new bioinfiltration cell complying with Sequim Municipal Code Chapter 13.104 and the current Washington State Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington. The landscape design utilizes native plantings, including drought-tolerant grasses and trees to minimize water usage on site. These planted areas increase the library street presence and add shaded areas to the site, with the overall landscape improvements being an asset to the community.

This proposal for the renovation of the existing NOLS Sequim Branch Library is consistent with the goals and objectives in the City of Sequim 2015-2035 Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan has a list of "Community Principals," many of which are reinforced in this proposal:

- *"Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and night."*
    - The proposed improved site access, site plantings, and building design increase the library's street presence.
- *"The street orientation, the placement of buildings and the use of shading should contribute to the energy efficiency of the community."*
    - The proposal is designed to maximize access to daylighting and solar heat gain in the winter, drastically reducing energy usage at the library.
- *"The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste."*
    - The proposal salvages portions of the existing building, taking particular care to save existing concrete elements due to its high embodied energy compared to most building materials.
- *"Communities should provide for the efficient use of water through the use of natural drainage, drought tolerant landscaping and recycling."*
    - The landscape design utilizes native plantings with focus on drought-tolerant species.