



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY  
AND LIVABILITY AGENDA

**HALA Community Focus Groups**  
**Medium Density Urban Villages | Meeting #7**  
Thursday, December 1, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Online Meeting

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A recording of the Medium Density Focus Group online meeting can be [accessed here](#). The following captures key questions and comments from the webinar participants.

### **Discussion Summary**

Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) - Medium Density Urban Village Focus Group members provided the following key questions, comments, and clarifications during their webinar review of the [preliminary summary of Focus Group discussion feedback](#), compiled by the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) following the Medium Density Focus Group's October meeting:

- In the **Admiral** urban village, the comment numbering should be updated to better reflect the location of needed changes (e.g. the urban village needs to potentially expand in areas other than where they are tagged).
- The Office of Housing should target Mandatory Housing Affordability fees in the commercial core area of the **Aurora-Licton Springs** urban village and build additional units there. This part of the urban village has a good combination of vacant and underutilized lots and good proximity to transit.
- On the **12th Avenue** map, there are several major institution overlays that need to be reviewed and updated.
- The **Wallingford** and **Fremont** neighborhoods have jurisdictional overlap between the Wallingford Community Council and the Fremont Neighborhood Council. The City needs to be sure to get to both neighborhood groups to ensure that residents are aware of proposed changes.
- There are ongoing developments in some of the **Fremont** area that will make some upzoning in the area unlikely to add additional units in the near-term.
- The MHA principles state: “*In Seattle’s Historic districts, do not increase development capacity, even if it means these areas do not contribute to housing affordability through MHA*” and that “*In other areas of historic or cultural significance, do not increase development capacity, even if it means these areas do not contribute to affordability through MHA.*” In the past, Focus Group members noted concern that this could potentially turn these areas into unaffordable neighborhoods and recommended MHA apply here.
- OPCD should continue talking to small developers in Seattle about how MHA may impact their interest in building housing in urban villages.
- If property taxes are going to increase for the people living in urban villages, then the City needs to invest in the services typically paid for by property taxes more than they currently are.
- There needs to be neighborhood specific outreach as a part of this rezoning process. The urban villages themselves were developed through neighborhood specific processes that accounted for diverse people who lived in each, specific area.
- The mailer should also be sent to every address with zoning increases under MHA.

- Overall, the impact of higher property taxes needs to be factored into displacement estimates in the upcoming Environmental Impact Statement that OPCD is releasing on housing affordability. The City should also work with the King County Assessor to determine how property taxes are determined.
- When OPCD's capacity analysis is completed and when results are available, please share the study with residents. Also, share the Roosevelt Comprehensive Analysis when able.
- Throughout the HALA process, the City needs to continue to hold itself accountable and to consider making conversation accessible to all of Seattle's diverse residents. This point could be captured within the discussion themes highlighted in the Focus Group feedback and then incorporated into the City's plan to communicate planned MHA zoning changes.

Observers participating on the webinar provided the following perspectives:

- The City should continue talking with smaller developers focusing on Seattle and affordable housing and work to support their efforts.

### **Online Meeting Attendees**

#### **Focus Group members:**

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|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| • Brie Gyncild   | • Jon Jurich    | • Rick Hooper    |
| • David Osaki    | • Kate Dunphy   | • Rob Harrison   |
| • Ryan DiRaimo   | • Matt Hutchins | • Shanna Alvarez |
| • Hendri de Kock | • Peter Wehrli  | • Toby Thaler    |

#### **Observers:**

- |                 |               |               |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| • David Almeida | • Ofer Avnery | • Paul Cesmat |
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#### **City Staff:**

- Nick Welch, OPCD

#### **Facilitation Team:**

- Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues
- Brett Watson, EnviroIssues

**HALA Focus Group**  
**Medium Density Webinar – Submitted Questions**

December 1, 2016

**Written Questions/Comments Received from Focus Group members:**

- Regarding maps--East Fremont is not being dealt with by Wallingford Community Council.
- The mailer should also be sent to every address with height increases under MHA.
- I have a question about this portion of the MHA principals in the summary regarding historic districts. "In Seattle's Historic districts, do not increase development capacity, even if it means these areas do not contribute to housing affordability through MHA. (B) In other areas of historic or cultural significance, do not increase development capacity, even if it means these areas do not contribute to affordability through MHA."--this was not what I recalled in terms of our discussion. My recollection was that we were concerned that this would turn these areas into San Francisco levels of unaffordable bubble neighborhoods. Thanks!
- Idea for aurora--MHA fees should be targeted here by Office of Housing—nice combination of vacant/underutilized land, lack of UV center feeling, proximity to transit.
- Ryan's point is good; higher taxes and impact on displacement needs to be quantified in the EIS.
- I thought, at the last meeting, it was mentioned by OPCD that we would have some results from capacity analysis by urban village. Is that available?
- Displacement after 3 years due to 30% increase is not as bad as after 1 year. But it is still not good. Thanks for info--Please put out the Roosevelt comp analysis you did.
- Has anyone from OPCD talked to small developers about how MHA will affect their interest in building housing in the Urban Villages?
- If property taxes are going to increase 25-30% for the people in these urban villages staying in their homes, then the City needs to invest in the services typically paid for by property tax much more than they currently are.