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**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
Office of Planning & Community Development

# CITYWIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF MANDATORY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY (MHA)

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement

June 8, 2017







HOUSING AFFORDABILITY  
AND LIVABILITY AGENDA



**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
Office of Planning & Community Development

*for the*

## **City of Seattle Citywide Implementation of Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

### **Date of Draft EIS Issuance**

June 8, 2017

### **Date Comments are Due on the Draft EIS**

July 23, 2017

### **Date of Draft EIS Open House and Hearing**

June 29, 2017





**Seattle**  
**Office of Planning &  
Community Development**

Edward B. Murray, Mayor | Samuel Assefa, Director

600 4th Ave, Floor 5  
P.O. Box 94788  
Seattle, WA 98124-7088

June 8, 2017

Dear Neighbors:

The City of Seattle invites your review of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that examines the potential effects of zoning changes necessary to implement Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA). The area studied includes multifamily residential and commercial zones in Seattle, areas currently zoned Single Family Residential in existing urban villages, and urban village expansion areas that were identified in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

Implementing MHA is one of many actions the City is proposing to address housing affordability. It is a key recommendation of the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Advisory Committee. In 2015 and 2016, the Mayor proposed the ordinances that established the framework for MHA, which the City Council adopted unanimously.

MHA helps ensure that as Seattle grows, development supports housing affordability. Development would comply with MHA by either providing affordable housing on-site or paying into a fund to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing throughout Seattle. To put MHA in place, the City would grant additional development capacity through area-wide zoning changes and modifications to the Land Use Code.

The EIS evaluates two action alternatives for implementing MHA with differing distributions and patterns of zoning changes, as well as a no action alternative that would not implement MHA. The Draft EIS identifies environmental impacts and mitigation measures for each alternative. The public comment period for this Draft EIS continues through July 23, 2017. You can learn more and provide your feedback at: <http://tinyurl.com/HALA-MHA-EIS>. Following the Draft EIS comment period, a Final EIS will be prepared that addresses comments received.

Thank you for your interest in Seattle's effort to implement Mandatory Housing Affordability. We welcome your comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel Assefa".

Samuel Assefa  
Director





# FACT SHEET.

## PROJECT TITLE

City of Seattle Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA)

## PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The proposal addressed in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is to implement Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements for multifamily residential and commercial development in certain areas of Seattle. Implementing MHA is one of many actions the City proposes to address housing affordability. To put MHA in place, the City would grant additional development capacity through area-wide zoning changes and modifications to the Land Use Code. The proposed action includes several related components:

- Adopt requirements in the Land Use Code (SMC Chapter 23) for developers either to build affordable housing on-site or to make an in-lieu payment to support the development of rent- and income-restricted housing when constructing new development meeting certain thresholds.
- Modify development standards in the Land Use Code to provide additional development capacity, such as increases in maximum height and floor area ratio (FAR) limits.
- Make area-wide zoning map changes.
- Expand the boundaries of certain urban villages on the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) near high-frequency transit, as studied in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan.
- Modify certain rezone criteria in the Land Use Code.

The Draft EIS evaluates alternative approaches to implementing MHA. Alternative 1 No Action assumes that MHA is not implemented in the study area, no development capacity increases or area-wide rezones would be adopted, and no urban village boundaries would expand.

The action alternatives (Alternatives 2 and 3) would allow for additional development capacity, which may lead to additional household or job growth compared to the growth that would otherwise occur. The total amounts of growth and MHA income restricted affordable housing is similar between Alternative 2 and 3. However, Alternatives 2 and 3 differ in the intensity and location of development capacity increases and the patterns and amounts of housing and job growth that could result across the city. The size of urban village boundary expansions for different urban villages also varies between Alternatives 2 and 3.

## LOCATION

The project location is existing multifamily and commercial zones in Seattle, areas currently zoned Single Family in existing urban villages, and areas zoned Single Family in potential urban village expansion areas identified in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Planning process. The study area does not include the Downtown, South Lake Union, and Uptown Urban Centers or the portion of University Community Urban Center addressed in the University District Urban Design Framework.

## PROPONENT

City of Seattle

## DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

First Quarter 2018

## LEAD AGENCY

City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development



## RESPONSIBLE SEPA OFFICIAL

### **Sam Assefa, Director**

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## CONTACT PERSON

### **Geoff Wentlandt**

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## REQUIRED APPROVALS

The City Council must approve the proposed rezones, Land Use Code text amendments, and MHA requirements.

## PRINCIPAL EIS AUTHORS AND PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTORS

This Draft EIS has been prepared under the direction of the City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development. The following consulting firms provided research and analysis associated with this EIS:

- **3 Square Blocks LLP:** lead EIS consultant
- **BERK:** environmental analysis of housing and socioeconomics, land use, and aesthetics and document design
- **Fehr & Peers:** environmental analysis of transportation, circulation, and parking
- **ESA:** environmental analysis of historic resources, biological resources, parks and open space, public services and utilities, and air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- **Weinman Consulting LLC:** review and advise on the description of the proposal, alternatives, and SEPA compliance and strategy



## DATE OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ISSUANCE

**June 8, 2017**

## DATE COMMENTS ARE DUE

**5pm, July 23, 2017**

Please submit comments using the online form on the project website:

[tinyurl.com/MHAEIScomment](http://tinyurl.com/MHAEIScomment)

Or submit comments to:

**Geoff Wentlandt**

City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development

600 4th Avenue, Floor 5

PO Box 94788

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[MHA.EIS@Seattle.gov](mailto:MHA.EIS@Seattle.gov)

## DATE AND LOCATION OF DRAFT EIS OPEN HOUSE AND HEARING

**June 29, 2017**

Time: Open House, 5:30 pm | Hearing, 6:30 pm

Location: Seattle City Hall Bertha Night Landes Room

600 4th Avenue, Floor 1

Seattle, WA 98124-7088

## TYPE AND TIMING OF SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

No environmental review of the proposed ordinance is anticipated subsequent to the environmental review contained in this EIS.

## LOCATION OF BACKGROUND DATA

### **Geoff Wentlandt**

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## DRAFT EIS AVAILABILITY AND PURCHASE PRICE

Copies of this Draft EIS have been distributed to agencies, organizations, and individuals as established in SMC 25.05. Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS has been provided to organizations and individuals that requested to become parties of record.

The Draft EIS can be reviewed at the following public libraries:

- Seattle Public Library—Central Library (1000 4th Avenue)

A limited number of complimentary copies of this Draft EIS are available—while the supply lasts—either as a CD or hardcopy from the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Public Resource Center, located in Suite 2000, 700 5th Avenue, in downtown Seattle. Additional copies may be purchased at the Public Resource Center for the cost of reproduction.

This Draft EIS and the appendices are also available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/HALA-MHA-EIS>



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