



City of Puyallup

**Planning Division**

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To: Hearing Examiner  
From: Rachael N. Brown, Associate Planner  
**Subject: W Meeker Public Parking**  
Date of memo: April 07, 2023  
Date of Public Hearing: March 24, 2023

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**EXHIBIT 15: MEMO REGARDING POLICE PARKING AND 'ESSENTIAL FACILITY' DEFINITION**

On March 24, 2023, the City of Puyallup Hearing Examiner held a duly noticed public hearing to review a conditional use permit (CUP) proposal for a 14 stall City owned parking lot at 321 & 313 W MEEKER (permit #PLCUP20220167). During the course of the public hearing, the Hearing Examiner noted that the property in question is located within the volcanic lahar zone of Mt. Rainier, a regulated critical area within the City of Puyallup. As noted by the Examiner during the meeting, per Puyallup Municipal Code (PMC) 21.06.1260: *Performance standards – Volcanic hazard areas*, construction of new 'essential facilities' is restricted within this critical area:

*"Construction of new critical facilities as defined in this chapter including essential facilities and hazardous facilities, as well as any building with occupancy of 1,000 persons or more as determined by the building official using the International Building Code, shall be prohibited in volcanic hazard areas, except that sewer collection facilities and other underground utilities not likely to cause harm to people or the environment if inundated by a lahar shall be allowed pursuant to the director's approval." (PMC 21.06.1260 (1))*

The definition of "essential facilities" is defined as:

*"Essential facilities" means those facilities that are necessary to maintain life, health, welfare and safety functions including, but not limited to: fire and police stations; emergency medical facilities or medical facilities containing surgery or emergency treatment areas; emergency response services or preparedness centers and their associated buildings, shelters, or vehicle storage areas; jails and detention centers; structures and equipment in government communications centers and other facilities required for emergency response; power-generating stations, standby power-generating equipment or other types of public utility facilities that if interrupted would cause disruption to normal living and business operations; wastewater treatment plants; and tanks or other structures containing, housing or supporting water or other fire-suppression material or equipment." (PMC 21.06.210 (41))*

Given that the proposed City owned parking lot will be used primarily for City Police use, the Examiner asked whether the parking lot could be considered an 'essential facility' under the defined use of

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*'emergency response services...and their associated buildings, shelters, or ~~vehicle storage areas~~'*. The Examiner heard testimony from Police Chief Scott Engle, who testified that the Police would not consider this site an 'essential facility' under this definition for the following reasons (the following is a summary of Chief Engle's testimony):

1. While the site will be signed to be used during business hours exclusively for police staff use, this use is intended to serve as parking for staff's personal vehicles, not as a primary storage area for official police vehicles.
2. On the rare occasion when official police vehicles are stored in the proposed parking lot overnight, this will only be for a special purpose such as a late night call or patrol.

Given the testimony provided by Chief Engle regarding the intended use of this site, and the fact that the police station across the street located at 311 W Pioneer has a gated police vehicle storage area already, the City concludes that this site would not be considered an 'essential facility' and is not subject to the provisions of PMC 21.06.1260 (1).

Respectfully,

Rachael Brown

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachael Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Associate Planner

City of Puyallup