

CITY OF VANCOUVER  
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

For The  
City of Vancouver  
West Vancouver Access Project  
Community Development Block Grant

A. APPLICANT:

City of Vancouver  
CDBG Program  
PO Box 1995  
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995  
(360) 619-1211

Chief Certifying Office:  
Peggy Sheehan, Community Development Manager

B. PROJECT DATA:

Project Name: West Vancouver Access Project

Subgrantee's Name: City of Vancouver

Project Location: The project area is located in downtown Vancouver, Washington (SW ¼, Section 27, Township 2N, Range 1E, WM). The project area is defined as the general area bounded by Columbia Street to the east, Evergreen Street to the north, Jefferson Street to the west, and the BNSF right of way to the south. The project also includes a short segment of W 7th and 6th streets southwest of the BNSF tracks and east of Jefferson Street.

Service Delivery Area: Citywide

Time Frame: May 2009 through December 2011

Total Cost: \$45 million

Section 108 & BEDI Cost: \$7.8 Million

*CDBG Contact:*

Peggy Sheehan  
City of Vancouver  
Community Development Manager  
360-487-7952  
[Peggy.sheehan@ci.vancouver.wa.us](mailto:Peggy.sheehan@ci.vancouver.wa.us)

C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The City of Vancouver (City) is proposing road and rail improvements in the downtown Vancouver area that is located within the Esther Short Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. The road element would connect the downtown street network with grade-separated crossings at the Esther and W 4th streets intersection and near the Grant and W 6th streets intersection. New roadways through these grade-separated structures would allow vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian flow in both directions through two railroad berms. When the road improvements are completed, the at-grade railroad crossings at W 8<sup>th</sup> Street would be removed. Included in the construction is a 2,400-foot shoo-fly and railroad tracks, shifting of the mainline track operations to the shoo-fly, demolition of the concrete viaduct and earthen embankment, installation of foundation footings and superstructure at the two underpasses, construction of the new earthen berm and mainline double tracks, and demolition of the shoo-fly.

The purpose of the project is to:

- Accommodate and enhance vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian flow of the downtown City road system.
- Bring the grade-separated crossing at W 6th Street up to standards (which becomes the Grant Street underpass). The clearance is currently approximately 9 feet, forcing trucks and emergency vehicles to use the W 8th Street at-grade crossing to access western Vancouver and the Port of Vancouver.
- Provide a grade-separated crossing at Esther Street for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, including emergency services, to access the Columbia River Waterfront, western Vancouver, and the Port of Vancouver.
- Accommodate the future closing of the W 8th Street at-grade crossing, through the Grant Street underpass upgrades and the construction of the Esther Street grade-separated crossing, thus improving safety and reducing noise from train whistles.

D. EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND TRENDS:

1. **Natural Setting:** The project area is located in downtown Vancouver, Washington. Current land use adjacent to the project area consists of a mix of commercial, residential, and a few abandoned and/or undeveloped properties.

Soils in the project area are primarily mapped as Lauren gravelly loam (LgB). Manmade fill could also be encountered over the native soils and sediments.

There are no waterbodies, including wetlands, streams, or lakes within the project area. Vegetation is primarily limited to landscape plants in planting strips within and adjacent to sidewalks and building fronts and small areas of natural vegetation.

2. **Cultural Setting:** The City of Vancouver is the fourth largest city in the state. The city offers affordable utilities, a favorable tax structure, and easy access to transportation services. Modern office buildings stand amid renovated historic structures in downtown Vancouver.
3. **Summary of Findings and Conclusions:** The West Vancouver Access Project is categorically excluded from NEPA review under 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1) "Acquisition, repair, improvement, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of public facilities and improvements (other than buildings) when the facilities and improvements are in place and will be retained in the same use without change in size or capacity of more than 20 percent (e.g., replacement of water or sewer lines, reconstruction of curbs and sidewalks, repaving of streets)". The project will require mitigation and, therefore, will not convert to exempt status.

E. CONCLUSION:

It is not anticipated that the need for substantial compliance with another authority will be triggered, therefore this project is categorically excluded in accordance with 24CFR Part 58.35(a)(1).

BY: P. Sheehan  
Certifying Officer (Signature)  
Peggy Sheehan, Community Development Manager  
CDBG Program  
City of Vancouver, Washington

DATE: 6/10/09

# ENVIRONMENTAL FINDING FORM

Project/Program: West Vancouver Access Project Project #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of activity:** The City of Vancouver (City) is proposing road and rail improvements in the downtown Vancouver area that is located within the Esther Short Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. The road element would connect the downtown street network with grade-separated crossings at the Esther and W 4th streets intersection and near the Grant and W 6th streets intersection. New roadways through these grade-separated structures would allow vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian flow in both directions through two railroad berms. When the road improvements are completed, the at-grade railroad crossings at W 8<sup>th</sup> Street would be removed. Included in the construction is a 2,400-foot shoo-fly and railroad tracks, shifting of the mainline track operations to the shoo-fly, demolition of the concrete viaduct and earthen embankment, installation of foundation footings and superstructure at the two underpasses, construction of the new earthen berm and mainline double tracks, and demolition of the shoo-fly.

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- Accommodate the future closing of the W 8th Street at-grade crossing, through the Grant Street underpass upgrades and the construction of the Esther Street grade-separated crossing, thus improving safety and reducing noise from train whistles.

**Tiered Review:** Does this project involve site specific review(s) of homes, rehabilitation work etc.?

Yes, follow the directions located under Tiered Review below.  No, you do not need to do anything further.

The attached environmental review record has determined that the environmental level of clearance for this CDBG project is:

**Exempt (24 CFR Part 58.34), or**

Attached documentation:

- \_\_\_\_ ERR Narrative  
\_\_\_\_ 58.6 Statutory Checklist  
\_\_\_\_ ArcView map (if applicable)

**24 CFR Part 58.35(a) Categorically excluded, subject to the §58.5 statutes, but requires no mitigation and has converted to exempt status [24 CFR Part 58.34(a)(12)], or**

Attached documentation:

- \_\_\_\_ ERR Narrative  
\_\_\_\_ 58.5 and 58.6 Combined Statutory Checklist  
\_\_\_\_ ArcView GIS Map (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_ Section 7 Endangered Species (*only if physical improvement or housing project*)

**24 CFR Part 58.35(a) Categorically excluded subject to the §58.5 statutes but will require mitigation and, therefore, will not convert.**

Attached documentation:

- X ERR Narrative  
 X 58.5 and 58.6 Combined Statutory Checklist (*include supporting documentation*)  
 N/A ArcView GIS Map (if applicable)  
 N/A Section 7 Endangered Species (*only if physical improvement or housing project*)

If the Statutory Worksheet triggers public noticing requirements, also provide:

- X Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds (proof of publication) and  
 Pending Request for Release of Funds and Certification (HUD-7015.15 form)

**24 CFR Part 58.35(b) Categorically excluded not subject to the §58.5 statutes**

Attached documentation:

- \_\_\_ ERR Narrative
- \_\_\_ ArcView GIS Map (if applicable)
- \_\_\_ 58.6 Statutory Checklist

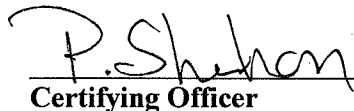
**Tiered Review (24 CFR Part 58.15)** (Required for all projects that perform site specific environmental reviews)

Attached documentation:

- \_\_\_ Check the appropriate Environmental Finding Citation above and complete all required ERR documentation.
- \_\_\_ Publish NOI/RROF in the Columbian
- \_\_\_ Keep copy of the NOI/RROF ad for file
- \_\_\_ After public comment period, send Form 7015.15 to HUD

**Environmental Assessment (24 CFR Part 58.36)** (Please see the EA and EIS Finding Form Sheet)

**Environmental Impact Statement (24 CFR Part 58.37)** (Please see the EA and EIS Finding Form Sheet)

  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Certifying Officer**

Peggy Sheehan, Community Development Manager  
CDBG Program

Date: 6/10/09



**COMMUNITY PLANNING  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM  
58.5 and 58.6 Combined Statutory Checklist**

**Sub-recipient:** City of Vancouver  
**Program:** West Vancouver Access Project  
**Project #:**  
**Applicant:** City of Vancouver, CDBG Program  
**Address:** PO Box 1995, Vancouver, WA 98668-1995

**Citation:** 24 CFR 58.35(a)(1)

**DIRECTIONS -** Write "A" in the Status Column when the project, by its nature, does not affect the resources under consideration; OR write "B" if the project triggers formal compliance consultation procedures with the oversight agency, or requires mitigation. Compliance documentation must contain verifiable source documents and relevant base data.

Area of Statutory or Regulatory Compliance	Status A/B	Provide compliance documentation. Additional material may be attached.
<b>Federal Requirements §58.5 Compliance Findings</b>		
Historic Properties 58.5(a)	B	<b>Does the project include repair, rehabilitation or conversion of existing properties, new construction, the acquisition of undeveloped land, or any construction that requires ground disturbance?</b> A cultural resources review recommended that the SP&S (BNSF) Railway and the 1907-1908 Viaduct/Berm be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Demolition of the Viaduct/Berm as part of the rail element will be an adverse effect that will be subject to mitigation procedures. The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) concurred with these findings and agreed to the proposed mitigation. See the attached historic preservation file for more information.
Floodplain Management 58.5(b)	A	<b>Is the project site in a FEMA designated floodway or a 100 or 500-year flood plain?</b> FEMA Panel # 530027 0006 B. The project is not located in a floodway or a 100 or 500-year flood plain (Zones A,B, or V) identified by FEMA maps. See the attached floodplain protection file for more information.
Wetlands Protection 58.5 (b)	A	<b>Does the project involve new construction within or adjacent to wetlands, marshes, wet meadows, mud flats or natural ponds per field observation and maps issued by the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service or US Corps of Engineers?</b> The project and adjacent area do not contain wetlands, marshes, wet meadows, mudflats, or natural ponds. See the attached wetland protection file for more information.
Coastal Zone Management 58.5(c)	A	Not Applicable in Clark County as it is not a CZM community. See the attached Coastal Zone Management file for more information.
Sole Source Aquifers 58.5(d)	A	The project is located within the Troutdale Aquifer System which has been designated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Sole Source Aquifer. The project has undergone consultation with Martha Lentz of the EPA and it was determined that the project does not pose a risk for contaminating the aquifer. See the attached Sole Source Aquifer file for more information.
Endangered Species 58.5(e)	A	<b>If physical improvement or housing project complete a section 7 form. Does the project threaten endangered species (fish, plants, animals or invertebrates) or adversely modify critical habitats?</b> The project was found to have a determination of "no effect" to federally listed species and critical habitat by FHWA and WSDOT. See the attached Endangered Species Act file for more information.
Wild and Scenic Rivers 58.5(f)	A	The project is not located within one mile of a wild and scenic river; therefore the project will have no effect. See the attached wild and scenic rivers file for more information.
Air Quality 58.5(g)	A	The project does not require an environmental assessment level review; therefore Clean Air Act conformity requirements do not apply. Air quality issues were evaluated and it was determined that the project does not pose an air quality concern; NEPA approval was issued by FHWA and WSDOT. See the attached Clean Air Act compliance file for more information.
Farmlands Protection 58.5(h)	A	The project area is zoned as industrial and commercial and does not contain prime farmland. See the attached farmlands protection file for more information.
<b>HUD Environmental Standards 58.5(i)</b>		
Manmade Hazards: Thermal/Explosive	A	<b>If home is 1978 or older fill out the lead based paint checklist(s) and documentation as required.</b> The project is located at an Acceptable Separation (ASD) from any above-ground explosive or flammable fuels or chemical containers according to "Siting of HUD-Assisted Projects Near Hazardous Facilities" (Appendices F&G, pp 51-52). The project will not expose people nor residential buildings, mobile home parks, or other HUD-

		assisted projects to such hazards. See the attached explosive and flammable operations file for more information.
Noise	A	Consideration will be given to noise attenuation if appropriate for the project. Is the project for new construction, purchase or resale of existing, modernization, or rehabilitation of noise sensitive use (i.e. housing, college housing, mobile home parks, nursing homes, hospitals ..) If the answer is no, the project is not subject to noise standards. The project does not have a noise sensitive use (i.e., housing, mobile home park, nursing home, hospital, or library) and is therefore not subject to noise standards. See the attached noise abatement and control file for more information.
Airport Clear Zones	A	The project is not within 2,500 feet of a civil airport or within 15,000 feet of a military airfield; therefore the project is not within a Clear Zone or Accident Potential Zone. See the attached Clear Zone and Accident Potential Zone file for more information.
Toxic Sites	A	Hazardous materials issues were evaluated and it was determined that the project has no hazards that could affect the safety of occupants or impact the intended use of the project. Section 4.2 of the rail and section 4.3 of the road hazardous materials technical memorandum state that the project elements would result in no long-term adverse effects to or from hazardous materials; NEPA approval was issued by the FHWA and WSDOT. See the attached toxic chemicals and radioactive materials file for more information.
Environmental Justice 58.5(j)	A	Environmental justice issues were evaluated and it was determined that the project does not pose an environmental justice concern; NEPA approval was issued by FHWA and WSDOT. See the attached environmental justice file for more information.

Area of Statutory or Regulatory Compliance	Status A/B	Provide compliance documentation. Additional material may be attached.
<b>Federal Requirements §58.6 Compliance Findings</b>		
Flood Plain Management - 58.6(a) and (b)	A	FEMA Panel # 530027 0006 B. The project is not located in a floodway or a 100 or 500-year flood plain (Zones A, B, or V) identified by FEMA maps. See the attached floodplain protection file for more information.
Coastal Barriers - 58.6(c)	A	The project is located in Clark County and does not contain a Coastal Zone Management area. See the attached Coastal Zone Management file for more information.
Airport Clear Zone Notification - 58.6(d)	A	The project is not within 2,500 feet of a civil airport or within 15,000 feet of a military airfield; therefore the project is not within a Clear Zone or Accident Potential Zone. See the attached Clear Zone and Accident Potential Zone file for more information.

In floodplain; flood insurance purchased \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Executive Order 11988 Published \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_ First Notice  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_ Second Notice

**DETERMINATION UNDER 24 CFR 58.35(a)**

(NOTE: In the rare case compliance issues are triggered-the paragraph below doesn't apply.)

A review for compliance with the other authorities cited at 24 CFR Part 58.5 and 24 CFR Part 58.6 has been accomplished as evidenced by the attached checklist. Substantial compliance with any other authority is not triggered. This project therefore becomes categorically excluded under 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(1).

Form completed by Kent Engler Date 6/10/09