

2019

YEAR IN REVIEW

Role of the Commission

The Seattle Planning Commission advises the Mayor, City Council and City departments on broad planning goals, policies and plans for the physical development of the City. The Commission's work is framed by the Comprehensive Plan and its vision for Seattle in the 21st Century, and by a commitment to engaging citizens in the work of planning for and working to reach these goals.

The Seattle Planning Commission is an independent, 16-member advisory body appointed by the Mayor, City Council, and the Commission itself. The members of the Commission are residents of Seattle who volunteer their time, and bring a wide array of expertise and a diversity of perspectives to these roles.

Contact us

600 4th Ave, Floor 5 Seattle
PO Box 94788 Seattle, WA, 98124
Tel: (206) 684-8694
www.seattle.gov/planningcommission

2019 Commissioners

Michael Austin, Chair
Patti Wilma, Vice-Chair
Sandra Fried
David Goldberg
Veronica Guenther
Grace Kim
Rick Mohler
Kelly Rider
Julio Sánchez
Amy Shumann
Lauren Squires
Jamie Stroble
Rian Watt

Commission Staff

Vanessa Murdock
Executive Director
John Hoey
Senior Policy Analyst
Connie Combs
Planning Analyst
Robin Magonegil
Administrative Analyst

The Seattle Planning Commission

*Advancing equitable planning of socially
and environmentally just communities*

Seattle
Planning
Commission



Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission strongly endorsed proposed amendments to Comprehensive Plan policies and maps to facilitate the implementation of the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) program citywide. These amendments included expansions to existing urban village boundaries and changes to neighborhood plan policies in support of achieving the production of 6,000 new affordable housing units. The Commission also made recommendations to aid City officials in determining which proposed 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan amendments should receive further analysis.

In the Community

In October, the Planning Commission held one of its regularly scheduled meetings in the Delridge community. The intent for this meeting was to learn about the work of Delridge community organizations and hear about issues, projects, and concerns directly from community members. The Commission plans to hold future meetings in other communities throughout Seattle.

West Seattle to Ballard Light Rail Extensions

The Planning Commission has consistently been very supportive of Sound Transit’s West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions (WSBLE) project, recognizing that Seattle’s growth necessitates a significant investment in transit. The Commission submitted scoping comments and recommendations to Sound Transit on alternatives to be studied in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We offered the Seattle members of Sound Transit’s Elected Leadership Group comments and recommendations specific to the Chinatown/International District (C/ID) and Delridge stations. The Commission feels strongly that these two station areas particularly warrant additional race and social equity analysis, as both of these communities have experienced historic and continued inequities. We also submitted detailed comments and recommendations on the WSBLE Level 3 Alternatives, including overarching comments that relate to all alternatives and specific comments on individual project segments to be studied in the Draft EIS.

Selected Comments

Testimony for Mandatory Housing Affordability: “The Commission reiterates its strong support for MHA, which is one of the most important tools to help address Seattle’s housing crisis....The Commission remains excited about the possibility for the MHA program to distribute more development capacity to areas with low displacement risk and high access to opportunity.”

Testimony for Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) legislation: “The Planning Commission strongly supports this proposal, as ADUs support many of the housing goals and policies in the City’s Comprehensive Plan and can provide alternatives in single-family neighborhoods for a variety of household types, including singles, families with children, and multi-generational households.”

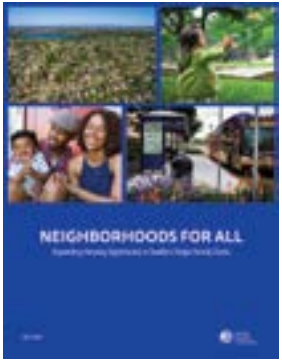
Letter to the Seattle Elected Leadership Group: “The Commission urges the City to proactively articulate station area visions and concerns, particularly for the C/ID station area, to which Sound Transit can respond, rather than wait for a final alignment to which the City will respond.”

Letter on the Sound Transit 3 Environmental Impact Statement scoping: “The Commission strongly urges Sound Transit to evaluate the benefits and impacts of the proposed West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions through a lens that considers a hundred-year horizon, well beyond the short-term construction timeline for this project.”

Neighborhoods for All

An independent focus of the Planning Commission in 2019 was to share the findings of the Neighborhoods for All (NFA) report with community members. The Commission hosted an open house in Northgate and one in Columbia City. Commissioners also attended the meetings of four community groups to discuss NFA. Lastly, during the Seattle Design Festival Commissioners joined an open house to present NFA findings.

Building on the NFA report, The Planning Commission spent the second half of 2019 developing a white paper that discusses how our current growth strategy could evolve to address issues of affordability, climate change, and livability. The Evolving Seattle’s Growth Strategy white paper is available on the Commission [website](#).



Focus Areas for 2020

- The Comprehensive Plan’s annual amendments and major update
- West Seattle to Ballard Light Rail Extensions, station area planning
- The recommendations of the Mayor’s Industrial and Maritime study

31 
Briefings from departments

9 
Community meetings

1,339
Commissioner total hours

5 
Letters to elected officials, departments, and other agencies