

Seattle Planning Commission Public Comment for 9/17/2015 Public Hearing Renewal and Expansion of the Multifamily Tax Exemption Program

My name is Grace Kim, and I'm speaking as a member of the Seattle Planning Commission. The Commission has long supported MFTE as one of the main tools the City has for encouraging the market to produce housing affordable to moderate income households.

MFTE works to *both*:

- provide affordability for households who would otherwise be priced out of many Seattle neighborhoods, *and*
- encourage developers to build housing in locations that have not been seeing as much new housing.

MFTE plays a unique and important role in the City's affordable housing toolbox. We are pleased that the HALA recommendations package includes the renewal and expansion of MFTE.

In 2014, the Planning Commission produced a white paper to highlight the need for more housing options that are suitably sized and affordable for families with children. One of our main recommendations was to ensure that MFTE works to encourage developers to build family-sized units.

We are excited that the MFTE renewal proposal includes stronger incentives for family-sized units, although we understand that it may actually take more than these changes to substantially influence the production of the larger family sized units with 3 or more bedrooms. We encourage Council members to look for additional ways, both through MFTE and other tools, to encourage these units.