

Seattle Neighborhood Workshops  
**WALLINGFORD Q & A SESSION**  
January 17, 2017

**Q&A Session Description**

After a presentation by Geoff Wentlandt of the City's Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), workshop participants submitted written questions. Facilitator John Howell read questions aloud, grouping some similar questions. A panel of three City staff members responded: Sara Maxana (OPCD), Lindsay Masters (Office of Housing), and Spencer Williams (Legislative Assistant to Councilmember Rob Johnson). The questions and answers provided at the workshop are summarized below.

There was not enough time at the workshop to address all the questions that were submitted. The City staff committed to address the questions, post the answers online, and email the web link to everyone who had signed in at the workshop.

The remainder of this document provides the responses given at the workshop with some additional information added for clarification.

**Questions and Answers at the Workshop**

**1. Can we expect more meetings with the city in our neighborhood to review revised maps?**

This meeting is part of the City's Housing Affordability and Livability (HALA) work. After the HALA recommendations came out in the summer of 2015, the City Council asked the staff to develop an implementation proposal.

The current Urban Village review process includes online comment opportunities, and an email address and a HALA hotline for comments. In addition, Councilmember Rob Johnson has spearheaded organizing workshops to get comments about proposed zoning changes in the Urban Villages. His staff will act as a resource on this comment process.

**[Note new information:** In addition, there will be a series of five city-sponsored HALA open houses in April and May. The meeting dates and times can be found at [www.seattle.gov/hala/calendar](http://www.seattle.gov/hala/calendar) ]

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposal will be issued in May. The Draft EIS will be open for public comment for 45 days as part of the EIS process. The Final EIS will be issued in July. Revised maps will likely be available in July or August. Once the EIS is complete, there will be a proposal before the City Council. This proposal will trigger its own public review process. At the earliest, that review would start in late summer or early fall 2017 and likely stretch into 2018.

**2. (Related questions) This is already an expensive neighborhood. Are the fees high enough to incentivize development that would include affordable housing? We're concerned about the in-lieu fund alternative and whether developers will want to build affordable units in Wallingford, or just pay**

**to have affordable housing built elsewhere. A related worry is that the low-income buildings will look like the segregated “projects” that exist in some East Coast cities.**

Both in-lieu payment and performance (that is, building affordable housing within private developments) are important. The proposed requirements were set at levels that should provide a mix of both. However, the Seattle Office of Housing (OH) staff will monitor this, and if not enough developers are choosing performance, the city will recalibrate the requirements.

Regarding the look and quality of the buildings, the OH has a long track record of developing low-income housing using funds from the Housing Levy. The buildings blend into the community in which they are located. Some are in Wallingford today.

**3. When HALA is overturned in court, will the city undo HALA until a legal growth plan can be put into place?**

The intent of HALA is to grow in an effective way. This is a new program for the City. Staff have been working with the Law Department, and believe the program is consistent with the law and legal mechanisms under state law. However, if the requirements are overturned in court, the City will explore other legal options.

**4. (questions about infrastructure) How will the City ensure that parks and community centers will be improved? If a requirement for an Urban Village is to be within a 10-minute walk of transit, how does Wallingford qualify, since Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) says we are not in a 10-minute walkshed?**

These questions relate to the “livability” aspect of HALA. Other City programs address various aspects of livability, such as child care, parks, minimum wage, and transit. OPCD is working on the proposed zoning changes in conjunction with other City departments. For example, SDOT is doing transportation and parking planning for the Urban Villages, and the Office of Environment is looking at changes to the tree canopy. OPCD is developing an updated design review process and drafting changes in design codes, such as for building set-backs. All Urban Villages are interested in better transit, sidewalks, parks and other services. Some infrastructure improvements come from private investment connected with development, some from City investments.

Regarding transit, the “frequent transit” designation also applies to places where transit intersects with two Urban Villages. Wallingford meets this criterion with transit on Aurora and on 45<sup>th</sup>.

**5. (specific zoning questions) Why is so much Single Family zoning in Wallingford being changed to Low-Rise 3 (LR3)? This does not show respect for current residents. While the presentation said most of the changes were only to increase height by one story, the definitions show greater increases to 55 feet.**

All Urban Villages are different in layout and size. Some are corridors, some are nodes. The community focus groups who have advised OPCD encouraged a consistent approach to be equitable with Urban Villages across the city. By and large across the city, the majority of the height increases are of one story. Within some Urban Village walksheds, however, the proposals include additional increases.

**6. (concerns about displacement and housing preservation) How is it adding affordable housing if a currently affordable home is knocked down and a new one is added? How many older, cheaper units will be lost for the new subsidized units? What is the net increase of affordable housing?**

In some cases the current affordable housing is affordable because it is in bad condition. A separate City program, the Preservation Program, offers funding for preservation and renovation of affordable housing.

The City has committed to conduct a displacement analysis related to the MHA proposal. For example, in the University District, analysis shows that over 20 years, 40 - 275 units might be demolished but will be replaced by approximately 620 - 910 affordable units. In addition, the new affordable housing will be rent- and income-restricted for 75 years. The City will monitor this affordability requirement.

**7. Will tenants for whom parking is not provided be required to say that they do not own and will not buy a car?**

No.

**8. Can arterial zoning be changed to have buildings go higher to save more of the single family zones?**

This could be discussed in the small groups at this workshop. In the proposal, the City is following the principles for development that the community focus groups helped to develop. One of these is to use a race and social justice equity lens in zoning. Putting all the multifamily housing on arterials would make it subject to more noise and pollution, and farther from parks and schools—the reverse of equity.

**9. Are there examples of cities where similar methods have been used to increase both density and affordability? Are there other cities with HALA-like programs that have worked?**

The City has reviewed examples where requirements have been set high and produced affordable housing. For example, Brooklyn has housing that looks like single family zones and that preserves family-sized units. Chicago has many affordable two-flats and three-flats that fit with their neighborhood. San Francisco, New York City and Portland all have had HALA-like programs. A lesson learned from San Francisco is that a 20 percent increase in height increased competition, and housing prices went up so steeply that only the richest people and those in subsidized units could afford to live there. Seattle is trying to create housing options that are affordable to people at all incomes.

**10. Why wouldn't a developer pay a small fee and then sell million-dollar units?**

Developers do include affordable units in projects now through the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) program. This is already part of their business model. The Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirement of HALA would make it easier for them to create affordable housing.

**11. HALA is supposed to be welcoming and "green," but there needs to be requirements for trees and green space.**

We currently have complaints that developments and townhouses take down trees and are built with no setbacks. For the MHA proposal, OPCD is developing design requirements and working with Parks for

tree planting opportunities. The small groups at this meeting can discuss and propose suggestions for design elements that participants would like to see.

**12. How do bonuses add to commercial and how does this add to livability?**

This varies by zone and by situation. The handouts at the discussion tables show examples of massing differences. The staff welcomes feedback on design standards. Also, many of the bonuses are an exchange for real costs. It is important to consider what we want to prioritize, such as walkability, child care and tree canopy.

**13. Why was there no mention of the Mayor’s secret “grand bargain” that prevents the city from changing ideas?**

The HALA Advisory Group had 28 members from a variety of constituencies. They worked for a year to develop the proposal. Near the end of their process, there was a stumbling block stemming from the 25-year differences among affordable housing advocates, private developers, social equity proponents and neighborhood interests. They worked in a subcommittee to develop a list of six or seven ideas that they could all stand behind and agree not to fight each other on. That agreement is what some outside the process have called the “grand bargain.”

**14. (Related questions about need) How does the city justify the proposal when there is no data to prove the changes are needed to meet the city’s goal? Why not keep the current boundaries? Would the city grandfather in current affordable buildings?**

The initial presentation touched on some indicators of need, such as the 3,000 people who are unsheltered every night, and 45,000 households that are severely cost burdened—paying more than half their income for housing. We have also seen rapidly rising rents in the city. The staff can provide more data on the need for affordable housing.

**15. How many new affordable units will be created and do they duplicate current ones?**

The City’s commitment with the MHA program is to provide 6,000 units affordable at 60 percent of Area Median Income (AMI). These are additional units that don’t currently exist. They won’t all necessarily look very different from current single family areas. For example, there are opportunities to create affordable units on single family lots through accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes.

**Seattle Neighborhood Workshops**  
**WALLINGFORD: RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS**  
*From the Workshop Held on January 17, 2017*

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Participants at the Wallingford Urban Village Community Design Workshop had the opportunity to write questions on a half-sheet of paper for response by a panel of City staff members at the workshop. Participants turned in a total of 119 forms, some asking multiple questions. The panel answered 15 questions at the meeting. (See the separate document entitled, “Wallingford Q & A Session Final.”) This document provides responses to the questions that staff did not have time to answer at the meeting. If a question was asked and answered at the meeting, it has not been included in this summary.

The following summarizes the questions, grouped into categories, and provides responses from City staff.

**1. Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Program**

**1.1 Questions on how much affordable housing is needed**

To address the housing affordability crisis, Seattle must build a substantial amount of market-rate housing, in order to reduce competition for housing and slow rent increases, and rent- and income-restricted affordable housing, in order to provide housing for people whom market-rate housing doesn’t serve. Numerous studies have found that both strategies are necessary to address affordability overall. By implementing zoning changes and affordable housing requirements at the same time, we can substantially increase our supply of affordable housing without affecting the critical supply of market-rate housing.

The overall HALA goal is 20,000 affordable housing units over the next 10 years, to be achieved by the 60+ HALA recommended actions. The goal for MHA is 6,000 affordable housing units over 10 years.

### **1.2 Questions on why the MHA program is needed**

Without putting the MHA program in place, new development would not contribute to affordable housing. Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) is a new requirement for developers of new commercial and multi-family residential development to either include affordable housing as part of their development, or make a payment to support affordable housing in Seattle. In exchange for creating affordable housing, developers will be able to access additional zoning capacity. Other cities within the region such as Issaquah, Kirkland, and Federal Way have already begun to use this program to address affordable housing needs. MHA, when adopted, would increase the size of allowable development and include an affordable housing requirement.

MHA will ensure that new affordable housing dedicated to households with lower incomes is created as the City continues to grow. MHA will create an estimated 6,000 net new units of affordable housing over 10 years for households with incomes no higher than 60% of the area median income (AMI) -- \$38,000 for an individual and \$54,000 for a family of 4. Current monthly market-rate rents for a one-bedroom apartment in new buildings average \$1,989. Currently, an individual with an income equal to or less than 60 percent of AMI would pay \$1,009 for that same apartment.

The conversation on how this program could work in Seattle as well as any changes in zoning is just beginning. The community has a real opportunity to help shape MHA and the related zoning changes that will be discussed and ultimately approved by City Council, in early 2017 for the University District, Downtown, and South Lake Union, and later in 2017 for the rest of the city.

### **1.3 Questions on why zoning changes are needed if there is already more than enough development capacity**

For Seattle as a whole, there is theoretical zoning capacity for approximately 220,000 more housing units. However, this theoretical capacity does not consider whether the properties are located in areas where there is a market for development at existing prices, whether this zoning would provide the types of housing (apartments vs. townhouse vs. cottages) that people desire, or the cost of developing these parcels. Existing zoning tends to allow mostly large apartment buildings or single-family homes with few options for lower-cost family-sized housing. Additionally, since lower-cost parcels tend to be developed first, a decreasing amount of development capacity means that developers must pay more for new land, further contributing to the rising cost of housing.

Additionally, new development is not currently required to contribute to affordable housing. Making zoning changes allows us to put a new affordable housing requirement in place through MHA and expands housing options in our urban villages, walkable places that offer transit, services, amenities, and jobs.

To implement MHA requirements, we are proposing zoning changes that add development capacity everywhere that the new affordable housing requirements will apply. This additional capacity — often

one more story than what someone could build today — helps to partially offset the cost of the affordable housing requirement. In this proposal, additional zoning capacity is necessary to ensure the city's future growth addresses our critical housing affordability needs. Commercial and multifamily development in areas where development capacity is not increased will not have the mandatory affordable housing requirement.

#### **1.4 Questions on how MHA will work to increase affordable housing, and on the performance and payment options**

Under MHA, developers will have the option to perform (include affordable units in the development) or pay into a fund for the Office of Housing to create affordable units. The MHA performance and payment options both offer benefits to help us achieve our affordable housing objectives. Under the performance option, rent-restricted homes become available when a new building opens and are part of a mixed-income building

Under the payment (in lieu) option, the Office of Housing leverages other funding sources to produce two to three times more affordable housing overall compared to projects choosing performance. The Office of Housing has a 35-year track-record of investing local and federal funds, including incentive zoning in-lieu payments, to meet a range of strategic goals for affordable housing. Additionally, we can use MHA payment funds to preserve *existing* affordable housing, to build affordable family-size homes of which the market produces very few, to invest in affordable housing options where displacement risk is a concern, to expand affordable housing options in neighborhoods with high opportunity and high housing costs.

#### **1.5 Questions on who will develop the affordable housing funded by MHA payments**

The Seattle Office of Housing will administer in-lieu payments from the MHA program. The Office of Housing does not build units itself but is a lending partner with affordable housing providers.

#### **1.6 Questions on why the city is focusing MHA in Urban Villages**

Seattle's urban village boundaries were established about 20 years ago when we adopted our first Comprehensive Plan. Each urban village in Seattle is a different place with a variety housing types, its own mix of land uses, unique topography, a range of services and amenities. Additionally, the [Growth & Equity Analysis](#) developed as part of the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan update evaluated the risk of displacement and the level of access to opportunity for marginalized populations across the entire city and in each urban village. Together, these many characteristics factor into how we plan for future growth in our neighborhoods so that we may become a more equitable and livable city for all. See also Question 9.1.

The quantity of additional housing growth and housing in each urban village depends on a number of unique local factors, such as the existing land use pattern, and existing assets and infrastructure.

As part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for MHA implementation, we are analyzing potential growth in each urban village as a result of the proposed zoning changes. This type of analysis

relies on several different inputs and assumptions, including the urban village housing and job growth estimates in the adopted Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The EIS will identify the potential effects of additional new market-rate and affordable housing beyond the Seattle 2035 growth estimate.

Single family areas outside of urban villages — comprising roughly 94 percent of all Single Family zoning — are not proposed to have zoning changes, and future development there won't contribute to affordable housing through MHA.

### **1.7 Questions on geographic equity and using MHA in areas outside Urban Villages**

One of our core MHA principles is to implement MHA requirements for new development in existing multifamily and commercial zones and in our urban villages, with a few limited exceptions for specific circumstances, such as National Historic Register Districts. This includes areas outside of Urban Villages that are currently zoned multifamily and commercial.

### **1.8 Questions on the potential for MHA to result in displacement of owners and renters**

MHA is an important tool for addressing displacement in Seattle. It provides an opportunity to slow the rate of displacement by creating 6,000 new affordable housing units over 10 years and by accommodating more market-rate housing on parcels that are ready to redevelop. Together, these actions will provide additional housing for low-income households and increase the overall supply of housing.

In the City's analysis of the U District and Downtown/South Lake Union zoning legislation, it found that the proposal would substantially reduce the risk of displacement in these areas due to the increase in affordable and market-rate housing. The City is currently in the process of conducting this analysis for the zone-wide changes as part of our Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and will use this analysis to inform the final proposal.

It is important to remember that displacement is occurring today due primarily to rent increases in the market because of high demand for housing, and there is currently no guarantee that any new housing built is affordable. With MHA, there is an assurance that some of the new housing built will be affordable or contribute to housing affordability.

### **1.9 Questions on the net impact of MHA—the new affordable units built compared to existing affordable units that are torn down**

The City has been working with consultants (external experts) to ensure that the value of allowing additional height or bulk and the cost of MHA requirements (affordable housing contributions) are balanced so that we produce affordable housing without making redevelopment more or less likely. Without MHA requirements, a zoning change could increase the value of a property and encourage redevelopment to happen. However, under the proposal, because providing affordable housing is a cost to a developer, the increase in value due to additional zoning capacity is balanced with the additional cost of affordable housing. As a result, in general, MHA will not cause any more sites to redevelop, but could allow for more housing (both affordable and market rate) on the sites that do.

The MHA program also allows for the preservation of existing, low-cost housing through investment of funds collected from developers. This strategy ensures that such housing is brought to a high standard of health and quality, and that it is preserved for the long-term for low-income households who need it most.

### **1.10 Questions on whether preservation of currently affordable housing could solve much of the problem**

See Question 1.9 re preservation as part of the MHA program. It is also important to understand that approximately 65% of Seattle’s land – not just its residential land but all its land – is zoned single family, severely constraining how much the City can increase housing supply. Among its peer cities, Seattle has one of the highest percentages of land dedicated exclusively to detached single family structures and a small number of accessory dwelling units. The exclusivity of Single Family Zones limits the type of housing available for sale or rent, limits the presence of smaller format housing and limits access for those with less income. In a city experiencing rapid growth and intense pressures on access to affordable housing, a strategy focused exclusively on preservation of existing housing units will not meet our affordable housing needs.

Seattle’s urban villages are prioritized for increased development capacity because they accommodate more people through high frequency transit service, open space, and other assets and amenities.

### **1.11 Question on the zoning definition of LR2 and LR3 and whether MHA changes them**

LR2 and LR3 zones are considered lowrise multi-family zones. They are intended to encourage multi-family housing. Instead of changing the LR2 or LR3 zone designation on the map, the draft proposal keeps the same zoning designation but increases the allowable height limit and floor-area ratio (FAR). The purpose is to implement the MHA requirement. (See 1.2 above). Nothing in the draft map proposal is set in stone. MHA implementing zones can be modified based on public input.

### **1.12 Questions on “bonuses” that can add to the official heights listed for multifamily and commercial buildings**

There are limited exceptions to the maximum height limit for certain rooftop features – principally elevator or stair structures for rooftop access that may exceed the height limit by a maximum of 15’. These features may cover no more than 25% of the rooftop area and must be setback from the edge of the roof to minimize visual impact. Some zones also allow for a 4’ height exception if the first floor of the building is raised up to 4’ above the sidewalk level. This is intended to encourage stoops and porches and create privacy so that first floor windows are not at eye-level to passersby.

The Living Building Pilot project is the only true “bonus” available in most lowrise and neighborhood commercial zones that could increase the allowable height limit. Projects that meet an exceedingly high green building standards (net zero or similar) may build an additional 10’ of height. There is a citywide cap of 20 Living Building Pilot projects total across the city. To date, with approximately 8 years of the program’s existence there have only been 2 projects: The Bullet Foundation building on Capitol Hill and the Brooks headquarters.

### **1.13 Questions on the proposed change for MHA of Neighborhood Commercial-40 (NC-40) to NC-55**

The existing NC-40 zone (which is proposed to change to NC-55) has a height allowance to increase the allowable height of the structure by 4' – 7' feet if a ground floor commercial space is provided. The proposed NC-55' zone would remove that ground floor commercial space allowance, but make the maximum height 55' (instead of 50'). Therefore, the effective height limit increase is about 10' consistent with other proposed changes. A tall ground floor commercial space is desirable in order to create vibrant retail storefronts, and storefronts that can work for certain businesses like grocery stores.

### **1.14 Question on oversight of MHA**

Any building that is constructed would have to go through the normal permitting process, including land use permitting, design review for most larger projects, and building permits. The required affordable housing that is produced will be monitored by the City's Office of Housing annual to ensure rents are at an affordable level, and that an eligible low income household occupies the unit.

## **2. Specifics of the Wallingford Zoning Proposal**

### **2.1 Questions on why put MHA in the Wallingford Urban Village**

See Question 1.6 on why focus MHA in Urban Villages generally. In addition, the criteria for expenditure of funds include factors that would make Wallingford a good location for investment, including locating within urban centers and villages, as well as in proximity to frequent bus service. For urban villages like Wallingford, this includes some areas that have Single Family zoning today. Under MHA, these areas could add more homes for people over time, and new development would directly contribute to affordable housing.

### **2.2 Questions on why MHA would change single family zoning in Wallingford and other Urban Villages**

The draft MHA implementation maps for Wallingford and all other urban villages were created based on a set of principles that were developed with public input. One of the foundational MHA implementation Principles is that areas within urban villages (including single family zoned areas) should be considered for MHA. Urban Villages are planned as locations for priority investment in assets and infrastructure, and are expected to receive much of the city's new growth. Additionally, these changes will allow for a greater diversity of housing options beyond large apartments and single-family homes.

Wallingford's existing land use pattern includes a relatively high proportion of single family zoned areas when compared to many other urban villages. Zoning changes from single family to other zones require more discretion and choice, because adding one additional story would not allow for additional housing units (as it would in an existing multifamily or commercial zone).

Application of a mix of Residential Small Lot (RSL), and Lowrise (LR) zones is anticipated for areas changing from Single Family to allow additional housing. Principles statements that support application of a Lowrise zoning designation instead of RSL include:

- Consider locating more housing near neighborhood assets and infrastructure such as parks, schools and transit.
- Plan for transitions between high- and lower-scale zones as additional development capacity is accommodated.

### **2.3 Questions on the Wallingford Urban Village boundary**

The MHA as proposed would not change the Wallingford urban village boundary. This boundary was developed with the city’s first comprehensive planning process in the early 1990s. Seattle first adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 1994 after a multiyear effort during which residents throughout the city considered ways to shape the future of the city and to accommodate expected growth. The foundation of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan is the urban village strategy. It is the City’s unique approach to meeting the state Growth Management Act requirement. This strategy encourages most future job and housing growth to occur in specific areas in the city that are best suited for growth. Advisory committees, as well as public meetings and events, helped develop and validate the urban village strategy.

### **2.4 Questions on light rail alignment and infrastructure needs in Wallingford**

The alignment for a Ballard to University of Washington high-capacity transit line has not yet been voted on or funded. It is not part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) voter-approved transit measure. The alignment could be included in future networks if/when the voters approve funding for this alignment after ST3.

The environmental impact statement (EIS) on MHA implementation will consider the network of existing infrastructure including open space and schools, and will evaluate potential impacts due to the proposal.

### **2.5 Questions on status of the Wallingford proposal and any connection to the University District rezoning**

The University District rezone proposal was a community process that started in advance of the HALA conversation. The changes proposed in the University District are distinct. There are no changes to Wallingford zoning before the City Council or recently voted on. The Wallingford Urban Village will be a part of the citywide zoning proposal sent to City Council in the fall of 2017.

## **3. Affordable Housing**

### **3.1 Questions on how HALA defines affordability**

Housing is considered affordable to a household if it costs no more than 30% of a household's income. Household income is typically shown as a percentage of the Area Median Income (AMI). AMI is the dollar amount where half the population earns less and half earns more. This amount is different in different regions. The chart below shows the range of incomes for the Seattle area based on family size.

HALA established a goal of creating 20,000 units that would be restricted to households with low incomes, at affordable rents or sale prices. Most programs proposed as part of HALA are targeted at

serving households with incomes up to 30%, 60%, or 80% of AMI. Affordable units produced through MHA would serve households up to 60% AMI for rental housing and up to 80% AMI for ownership housing.

Income Limits (2015)								
Income Limit	Household Size							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>30% of AMI</b>	\$18,850	\$21,550	\$24,250	\$26,900	\$29,100	\$31,200	\$33,360	\$35,490
<b>60% of AMI</b>	\$37,680	\$43,020	\$48,420	\$53,760	\$58,080	\$62,400	\$66,720	\$70,980
<b>80% of AMI</b>	\$50,240	\$57,360	\$64,560	\$71,680	\$77,440	\$83,200	\$88,960	\$94,640

HALA included more than 60 recommended actions to improve affordability. Different actions provide benefit to different income groups and community members. For example, the action to increase the Seattle Housing Levy to \$290 million, approved by more than 70% of Seattle voters in 2016, will provide resources that in large part serve very low income households and households transitioning out of homelessness. Meanwhile, the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program, which was expanded to more areas of the city pursuant to the HALA recommendation, reserves 20% or more units in a new building for persons earning up to the 80%AMI income level. Other actions including strengthening tenant protections, and preventing discrimination based on source of income, serve tenants at a wide variety of income levels.

### 3.2 Questions on equity and social justice, and the location of housing funded by MHA payments

The Seattle Office of Housing, which will administer in-lieu payments from the Mandatory Housing Affordability program (MHA), has a 35-year track-record of investing local and federal funds, including incentive zoning in-lieu payments, to meet a range of strategic goals for affordable housing.

#### **Equity**

Affordable housing built with MHA funds will advance racial and social equity. These investments mitigate displacement by providing stable rents in areas at high risk of displacement, and stimulate economic development in neighborhoods that lack private investment. Affordable housing is typically developed in partnership with community based organizations that plan development around the needs of a community, including providing culturally relevant services or affordable retail space for local businesses. City funds are used to preserve existing at-risk affordable housing, and support critical family-sized units that are not being built by the private market. And, City-funded affordable housing often includes resident service programs and other connections to social services that help individuals and families to thrive.

#### **Quantity**

MHA payments will be leveraged 3:1 on average and will attract critical private and public dollars for affordable housing into Seattle. In nearly all zones, MHA payments will yield a greater number of

affordable housing units than would be produced on-site, if the payments support housing at 60% AMI. The Office of Housing has proven its effectiveness in aligning resources to maximize production.

### ***Sustainability***

MHA payments will be invested in high quality affordable housing that is built to last. The Office of Housing provides long term stewardship of City-funded housing for 50 years, ensuring it remains affordable and in good condition for generations to come. City-funded affordable housing meets the state-wide Evergreen Sustainable Development Standard, providing significant energy and water savings that benefit the environment and low-income residents over the long-term.

### ***Location***

When determining the location of affordable housing funded with MHA payments, the Office of Housing will consider the following factors:

- a. Affirmatively furthering fair housing choice and economic opportunity, and address the needs of communities vulnerable to displacement;
- b. Locating within an urban center or urban village;
- c. Locating in proximity to frequent bus service or current or planned light rail or streetcar stops;
- d. Furthering City policies to promote economic opportunity and community development and addressing the needs of communities vulnerable to displacement; and
- e. Locating near developments that generate cash contributions.

The Office of Housing has a track-record of building affordable housing in neighborhoods throughout Seattle. A 2014 independent analysis of Seattle's Incentive Zoning (IZ) program determined that housing funded with IZ payments is likely to be located in neighborhoods closer to downtown and within close proximity to the properties that provided the payments, not highly concentrated in one neighborhood. The report concluded that a greater reliance on the on-site production option would not result in a significant change in the geographic distribution of units and that on-site performance units would not be located in neighborhoods of higher economic opportunity.

### **3.3 Questions on whether affordable housing will be ownership as well as rental housing**

HALA supports more affordable and market-rate homeownership housing as well as rental housing. The HALA Advisory Committee recommendations included six recommendations to promote sustainable homeownership, including seeking to remove barriers to condominium development. The City is pursuing removal of barriers for condominium development as part of a State Legislative Agenda to address the State's Condominium Act.

Affordable homeownership is also a part of MHA. When a building satisfies the MHA requirement to build or contribute to affordable housing, it could be done with ownership units as well as rental units. Ownership units would have to be sold at a price point affordable to persons at the eligible AMI level (see Question 3.1, above), and would have to be maintained for that income level for the 75-year term. Additionally, funds generated by MHA through payments could be used to fund affordable homeownership development such as a project by a community land trust.

### **3.4 Questions on development of family-sized housing**

MHA is not expected to provide substantial incentives or disincentives for unit sizes different than what the market is already supporting in new construction.

It is expected that homes produced in the Residential Small Lot (RSL) zone would be family sized units (i.e., 2+ bedrooms and over 1,000 sq. ft.) because of the density limit in the zone. In the Lowrise 1 zone, a new development standard is proposed that would require at least one family-sized unit anytime more than 7 small apartment units are created. It is also expected that much of the infill development in the Lowrise 2 zone would include attached ground-related housing like townhouses or rowhouses that can be a good option for families and larger households.

In addition, the Office of Housing is working hard to create more family-sized housing through their affordable housing programs. Funds that are generated through the MHA payments could be used to fund buildings specifically designed to serve low income families.

### **3.5 Questions on duplexes, ADUs and DADUs in single family zones**

MHA is proposed to apply to existing commercial and multi-family zoned areas and urban villages. There is no current proposal to rezone single family zones outside of urban villages. The HALA committee recommended removing barriers to make Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in all single family zones easier to build. (ADUs and Detached Accessory Dwelling Units [DADUs] are already allowed in all single family zones). While the City took initial steps in 2016 to develop legislation to remove ADU /DADU barriers, that proposal is currently on hold for additional environmental review.

The city does account for accessory units and any known existing multi-family buildings in single family zones in its analysis of housing conditions. Many existing multifamily buildings in single family zones have legally non-conforming status. If an existing “illegal” (unpermitted) apartment is in a single family zone that is rezoned to allow multi-family housing, the unit could be made legal with a permit.

There is an owner-occupancy requirement for lots in Single Family zones where the homeowner adds an ADU or backyard cottage. A homeowner must live either in the principal single-family house or in the accessory dwelling unit for at least six months of the year. Councilmember Mike O’Brien is currently considering changes that could remove barriers to building ADUs and backyard cottages, but it is currently on hold.

### **3.6 Question on whether RSL owners will need to live on their lot**

No, there are no ownership requirements for RSL, just as there are no ownership requirements for current single-family zones. Owners of RSL property could rent as other property owners do.

### **3.7 Questions on whether there will be a fee to current property owners who renovate**

There is no affordable housing fee for renovations of existing building.

### **3.8 Questions on negative effects of owner improvements such as solar panels**

Thank you for the input on solar panels, we do not currently have an exception for solar panels in or out of Urban Villages. This will need further exploration.

### **3.9 Questions on development standards and design**

As part of MHA implementation, we are reviewing all of our development standards and considering modifying or adding standards, like setbacks, that could improve urban design outcomes as new development occurs throughout Seattle. We welcome feedback on those aspects of our proposal.

### **3.10 Questions on the impact on property values and real estate taxes**

The King County Assessor determines property taxes by multiplying a citywide tax rate by the assessed value of a property. The assessed value is essentially the Assessor's estimate of how much a property could sell for. If the Assessor determines in the future that the value of additional development capacity, along with the cost of MHA requirements, has significantly increased the overall value of a property, then property taxes would go up as well. However, economic analysis suggests that value of the additional zoning capacity and the cost of MHA affordable housing requirements are generally offsetting on most sites, but it is possible that value could increase in many cases. This change would not, however, happen automatically when a zoning change occurs. A property's assessed value increases only if there is evidence that the value of properties with similar zoning and location has increased.

A study of property assessments after a 2011 rezone near the proposed site of Roosevelt Light Rail Station provides some clues about how property values could potentially change under MHA. In that area, a number of parcels were rezoned from Single Family to Lowrise 3 (allowing four-story apartments) and Midrise (allowing six-story apartments) without the implementation of MHA requirements. A comparison of these parcels to adjacent single-family parcels that were not rezoned showed no change in property assessments or taxes for the rezoned properties in the first three years following the zoning changes. In the fourth and fifth year, after groundbreaking of several large Midrise multifamily apartment buildings, property values for the Midrise-zoned properties increased while the Lowrise-zoned properties continue to show no difference from the single-family zoned areas. Even in the extreme case of a rezone from single-family to Midrise adjacent to the light rail station *without* MHA requirements, the increase in property assessment was roughly 25 percent.

Property taxes, excluding publicly approved levies, are also subject to regulations that limit the total increase in taxes within a City to one percent annually, with some limited exceptions. If, for example, all properties in the City increased in value by exactly 10 percent, tax rate would have to go down such that the total property taxes collected would only go up by one percent. As MHA is proposed to be implemented citywide, this rule will limit the potential increase in property taxes.

Senior citizens and the disabled on limited incomes are also eligible for exemption from paying some property taxes, depending on their income levels. More information is available [here](#).

### **3.11 Questions on other strategies for affordability, such as rent control**

The Council has discussed this subject multiple times in the past and has chosen not to implement rent control beyond the limited restriction that we already have in place. In general, the Council felt that rent control would be counterproductive because it often results in landlords raising the rents for new tenants to offset the lower rents for tenants that have been in the building for a while. Rent control is currently not legal in Washington State. The code section of this prohibition is Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.21.830. See 3.10 above for discussion of the determinants of property taxes.

## **4. Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) and Implementation**

### **4.1 Questions on what HALA is and why it is needed**

The Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) is a comprehensive and multi-pronged approach to create an affordable and livable city. The HALA recommendations respond to a critical need:

- 40,000 Seattle low-income households spend more than half their income on housing.
- 2,800 people are sleeping on the streets.
- Rents are beyond the reach of many working families. Fewer homes are for sale today than any time in the last 10 years.
- Even with a new \$15 minimum wage, the average rent for a one bedroom apartment is out of reach for a single-person household minimum wage worker.

In September of 2014, Mayor Murray and City Council called together leaders in our community to help develop a bold agenda for increasing the affordability and availability of housing in our city by convening a Housing Affordability and Livability Advisory Committee. The twenty-eight member stakeholder Advisory Committee included renters and homeowners, social justice and labor advocates, for-profit and non-profit developers and other local housing experts. Mayor Murray challenged the committee to establish a plan to create 50,000 new homes, including preservation and production of 20,000 net new affordable homes, over the next 10 years. After months of deliberation, they reached consensus and in July 2015 and published a report with 65 recommendations to consider.

Shortly thereafter Mayor Murray published an Action Plan to Address Seattle's Affordability Crisis signaling an intention for the City to carry forward many of the HALA Committee recommendations. This work is ongoing.

The goal of the HALA recommendations and Mayor Murray's action plan is: To create an affordable, livable Seattle.

### **4.2 Questions on how HALA addresses livability**

Over the past several years the Mayor has been working on building a more equitable and livable Seattle. The Mayor has focused on:

- Transportation Investments – Investing in safety and moving more people through our streets in all mode types.
- Parks Investments – Focusing on current park maintenance, better serving communities through culturally appropriate programming, and acquiring new parks.
- Advancing Equity – Through the rise in minimum wage and school achievement both pre-school and while children are in the K-12 system.

The Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda is an essential part of addressing livability as the high cost of housing puts an increasing burden on the people who live here and threatens to displace an increasing number of our residents from Seattle entirely.

#### **4.3 Questions on the need for HALA in the currently booming housing market**

A strong economy and a growing population are resulting in a significant increase in demand for new housing. Limited supply of housing has led to significant increase in housing cost as people compete for limited spaces. The development community has responded to this demand and increasing cost by developing new housing. While this new development is being successful in slowing the cost increases, it is not sufficient to fully address our existing demand or the growth that is expected over the next twenty years. There is also a large and growing demand for housing affordable to lower-income households that will not be addressed by new market-rate development. The sooner MHA is put in place, the more the strong market housing production will contribute to housing affordability.

#### **4.4 Questions on using impact fees and other strategies**

Impact fees are one-time charges on new development to pay for new public improvements required to serve the new development. Washington State law only allows impact fees to pay for improvements in parks/open space, schools, transportation, and public safety if they are directly associated with the new development. The City of Seattle does not currently charge Impact Fees. The City has looked at this issue numerous times in the past and has chosen not to implement them for many reasons including the impact on the cost of new housing and the challenges of using them in already-developed City.

However, the City is currently in the process of reexamining the possibility of using impact fees as part of a comprehensive strategy for funding key City priorities. The City is currently working with a consultant team to develop options for impact fees to fund transportation and park improvements. We are also working with Seattle Public Schools to start a dialogue about whether school impact fees could play a role in the proposed update of their capital plan.

At the same time, the City is working on multiple initiatives which will impact both the City's approach to funding capital improvements and will make significant contributions to addressing our infrastructure needs. These efforts include the System Development Charges, Street Use Fee Update, and Parks Development Plan as well as implementation of the Move Seattle Transportation Levy and the new Parks District. Over the next two years, we will be working to understand how these initiatives work together and the appropriate role for impact fees in meeting our needs.

## 5. Neighborhood and Building Design

### 5.1 Questions on design guidelines, impact of height and maintaining neighborhood character

The proposed MHA implementation zoning standards include new design and development standards, and existing design standards are also retained. The development standards are draft and can be improved based on input.

We have taken steps to seek to improve urban design outcomes based on issues of concern by the community. For example, the proposed MHA zones include new urban design standards that were adopted as part of the Ballard Partnership planning process to improve mixed use buildings. These include an upper level setback and new façade modulation requirements. Other proposed new design standards include requirements for side-facing façade modulation and window placement for privacy in the Lowrise multi-family zones.

When new buildings are built, the city's design review process reviews specific projects designs for compatibility with unique site conditions and neighborhood design guidelines. In the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), impacts of additional height or scale of buildings due to the zoning changes will be evaluated for their potential impact.

### 5.2 Questions about RSL design

Design is important. Pitched roofs are not required, but are encouraged by allowances for pitched roofs in the height RSL height limits. The height limit in the RSL zone is equal to the height limit in the existing single family zone. The RSL zone is drafted to have an FAR limit of 0.75 to control maximum building bulk. The existing single family zone does not have an FAR limit, so could actually have bulkier buildings than the proposed RSL zone. Front, side and rear setbacks are proposed for the RSL zone.

### 5.3 Questions about whether families will want to live in multifamily buildings

Families already are living in multifamily buildings. There are different preferences and economic realities that make up where a family can live. Single family housing may not be the goal for all families in our community. The City is committed to creating housing choices so that families have more choices for where they can live. See also Question 3.4 above regarding family-sized housing.

## 6. Infrastructure Needs

### 6.1 Questions on how the city will provide for the infrastructure development needed with additional housing

Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light conduct annual planning that looks 20 years ahead. OPCD is working closely with them. These departments have said they think the existing infrastructure system, in combination with planned investments and requirements imposed on new development, will be sufficient to handle expected growth over the next twenty years. However, the City is also undertaking

an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will study impacts of this proposal. The Draft EIS is expected in May and there will be a comment period going through June.

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is designing the Ship Canal Water Quality Facility to bring our combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in Ballard, Fremont and Wallingford into compliance. See <http://www.seattle.gov/util/environmentconservation/projects/shipcanalwaterquality/> The project was sized to accommodate the combined flows from areas highlighted on this fact sheet's first page: [http://www.seattle.gov/util/cs/groups/public/@spu/@drainsew/documents/webcontent/3\\_036587.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/util/cs/groups/public/@spu/@drainsew/documents/webcontent/3_036587.pdf)

It has been sized to fully control the area's outfalls and has factored in climate change impacts.

In general, combined sewer flows are mainly storm water (90%) and to a smaller degree of sewer water (10%). The City of Seattle's storm water code says that all new development needs to take care of its storm water onsite through methods such as underground detention or infiltration. Therefore, new development will not adversely affect our CSO outfalls.

SPU has done a lot of planning around CSOs. A good summary of this planning is available here. Later this year, SPU will begin developing a Wastewater Master Plan. This Plan will create solutions for capacity constrained wastewater locations throughout the City and will plan for increasingly strict water quality regulations, climate change and development. The Wastewater Master Plan's public engagement plan hasn't been developed yet, but there will be opportunities to participate in the future.

## **6.2 Questions on impact fees to address environmental impact**

See Question 4.4, above, on impact fees.

## **6.3 Questions on how the City will provide parks and open space**

Regarding parks and open space, the Seattle Parks and Recreation Goals for green space addressing equal access and other issues are included in the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks Legacy Plan. Actions to meet the goals are codified in the Parks Development Plan, Capital Improvement Program, and the Budget. Seattle Parks and Recreation is currently in the process of updating the Development Plan. They have been doing extensive mapping of needs considering factors such as the location and accessibility of existing spaces, growth that is expected over the next 20 years, and equity. They are continuing to acquire new parks space to address existing and future needs.

Regarding protecting the tree canopy, the preservation and cultivation of tree canopy is driven by goals in the [Urban Forest Stewardship Plan](#), the work of the Urban Forest Interdepartmental Team, and the work programs of the departments who manage trees: SDOT (street trees), Parks (trees in parks), Seattle City Light (power lines), SPU (natural areas), FAS (City properties), and SDCI (regulations for private property). Each of these organizations continually updates its policies and work plans to make sure that it contributes toward meeting our overall citywide canopy goals. Many regulations also prevent or limit the removal of trees during or outside of development. For more detail, see our [summary of existing regulations for private property](#).

We are currently in the process of updating our canopy cover analysis to understand the changes in canopy cover that are occurring and will be conducting more specific analysis as part of the Environmental Impact Statement for Mandatory Housing Affordability Implementation. More information on trees in Seattle is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/trees/>.

#### **6.4 Questions on the need for additional school capacity**

The City of Seattle works closely with the Seattle Public Schools district to support their planning process. Seattle Public Schools is currently in the process of planning for their BEX V levy and associated investment plan. Under their current plan, they are substantially increasing the capacity of their schools in response to increasing need; however, this need is due primarily to demographic changes in existing single-family neighborhoods and the McCleary decision, which has reduced the maximum number of students allowed in each classroom (and thus the number of classrooms needed). While recent development has not been a major factor in their capacity issue, we are continuing to work with them to address the issue overall and the impacts of development specifically.

#### **6.5 Questions on transit and transportation needs and planning**

The Seattle Department of Transportation, King County Metro, and the Washington State Department of Transportation are continuously planning for current and future transit and transportation needs. Some of the major initiatives that are planned or ongoing include:

- Move Seattle Plan and Levy: The City of Seattle developed a 20-year vision for projects that will be needed to address expected growth and proposed a property tax levy, which was approved by voters last November, to fund these needs. This plan also helped to integrate that four modal plans that help to guide needed growth – Transit Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, Bike Master Plan, and the Freight Master Plan. More information is available at: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/moveseattle.htm>.
- Metro-Connects: This 25-year vision for the regional bus transit system was adopted by King County in 2016. More info is available at: <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/planning/long-range-plan/>.
- Sound Transit: In 2016, regional voters approved the third phase of expanding the light rail system which includes service to Delridge and Alaska Junction. More info is available at: <http://soundtransit3.org/>

#### **6.6 Questions on parking needs**

Currently, no minimum or maximum parking requirements apply to residential development in most urban villages. Outside of these areas, parking requirements vary based on the use of the building, but for residential uses are generally one space for every unit. Parking minimums were previously removed for urban villages after a study found that a larger portion of the required spaces were not being used and that the parking requirement was adding significantly to the overall cost of housing. Despite the lack of minimum requirements, most developments still provide parking. Over the last four years, 87 percent

of new units were in buildings that provided parking. In buildings that did provide parking, they averaged three parking spaces for every four units.

## 7. Legal Issues

### 7.1 Questions about the legality of the proposed “in lieu” fees

The proposed MHA program, including the provision that allows for a payment option, is authorized under Washington State Law (RCW.36.70A.540).

### 7.2 Questions about the effect of possible lawsuits

The city is confident the proposal is legal, and has received close guidance from legal experts in drafting the proposed MHA. If developers sue, the City will defend the legality program. We are also exploring the addition of a “clawback” provision in the MHA legislation that would signal the city will take action to remove the zoning capacity increases if the MHA affordable housing provisions are struck down in a court.

## 8. Comparisons with Other Cities/Places

### 8.1 Question on how MHA compares to what other cities do

Approximately 500 cities across the country require new development to contribute to affordable housing. These programs vary dramatically in their approach and requirements based on local goals, market conditions, and legal requirements. Below is a summary of key points about the range of programs in other cities:

- The performance set-asides vary widely from 5 percent to 35 percent.
- Target income levels vary widely from 40 percent to 115 percent of area median income (AMI) and typically differ for rental and ownership housing.
- Most programs apply only to residential development.
- Most programs apply to projects of a minimum size, often 10 or more units.
- Many programs, like New York’s and Boston’s, apply in a limited geographic area or to limited types of development.

Within Washington State, there are five cities with mandatory housing affordability requirements for residential development and none with requirements for commercial development. The residential programs generally require that 8-10 percent of total units be set-aside as affordable units for households making 50-80 percent of AMI. Most of these programs apply in limited geographic areas.

A summary of programs in other cities with affordable housing requirements is contained in the [Director’s Report](#) summarizing the residential portion of MHA.

Seattle’s proposed program is generally proposed to require 5-7 percent of units affordable to renter households earning 60 percent AMI in residential developments outside Downtown and South Lake Union (or \$7-18 per square foot), and \$5-8 per square foot in commercial developments. Overall, the proposed program is projected to create more affordable housing than programs in any other similar-sized city due to its intended application on a large geographic scale, and its strategy to create housing through investment of in-lieu payments that leverage other funding.

## **8.2 Questions on whether there are affordable housing “best practices”**

There are over 500 jurisdictions nationwide that require new development to contribute to affordable housing. These programs vary widely in their application and requirements. Third-party reviews have found that programs with the greatest impact:

1. Are mandatory
2. Apply in areas with strong housing markets
3. Are supported by a broad range of stakeholders including acceptance by the development community
4. Consider local market conditions and factors
5. Include a strong compliance component
6. Include a plan for revenue to support staffing

## **8.3 Questions on examples of development by the Seattle Office of Housing**

The Office of Housing has funded a large, diverse range of projects throughout the city. Examples of affordable housing projects funded in the Wallingford neighborhood include the Stone Way Apartments (1215 N 45th St), and the Good Shepherd Center (4649 Sunnyside Ave N).

# **9. Comprehensive Plan**

## **9.1 Questions on the connection to the Comprehensive Plan**

Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan, Seattle 2035, is a 20-year vision and roadmap for Seattle’s future. This plan guides City decisions on where to build new jobs and houses, how to improve our transportation system, and where to make capital investments such as utilities, sidewalks, and libraries. Our Comprehensive Plan is the framework for most of Seattle’s big-picture decisions on how to grow while preserving and improving our neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan, which was updated in 2016, includes numerous goals and policies that support development of the Mandatory Housing Affordability program. This program was envisioned to be part of a larger strategy for meeting the city’s equity goals.

## **9.2 Questions about creation of the urban villages**

The urban village boundaries were developed with the City’s first comprehensive planning process in the early 1990s. The City adopted its updated Comprehensive Plan, our plan for how the city will grow, in

late 2016. The City is committed to the Urban Village strategy. There is ongoing discussion about boundary expansion in areas that are well served by transit. Wallingford Urban Village does not have a proposed Urban Village boundary expansion.

Changes to Urban Village boundaries require a change to the City's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map. The City Council receives Comprehensive Plan amendment requests once a year.

### **9.3 Questions about urban villages' features**

The Comprehensive Plan includes a large number of policies and goals statements for each element of the Plan, including but not limited to Transportation, Parks Recreation and Open Space, and Arts and Culture. The policies are too numerous to summarize here. In many of the policies you will see a strong emphasis on prioritizing the infrastructure or service investment in urban village locations.

The Comprehensive Plan, at page 30, assigns a lower (30%) 20-year growth estimate to Wallingford because it does not have the "very good" transit level of service. The proposed MHA zone changes will study the effect of additional housing on available transit service. The draft map proposal for Wallingford includes relatively larger increments of zoning change nearby Rapid Ride service on Aurora Ave. N.

### **9.4 Questions about connections to the urban villages strategy**

A foundation of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan is the urban village strategy. This strategy directs the City to encourage new growth in areas with existing amenities such as frequent transit, retail, parks, schools, and other assets. It also focuses new investments in these growth areas to leverage new growth and ensure that it contributes to more livable neighborhoods. During the recent update of the Comprehensive Plan, the Urban Village boundaries for some of the current Urban Villages were revisited based on access to transit. Additionally, new policies were adopted that provide more flexibility in accommodating different land uses in urban villages so that additional housing, including affordable housing, can be added.

The Wallingford Urban Village boundaries are not proposed to change. Since the creation of Urban Villages in the first Comprehensive Plan more than 20 years ago, the existing single family areas within Wallingford have remained unchanged. Over time conditions and circumstances change, however, and policy objectives may have to change to meet new challenges.

### **9.5 Questions about community input into and control of the urban villages**

See 9.4 above regarding public input on the Comprehensive Plan update and policies. The proposed draft maps are intended to be improved based on public input. Input from the workshop and many other venues, and information from environmental review will inform a revised preferred alternative. All comment on modifying the draft MHA zoning proposals are welcomed.

## 9.6 Questions about growth policies

Many of the policies embedded in the Comprehensive Plan are for Seattle to continue to be a welcoming city that is accessible to a wide variety of income levels and types of households. Policies to support a vibrant economy with job growth is also supported by adopted policies. Growth that can be supported by existing and planned infrastructure is not discouraged by city policies.

## 10. Community Involvement in HALA and MHA

### 10.1 Questions about how the City has been doing outreach and involvement for the MHA proposal and proposed zoning changes

The City has been talking with communities for over a year about this and other HALA proposals. We have been reaching people through a diverse variety of forums including citywide mailings, door-to-door canvassing, online discussions, telephone town halls, citywide open houses, neighborhood workshops and discussions at neighborhood councils and small groups. Please take a look at the <http://www.seattle.gov/hala/your-thoughts> to see where we have been and a snapshot of what we have heard.

The City has also been working with community focus groups. See Question 10.2 below.

### 10.2. Questions about how the community focus group members were chosen

The community focus groups had an application process. We received over 600 applications to participate and accepted 160. The HALA Community Focus Group selection committee consisted of five members, one each from the Department of Neighborhoods and Office of Housing and three from the Office of Planning and Community Development. The sequence of the selection process was as follows:

1. The committee met to review applicants using the **selection principles** aiming to include a diverse grouping of people from each urban village.
2. Aside from name, address, and contact information, **all other applicant characteristics were provided voluntarily in application narratives**. For this reason, it was not possible to discern gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, renter/owner status, income, and many more characteristics for all applicants. Many people chose to self-identify, and that information — along with applicant interests, perspectives, and backgrounds — was considered during the selection process in meeting the pre-established criteria.
3. After the initial selections, the committee tallied participant characteristics according to the established principles to ensure representation from a diversity of groups.
4. The committee met with Puget Sound Sage, with whom the City is working to bring members of underrepresented communities into the focus group process. This aspect of the focus groups aimed at welcoming a diversity of perspectives while further equipping members of traditionally

underrepresented groups with experience and skills in government and community leadership processes. Sage recommended ten people who had applied from among Seattle's 33 urban villages.

5. The committee's recommended list was then sent to and approved by the mayor's office, at which time notices were sent to applicants.

The City desires participation by a broad range of community members who reflect Seattle's diverse population. We strove to ensure balanced representation from a range of different demographics and perspectives, including:

- Traditionally under-represented groups, including minorities, immigrants, refugees, and non-native English speakers;
- Renters;
- Households with children; and
- Experienced neighborhood advocates.

The selection principles were:

- Representation from every urban village / neighborhood area
- 4-6 community members from each urban village / neighborhood area
- That most participants (50-75%) should reside within the urban village boundary (including boundary expansion areas proposed through Seattle 2035) where the bulk of land use changes will occur.

You can also find information on what that discussion has been like here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/hala/focus-groups>

### **10.3 Questions on whether the community input will have an impact on the proposal**

Yes, the City is open to modifying the current mapping proposal to ensure that community input is reflected in the Mayor's final proposal to be sent to City Council for their review in summer 2017. The City appreciates the work of the Wallingford Community Council and is committed to hearing from a variety of voices in the community.

Both HALA in general and the new MHA program in particular, are citywide approaches to addressing the affordability crisis. However, we also value community input that is specific and neighborhood specific. However, we will not value one comment over another based on zip code. It is important to recognize that community can be defined both by where you live, work and play. If someone works in the area, recreates in the area or creates community in the area but lives elsewhere, we will accept this feedback.

### **10.4 Questions on whether the City Council will see the community input**

Summaries of the public comment from each about the MHA proposal and HALA will be given to city officials and Councilmembers.