



# **A Comprehensive Plan for Managing Growth 2015-2035 | Draft**



**CITY OF SEATTLE  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
JULY 8, 2015**



# City of Seattle

## Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

July 8, 2015

Dear Seattle,

We have come a long ways since Seattle adopted its 1994 Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*. The core values from that plan are still very relevant – community building, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and social equity. However, we are a different city now. Community building is even more important with our diversity of populations; the economy is strong, but there are significant gaps in who is benefiting from growth and who is not; climate impacts are much more evident and urgent today; and race and social equity has been identified as a core foundational value of our Plan.

We reviewed all the advice we heard from the past two years of listening to the public. We evaluated alternative growth scenarios in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. And we carefully considered the Equity Analysis that examines how growth could affect low-income and minority populations. All this information helped us compile this draft that we believe represents a solid strategy for the next 20 years.

But we know this Plan is not done yet. We need to hear from you about the changes this Plan includes and about the strategies that it would continue, like the idea of concentrating growth in urban centers and urban villages. Let us know if there are key pieces missing.

The best way to comment is to visit [2035.Seattle.gov](http://2035.Seattle.gov). and use our online comment tool, where you can see what others have said and add your thoughts. We will be taking comments through September 30, 2015.

In December 2015 the Mayor will forward his recommended Plan to City Council, and DPD will publish a Final Environmental Impact Statement. The City Council will review the Mayor's recommendation and will adopt the new Plan in early 2016.

Thank you for your interest in Seattle 2035 and for helping shape the city's future.

Sincerely,

Diane M. Sugimura

Director



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# Introduction

*We envision Seattle as a city where growth benefits and increases opportunities for all residents and offers ways to enhance and preserve our natural environment.*

The recent building boom is a reminder that Seattle is an attractive and growing place. Continued growth will present challenges about how the City can ensure that everyone in the city will have a chance to prosper. This Plan provides long-term guidance that will help the City make decisions about managing growth over the next 20 years and providing services to make the growth for all of the city. Since the Plan was first adopted in 1994, it has embraced the concept of sustainable growth, meaning that the City would accommodate additional people and businesses, while also aiming to maintain and enhance resources for future generations.

## The City in the Region

With the largest population and greatest number of jobs of any city in Washington State, Seattle is the center of the fast-growing Central Puget Sound region. Made up of King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kitsap Counties, this dynamic metropolitan region boasts a population expected to exceed 5 million by 2040. As its heart, Seattle plays host to many of the region's major cultural attractions such as the Symphony, Folklife Festival and professional sports teams and serves as the focal point of the region's multiple transit systems. Over the past decade, the city has grown rapidly, adding an average of almost 4,000 housing units each year and a total of about 70,000 people. In the years to come, Seattle expects to welcome a significant share of the region's growth. This Plan contains goals and policies designed to guide growth in a manner that reflects the City's core values and that enhances the quality of life for all.

## What Drives This Plan

### Seattle's Core Values

Before Seattle's Comprehensive Plan was first drafted in the early 1990s, City staff and the Planning Commission held numerous community meetings, specifically reaching out to groups that had not traditionally participated in similar planning efforts. The goal of City staff and the Commission was to identify the values that people cared most about in regard to the city they called home. The principles that emerged from these conversations came to be known as the core values for the Comprehensive Plan, and they are as relevant today as when they were first incorporated into the Plan. With this update, planners and other City staff kept these core values at the Plan's center, honoring the efforts of those participants decades ago.

**Race and Social Equity.** Seattle believes that every resident, employee and business should have access to resources, opportunities and outcomes that will improve their quality of life and enable them to

reach their full potential. All of the city's residents deserve the opportunity to thrive and to be a part of the city's growing economy.

Whenever opportunity is held out of reach by poverty, racial discrimination, or intolerance of cultural difference, equity cannot be achieved. Historically in the city of Seattle and throughout the nation, people have been denied equal access to education, jobs, homes, or even neighborhoods because of their race, class, disabilities, or other real or perceived differences. While such practices are no longer permitted by law, certain segments of the population still do not enjoy the same access to economic opportunity, safety, and freedom that other Seattle citizens have.

This value reminds us that Seattle has not yet achieved social equity for all who live and work in our city, and statistics have shown that this is particularly true for people of color. For instance, household income for whites in Seattle is more than double that for blacks and more than 30% higher than Asians. Thirty-five percent of black households spend over 50% of their income on rent, compared to 19% of white renters. The unemployment rate for black residents is more than twice the rate for whites (14% vs. 6%).

These inequities are even more significant now because the makeup of Seattle's population is changing. The city has gone from being 25 percent people of color in 1990 to 34 percent in 2010, and this trend is expected to continue. Currently, Seattle's ethnic minorities tend to be concentrated in a few locations, such as the Rainier Valley in southeast Seattle and in smaller pockets in north and west parts of the city, as shown in the map on the following page. More immigrants will arrive, and minority populations will continue to grow through natural increase.

With more people moving into the city property values could increase, or existing buildings and homes could be replaced with new and more expensive ones. Changes like these will affect some communities more than others, and these changes can make it more difficult for the residents or businesses to remain in their current neighborhoods, especially in low-income areas. In some cases these outcomes are unavoidable, but the City will endeavor to provide options for existing residents and businesses to be part of a growing and changing community.

Since the early 2000s, the City has worked to implement a race and social justice initiative, a citywide effort to realize the vision of racial equity.

The main goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide the physical development of the city. However, in shaping how we create new spaces for people to live, work, and play, this Plan also promotes better access to jobs, education, affordable housing, parks, community centers, and healthy food for all of Seattle's residents. The goals and policies in this plan can also influence the actions of other government agencies and private businesses, encouraging them to promote social justice and racial equity in their work. Working toward equity will help produce stronger and more resilient economic growth – growth that benefits everyone.



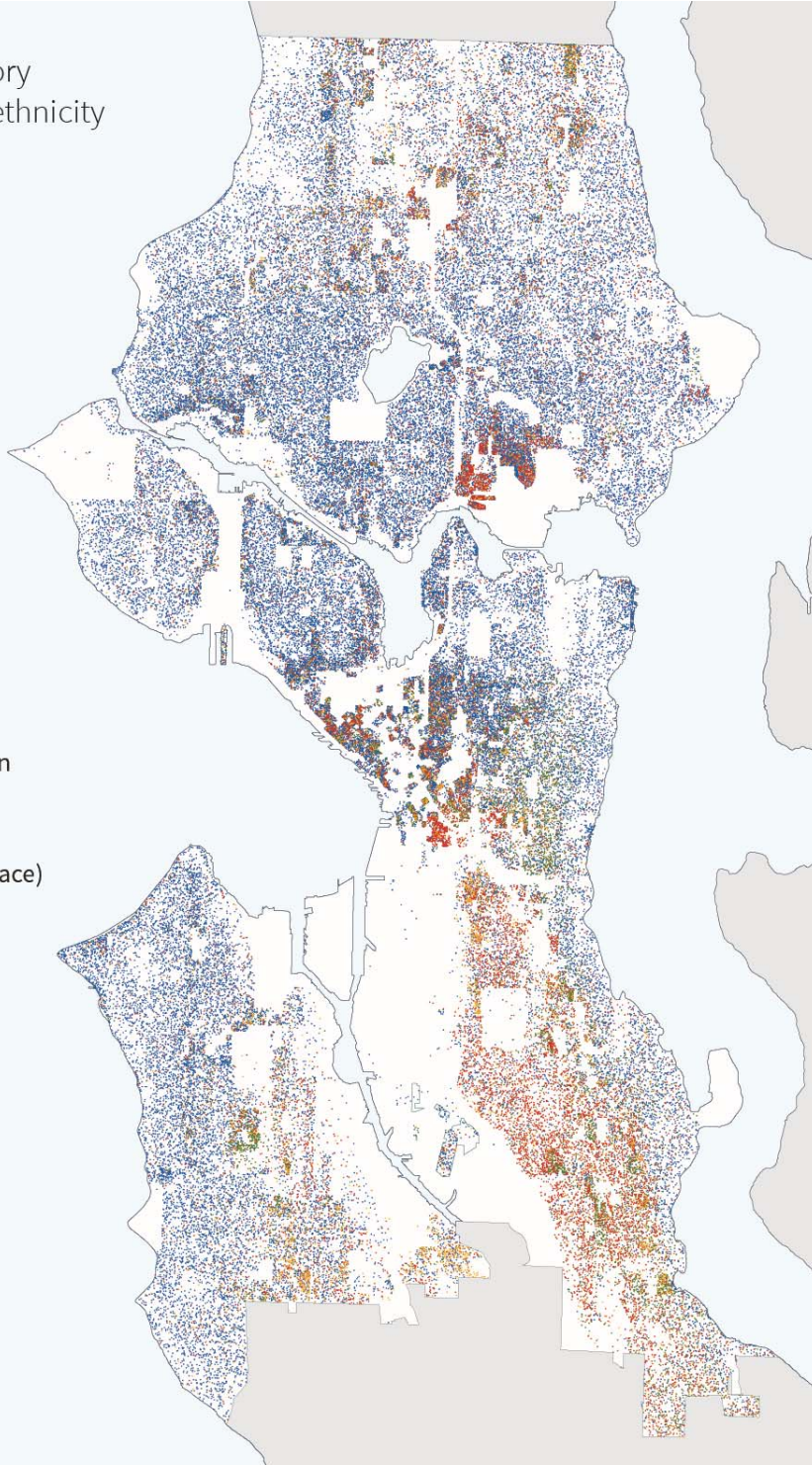
**Economic Opportunity and Security.** Seattle has been able to surpass 2008 employment levels and by 2013 the city contained 499,900 jobs. Boeing and Amazon have been major contributors to that employment growth, but other smaller firms are also providing more jobs. Growing businesses and an increasing number of jobs create opportunities for residents.

**2010 population**

by major racial category  
and Hispanic/Latino ethnicity

one dot equals five people

- Asian
- Black/African American
- White
- Hispanic/Latino (any race)



For businesses to thrive they need space to grow and skilled employees locally. Examples of how this Plan can address economic opportunity can be found in the Urban Village and Land Use Elements of this Plan, which include policies that identify locations where the City can accommodate the desired employment growth and offers policies to help direct growth to those areas. The Economic Development Element encourages businesses to locate and expand, while the Community Well-Being Element addresses the education and skills residents need to fill the new jobs created.

Sometimes, just having a job isn't enough to provide the economic security people need. They may not be able to afford to live in the city or to make the purchases they need and desire. Through the Plan, the City demonstrates its commitment to providing a livable wage and providing access to affordable housing to help give people more financial stability. The City has also developed programs to help address continuing racial disparities in education and employment.

**Environmental Stewardship.** Even as the city becomes increasingly urban, Seattle is committed to protecting and restoring the natural environment. By taking on a significant share of the region's growth, Seattle helps protect rural farmed and forested areas from development. And by concentrating growth in urban villages, we help preserve the existing green areas in the city, including the areas that now contain low-density development.

By far the boldest step the City has taken toward enhancing the natural environment is achieving our commitment to become carbon neutral by the year 2050. This is an ambitious goal that will require the government, businesses, and residents to all work together. However, the City sees this as a necessary and responsible step in order to help reduce the real threat of climate change. This Plan contains goals and policies to help guide this reduction. For instance, the Growing Seattle Element calls for a development pattern that can lower the demand for vehicle trips, and the Transportation Element promotes improvements that will make walking, biking and transit viable options for more people, so they can be less reliant on automobiles – a major source of carbon emissions in this region.

**Community.** The greater community of Seattle is made up of many smaller groups that share common bonds such as neighborhood, values, faith, country of origin, or business type, among others. Whatever the size of the group and however people come together, community occurs at so many different levels that the city becomes a large web of interwoven communities. These connections help us recognize our similarities, appreciate our differences, and see the need to cooperate to knit together the greater Seattle community.

In preparing this Plan and previous versions of it, many hundreds of people participated in meetings, filled out comment forms, and wrote e-mails and letters to express their desires for how the City should address problems and build the future. In a city the size of Seattle, there are many different interests and perspectives that can compete with each other. However, the city's cultural diversity is a strength, and when people recognize they are part of the same community, they can collaborate to find solutions that work for the greater community. This Plan encourages broad public participation in decisions that

affect all aspects of City operations, and helps bring people into forums and groups where they can share their experiences and thoughts.

## Sustainability

The Plan has been guided by the principle of sustainability – the idea that as the city grows public and private actions will preserve resources for future generations, so that they can enjoy the qualities we value today. That means preserving forests and farm lands outside the city by accepting more of the urban growth in Seattle. It also means creating urban environments where resources are used efficiently because residents are close enough to services to walk or bike to them at least some of the time, and there is enough concentration of people that providing frequent transit is a practical solution.

Since the Plan was first adopted, Seattle has accommodated more than its expected share of countywide residential growth – adding more than 67,000 new housing units, compared to the original Plan’s estimate of 50,000 – 60,000. This has helped reduce the proportion of countywide housing growth in rural areas to decrease from about 15% in the 1980s to about 3% in recent years. At the same time the percentage of people in the city who drive alone has declined, as more people walk, bike or use transit for commuting and other daily trips. Seattle has also become a leader in green building and green infrastructure, helping reduce the use of energy and water in the city.

## Washington’s Growth Management Act

The state Growth Management Act (GMA), enacted in 1990, requires that all cities and counties above certain sizes prepare comprehensive plans and update those plans at certain intervals. GMA’s goals include reducing sprawl and directing growth to areas that already have urban services. GMA calls on counties to draw so-called urban growth boundaries, outside of which urban-style development is prohibited. Comprehensive plans must show that each city has enough land in appropriate zoning categories to absorb the expected level of growth for twenty years into the future, along with the transportation, water, and sewer facilities to serve that growth. GMA also requires that cities’ plans must be consistent with other plans in the region. In this region, other plans include Vision 2040 and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

Seattle first adopted its Comprehensive Plan in 1994. The Plan was drafted following extensive public engagement and in coordination with other regional governments who were all learning the implications of GMA at the same time.

## Vision 2040

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the regional growth management, transportation, and economic development organization covering King, Snohomish, Pierce, and Kitsap Counties. It is governed by elected officials from across the region, and together they have adopted a regional growth strategy called Vision 2040. That strategy establishes a framework that is reflected in this Plan. It calls



for concentrating population and job growth in designated centers and for using high-capacity transit to connect these centers. Seattle's Plan identifies six regional growth centers and two manufacturing/ industrial centers that are recognized in the regional plan. In addition, Seattle has identified 24 urban villages that are concentrations of population, employment and services that carry the regional centers concept to a neighborhood scale. Vision 2040 also assumes a distribution of growth across the Puget Sound region, with especially large shares of growth going to the five metropolitan cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, Tacoma, and Bremerton. This Plan reflects Seattle's commitment to accommodate its share of regional growth.

In recent years PSRC brought together representatives from local governments and the private sector to develop guidance for how to plan for areas around light rail stations. The result was a regional agreement that Seattle signed which outlined an approach to equitable development in these transit areas so that "...the benefits of new transit investments and local development accrue to everyone, including low-income people and communities of color."

## King County Countywide Planning Policies

GMA requires that counties adopt policies that will guide the plans for all the jurisdictions in the county. In King County, the Growth Management Planning Council is a body of elected officials representing all the jurisdictions who develop the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). The CPPs contain the urban growth boundary for the county, which separates areas designated for more or less development and density. These planning policies also contain twenty-year housing and job-growth targets for all the jurisdictions. These policies address the need for affordable housing in the county, for local action to address climate change, and for growing in ways that will contribute to positive health impacts for residents.

## Seattle's Urban Village Strategy

In keeping with Seattle's Core Values and anticipating future growth, the foundation of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan is the Urban Village Strategy. This strategy encourages most future job and housing growth to specific areas in the city that are best able to absorb and capitalize on that growth, while providing essential public services and making amenities available to residents. These areas include designated urban centers, such as Downtown and the five others that are recognized in the regional plan, as well as smaller urban villages throughout the city. Both urban centers and urban villages are places that already have active business districts and concentrations of housing. The Urban Village Strategy:

- Accommodates Seattle's expected growth in an orderly and predictable way
- Strengthens existing business districts
- Promotes the most efficient use of public investments, now and in the future
- Encourages more walking, bicycling, and transit use in the city
- Retains the character of less dense single-family neighborhoods outside of urban villages

By encouraging both business and housing growth in the urban centers and urban villages, the Plan makes it possible for more people to live near job opportunities as well as near services that can meet their everyday needs. In this way, more people are able to walk or bike to some of their daily activities, creating more activity on the sidewalks and streets and making these communities more vibrant. It also puts more people near transit service, so that they can more easily use buses or light rail to get to other job centers, shopping or entertainment. This access is useful for all residents, but particularly those with limited incomes or physical limitations that make them reliant on public transit.

The Urban Village Strategy is a way of putting into practice the regional growth center concept called for in regional plans, but at a more local scale. The strategy includes designating regional centers, such as Downtown and the University District, as the focal points for the most growth. In addition to these urban centers, the Plan identifies two classes of “urban villages,” each intended to combine housing with employment opportunities, shops, and stores, all in compact environments that encourage walking. The plan identifies six “hub” urban villages where a fair amount of housing and employment growth should occur, though at lower densities than in the centers. On an even smaller scale, in eighteen “residential” villages scattered around the city, modest housing growth should occur near retail and services that mainly serve the nearby population.

All of the centers and villages identified in the Plan function the way the regional plans anticipate, as compact, pedestrian-friendly areas that offer different mixes of office, commercial, civic, entertainment, and residential uses, but at scales that respect Seattle’s character and development pattern.

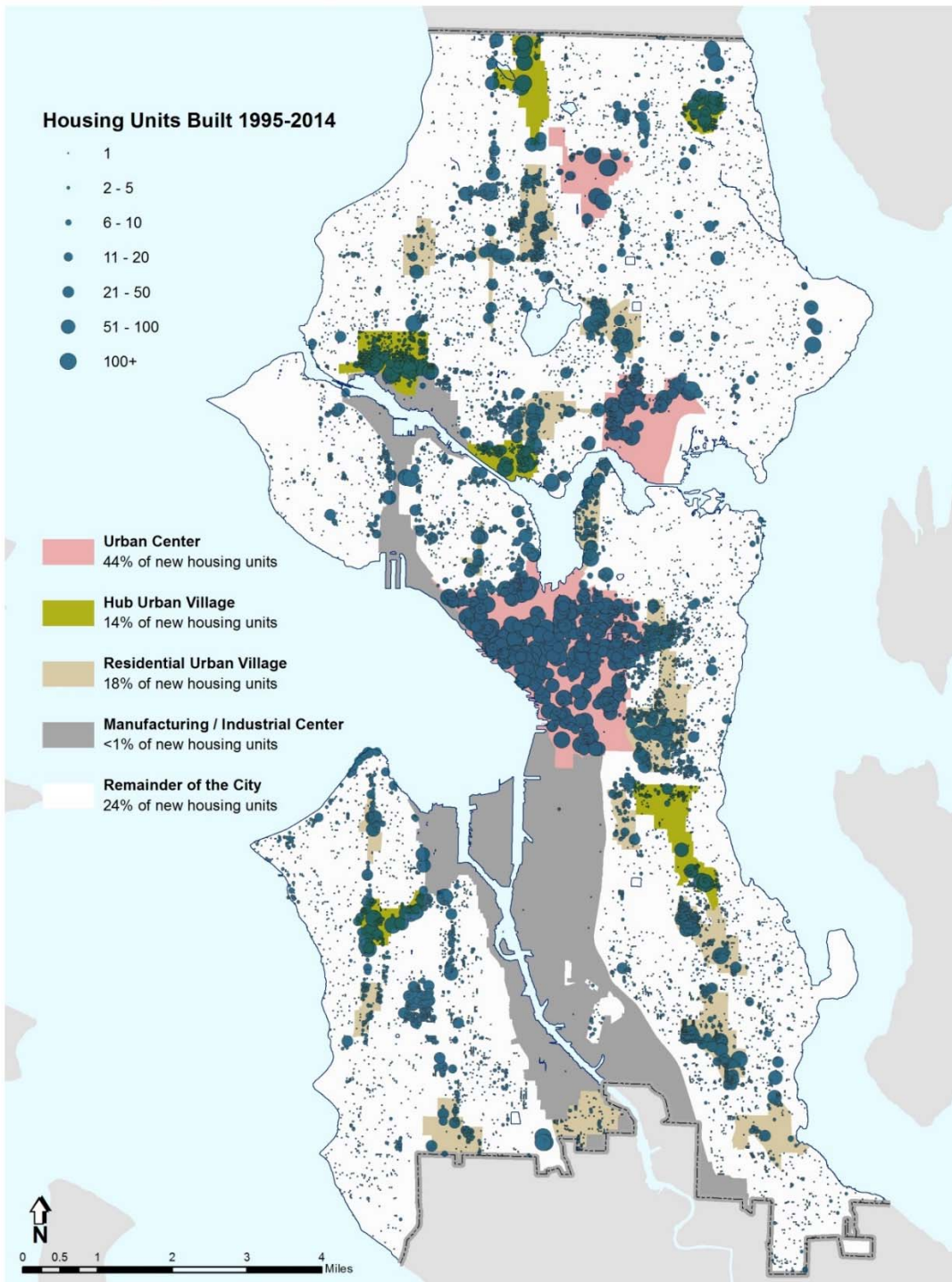
The Urban Village Strategy continues to form the backbone of the Plan because it has been successful in achieving its purposes over the 20 years it has been in place. During that time over 75 percent of new housing and new jobs located inside the urban centers and villages that together make up only about 17 percent of the city’s total land area. (See map on the following page.) More than half of the housing growth occurred in the six urban centers, and the two manufacturing/industrial centers received about 9 percent of the employment growth on 11 percent of the city’s land.

Even more of the urban villages are thriving now than in 1994, when the strategy was first adopted. Columbia City, Ballard, and Madison/Miller are just a few of the neighborhoods where added residents and new businesses have meant more people out on the sidewalks, enjoying their communities, and raising the overall vitality of each area. The villages continue to provide new services and goods for residents in nearby areas, meaning community members have less distance to travel to get what they need and want. However, the long-sought prosperity in these communities has sometimes come at the cost of changing the character of the neighborhoods and forcing some former residents and businesses to leave. Those who left were often lower-income households, whose housing was replaced by more expensive new buildings, or who could not afford the rising rents brought on by the neighborhood changes. In defining the future success of the urban village strategy, the City will look at and try to plan ways for the urban villages to include opportunities for marginalized populations to remain in the city and to access education and employment.

In many of the urban villages, ridership on Metro buses has outpaced the population growth, and several of villages have already benefited from the opening of light rail service in 2009, providing another option for traveling without a car.

Of course, urban villages are more than just the fulfillment of the regional growth strategy; they are neighborhoods where Seattle residents live, work, learn, shop, play, and socialize. After initial adoption of the Plan, the City engaged in a citywide neighborhood planning effort that produced a neighborhood plan for each area of the city containing an urban center or urban village. Those neighborhood plans found some common needs among the different communities and also highlighted some needs that were unique to each of those neighborhoods. To address the common needs caused by growth in these locations, voters approved funding for libraries, open space, community centers, and transit.

Since the neighborhood plans were first adopted, the City has worked with communities to refine more than half of those plans and help take action to accomplish the goals each community prioritized. A review of the projects suggested by neighborhood plans discovered that over 80% of those projects were completed, and a later review by the Planning Commission determined that the original goals and policies were still valid for most neighborhoods.



## Seattle 2035

Over the next twenty years, forecasts predict that Seattle will need to accommodate 70,000 additional housing units, 120,000 more residents, and 115,000 additional jobs. This updated version of the Plan builds on the success of the Urban Village Strategy to encourage that growth in a manner that works for all of the city's people. Both urban centers and villages have continued to grow rapidly during the recent building boom, and current zoning allows them to handle even more growth. Between now and 2035, the Plan expects that most housing and employment growth will occur in those urban centers and villages.

In addition, the opening of light rail service in Seattle now provides certain areas of the city with more frequent and reliable transit connections to a greater number of locations. Light rail already connects Downtown to neighborhoods in southeast Seattle and to the airport. By 2016, the service will extend northward through Capitol Hill to Husky Stadium at the University of Washington; by 2021 to Roosevelt and Northgate; and by 2023, to Lynnwood and the eastside. By 2035, there could be even more light rail lines in the city. This increased transit service signals a major regional investment and commitment to these neighborhoods, and an opportunity that Seattle should not waste. To leverage this investment to the fullest extent, the Plan calls for focusing more growth in areas within a ten-minute walk of light rail stations and those urban villages that light rail will directly serve.

As mentioned above, the City has committed to be climate neutral by the year 2050. This Plan therefore spans a critical time for the City in meeting that goal, and it provides some of the direction necessary to assist the City in achieving it. It also provides guidance about anticipating and adapting to those impacts we are unable to avoid.

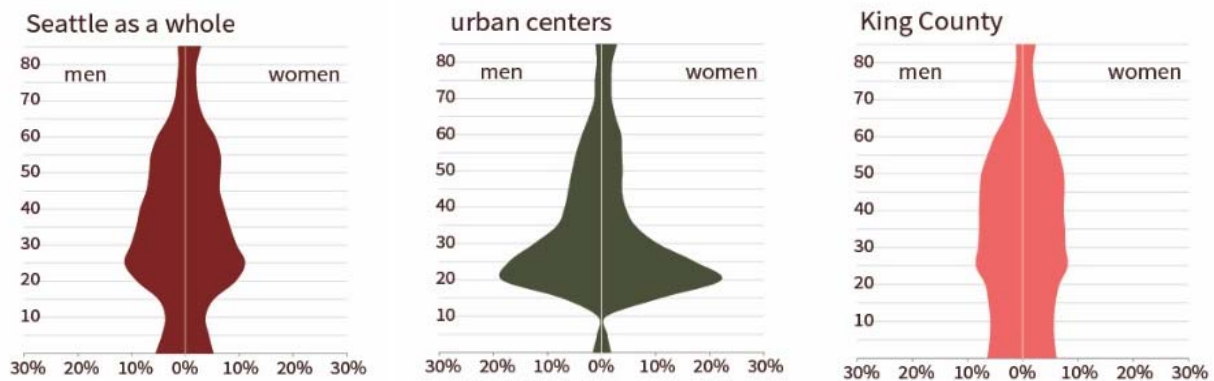
### Who We are Planning For

This Plan is for the people who live and work in Seattle today. It is also for those who will make up the community fabric of Seattle in the future—not only our children but also the newcomers who will arrive for education or job opportunities, and who will value the urban and natural features of Seattle as much as we do.

While we have an idea about how many new housing units and jobs the City should expect over the next twenty years, it is harder to know more specific information about the ages, incomes, and family structures of those future residents and workers, and to get a real picture of who our new neighbors might be.

The U.S. Census and other sources give us a good description of the city's current population and information about recent trends that help provide a general picture about the future population. Seattle's population in 2014 was 640,500, and growth over the next twenty years will add about 120,000 people to that total. Seattle's population is younger than the surrounding region, with a higher

percentage of the city's population in their twenties than in King County as a whole. However, Seattle has a much lower percentage of people below the age of eighteen than does King County. In fact, Seattle's percentage of households containing children is one of the lowest among large cities in the U.S. The age differences in Seattle households are even more dramatic in urban centers. The average number of people living in a household (2.06) is also lower than for King County (2.39). Seattle's household size has been decreasing since the 1960s, but the rate of that decrease has slowed in the past 20 years. Household size could continue to decline slowly in the future.



*2010 percentages of population by age and gender.*

As previously noted, Seattle is becoming more diverse racially and culturally. As of 2010, almost one-fifth of Seattle residents were born in another country, and more than 20 percent of residents speak a language other than English at home. The Seattle School District reports that there are over 120 languages spoken by their students. Indeed, following recent trends, it is possible that white residents could well be the minority of the city's population by 2035 or shortly thereafter. The growing diversity in the city's population poses new challenges for City departments and other institutions to meet the needs of all residents. It also provides an opportunity to benefit from the cultures and skills of the people that make up these groups.

This Plan provides policy direction for locating new housing units and encourages a variety of housing types that can help meet the needs of diverse households, who may be looking for studios, larger apartments, townhouses, high-rise condominiums, or detached houses. By planning for more transportation choices, including bicycles and transit, the Plan will shape a city attractive to many potential future residents, from today's twenty-somethings who can remain in the city as they begin to have families, to aging residents hoping to grow old in the place they've called home, to those who rely on transit for getting around. At the same time, the Plan can make the city attractive to those critical businesses that provide jobs and services for Seattle residents.

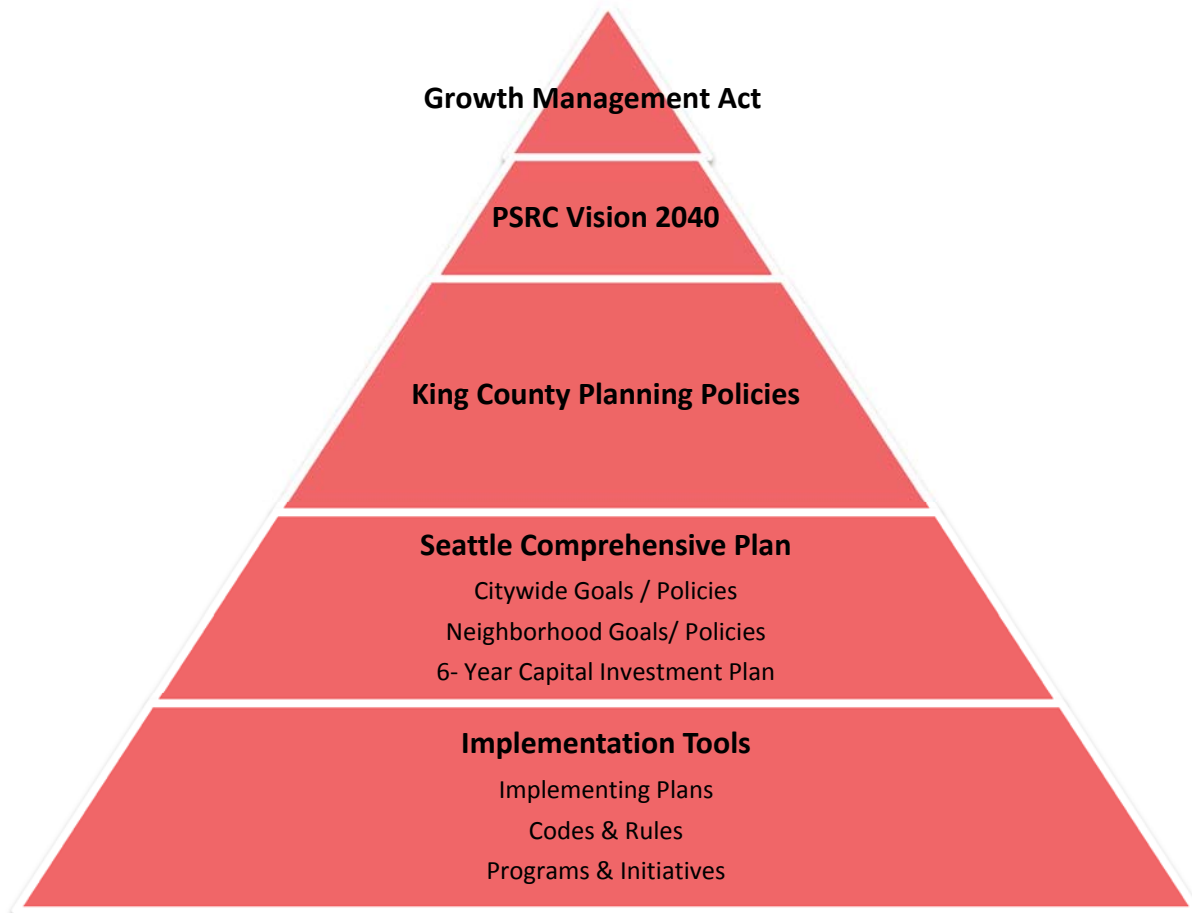


## Implementing the Plan

This Plan is a framework with a strong purpose. Yet since it provides provides guidance for a 20-year timespan, it does not prescribe specific solutions for the most part.

The City carries the Plan forward more specifically through development regulations and functional plans. For instance, the City's Land Use Code is a compilation of development regulations that guide how land in the city can be used. The Land Use Element of this Plan provides the policy basis for regulations that appear in the Land Use Code. The Transportation Element of this Plan provides direction for the Bicycle Master Plan and Transit Master Plan. The illustration below shows the relationship among various City plans, this Plan, and regional plans.

While the City adopts regulations and plans for its functions, the private sector and other government agencies also help shape the city in significant ways. For example, the private sector builds most of the new housing and commercial space in the city, King County provides bus service, Sound Transit builds and provides light rail service, the Port of Seattle operates shipping terminals that bring significant international trade to the city and region, and the Washington State Department of Transportation builds and maintains state highways in the city. The City maintains partnerships with these agencies to help them make decisions that best serve the City's goals.



**Examples of Implementing Plans**

- Pedestrian Master Plan
- Bicycle Master Plan
- Transit Master Plan
- Freight Master Plan
- Move Seattle Action Plan
- Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development
- Parks Legacy Plan
- SPU Strategic Business Plan
- SPU Stormwater Management Plan
- SPU Solid Waste Plan
- City Light Strategic Plan
- My Library Strategic Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Disaster Recovery Framework

**Examples of Codes and Rules in Seattle Municipal Code**

- Land Use Code
- Stormwater Code
- Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) Code
- Historic Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Street and Sidewalk Use
- Parks and Recreation

**Examples of Programs & Initiatives**

- Bridging the Gap
- Housing Levy
- Seattle Parks District
- Seattle Homeowner Stabilization Program
- Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program Credit Program
- Neighborhood Matching Fund
- City Light Appliance Rebate Program
- Public Art Program
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure Program
- Fire and Emergency Response levy
- Food Action Plan

## Defining and Measuring Success

This Plan specifically covers the next twenty years of growth in Seattle, but the city is expected to continue growing beyond that time period. There will always be ways the city can improve to meet changing needs and to address ongoing concerns. Because of the changing nature of our region and our city, the success of this Plan is not measured by an ideal end state. Instead, success is measured by whether we are moving in the directions the Plan lays out.

The Plan covers many topics in several chapters, and monitoring progress on every one of those topics would be a time-consuming and demanding task. To simplify the monitoring process, the City has identified the following list of key indicators that will provide insights about progress on key issues the addressed by the Plan. The City will report regularly on these indicators to help the public and elected officials judge the effectiveness of the Plan and the City's actions to implement it. These indicators are in addition to data that DPD currently publishes on housing and job growth by urban center and urban village and demographic data.

- Income Equity – gap between persons of color and overall population
- High School Graduation rates by race
- Housing Affordability, especially for cost-burdened renter households
- Transportation Choices - trips by walking, biking, transit
- Recreational Opportunities - households with access to usable open space
- Crime Rate
- Childhood Obesity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions – compared to 2008 levels
- Recycling - % waste recycled or composted
- Healthy Creeks – habitat conditions of major creeks

Where data is available, the City would report information about indicators for each urban village to help assess the status of each village.

## Developing and Updating This Plan

Seattle first adopted this Comprehensive Plan in 1994 after a multi-year effort in which residents throughout the city considered ways to shape the future of the city and to accommodate expected growth. Numerous meetings and events with the general public helped define the core values cited earlier in this introduction and helped validate the urban village strategy. Advisory committees also played a central role in the creation of the Plan. The process that produced this latest version of the Plan has also involved much consultation with the public through a variety of meetings and events and through online conversations.

The GMA limits the City to amending the Plan only once each year, with limited exceptions for certain types of amendments that can be considered at any time such as adoption of a new neighborhood plan, or incorporation of the shoreline plan. Since the Plan was first adopted, the City has amended it every year through a regular process that is defined in a City Council resolution.

## Application of the Plan

**Purpose.** The principal purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to provide policies that guide the development of the city in the context of regional growth management. These policies can be looked to by citizens and by all levels of government in planning for growth. Specifically, the Plan will be used by the City of Seattle to help make decisions about proposed ordinances, capital budgets, policies, and programs. Although the Plan will be used to direct the development of regulations which govern land use and development, the Plan will not be used to review applications for specific development projects except when reference to this Comprehensive Plan is expressly required by an applicable development regulation.

The Plan format generally presents a *goal*, followed by *policies* related to the goal, and may include a *discussion* about the goals and policies. Each of these components is defined as follows:

**Goals** represent the results that the City hopes to realize over time, perhaps within the 20-year life of the Plan, except where interim time periods are stated. Whether expressed in terms of numbers or only as directions for future change, goals are aspirations, and not guarantees or mandates.

**Policies** should be read as if preceded by the words “it is the City’s general policy to...” A policy helps to guide the creation or change of specific rules or strategies (such as development regulations, budgets or program plans). City officials will generally make decisions on specific City actions by following ordinances, resolutions, budgets or program plans that themselves reflect relevant Plan policies, rather than by referring directly to this Plan. Implementation of most policies involves a range of City actions over time, so one cannot simply ask whether a specific action or project would fulfill a particular Plan policy. For example, a policy that the City will “give priority to” a particular need indicates that need will be treated as important, not that it will take precedence in every City decision.

Some policies use the words “shall” or “should,” “ensure” or “encourage,” and so forth. In general, such words should be read to describe the relative degree of emphasis that the policy imparts, but not necessarily to establish a specific legal duty to perform a particular act, to undertake a program or project, or to achieve a specific result.

Some policies may appear to conflict, particularly in the context of a specific fact situation or viewed from the different perspectives of persons whose interests may conflict on a given issue. A classic example is the oft-referenced “conflict” between policies calling for “preservation of the environment” and policies that “promote economic development.” Because Plan policies do not exist in isolation, and

must be viewed in the context of all potentially relevant policies, it is largely in the application of those policies that the interests which they embody are reconciled and balanced by the legislative and executive branches of City government.

To the extent a conflict may arise between another City policy and this Plan, the Plan will generally prevail.

Discussion is provided to explain the context in which decisions on goals and policies have been made, the reasons for those decisions, and how the goals and policies are related. The discussion portions of the Plan do not establish or modify policies, but they are intended to help explain or interpret policies. Appendices to the Plan contain certain maps, inventories, and other information required by the GMA, and, in some cases, provide further data and discussion or analysis. The appendices are not to be read as establishing or modifying policies or requirements unless specified for such purposes in the Plan policies. For example, descriptions of current programs in an appendix do not require that the same program be continued, and detailed estimates of how the City may expect to achieve certain goals do not establish additional goals or requirements.

# Seattle's Growth Strategy

## Introduction

Seattle's strategy for accommodating future growth and creating a sustainable city builds on the foundation of its many diverse neighborhoods, and aims to create a better city by providing:

- A variety of housing options and employment growth
- Walkable communities with good transit access
- Services and the infrastructure needed to support growth
- Respect for the natural environment and enhancements to the city's cultural resources

Together, these outcomes help define the urban village strategy as a thoughtful and effective way to grow Seattle now and into the future. As Seattle's population and job base increase, urban villages will be the areas best able to support the increased density needed to house and employ the city's newest residents and workers. The City has made a commitment to growing wisely, in ways that ensure a livable future that is sustainable and accessible to all. By concentrating growth in the urban villages, Seattle can strengthen successful aspects of the city's character, continuing to encourage growth in dense, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use neighborhoods at appropriate locations throughout the city.

This Plan envisions a city where growth helps to build stronger communities, heightens our stewardship of the environment, leads to enhanced economic opportunity and security for all residents, and is accompanied by greater race and social equity across Seattle's communities.

This Element of the Plan describes how the City goes about planning for growth and how it involves others in that planning. It also describes where the City has determined most growth should occur – in the urban centers, urban villages and manufacturing/industrial centers. It also presents policies about urban design that describe how decisions about the location of growth should interact with the natural and built environments.

## Planning for Growth

### Discussion

This Plan is the City's response to the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) and its requirements for a comprehensive plan that meets certain standards. In addition to this Plan, the City also prepares more detailed plans and regulations for implementation and to guide the specific activities of various City departments. The City has a history of encouraging community participation in the development of City plans. In preparing the 1994 version of this Plan, the City deliberately sought participation from a number of communities that had not traditionally been involved in such efforts. Since the original



adoption of the Plan, the City has been even more systematic in conducting outreach to under-represented communities to have their opinions and needs reflected in plans and programs the City will be carrying out. As the make-up of the city's population continues to change, the City will need to increase these outreach efforts to ensure growing segments of the community are represented in the choices the City will make. Enhanced participation in planning and in decision-making can help create communities of opportunity for everyone, regardless of race or means. It can also help balance how the benefits of growth are distributed across the city's communities.

As described in the Introduction to this Plan, planning is a process that continues beyond the production of a document. It requires continual monitoring of conditions that the plan was intended to affect. That means someone or some group must be responsible for understanding what the plan intended and be in a position to both collect data on changes over time and recommend specific adjustments as the need arises. Over time, new people will move into the city and into individual urban villages, and the City will need to find ways to engage these new residents and business owners in testing whether the Plan's vision, goals and policies continue to reflect the current population and circumstances.

## GOAL

**GSG1** Have strategies that prepare the City for the challenges and opportunities of growth and that represent the needs and desires of a broad cross-section of city residents and business owners.

## POLICIES

**GS1.1** Work with other governments in the region to develop coordinated approaches to growth management that will advance the City's values.

**GS1.2** Maintain an updating process for this Plan that is predictable and transparent to the public.

**GS1.3** Engage Seattle residents and businesses in discussions leading to the adoption of plans that guide growth, City government activities, and City services so that the outcomes reflect the public's values and concerns.

**GS1.4** Develop and use practices to reach historically under-represented communities and to aid their participation in decision-making processes.

**GS1.5** Monitor urban centers and villages to track changes over time in the number of housing units and jobs, population and public investments, and use this information to make decisions about conducting further planning or providing additional investments to help meet the needs of residents in these locations.

- GS1.6 Monitor development activity in areas with high potential for displacement of marginalized populations and small businesses and identify and implement strategies that can limit that displacement.

## Urban Village Strategy

### Discussion

The foundation of this Plan's approach to managing growth is a strategy that concentrates most of the expected future growth in places the City has designated as urban centers and urban villages. Most of these places have been the commercial areas serving their local communities or even the broader city and region for decades. They are the places best equipped to absorb more housing and businesses and to provide the services that new residents and employees will need.

Urban centers and villages are complete, compact and connected neighborhoods within the city. They are community resources that allow Seattle to deliver services more efficiently. Urban villages also enable the City to pursue a development pattern that is both environmentally and economically sound. As a result, Seattle can more comprehensively plan for a sustainable future. With an aim to advance the entire community, this approach helps maximize the benefits of public infrastructure investments and to promote private and public collaborations.

Locating more residents, jobs, stores, and services near each other can reduce people's reliance on cars, thereby decreasing fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing residential and employment densities in locations makes transit and other public services convenient for more people, and it also makes providing these key services more efficient. This can be a benefit to transit-dependent populations and to those who rely on other community services.

The urban village strategy takes the existing and intended character of the city's neighborhoods into account when planning for future growth. The places selected for absorbing the most growth come in various shapes and sizes, and they will serve somewhat different purposes. The following four designations represent the roles that different areas will play in the city's future:

**Urban centers** are the densest Seattle neighborhoods, and they act as both regional centers and as neighborhoods that provide a diverse mix of uses, housing, and employment opportunities.

**Manufacturing/industrial centers** are home to the city's thriving industrial businesses, and like urban centers, are regional designations and important regional resources for retaining and attracting jobs and for maintaining a diversified economy.

**Hub urban villages** are communities that offer a balance of housing and employment, and generally are less dense than urban centers. These areas provide a mix of goods, services, and employment for their residents and surrounding neighborhoods.

**Residential urban villages** are locations of expected residential concentrations, generally at lower densities than urban centers or hub urban villages. While they are also sources of goods and services for residents and surrounding communities, they are not to be concentrations of employment.

Each of these areas is intended to see more growth and change over time than other commercial nodes or primarily residential areas, and together they will accommodate the majority of the city's expansion during this Plan's lifespan. The City will continue to work with its residents, businesses, and institutions citywide to promote conditions that will help each of its communities thrive, but it will pay special attention to the centers and villages where the majority of expansion is expected. The policies in this Plan provide direction for that change and growth.

The City will especially focus growth within urban centers and urban villages in the areas within easy walking distance of frequent and reliable transit service. The presence of transit reinforces the walkability and decreased car dependency intended in the urban villages by providing viable alternatives to cars for area residents and employees. The centers and villages also provide focal points for locating services and public gathering places.

Because urban centers and urban villages are the places where the City expects to concentrate public facilities, services and transit, it will be important to ensure that there are opportunities for all households, including those with low incomes, large families, and people of color to find housing and employment in those places.

In addition to designating urban villages and defining desired conditions, the Plan addresses conditions outside urban centers and villages, which will also accommodate some growth, although in less dense patterns. These include single-family neighborhoods, small areas of multifamily and commercial areas, and scattered industrial areas. On the whole, however, the urban village approach continues to direct most new development away from Seattle's single-family-focused communities because most of these areas do not have needed services within easy walking distance.

## GOAL

**GSG2** Accommodate most of the city's housing and employment growth in designated urban centers and urban villages in ways that will lead to equitable outcomes for all of the city's residents.

## POLICIES

**GS2.1** Designate places as urban centers, urban villages, or manufacturing/industrial centers based on the functions they can perform and the densities they can support.

- GS2.2 Encourage investments and activities in urban centers and urban villages that will enable those areas to flourish as compact mixed-use neighborhoods designed to accommodate the majority of the city's new jobs and housing, provide services and employment close to housing, and promote efficient use of public services, including transit, with housing options for a variety of households and a range of incomes.
- GS2.3 Establish boundaries for urban centers, urban villages, and manufacturing/industrial centers that reflect existing development patterns, intended community characteristics, and recognized neighborhood areas.
- GS2.4 Coordinate planning for transportation, utilities, open space and other public services to meet the anticipated growth and increased density.
- GS2.5 Encourage infill development on vacant and under-used sites, particularly in urban centers and villages.
- GS2.6 Plan for development in urban centers and urban villages in ways that will provide a broad cross-section of Seattle households with better access to services, transit, and educational and employment opportunities.
- GS2.7 Promote levels of density, mixes of uses, and transit improvements that will support the use of walking, biking, and public transportation.
- GS2.8 Direct the majority of future development to centers and urban villages, and limit the possibility of scattered growth along arterials and other areas not conducive to walking, transit use, and cohesive community development.
- GS2.9 Use zoning and other planning tools in places where growth and development are expected to shape the amount and pace of growth in ways that will control displacement of marginalized populations, community services and institutions.
- GS2.10 Establish Urban Centers and Urban Villages using the criteria described in Growth Strategy Figure 1.

**Growth Strategy Figure 1. Characteristics of Urban Centers and Urban Villages**

Characteristic	Urban Centers	Hub Urban Villages	Residential Urban Villages
Land Area	Up to 1.5 square miles (960 acres)	At least 20 contiguous acres of land currently zoned to accommodate commercial or mixed-use activities	Includes one or more centers of activity, including at least 10 acres of commercial zoning within a radius of 2,000 feet
Access	<p>Within ½ mile of the existing or planned high capacity station;</p> <p>Existing or planned connections to surrounding neighborhoods by bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities</p>	<p>Transit service with a frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak hours and 30 minutes in off-peak hours, with direct access to at least one urban center</p> <p>Convenient and direct connections to neighboring areas by pedestrians and bicyclists</p>	<p>Presently served by a transit route providing direct transit service to at least one urban center or hub village, with a peak-hour transit frequency of 15 minutes or less and 30 minutes at off-peak times</p> <p>Connected by existing or planned to be in the future by bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities to neighboring areas and nearby public amenities</p>
Zoning and Use	Zoning that allows for a diverse mix of commercial and residential activities	<p>Zoning that allows a broad range of housing types as well as commercial and retail support services— either existing or allowed under current zoning—to serve a local, citywide, or regional market</p> <p>Opportunities for redevelopment due to a substantial amount of vacant or under-used land within the village</p>	Zoning that emphasizes residential uses while allowing for commercial and retail support services for the surrounding area
Growth Accommodation	<p>Zoning that permits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 15,000 jobs within a 0.5 miles of a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient zoned capacity to accommodate a minimum of 25</li> </ul>	Existing densities or the potential for residential density of at least 8 units per

	<p>high-capacity transit station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An overall employment density of 50 jobs per acre</li> <li>• An overall residential density of 15 households per acre</li> </ul>	<p>jobs per gross acre and at least 2,500 jobs, in addition to at least 3,500 dwelling units within the village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area presently supports, or current zoning would allow an overall residential density of 15 or more units per gross acre</li> </ul>	<p>gross acre under current zoning</p>
<p>Currently Designated Centers/Villages (See map on Figure XX)</p>	<p>Downtown Seattle First Hill/Capitol Hill Uptown University Northgate South Lake Union</p>	<p>Lake City North Rainier Bitter Lake Village Ballard West Seattle Junction Fremont</p>	<p>Crown Hill 23<sup>rd</sup> &amp; Jackson Madison-Miller Wallingford Eastlake Othello South Park Upper Queen Anne Roosevelt Aurora-Licton Springs Green Lake Rainier Beach Morgan Junction Admiral North Beacon Hill Greenwood/Phinney Ridge Columbia City Westwood/Highland Park</p>

GS2.11 Permit varying sizes of urban villages based on local conditions, but limit sizes so that most village areas are within walking distance from employment and service areas in the village.

GS2.12 Reflect the area that is generally within a ten-minute walk of frequent light rail stations in urban village boundaries.

GS2.13 Support convenient access to healthful food for all areas where people live by encouraging grocery stores, farmers’ markets and community food gardens.

GS2.14 Allow commercial activity in residential urban villages that supports the overall residential function and character of the village.



- GS2.15 Promote meaningful choice for marginalized populations to live and work in urban centers and urban villages throughout the city.
- GS2.16 Designate areas as manufacturing/industrial centers consistent with the following criteria and with the Countywide Planning Policies:
- Existing zoning that promotes manufacturing, warehousing and distribution uses
  - Zoning that discourages uses that pose short- or long-term conflicts with industrial uses, or that threaten to convert significant amounts of industrial land to non-industrial uses
  - Strictly limit residential uses and discourage land uses that are not compatible with manufacturing/industrial uses
  - Buffers that protect neighboring, less-intensive land uses from the impacts associated with industrial activity (provided by generally maintaining existing buffers, including existing industrial buffer zones)
  - Sufficient zoned capacity to accommodate a minimum of 10,000 jobs
  - Land parcels suitable for industrial activity
  - Relatively flat terrain allowing for efficient industrial processes
  - Reasonable access to the regional highway, rail, air and/or waterway system for transportation of goods
- GS2.17 Designate the Ballard-Interbay and Duwamish areas as manufacturing/industrial centers.
- GS2.18 Use zoning and other tools to maintain and expand existing industrial activities within the manufacturing/industrial centers.
- GS2.19 Limit City-owned land in the manufacturing/industrial centers to uses that are compatible with other industrial uses and that are inappropriate in other zones, and discourage other public entities from siting non-industrial uses in manufacturing/industrial centers.
- GS2.20 Retain land in the Manufacturing/Industrial Centers for industrial uses and develop criteria for evaluating requests to remove land from a M/IC, recognizing the important economic resource the land in these centers represents.

## Areas Outside Centers and Villages

- GS2.21 Support healthy neighborhoods throughout the city so that all residents have access to a range of housing choices, as well as access to parks, open space and services that make it easy for them to walk, bike or take transit to meet many of their daily needs.
- GS2.22 Allow limited multifamily, commercial, and industrial uses outside of urban villages to support the surrounding area or to maintain the existing character.

GS2.23 Plan for uses and densities on hospital and college campuses that are located outside an urban center or village in ways that recognize the important contributions of these institutions and the generally low-scale development of their surroundings.

## Distribution of Growth

### Discussion

The urban village strategy focuses Seattle's future growth primarily within areas designated as centers and villages. This Plan anticipates that most future job growth will take place in urban centers—areas that already function as high-density, concentrated employment cores that enjoy the greatest access to the regional transit network.

Currently, jobs and households are unevenly distributed throughout Seattle. For instance, the four adjoining urban centers (Downtown, Capitol Hill/First Hill, South Lake Union, and Uptown) contain almost one-fifth of the City's households and nearly one-half of the city's jobs—on less than 5 percent of the city's land. Downtown alone has about ten times more jobs than housing units. However, the Plan does not intend to have an even distribution of jobs and households across the city, and future growth estimates also show that the urban centers' current role as primarily job centers is likely to continue.

Industrial job growth will continue to take place mostly within the City's two existing and well-established manufacturing/industrial centers. There will also be overall job growth in hub urban villages distributed throughout the city, which will promote additional employment centers that are easily accessible to the surrounding residential population, thereby locating jobs and services near where people live.

The largest amount of residential growth is expected to occur in urban centers, furthering chances for people to live close to work. The next most significant share of residential growth will likely occur in the various hub and residential urban villages throughout the city. More modest growth will be dispersed, at lower densities, in various places outside centers and villages, including along arterials where current zoning allows multifamily and commercial uses.

Over the next 20 years, this Plan anticipates that Seattle will add 70,000 housing units and 115,000 jobs. These estimates represent the City's share of King County's projected 20-year growth.

### GOAL

GSG3 Accommodate approximately 80% of the city's expected household growth in urban centers and urban villages and 80% of employment growth in those areas plus manufacturing/industrial centers. Figure 2 shows the amount of growth planned for each

center, and Figure 3 shows the growth rate planned for different categories of urban villages.

**Growth Strategy Figure 2**  
**Estimated Urban Center Growth 2015-2035**

	Housing Units	Jobs
<b>Urban Centers</b>		
Downtown	10,000	30,000
First Hill/Capitol Hill	7,000	3,000
University District	2,700	8,000
Northgate	1,600	6,000
South Lake Union	4,700	20,000
Uptown	3,500	3,500
<b>Manufacturing/Industrial Centers</b>		
Duwamish	-	3,000
Ballard - Interbay	-	1,500

**Growth Strategy Figure 3**  
**Estimated Urban Village Growth Rates**

	Expected Housing Growth Rate*	Expected Job Growth Rate*
<b>Hub Urban Villages</b>		
With frequent transit **	70%	50%
Without frequent transit	40%	50%
<b>Residential Urban Villages</b>		
With frequent transit	80%	
Without frequent transit	20%	

\* Growth above 2014 actual housing units or jobs

\*\* Frequent transit means a light rail station or two or more bus lines serving multiple destinations

## POLICIES

- GS3.1 Encourage residential growth in places around the city that are conducive to compact, well-served urban living.
- GS3.2 Increase employment growth in areas that are convenient to the city's residential population as a way to promote walking and transit use and to reduce work commutes.
- GS3.3 Plan for a variety of uses and the highest densities in Seattle's urban centers, consistent with their role in shaping the regional development pattern.

- GS3.4 Base 20-year growth estimates for each urban center and manufacturing/industrial center on:
- Citywide targets for housing and job growth adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies
  - The role of the center in regional growth management planning
  - Access to transit
  - Existing zoning, including capacity for additional commercial and residential development
  - Existing densities
  - Current development conditions, recent development trends and plans for private or public development, such as by major institutions
  - Plans for infrastructure, public amenities and services that could attract or support additional growth
  - Potential benefits and burdens for the city's marginalized populations
- GS3.5 Encourage a distribution of growth that both fosters opportunity in low-income neighborhoods and provides access for marginalized populations in neighborhoods that already have good access to opportunities and amenities.
- GS3.6 Focus development activity on centers and villages over the Plan's 20-year timeframe through such measures as providing services, facilities, and incentives to accommodate estimated growth.
- GS3.7 Adjust urban center growth estimates at least every 10 years to reflect current information as well as state and county 20-year growth estimates, or reexamine projections as neighborhood plans for the city's centers are substantially amended.

## Urban Design

### Discussion

As Seattle evolves, thoughtful urban design can help both conserve and enhance the aspects of Seattle's physical environment that make it so appealing to residents and visitors alike. These aspects include: well-defined and diverse neighborhoods; the city's compact, intimate, walkable scale; mixed-use neighborhoods; close relationship with nature; and parks, streets, and public spaces. In a flourishing city, urban design can help seamlessly integrate the new with the old, producing positive results while limiting the negative impacts of change. The policies in this element are concerned with broad choices the City might make about where and how to develop.

The policies in this Element are not intended to be used for reviewing individual projects. Through zoning regulations and design review, the City helps shape the appearance of individual projects.

The designation of several Seattle historic districts preserves those valued neighborhoods' distinctive character. Moreover, the way the City builds and maintains major infrastructure, including parks and roads, will continue to define key public spaces and the connections among them.

Providing a citywide context, the urban design policies described here outline the City's future approaches in regulating, building and maintaining the city, while reflecting its diverse neighborhoods, populations and natural features. The policies here are separated into three specific areas: Natural Environment, Built Environment, and Public Spaces. More detailed direction for individual projects can be found in the Land Use Code's regulations and in design guidelines.

## GOAL

- GS4 Maintain and enhance Seattle's unique character and sense of place, including its natural setting, history, human-scaled development, and community identity as the city grows and changes.

## Natural Environment

### POLICIES

- GS4.1 Encourage the preservation, protection, and restoration of Seattle's distinctive natural features and land forms such as bluffs, beaches, streams, and remaining evergreen forests.
- GS4.2 Design public facilities and development regulations to emphasize physical and visual connections to Seattle's natural surroundings, with special attention to public vistas of shorelines, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains.
- GS4.3 Encourage design that recognizes natural systems and integrates ecological functions such as storm water filtration or retention with other infrastructure and development projects.
- GS4.4 Respect topography, water and natural systems when building by siting tall buildings in harmony with the city's topography.
- GS4.5 Increase both physical and visual public access to streams, lakes and the Sound.
- GS4.6 Extend sustainable landscaping and an aesthetic approach to typically under-designed sites such as surface parking lots, rooftops and freeway borders.

- GS4.7 Promote the use of native plants for landscaping to emphasize the region's natural identity and foster environmental health.

## Built Environment

- GS4.8 Preserve characteristics that contribute to communities' general identity, such as block and lot patterns and areas of historic, architectural or social significance.
- GS4.9 Design public infrastructure and private building developments to help visitors understand the existing block and street patterns and to reinforce the walkability of neighborhoods.
- GS4.10 Use zoning tools and natural features to ease the transitions between urban villages' moderate building intensities to lower-density developments of surrounding areas.
- GS4.11 Design streets with distinctive identities that are compatible with a citywide system that defines differences between types of streets.
- GS4.12 Preserve, strengthen, and, as opportunities permit, reconnect Seattle's street grid as a means to knit together neighborhoods and to connect areas of the city..
- GS4.13 Develop street designs that reflect each street's function, right-of-way width, adjoining uses and opportunities to provide open space and green infrastructure.
- GS4.14 Design urban villages to be walkable, using approaches such as clear street grids, pedestrian connections between major activity centers, incorporation of public open spaces, and commercial buildings with retail and active uses that flank the sidewalk.
- GS4.15 Design multifamily zones to be appealing residential communities with high-quality housing, and development standards that promote privacy and livability, such as appropriately scaled landscaping, street amenities, and in appropriate locations limited commercial uses targeted for the local population.
- GS4.16 Encourage designs for buildings and public spaces that maximize use of natural light and provide protection from inclement weather.
- GS4.17 Encourage the use of land, rooftops, and other spaces to contribute to urban food production.
- GS4.18 Use varied building forms and heights to enhance attractive and walkable neighborhoods.

- GS4.19 Use groupings of tall buildings, instead of lone towers, to enhance overall topography or to define districts.
- GS4.20 Consider taller building heights in key locations to provide visual focus and define activity centers, such as near light rail transit stations in urban centers and urban villages.
- GS4.21 Limit the negative impacts of tall buildings on public views and on sunlight in public streets and parks through regulations defining upper-level building setbacks, lot coverage limits or other techniques.
- GS4.22 Locate tall buildings to respect natural surroundings and key natural features and to minimize obstructing views of these features, such as by having lower building heights near lakes or the Sound.
- GS4.23 Encourage street widths and building heights that are in proportion with each other by reducing setbacks from the street and keeping reasonable sidewalk widths for lower buildings.

## Public Spaces

- GS4.24 Encourage innovative street design that expands the role of streets as public spaces that could include use for markets, festivals, or street parks.
- GS4.25 Promote well-defined outdoor spaces that can easily accommodate potential users and that are well integrated with adjoining buildings and spaces.
- GS4.26 Design public spaces that consider the nearby physical context and the needs of the community.

## Annexation

### Discussion

Small areas of unincorporated land lie immediately south of the Seattle city limits. The King County government currently administers services to these areas. However, the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) anticipates that all areas within the county's urban growth boundary will eventually be part of a city. Figure 4 shows the locations the City has identified as potential annexation areas.

### GOAL

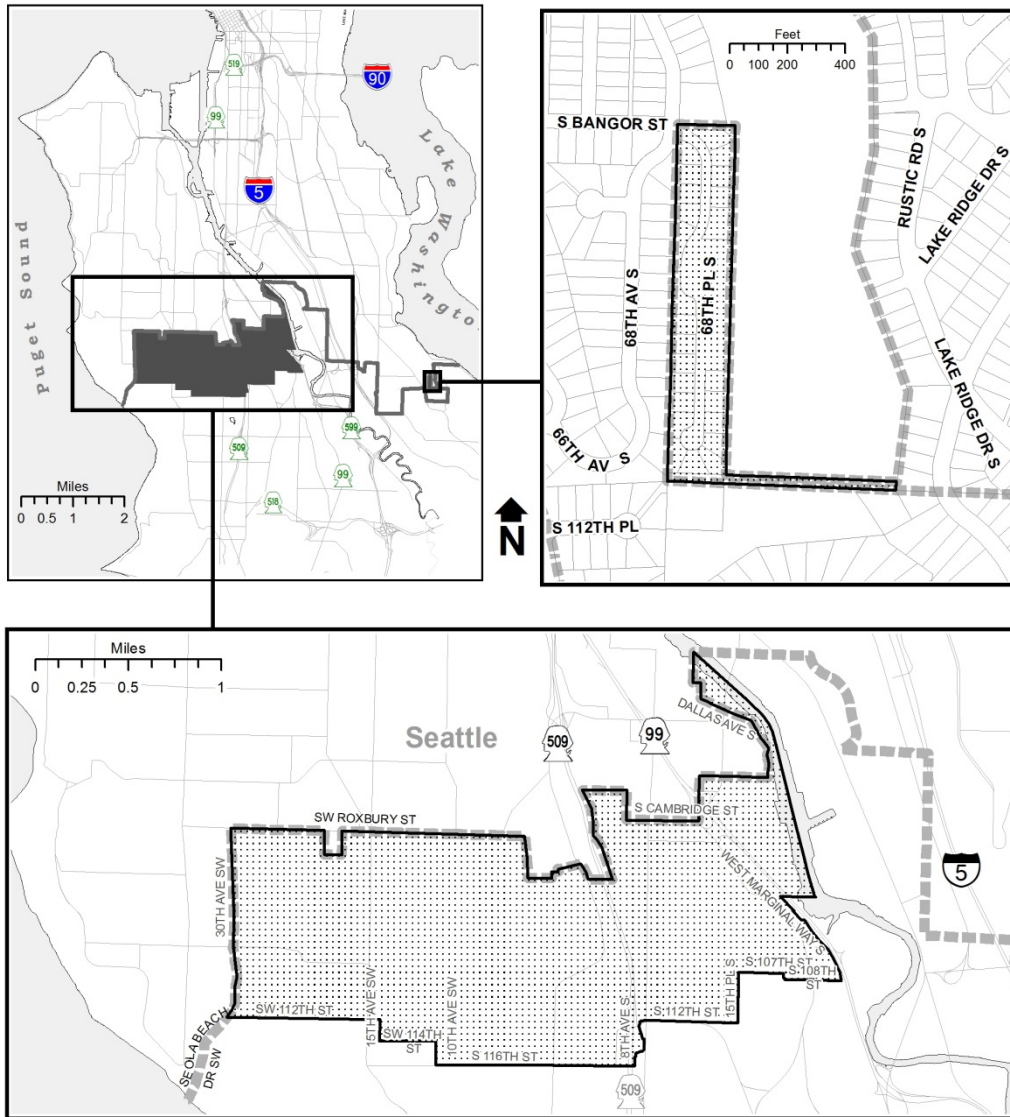
- GSG5 Eliminate pockets of unincorporated land abutting Seattle.

## POLICIES



- GS5.1 Cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions in order to reach equitable and balanced resolutions to jurisdictional boundaries for the remaining unincorporated areas abutting city limits.
- GS5.2 Consider annexing land in cases where:
- The area has access, or can easily be connected, to areas already served by the City
  - The City can readily provide services to the area
  - The boundary changes or interjurisdictional agreements will result in an equitable distribution of revenues and costs related to asset transfer and to the development, maintenance and operation of facilities
- GS5.3 Designate for potential annexation those areas that include City-owned parcels or small sites almost completely surrounded by land currently within Seattle's city limits. Areas meeting these conditions are designated as Potential Annexation Areas as shown in Growth Strategy Figure 4.
- GS5.4 Consider annexation requests by the residents of unincorporated areas as a way for the City to meet regional growth management goals.
- GS5.5 Support annexations of unincorporated areas to surrounding jurisdictions by taking part in public outreach efforts to determine local sentiment regarding annexations, the development of inter-local agreements concerning final annexation plans, and the evaluation of proposals to create new jurisdictions in these areas.



Growth Strategy Figure 4  
**Potential Annexation Areas**



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 Potential Annexation Area  
 Seattle City Limit

# Land Use

## Introduction

Decisions about land use influence the city's shape, appearance, and function. To implement the urban village strategy, land use policies guide where growth occurs and what is built to accommodate it. The urban village strategy expands the scope of land use to go beyond regulations mostly focused on uses and buildings to address relationships between buildings, different mixes of uses, and the special characteristics of different types of neighborhoods. In coordination with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the land use regulations contribute to building community. Given the reality that Seattle is essentially a built city with little vacant land, the land use goals and policies emphasize maintaining and expanding upon the city's compact, walkable, and distinctive communities. To better share the opportunities and benefits generated by growth, new development is directed to the most accessible locations within the city, or areas where improvements will be made to increase accessibility. New development is also encouraged to mitigate some of the impacts created in locations targeted for increased densities. Measures are included to relieve the impacts that often accompany growth and change, including increasing access to resources such as housing and other services for the city's most vulnerable residents.

One of the most visible outcomes of that strategy will be the location, type, and size of new buildings. Aligned with the urban village strategy, the City's Land Use Code (SMC Title 23) includes the zoning map and detailed regulations that determine by zone where different uses are allowed and the types and sizes of buildings permitted to accommodate them. The zones themselves are grouped in the Land Use Code under general zoning categories: single-family zones, multifamily zones, commercial zones, industrial zones, Downtown zones, and Seattle Mixed zones. Also, within urban centers, a special Master Planned Community zone can be established. The various zone categories are further generalized in this Land Use Element and grouped into what are referred to as land use areas, which combine the zoning categories in the Land Use Code that are similar in terms of their function and the types of development they promote. The land use areas are among the designated areas shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Policies in this Land Use Element provide the basis for determining what is permitted in the various zones and where the zones are located so that most new development will likely occur in the urban centers and urban villages to help create the walkable communities the urban village strategy envisions. The policies also aim for new development outside centers and villages that will be compatible with the surroundings in order to respect the history, scale, and character of existing neighborhoods, some of which reflect distinct cultural heritages.

The Land Use Element is divided into three sections. The first section outlines citywide land use policies that address broad issues spanning the various zoning categories. These policies describe the overall development pattern envisioned for the city, which is illustrated on the Future Land Use Map. The

second section identifies and discusses each land use area in more depth: single-family areas, multifamily areas, commercial/mixed use areas (combining commercial and Seattle Mixed zones), industrial areas, and Downtown areas), and includes the policies that differentiate the City's land use areas from each other. The third section discusses place-specific land use policies, including those that address areas with unique characteristics or where a special public purpose is to be achieved, such as an historic district or a shoreline environment.

## Citywide Land Use Policies

Citywide land use policies guide the contents and interpretation of the City's land use regulations, which are applied geographically through a series of zones. Unless a difference is noted, policies in this section generally apply across all zones. Policies related to the Future Land Use Map help guide the location of specific zones.

## The Future Land Use Map and Locations of Zones

### Discussion

Under this plan, the Future Land Use Map identifies nine designated land use areas that help determine the appropriate functions and intensity of development that the zoning should support throughout the city. Five of these areas – single-family residential areas, multifamily residential areas, commercial/mixed use areas, downtown areas, and industrial areas – are land use area designations established to accommodate a specific function or a particular use, while also providing for a range of zones allowing different development densities for that use and provisions for other complementing uses. These areas cover the entire city, with a few exceptions where a special process allows for specialized zoning to be created, such as major institution overlay districts or master planned communities. The other four designated areas – urban centers, hub urban villages, residential urban villages, and manufacturing and industrial centers – are urban village designations that overlap with the land use area designations. These urban village designations typically encompass a variety of land use areas integrated into a cohesive development pattern to achieve the desired function and range of development densities.

The Future Land Use Map show the distribution of the different designated areas throughout the city, providing a graphic representation of Seattle's future by displaying the general location of where different activities and types of development are planned to occur. More specific zoning is identified on the City's Zoning Map, which is part of the plan's regulatory structure and can be found in the Land Use Code.

To respond and adapt to changing circumstances that arise as the city evolves, the Future Land Use Map may be amended. Some changes, such as boundary adjustments, changes in the location of specific zones within the same general land use area category; or changes to zones within the boundaries of a

designated urban center, urban village, or manufacturing and industrial center will not require amendments to the Future Land Use Map.

Changing the zoning of a particular area or a particular site requires a rezone. In addition to ensuring consistency with the Future Land Use Map, using criteria laid out in the Land Use Code, the City will evaluate the appropriateness of a zoning change at a specific location.

## GOAL

LUG1 Achieve a development pattern consistent with the urban village strategy, which concentrates most housing and employment growth in urban centers and urban villages, with additional employment in manufacturing/industrial centers, while also allowing infill development compatible with the established context in areas outside centers and villages.

## POLICIES

LU1.1 Use the Future Land Use Map to identify where different types of development are planned to achieve a development pattern that supports the urban village strategy.

LU1.2 Use the Future Land Use Map, the land-use policies in this land use element, and criteria in the Land Use Code to determine the appropriate zoning designation for property in the city.

LU1.3 Promote this plan's overall desired land-use pattern through appropriate zoning that regulates the mix of uses and size and density of development to:

- Focus new residential and commercial development in urban centers and urban villages
- Integrate new projects outside of centers and villages with the established development context

LU1.4 Provide for a wide range in the scale and density permitted for multifamily residential, commercial, and mixed use projects to generally achieve the following overall density and scale characteristics:

- In urban centers, a moderate to high density and scale of development
- In hub urban villages, a moderate density and scale of development
- In residential urban villages, a low to moderate density and scale of development

LU1.5 Establish building height limits that are consistent with the goals of the urban village strategy and the type and scale of development intended for each zone classification, and limit the zones that allow the greatest height and density of development to urban centers and urban villages.

- LU1.6 Provide a harmonious transition where urban centers and urban villages border neighboring residential areas.
- LU1.7 Require Future Land Use Map amendments only when needed to achieve a significant change to the intended function of a large area.

## Uses

### Discussion

Seattle regulates land uses by zone to ensure an adequate supply of land to accommodate future growth and facilitate access to housing, employment, goods, and services, while also maintaining an appropriate relationship among uses within the same zone and between uses in neighboring zones. Regulating land uses provides predictability about how an area will evolve over time, which is necessary to support neighborhood stability. Regulating uses by area through zoning creates a varied array of living and working environments that reflect existing neighborhood identity and define the desired future character of an area. In addition, certain uses are important to the community because of the services they provide and need to be accommodated in a variety of areas. These special uses are subject to standards that will ensure their compatibility with the intended function and character of these different areas.

### GOAL

- LUG2 Provide zoning and accompanying land use regulations that:
- Allow for a variety of housing types to accommodate housing choices for households of all types and income levels
  - Support a wide diversity of employment-generating activities providing jobs for a diverse residential population, as well as a variety of services for residents and businesses
  - Accommodate the full range of public services, institutions, and amenities needed to support a fully developed, diverse, and economically sustainable urban community

### POLICIES

- LU2.1 Allow or prohibit uses in each zone based on the zone's intended function as described in Section 2 of this land use element and the expected impacts of a use on other properties in the zone and the surrounding area. Generally allow for a broad mix of compatible uses in those zones that allow the greatest densities of development.

- LU2.2 Include provisions to potentially allow as conditional uses those activities that may be beneficial to an area but that could also require additional mitigation because of the potential for severe impacts on sensitive environments or, if occurring too frequently in one area, could result in cumulative impacts that might prove incompatible with other permitted uses.
- LU2.3 Allow residential use outright or as a conditional use in all zones except in industrial zones and those shoreline areas where residential uses may conflict with the intended function of the shoreline environment.
- LU2.4 Limit non-residential uses in residential zones to those necessary or highly compatible with the function of residential neighborhoods.
- LU2.5 Encourage legally established structures and uses that do not conform to current regulations to become more conforming over time.
- LU2.6 Allow nonconforming uses to be maintained and enhanced, but generally not to be expanded or extended.
- LU2.8 Evaluate all new land use regulations to determine if there are potential adverse outcomes that may affect certain groups or individuals unfairly, and seek to avoid or mitigate such potential outcomes.
- LU2.9 Avoid introduction of incompatible land uses adjacent to or within the Airport Influence Area of Commercial Service Airports.

## Special Uses: Public Facilities and Small Institutions

### Discussion

Over Seattle's long history, many facilities have been developed that provide services to local communities. These include public and private schools, fire and police stations, nursing homes, and other structures that have specialized physical requirements compared to the typical uses found in a particular zone. For instance, public schools in a single-family zone, where most public schools are located, may need to vary from the development standards generally required in the zone.

### GOAL

- LUG3 Allow public facilities and small institutions to locate where they are generally compatible with the function, character, and scale of an area, even if some deviation from certain regulations is necessary.

## POLICIES

- LU3.1 Regulate small institutions and public facilities to promote compatibility with other developments in the area.
- LU3.2 Allow public facilities and small institutions to depart from development standards, if necessary to meet their particular structural requirements, while maintaining general design compatibility with the surrounding area's scale and character.
- LU3.3 Require public facilities and small institutions to adhere to zoned height limits, except for schools and spires on religious institutions.
- LU3.4 Allow standards to be modified for required off-street parking that is associated with public facilities or small institutions based on the expected use and characteristics of the facility and the likely impacts on parking, surrounding development conditions, and existing and planned transportation improvements that affect accessibility in the area.
- LU3.5 Avoid clusters of small institutions and public facilities in residential areas if such concentrations would create or further aggravate parking shortages, traffic congestion, and noise in the area.
- LU3.6 Allow non-conforming small institutions and public facilities to expand or make structural changes, provided these alterations do not increase the structure's non-conformity and comply with the zone's development standards.
- LU3.7 Allow buildings no longer used as schools to be repurposed for other uses not otherwise permitted in the applicable zone, using criteria to assess proposed uses for each vacant school building that are established as the need arises through a process that includes the participation of the Seattle School District, the City, and the surrounding neighborhood.

## Special Uses: Telecommunication Facilities

### Discussion

Broadcast radio and television stations, as well as cell phone service providers, require facilities that can transmit their signals. These facilities usually must be in elevated locations and are primarily regulated by federal law. Generally, major communication facilities are AM and FM radio and VHF and UHF television transmission towers. Minor communication facilities are generally smaller than major facilities and include such things as personal wireless service and cellular communication facilities.

## GOAL

- LUG4 Provide opportunities for locating radio and television broadcast utilities (major communications utilities) to support continued and improved service to the public and to address potential impacts to public health.

## POLICIES

- LU4.1 Allow major communications utilities only where impacts of their size and appearance can be offset, and in a way that does not lead to an overall increase in new or expanded TV and radio towers.
- LU4.2 Adopt standards to limit exposure to radio frequency radiation that are in keeping with federal standards.
- LU4.3 Encourage replacing existing antennas with new antennas to achieve lower levels of radio frequency radiation at ground level.
- LU4.4 Apply radio frequency radiation standards to newly established radio or television stations transmitting from an existing utility and when any modification or replacement of existing radio or television antennas results in a significant increase in off-site radio frequency radiation.
- LU4.5 Prohibit new major communication utilities, such as radio and television transmission towers, in single-family and multifamily residential zones and in pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use zones, and encourage existing major communication utilities to relocate in nonresidential areas.
- LU4.6 Require major communication utilities to be developed in ways that limit impacts on nearby areas, including application of development standards and other design treatments to minimize visual impacts on neighboring properties and to provide an overall appearance that is as compatible as possible with the uses permitted in the zone and the desired character of the area.
- LU4.7 Allow minor communication utilities and accessory communication devices that provide telephone and other communication functions to locate in areas of the city with zoning that is generally consistent with the following ranking of zoning categories, from the most to least preferred:
- Industrial
  - Downtown
  - General commercial



- Pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use
- Residential

LU4.8 Allow minor communication utilities and accessory communications devices if they are developed in a manner that limits impacts on nearby areas. Consider the following factors in evaluating the impacts of these facilities: visual impacts, including antenna type, size and color; proximity to schools; and neighborhood and land use compatibility.

## General Development Standards

### Discussion

Development standards establish limits on the height, bulk, placement, and density of structures permitted on a lot. They also specify additional features or design treatments that may be required or encouraged in a new project. In doing so, they shape Seattle's buildings and neighborhoods. Applying appropriate development standards in each type of zone advances the intent of that zone and reflects how new development contributes to the appearance and character of areas where the zone is applied. The City uses development standards to ensure that new development is in keeping with the existing and planned character of a neighborhood, and that it accounts for physical and environmental constraints. While most zones do not employ development standards that set specific density limits in terms of numbers of units or employees permitted, density is indirectly controlled through limits on the amount of floor area allowed in a structure, either through a floor area ratio (FAR) limit or other development standards that define a permitted building envelope that determines the amount of floor area allowed.

### GOAL

LU4.5 Maintain development standards that guide building design to serve each zone's function and produce the scale and character desired.

### POLICIES

LU5.1 Allow for flexibility in development standards so existing structures can be maintained and improved and new development can better respond to site specific conditions.

LU5.2 Develop and apply appropriate development standards that provide predictability regarding the allowed intensity of development and expected development types for each zone.

LU5.3 Control the massing of structures to make them compatible with the area's planned scale, provide a reasonable ratio of open to occupied space on a site, and allow the building to receive adequate natural light.

- LU5.4 Establish maximum height limits to maintain the desired scale relationship between new structures, existing development and the street environment; address varying topographic conditions; minimize view blockage; and, especially in lower-scale residential areas. In certain Downtown zones and in industrial zones, heights could be unlimited to allow for special types of development uniquely suited to these zones.
- LU5.5 Provide for residents' recreational needs on the development site with standards that may include requirements for private or shared amenity areas such as rooftop decks, balconies, or ground-level open spaces, and that may include an option to provide a portion of the required amenity area as enclosed spaces shared by all residents.
- LU5.6 Establish setbacks in residential areas as needed to allow for adequate light, air, and open space at the ground level, help provide privacy, promote harmony with the existing development pattern, and separate residential uses from more intensive uses.
- LU5.7 Employ development standards in residential zones that address the use of the ground level of new development sites to help maintain existing patterns of landscaping, especially front yards in single-family residential areas, and to encourage permeable surfaces and vegetation.
- LU5.8 Use landscaping requirements and other tools to minimize impacts on the natural environment, including increasing storm water infiltration where appropriate.
- LU5.9 Enhance the visual quality of an area through standards for screening and landscaping appropriate to each zone in order to minimize the visual impact of new development on the surrounding neighborhood, the streetscape, and development in areas with less-intensive zoning.
- LU5.10 Regulate signage to encourage reasonable identification of businesses and to communicate information of community interest while limiting visual clutter, protecting the public interest, and enhancing the city's appearance and safety. Adapt provisions to align with each zone category's intended character and scale, while allowing flexibility to promote superior comprehensive design solutions.
- LU5.11 Allow for flexibility in signs' height or overall area on existing or new buildings when there is a comprehensive design that creates visual harmony between the sign, the building and the site where it is located.
- LU5.12 Establish maximum permitted noise levels that account for both the function of the noise-producing area and the function of areas where the noise may be heard in order to reduce the health hazards and nuisance factors associated with some uses.

- LU5.13 Identify uses as major noise generators based on the noise associated with certain equipment operations or the nature of a particular activity and regulate these uses to reduce noise to acceptable levels.
- LU5.14 Regulate uses and activities that generate air emissions such as dust, smoke, solvent fumes or odors, in order to maintain and encourage successful commercial and industrial activities while protecting employees, clients, nearby residents, the general public, and the natural environment from the potential impacts.
- LU5.15 Establish controls on the placement, direction, and maximum height of lighting and on the glare from reflective materials used on the exterior of structures in order to limit impacts on surrounding uses, enhance the character of the city, and encourage energy conservation.
- LU5.16 Address view protection through:
- Zoning that takes into accounts views, with special emphasis on protection of shoreline views
  - Development standards that help to reduce impacts on views, including height, bulk, scale, and view corridor provisions, as well as design review guidelines
  - Environmental policies that protect specified public views, including views of mountains, major bodies of water, designated landmarks and the downtown skyline, during reviews of development projects
- LU5.17 Impose conditions on higher-density development to offset the impacts of increased densities, including consideration of incentives for Landmark preservation, additional open space amenities, and affordable housing, and encourage new development to contribute to affordable housing through incentives or code changes that are implemented as part of rezones.
- LU5.18 Help preserve active farms through strategies such as offering incentives to developers who take part in programs that transfer development rights from regional farmland into the city.
- LU5.19 Seek excellence in new development through a design review process that encourages multiple perspectives on design issues and that complements development regulations, allowing for flexibility in the application of development standards to achieve quality design that:
- Enhances the character of the city
  - Respects the surrounding neighborhood context, including historic resources
  - Enhances and protects the natural environment
  - Allows for diversity and creativity in building design and site planning

- Furthers community design and development objectives
- Achieves desired intensities of development
- Responds to the increasingly diverse social and cultural character of the city

## Off-Street Parking

### Discussion

The main function of a parking space is to provide vehicle storage, either for a short period of time, such as for customer or visitor parking, or a long period of time, such as for resident or commuter parking. The City provides parking on streets and on public property. Since on-street parking competes with various types of transportation for use of the street, it is addressed in the Transportation Element policies. Policies in that element also promote increased use of travel options besides the car. The Land Use Code regulates off-street parking, which is often provided as part of private developments. The City does not require parking through zoning in urban centers and those urban villages with superior transit access, and instead relies on the private market to provide an amount of parking in individual projects that is based on anticipated demand in these areas. In some areas such as downtown where alternative transportation options exist and it is desirable to limit parking to encourage transit use, the amount of permitted parking may be capped. Where parking is required, the quantity, design, and location of required parking strongly influence the scale, shape, and cost of new development. The policies in this section address automobile parking to encourage other means of travel and to support the walkable environments this Plan aims to create, especially in the urban centers and villages.

### GOAL

LUG6 Regulate off-street parking to address parking demand that may vary across the city in ways that reduce reliance on automobiles, lower construction costs, create attractive and walkable environments, and promote economic development throughout the city.

### POLICIES

LU6.1 Establish parking requirements where appropriate at levels for both single-occupant vehicles and their alternatives to further this Plan's goal to increase the use of public transit, carpools, walking, and bicycles as alternatives to the use of single-occupancy vehicles.

LU6.2 Modify residential parking regulations, where parking is required, to recognize differences in the likely auto use and ownership of intended occupants of new developments, such as projects provided for low-income, elderly, or disabled residents.

- LU6.3 Rely on market forces to determine the amount of parking provided in areas of the city that are well-served by transit, such as urban centers and those urban villages that contain frequent transit service, without requiring a minimum parking requirement in these areas.
- LU6.4 Consider setting parking maximums in urban centers, urban villages and other areas served by high-capacity transit in recognition of the increased pedestrian, bicycle and transit accessibility already provided or planned for in these areas.
- LU6.5 Establish bicycle parking requirements to encourage bicycle ownership and use.
- LU6.6 Limit the impacts of off-street parking access on pedestrians and on surrounding areas by restricting the number and size of automobile curb cuts, and by generally requiring alley access to parking when there is an accessible, surfaced alley that is not used primarily for loading and when not prevented by topography.
- LU6.7 Prohibit most street-level parking between buildings and the street in multifamily and commercial zones in order to maintain an attractive and safe street-level environment, facilitate the movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, minimize adverse impacts on nearby areas and structures, and, where appropriate, maintain or create continuous street fronts.
- LU6.8 Allow shared and off-site parking facilities for more efficient use of parking and to provide the flexibility to develop parking on a site separate from the development site. Ensure that such parking is compatible with the existing or desired character of the area.
- LU6.9 Require parking in areas with limited transit access and set the requirements to discourage underused parking facilities, even if occasional spillover parking results.
- LU6.10 Allow parking management provisions to be reviewed or established in select commercial and multifamily residential areas, to include measures such as cooperative parking, shared parking, shared vehicles, restricted access, carpools, vanpools, or transit pass subsidies.
- LU6.11 Achieve greater parking efficiency by allowing fewer parking spaces per business when several businesses share customer parking, thereby enabling customers to park once and walk to numerous businesses.
- LU6.12 Locate off-street parking facilities to minimize impacts on the pedestrian environment, especially in areas designated for active pedestrian use.
- LU6.13 Limit parking overall in City parks to discourage auto use and to limit the conversion of park land for parking private cars, and where parking is needed, design parking facilities in ways that preserve open space, green space, trees and other mature vegetation.

- LU6.14 Prohibit parking, which is not accessory to another use, in places where that parking would be incompatible with the area's intended function.
- LU6.15 Discourage the development of major, stand-alone park-and-ride facilities within Seattle. Situations where additions to park-and-ride capacity could be considered include:
- At the terminus for a major regional transit system
  - Where opportunities exist for "shared parking"
  - Where alternatives to automobile use are particularly inadequate or cannot be provided in a cost-effective manner

## Incentives

### Discussion

Applying zoning to accommodate increased densities in areas suitable for growth is a major component of the urban village strategy. However, the City also recognizes that there are impacts associated with increasing development density in an area, including increased demand for affordable housing and community services, increased development pressure on historic and environmental resources, and a greater need for more public open space to serve denser populations. By participating in various incentive programs, private developers have the opportunity to add density to their projects through on-site improvements or contributions to programs that address impacts of growth, or by acquiring the unused development rights from other sites occupied by uses such as public parks or historic landmarks that are desirable to retain. Because many of the impacts of increased density fall most heavily on the existing residents of an area who have limited resources for housing, the use of incentives is prioritized to focus on providing affordable housing.

### GOAL

- LUG7 Use development incentive programs to provide opportunities for increasing density in areas targeted for growth while addressing the impacts of the added density on the livability of urban neighborhoods, with particular emphasis on addressing the needs of those residents who are least likely to be served by higher density development provided by the private market.

### POLICIES

- LU7.1 In areas where zoning changes are implemented to accommodate higher densities, incorporate incentive zoning programs into zoning regulations for projects where the higher density is proposed.

- LU7.2 Structure incentive programs to prioritize the provision of affordable housing, while also allowing for incentives that mitigate other impacts of high density development in those areas permitting the greatest allowable densities, including measures that support the preservation of historic or environmental resources or that add to the supply of public open space or other community resources serving high density populations.

## Land Use Areas

### Discussion

In the context of existing environments and the urban village strategy, the goals and policies in this section outline the diverse areas that the City seeks to create and enhance. There are five broad categories of land use areas in Seattle, each of which should result in a variety of building types and uses: Single-family, Multifamily, Commercial/Mixed use, Industrial, and Downtown.

Historically, zones were created to allow different types of uses in distinct areas of the city, partly to limit the impacts of one use on the other. For, instance, industrial activities were separated from residential areas to protect residents from the potentially hazardous activities that occurred in the industrial areas. Over time, the city evolved into areas that reflect this separation of uses, contributing to the discrete neighborhood characters frequently seen today. For instance, commercial zoned land has become the heart of many residential areas, with stores and small offices clustered along an important neighborhood street. These areas that serve nearby residents and that are zoned to accommodate even more residents and businesses are now often identified as the cores of the urban villages. Because most of the City's commercial zones also allow housing, there are now more areas with a mix of residential and commercial uses – often retail uses on the ground floor of a structure that contains housing in the upper floors. Elsewhere, single-family areas in different parts of the city developed at different times with distinct characters that may be defined by a particular architectural style or a unique relationship to their surroundings.

Each of the land use areas plays a unique role in the city, and in combination they promote a general land use pattern that locates the most opportunities for new housing in the areas where the greatest concentrations of jobs and services either currently exist or are expected to occur, and where exceptional access is provided or planned to such concentrations of jobs and services.

### Single-family Residential Areas

Single-family zones cover a large portion of the city's land area, and those zones include a variety of uses, beyond housing. For instance, most of the City-owned park land is found in these zones, as are most of the public schools, cemeteries and many small institutions. The areas where residential uses predominate are characterized by houses that of generally low bulk and scale, that leave significant portions of the areas in open space.

## GOAL

LU8.8 Provide detached single-family and other compatible housing options that have low heights, bulk and scale in order to serve a broad array of households and incomes and to maintain an intensity of development that is appropriate for areas with limited access, infrastructure constraints, or fragile environmental conditions that are not conducive to more intensive development.

## POLICIES

LU8.1 Designate as single-family residential areas those portions of the city that are predominantly developed with single-family houses and that are large enough to maintain a consistent residential character of low height, bulk and scale over several blocks.

LU8.2 Use a range of single-family zones to:

- Maintain the current low height and bulk character of designated single-family areas
- Protect designated single-family areas intensity that are predominantly in single-family residential use, or that have environmental or infrastructure constraints
- Respond to neighborhood plans calling for redevelopment or infill development that maintains the single-family character of the area but also allows for a greater range of housing types

LU8.3 Consider allowing redevelopment or infill development near urban centers and villages, where that new development would maintain the low height and bulk that characterize the single-family area, while allowing a wider range of housing types.

LU8.4 Recognize detached single-family dwellings as the principal use in single-family residential areas and as the primary use permitted outright, with a household occupying a single-family dwelling defined to encompass a great variety of income levels and lifestyle choices.

LU8.5 Allow the development of residential structures compatible with the existing pattern of low height, bulk and scale of development in those neighborhoods where and encourage accessory dwelling units and other housing types that are attractive and affordable to a broad range of households and incomes.

LU8.6 Limit the number and types of non-residential uses allowed in single-family residential areas and apply appropriate development standards in order to protect those areas from the negative impacts of incompatible uses.



- LU8.7 Prohibit parking lots or other activities that are part of permitted uses situated in neighboring higher-intensity zones from locating or expanding into single-family residential areas.
- LU8.8 Use minimum lot size requirements to maintain the character of single-family residential areas, while reflecting differences in development conditions and densities in various single-family areas throughout the city.
- LU8.9 Allow exceptions to minimum lot size requirements to recognize building sites created under earlier regulations and historic platting patterns, to allow the consolidation of very small lots into larger lots, to adjust lot lines to permit more orderly development patterns, and to provide more housing opportunities by creating additional buildable sites that integrate well with surrounding lots and do not result in the demolition of existing housing.
- LU8.10 Reflect the character of existing low-density development through the regulation of scale, siting, structure orientation, and setbacks.
- LU8.11 Permit, through Council or administrative conditional use approval, variations from established standards for planned large developments to promote high-quality design that is compatible with the character of the area, enhances and preserves natural features and functions, encourages the construction of affordable housing, allows for development and design flexibility, and protects environmentally critical areas. Such developments shall not be considered as sole evidence of changed circumstances to justify future rezones of the site or adjacent properties.
- LU8.12 Emphasize measures that can increase housing choices for low-income individuals and families when considering changes to development standards in single-family areas.

## Multifamily Residential Areas

### Discussion

The City's multi-family areas contain a variety of housing types – duplexes, townhouses, walk-up apartments, and high-rise towers. These structures include units that are occupied by owners and renters. Some of the city's multifamily neighborhoods have a walkable, residential feel, while others seem less urban. Overall, these areas offer a number of choices that can accommodate different living styles and incomes.

**GOAL**

- LUG9** Achieve a residential development pattern consistent with the urban village strategy that includes increased availability of a variety of housing types and densities suitable for a wide range of household types and income levels, including opportunities for both home ownership and renting, and that promotes walking and transit use near employment concentrations, residential services and amenities.

**POLICIES**

- LU9.1** Designate as multifamily residential areas those places that are either predominantly occupied by multifamily development or are located where a greater concentration of residential development is desired at various intensities consistent with the urban village strategy.
- LU9.2** Maintain a variety of multifamily zoning classifications that allow development at different densities, scales and configurations and that are well suited to a variety of specific conditions and development goals of diverse areas within the city.
- LU9.3** Balance the aim to increase Seattle's housing stock at all income levels with the equally important objectives of ensuring that new development is compatible with the desired neighborhood character and contributes to high quality, livable urban neighborhoods.
- LU9.4** Establish evaluation criteria for rezoning land to multifamily designations that support the urban village strategy, create desirable multifamily residential neighborhoods, maintain compatible scale, maintain views, enhance the streetscape and pedestrian environment, and achieve an efficient use of the land without major impact on the natural environment.
- LU9.5** Provide flexible criteria for rezoning multifamily residential areas to allow them to be reclassified as compatible pedestrian friendly commercial/mixed use areas, when such action is consistent with the urban village strategy or approved in an adopted neighborhood plan.
- LU9.6** Establish multifamily residential use as the predominant use in multifamily areas while limiting the number and type of non-residential uses, to preserve the residential character of these areas, protect these areas from negative impacts of incompatible uses, and maintain development opportunities for multifamily use.
- LU9.7** Support multifamily developments with units that have direct access to residential amenities, such as ground-level open space, to increase their appeal for families with children.

- LU9.8 Allow a variety of housing types to accommodate a wide range of housing needs for a diversity of households in all residential zones.
- LU9.9 Establish low-rise multifamily zones to accommodate various housing choices in the low to moderate density range that include walk-up flats, townhouses, rowhouses, duplexes and triplexes, and cottage housing.
- LU9.10 Designate low-rise multifamily zones in places where low-scale buildings can provide a harmonious transition between single-family zones and more intensive multifamily or commercial areas.
- LU9.11 Use midrise multifamily zones to provide greater concentrations of housing in urban villages and urban centers.
- LU9.12 Emphasize residential character in the development standards for midrise multifamily zones and allow for scale and building types that differ from those in less intensive residential areas to accommodate a greater density of development in order to promote higher levels of pedestrian activity and frequent transit service, as well as to support local businesses.
- LU9.13 Use highrise multifamily zoning designations to accommodate highrise residential structures, fulfilling the need for high density housing in urban centers, where the mix of activities offers convenient access to regional transit and to a full range of residential services and amenities, as well as many opportunities for people to live within walking distance of their jobs.
- LU9.14 Ensure that midrise and highrise development balance the desire to accommodate larger scale, high density development with the need to maintain livability through controls on such impacts as shadows, bulk, open space, and traffic.
- LU9.15 Permit street-level commercial uses in midrise and high-rise neighborhoods to allow residents greater access to services and to promote an active street environment without detracting from the overall residential character desired for high density neighborhoods.

## Commercial/Mixed Use Areas

### Discussion

Commercial/Mixed Use zones are places for locating businesses that provide jobs and services for residents. Most of these zones also allow housing to be built within the commercial projects, or as stand-alone residential structures. In recent years, most new housing in the city has occurred in these

zones. The Land Use Code identifies several commercial zones – general commercial (C1 and C2), neighborhood commercial (NC1, NC2 and NC3) and the Seattle Mixed zones. All of these zones allow for a variety of commercial activities and a mix of other uses at different heights and densities, depending on location. The general commercial zones are considered to be auto-oriented and less suitable for housing, while the neighborhood commercial and Seattle Mixed zones are considered to be pedestrian-oriented and favorable to housing development, and that distinction is reflected in the development standards that regulate each zone. Where policies refer to “mixed-use,” they mean areas or projects that combine both residential and commercial uses.

## GOAL

LUG10 Create and maintain strong, successful commercial /mixed-use areas that provide a focus for the surrounding neighborhood and that encourage new businesses, provide stability and opportunities for expanding existing businesses and services, and promote economic development and neighborhood vitality, while also accommodating residential development in livable environments that are compatible with the desired commercial function.

## POLICIES

- LU10.1 Prioritize the preservation, improvement, and expansion of existing commercial/mixed use areas over the creation of new business districts in order to strengthen those existing areas.
- LU10.2 Encourage the development of compact, concentrated commercial /mixed use areas, particularly in urban centers and urban villages, where pedestrians can easily access many businesses.
- LU10.3 Provide a range of commercial zone classifications to allow different mixes and intensities of activity, varying scales of development, varying degrees of residential or commercial orientation, and varying degrees of pedestrian or auto orientation.
- LU10.4 Apply development standards that distinguish between pedestrian-oriented commercial zones, which are harmonious with and easily accessible to their surrounding neighborhoods, and general commercial zones which accommodate uses that are more dependent on automobile access.
- LU10.5 Support a wide range of uses in commercial areas, taking into account the intended pedestrian, automobile, or residential orientation of the area, the area’s role in the urban village strategy, and the impacts that the uses could have on surrounding areas.

- LU10.6 Encourage housing in mixed-use developments in pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use areas to provide additional opportunities for residents to live in neighborhoods where they can walk to services and employment.
- LU10.7 Apply limits on the size of specific uses in commercial areas when those limits would:
- Help ensure that the scale of uses is compatible with the character and function of the commercial area
  - Discourage uses likely to attract significant vehicular traffic from locating in areas where that would exacerbate existing traffic problems
  - Promote compatible land use and transportation patterns
  - Foster healthy commercial development
  - Provide opportunities for small local businesses to locate, especially in ethnically relevant business districts throughout the city
- LU10.8 Limit the creation or expansion of uses that generate heavy traffic by reviewing proposals for such uses in order to control the associated traffic impacts and ensure that the uses are compatible with the character of the commercial area and its surroundings.
- LU10.9 Limit new drive-in businesses and accessory drive-in facilities in pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use areas and in automobile-oriented commercial areas with development standards that address the potential for traffic impacts, pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, disruption of an area's business frontage, and the overall appearance of the commercial area.
- LU10.10 Prohibit or limit the location and size of outdoor uses and activities in certain commercial areas, according to the area's function and its proximity to residentially zoned lots, in order to maintain and improve the continuity of the commercial street front, reduce the visual and noise impacts associated with such outdoor activities, and keep compatible with adjacent residential areas.
- LU10.11 Preserve active streetscapes in pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use areas by limiting residential uses along the street frontage of the ground floor and by keeping those spaces available primarily for commercial uses, in order to strengthen commercial cores and accommodate fluctuating market conditions. Consider street-level residential uses outside these areas, and when street-level residential uses are permitted, find ways to give ground floor tenants privacy and to create visual interest along the street-front.
- LU10.12 Provide amenity areas for use by residents of housing in commercial/mixed use areas.
- LU10.13 Assign height limits to commercial/mixed use areas independent of the commercial zone designations but consistent with the intended intensity of development in the zone. Allow

different areas within a zone to be assigned different height limits based on the appropriate height needed to: further the urban village strategy's goals of focusing growth in urban villages; accommodate the desired functions and intensity of development; provide a harmonious scale relationship with existing development; accommodate desired transitions with development in adjacent areas, and address potential view blockage.

- LU10.14 Allow limited exceptions to the height limit in order to accommodate ground-floor commercial uses or special rooftop features, encourage development of mixed-use structures, enable structures to function appropriately, accommodate special features consistent with the special character or function of an area, or support innovative design that furthers the goals of this Plan.
- LU10.15 Apply appropriate development standards to promote compatible conditions along the edges of commercial zones abutting residential zones.
- LU10.16 Use a development pattern, mix of uses, and intensity of activity generally oriented to pedestrian and transit use in pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use zones to achieve:
- A harmonious blend of commercial and residential uses
  - Strong, healthy business districts that reinforce a sense of place, while providing essential goods, services and livelihoods for Seattleites, especially residents who are within walking distance of these places
  - Mixes of commercial activity that are compatible with development in adjacent areas;
  - Residential development that is both appealing for residents and compatible with the desired commercial function of the area
  - An active, attractive, accessible, walkable pedestrian environment with continuous commercial street frontages
- LU10.17 Apply pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use zones in places where residential uses are already in close proximity and where the allowed development intensity conforms in size and scale to the community it serves.
- LU10.18 Locate and provide access to accessory parking facilities in pedestrian-oriented commercial zones in ways that avoid conflicts with pedestrian routes and interruptions to the continuity of the street façade, such as by locating unenclosed parking to the side of or behind the building, or by enclosing parking below the building, or within the building and screened from the street, preferably by other uses.
- LU10.19 Use general commercial zones to support existing auto-oriented commercial areas that serve a citywide or regional clientele and have easy access to principal arterials, or in areas that border industrial zones where they can help to maintain compatible development conditions.

LU10.20 Encourage the conversion of general commercial areas within urban villages to pedestrian-oriented commercial zones in keeping with the Plan's goals and urban village strategy.

LU10.21 Accommodate the broadest range of commercial activities in general commercial areas, including retail uses of all sizes, small office buildings and warehouses, along with light and general manufacturing facilities.

LU10.22 Use zoning and other planning tools in urban centers and urban villages to address displacement of businesses that provide culturally relevant goods and services to Seattle's diverse population.

## Industrial Areas

### Discussion

Seattle has a long history as a maritime, manufacturing, and freight distribution center for the region. These activities are now largely located in industrial zones, and clustered primarily in two manufacturing/industrial centers. The industrial areas, generally flat and often created on fill, have unique access to transportation infrastructure that includes waterways, railways and thoroughfares, with platting and street layouts that have resulted in especially large sites. Industrial zones provide an important source of employment for the city and add diversity and strength to the local economic base. Many of the uses found in these zones make them generally incompatible with residential and most commercial uses. Because some of the conditions in industrial areas are also attractive to other non-industrial uses, it is important to regulate these uses to avoid conflicts with industrial activities and prevent displacement of those activities.

### GOAL

LUG11 Provide sufficient land with the necessary characteristics to allow industrial activity to thrive in Seattle and protect the preferred industrial function of these areas from activities that might displace them.

### POLICIES

LU11.1 Designate industrial zones where:

- The primary functions are industrial activity and industrial-related commercial functions
- The basic infrastructure needed to support industrial uses already exists
- Areas are large enough to allow a full range of industrial activities to function successfully

- Sufficient separation or special conditions exist to reduce the possibility of conflicts with development in adjacent, less-intensive areas
- LU11.2 Preserve industrial land for industrial uses, especially where industrial land is next to rail or water transportation facilities, protecting viable marine and rail-related industries from having to compete with non-industrial uses for scarce industrial land that is accessible to their necessary transportation infrastructure.
- LU11.3 Accommodate the expansion of current industrial businesses and promote opportunities for new industrial businesses within Seattle to strengthen the city's existing industrial areas.
- LU11.4 Restrict industrial activities that— by the nature of materials involved or processes employed—are potentially dangerous or very noxious to appropriate locations within industrial areas.
- LU11.5 Provide for range of industrial zones that address varying conditions and priorities in different industrial areas, including the need to protect industrial uses from the intrusion of non-industrial uses in areas with critical supporting infrastructure and transportation access, the need to provide transition and protect less intensive areas from activities in some abutting industrial areas, and the need to promote high quality environments attractive to emerging new industrial activities, such as research and development, in some industrial areas suited to this function because of location and existing amenities.
- LU11.6 Prohibit new residential development in industrial zones, except for certain types of dwellings, such as caretaker units, that are related to the industrial area and that would not restrict or disrupt industrial activity.
- LU11.7 Use the general industrial zones to promote a full range of industrial activities and related support uses. Distinguish among general industrial zones based on the amount of commercial uses permitted.
- LU11.8 Apply the general industrial zones mostly within the specific manufacturing/industrial centers, where industrial activity impacts are less likely to affect residential or commercial uses. Outside of manufacturing/industrial centers, general industrial zones may be appropriate along waterways used for maritime uses.
- LU11.9 Avoid placing industrial zones within urban centers or urban villages. However, in locations where a center or village borders a manufacturing/industrial center, use of the industrial commercial zone within the center or village where it abuts the manufacturing/industrial center may provide an appropriate transition to help separate residential uses from heavier industrial activities.



- LU11.10 Limit the density of development for non-industrial uses to ensure that activity levels are compatible with industrial use, and that new development will not require major redevelopment of transportation and utility systems or create other substantial negative impacts. Permit commercial uses in industrial areas only if they reinforce the industrial character, and strictly limit the size of office and retail uses not associated with industrial uses, in order to preserve these areas for industrial development
- LU11.11 Recognize the unique working character of industrial areas by keeping landscaping and street standards to a minimum to allow for flexibility of industrial activities, except along selected arterials where installing street trees and providing screening and landscaping can address the specific need to offset impacts of new industrial development in high visibility locations.
- LU11.12 Set parking and loading requirements in industrial zones to provide adequate parking and loading facilities that support business activity, accommodate loading needs, promote air quality, encourage efficient use of the land in industrial areas, discourage under-used parking facilities, and maintain adequate traffic safety and circulation. Allow some on-street loading and occasional spillover parking.
- LU11.13 Maintain standards for the size and location of vehicle curb cuts and driveways in industrial zones in order to balance the need to provide adequate maneuvering and loading areas with availability of on-street parking and safe pedestrian access.
- LU11.14 Permit noise levels in industrial areas that would not be allowed in other parts of the city, except for buffer areas, in recognition of the special nature of industrial activities and the restrictions on residential uses that are in place in industrial areas.
- LU11.15 Classify certain industrial activities as conditional uses and require conditional use review in industrial zones in order to accommodate these uses while making sure they are compatible with the zone's primary industrial function and to protect public safety and welfare on nearby non-industrial sites. Require mitigation of any impacts on industrial activity, the immediate surroundings, especially on nearby less intensive zones and the environment in general.
- LU11.16 Prohibit certain uses, such as those that attract large numbers of people to the industrial area for non-industrial purposes, in order to keep the focus on industrial activity and to minimize potential conflicts from the noise, night-time activity, and truck movement that accompanies industrial activity.
- LU11.17 Establish the Industrial Buffer Zone to provide an appropriate transition between industrial areas and adjacent residential or pedestrian-oriented commercial zones.

- LU11.18 Allow the widest possible range of manufacturing uses and related industrial and commercial activities within the Industrial Buffer zone, while ensuring compatibility with the activity and physical character of neighboring, less-intensive zones.
- LU11.19 Include development standards or performance standards for the industrial buffer zone that protect the livability of neighboring areas, promote visual quality, and maintain a compatible scale of development along zone edges. Apply these standards only in places where existing conditions do not adequately separate industrial activity from less intensive zones.
- LU11.20 Limit the height of structures on the borders of industrial buffer zones where streets along the zone edge do not provide sufficient separation for a reasonable transition in scale between industrial areas and less-intensive neighboring zones, taking into consideration the permitted height in the abutting, less intensive zone.
- LU11.21 Use the industrial commercial zones to allow a wide mix of employment uses, such as light manufacturing and research and development.
- LU11.22 Limit the future application of the IC zone inside the M/IC boundaries to prevent the expansion of offices and other non-industrial uses.
- LU11.23 Limit development density in industrial commercial zones in order to reflect transportation and other infrastructure constraints, while taking into account other features of an area.
- LU11.24 Include development standards in the industrial commercial zone designed to create environments that are attractive to new technology businesses and that support a pedestrian-oriented environment, while controlling structure height and scale to limit impacts on nearby neighborhoods.
- LU11.25 Provide a range of maximum building height limits in the industrial commercial zones in order to protect the distinctive features that attract new technology businesses to the area—such as views of water, shoreline access, and the scale and neighborhood character—to make sure that these features will continue to be enjoyed, both within the zone and from the surrounding area.
- LU11.26 Assign height limits independently of the industrial zoning designation to provide flexibility in zoning-specific areas and to allow different areas within a zone to be assigned different height limits according to the rezone criteria.

## Downtown Areas

### Discussion

Downtown is the most densely developed area in the Northwest. It includes five distinct neighborhoods – Belltown, Denny Triangle, the Commercial Core, Pioneer Square and Chinatown/International District. Each of these neighborhoods has a unique character and unique expectations for how it is expected to grow, resulting in a complex set of regulations governing development in Downtown. Unlike other portions of the Land Use Code, the guidance for Downtown regulations are not found in this element. Instead, it can be found as part of the Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan, located in the Neighborhood Planning Element.

### GOAL

LUG12 Promote Downtown Seattle as an urban center with the densest mix of residential and commercial development in the region, with a vital and attractive environment that supports employment and residential activities and is inviting to visitors.

### POLICIES

LU12.1 Recognize the division of Downtown into areas of distinct character defined by their primary land use function, such as office, retail, or mixed-use with either a commercial or a residential emphasis.

LU12.2 Use a range of land use zones and height limits to support the existing and desired character of different areas within Downtown.

## Location-Specific Regulations

### Discussion

Certain uses and locations in the city require development regulations different from what applies in the basic zoning categories described above in this element. For example, historic districts are governed by a basic zoning category, as well as by regulations that respond to an area's unique historic features. This section provides the policy foundation to guide how the City adjusts its regulations to respond to unique environments, particularly those created by major institutions, historic districts and landmarks, environmentally critical areas and shorelines. The policies in this section generally address overlays that could be applied in multiple locations within the city. The Land Use Code contains other overlay districts that are unique to certain locations, such as the Stadium Area or the Pike/Pine corridor.

## GOAL

LUG13 Provide flexibility in standard zone provisions or supplement those provisions to achieve special public purposes in areas where unique conditions exist, such as shorelines, historic and special review districts, and major institutions.

## POLICIES

LU13.1 Allow for zoning overlay districts, which modify the regulations of the underlying zoning, to address special circumstances and issues of significant public interest in subareas of the city.

LU13.2 Use overlay districts or other zoning modifications to regulate transit-oriented communities in ways that will help integrate high-capacity stations into the neighborhood and promote development that will attract pedestrian activity and transit ridership.

LU13.3 Establish a Master Plan Community zone and apply the zone as a way to address unique opportunities for large site redevelopments in the densest areas of the city and to provide predictability to the City, community and potential developers, with the goal to encourage a mix of uses at appropriate urban densities using a cohesive urban design, with high levels of environmental sustainability, housing affordability, and publicly accessible open space. Designate a Master Planned Community only for large multi-block sites inside an urban center that are subject to unified control.

LU13.4 Consider establishing a master planning process for large sites outside of urban centers in order to allow development that incorporates good urban design and appropriate public benefits.

## Major Institutions

### Discussion

Major institutions include hospitals and higher educational facilities and play important roles delivering vital health and educational services to residents of Seattle and the region. As major employment generators, they also provide job opportunities and contribute to the overall diversification of the city's economy. However, when located in or adjacent to residential and pedestrian-oriented commercial areas, the activities and scale of facilities of major institutions can have impacts on their surroundings, such as increased traffic, housing and business displacement, and incompatible structures or uses. These policies will help guide the City in balancing the growth of these institutions with the need to be compatible with, and maintain the livability of, surrounding neighborhoods.

**GOAL**

LUG14 Encourage the benefits that major institutions offer the city, including health care, educational services and significant employment opportunities, while minimizing the adverse impacts associated with development and geographic expansion.

**POLICIES**

- LU14.1 Designate the campuses of large hospitals, colleges, and universities as Major Institutions, making clear that they are defined under a separate public process in terms of their appropriate uses and development standards.
- LU14.2 Support the coordinated growth of major institutions through conceptual master plans and the creation of major institution overlay districts. Use a master plan process to identify development standards for the overlay district that are specifically tailored to the major institution and the surrounding area.
- LU14.3 Establish Major Institution Overlays (MIO) as a designation on the zoning map and the Future Land Use Map to show areas where development is regulated by the contents of a master plan, rather than by the underlying zoning. Balance the need for major institutions to grow and change with the need to maintain the livability and vitality of neighboring areas. Where appropriate, establish MIO boundaries for better integration between major institution areas and less intensive zones.
- LU14.4 Encourage community involvement in the development, monitoring, implementation and amendment of major institution master plans, including the establishment of citizen's advisory committees that include community and major institution representatives who are encouraged to participate throughout the revision, amendment and refinement of the proposed master plan.
- LU14.5 Allow all functionally integrated major institution uses to occur within the overlay district if the development standards of the underlying zone are met.
- LU14.6 Allow the MIO to modify underlying zoning provisions and development standards, including use restrictions and parking requirements, in order to accommodate the changing needs of major institutions, provide development flexibility and encourage a high-quality environment.
- LU14.7 Discourage the expansion of established major institution boundaries.

- LU14.8 Require either that a master plan be prepared or that the existing master plan be revised when a proposed major development is part of a major institution, does not conform to the underlying zoning, and is not included in an existing master plan.
- LU14.9 Locate new major institutions in areas where their activities are compatible with the surrounding land uses and where the impacts associated with existing and future development can be appropriately mitigated and provide procedures for considering the establishment of new major institutions.
- LU14.10 Define as major institution uses those that are part of, or substantively related to, the major institution's central mission or that primarily and directly serve institution users and allow these uses within the MIO district, in accordance with the development standards of the underlying zoning classifications or adopted master plan.
- LU14.11 Apply the development standards of the underlying zoning classification to all major institution development, except for specific standards altered by a master plan.
- LU14.12 Determine appropriate measures to address the need for adequate transition between the major institution and surrounding uses.
- LU14.13 Establish minimum parking requirements in MIO districts to meet the needs of the major institution and reduce parking demand in nearby areas. Include maximum parking limits to avoid unnecessary traffic in the surrounding areas and to limit the use of single-occupant vehicles. Allow an increase in the number of permitted spaces only when such an increase is needed to reduce parking demand on surrounding streets and when it will help to minimize traffic congestion in the area.
- LU14.14 Use the transportation management program to reduce the number of vehicle trips to the major institution, minimize the adverse impacts of traffic and of institution-related parking on surrounding streets, and minimize parking demand on nearby streets, especially residential streets. To meet these goals, seek to lessen the number of single-occupant vehicles used for trips to and from major institutions at peak times. Allow short-term or long-term parking space requirements to be modified as part of a transportation management program.
- LU14.15 Encourage housing preservation within major institution overlay districts and minimize impacts on housing in surrounding areas. Discourage conversion or demolition of housing within a major institution's campus, allowing it only when the institution needs to expand. Prohibit demolishing non-institutional housing in order to build any parking lot or parking structure that provides non-required parking or could be used to reduce a deficit of required parking spaces. Prohibit development by a major institution outside of the MIO

district boundaries when it would result in the demolition or conversion of residential buildings into non-residential uses.

LU14.16 Require a master plan whenever a Major Institution proposes development that could affect the livability of adjacent neighborhoods or has the potential for significant adverse impacts on the surrounding areas. Use the master plan to:

- Establish or modify geographic boundaries for the major institution and establish clear guidelines and development standards on which the major institutions can rely for long-term planning and development
- Provide the neighborhood with advance notice of the institution's development plans
- Allow the City to anticipate and plan for public capital or programmatic actions that will be needed to accommodate development
- Provide the basis for determining appropriate mitigating actions to avoid or reduce adverse impacts from major institution growth
- Describe a transportation management program
- Define the major institution's development program for a specified time period
- Guide a comprehensive review of potential benefits and impacts of the Major Institution's proposed development

LU14.17 Require City Council review and adoption of the master plan after a planning process to develop the master plan by the Major Institution, the surrounding community, and the City.

LU14.18 Achieve a better relationship between residential, commercial or industrial uses and the Major Institution's activities when considering rezones, while also trying to reduce or eliminate major land use conflicts.

## Stadium District

### GOAL

LUG15 Recognize the Stadium District as a unique sports and entertainment district that includes a range of complementary uses, has businesses that are active both day and night, and capitalizes on the public investment in stadium infrastructure, while supporting the continued viability of industrial and cargo container operations in the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

### POLICIES

LU15.1 Limit residential uses in the Stadium District to land no farther south than 200 feet south of the S. Charles St. right-of-way, and the residential use only in combination with public benefits in the area.

- LU15.2 Site and design residential uses to minimize negative impacts on nearby activities including industry and transportation.
- LU15.3 Allow lodging uses within the Stadium District to accommodate visitors to stadiums and event centers.
- LU15.4 Allow building heights that are compatible with the historic development pattern in the area, generally 65 to 85 feet, except for stadiums, and except for a limited quantity of tower structures that may be permitted on sites where residential uses would be allowed.
- LU15.5 Reflect the character of historic development in the design and massing of infill structures and encourage preservation of character buildings.
- LU15.6 Design towers in the limited area where they are permitted in ways that contribute to the downtown skyline.
- LU15.7 Encourage new development to contribute to the creation of a network of public spaces and streetscapes that accommodates patrons before and after events, supports social interaction, promotes activity seven days a week and contributes to a safe and vibrant district, without adversely affecting neighboring industrial activity, stadium and event center operations, and traffic flow.
- LU15.8 Encourage transportation management strategies by major sports and entertainment uses and other large uses in the district to minimize the need for parking facilities and limit the traffic impacts associated with events, by encouraging patrons to ride transit and choose non-motorized modes of travel.
- LU15.9 Encourage major uses in the district to use coordinated and shared parking strategies to address unique event-related parking needs. If new parking facilities are added, they should be co-located with or adjacent to existing parking and designed to be compatible with the pedestrian-friendly character intended for the district.
- LU15.10 Continue to support the unique transportation operations of stadiums and event centers, such as event staging, temporary alteration of normal traffic patterns, nighttime operations, and accommodating buses and trucks.
- LU15.11 Site and develop new land uses in the Stadium District in ways that minimize incompatibilities at the edges of the district, with regard to light, glare, noise, access and mobility.



## Historic Districts and Landmarks

### Discussion

Seattle values its past and recognizes and protects its heritage by designating buildings, objects, sites, vessels, and districts of exceptional historic, cultural, social, or architectural value or of special significance because of a relationship to notable individuals or events. These visible connections to the past strengthen the sense of place and make a significant contribution to community building. Finding new uses for existing structures also strengthens the City's goals for sustainable urban development.

### GOAL

LUG16 Maintain the city's cultural identity and heritage by rehabilitating, restoring, and reusing structures in designated historic districts and landmarked sites, objects and structures.

### POLICIES

LU16.1 Support the designation of areas as historic and special review districts and for the designation of structures, sites, and objects as City of Seattle landmarks in order to protect, enhance, and perpetuate their historical or architectural identities.

LU16.2 Tailor development standards and design review processes specifically for a special review district to describe design-related features allowed, encouraged, limited, or excluded from the district. Allow adopted guidelines to modify, exempt, or supersede the underlying zone's standards.

LU16.3 Encourage the adaptive reuse of designated landmark structures by allowing uses in these structures that may not otherwise be allowed under the applicable zoning, provided such action is approved by the Landmarks Board.

LU16.4 Use incentives where appropriate, including the transfer of development rights, to encourage developers to contribute to the restoration and reuse of designated landmark structures and specified structures in designated districts.

## Environmentally Critical Areas

### Discussion

While Seattle is essentially a developed city, there are still natural areas within the city that deserve special attention, both in terms of natural conservation and also to prevent possible harm to other parts of the urban environment.

## GOAL

LUG17 Protect the ecological functions and value of environmentally critical areas, including wetlands and fish and wildlife conservation areas; prevent erosion caused by development on steep slopes; and protect public health, safety and welfare in hazard-prone areas, including areas subject to landslides, liquefaction or floods, while permitting development that is reasonable in light of these constraints.

## POLICIES

LU17.1 Strictly regulate development in critical areas to protect public health, safety, and welfare on development sites and neighboring properties, and establish development standards to:

- Prevent the degradation of water quality
- Prevent erosion and siltation
- Protect fish and wildlife habitat
- Prevent private property damage

LU17.2 Limit impacts to environmentally critical areas and their surrounding buffers by directing activities away from these areas and by applying standards to design, siting, and on grading and other land-disturbing activity.

LU17.3 Allow adjustments of development standards in environmentally critical areas to help protect those places while enabling reasonable development.

LU17.4 Review rezones in areas located in or adjacent to a critical area or a hazard prone area by considering the effect of the rezone and recognize that lower-intensity zones are generally more appropriate than higher-intensity zones in these areas.

LU17.5 Identify landslide-prone areas by examining the geologic, hydrologic and topographic factors that contribute to landslides and regulate development to protect against future damage due to instability that might be created or exacerbated by development, including potential damage to public facilities. Consider the relative risk to life or property when reviewing development proposals for landslide-prone areas.

LU17.6 Require engineering solutions for development on landslide-prone sites in order to prevent slides during high-stress periods and if there has been poor maintenance of the hillside.

LU17.7 Require, as appropriate, that special engineering considerations be included in a structure's design to provide an acceptable level of risk. Design permanent facilities for a 100-year life

expectancy. Account for a one-in-100-year event for seismic activity when designing a development.

- LU17.8 Regulate development, limit disturbance, maintain and enhance vegetative cover on steep slopes to control erosion, water runoff, siltation of streams, lakes, Puget Sound and the City's stormwater facilities.
- LU17.9 Identify areas where earthquakes could cause liquefaction, and require new development in those areas to be designed and built to limit property damage and to prevent injury and loss of life during earthquakes.
- LU17.10 Regulate development on abandoned solid waste landfill sites and adjacent areas to minimize the risks of ground subsidence, earthquake-induced ground shaking, and methane gas build-up.
- LU17.11 Seek a net gain in wetland function by enhancing and restoring wetland function across the city.
- LU17.12 Protect Seattle's unique remaining wetland resources and support efforts to restore wetlands to their original state and natural function while minimizing construction and post-construction impacts in and near wetlands through development regulations.
- LU17.13 Seek to avoid net loss in area of wetland acreage, and require no net loss of wetland values or functions across the city, including, but not limited to flood control, water quantity and quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and quality of life and educational benefits. Allow a wetland's functions to be replaced either on or off-site, in certain circumstances.
- LU17.14 Protect current vegetation near wetlands unless augmenting or replanting can be shown to better protect the wetland's functions.
- LU17.15 Regulate development in and near designated fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas in order to protect the remaining native wildlife species and significant fish populations, especially salmonids.
- LU17.16 Maintain in their native state those areas that contain natural vegetative cover and enough physical space to serve as valuable habitat, in order to:
- Protect large contiguous wildlife habitat areas
  - Maintain wildlife corridors that connect functions
  - Conserve soil and ground conditions that support native vegetation
  - Prevent siltation and high water temperatures in downstream habitats

- Dampen fluctuations in surface water flow which are typically problematic in urbanized areas
- Maintain groundwater recharge flow to support stream flows during drier seasons

LU17.17 Regulate development in and around the banks of streams, creeks and lakes wetlands to protect the natural functions and values of these areas from the potential negative effects of urban development.

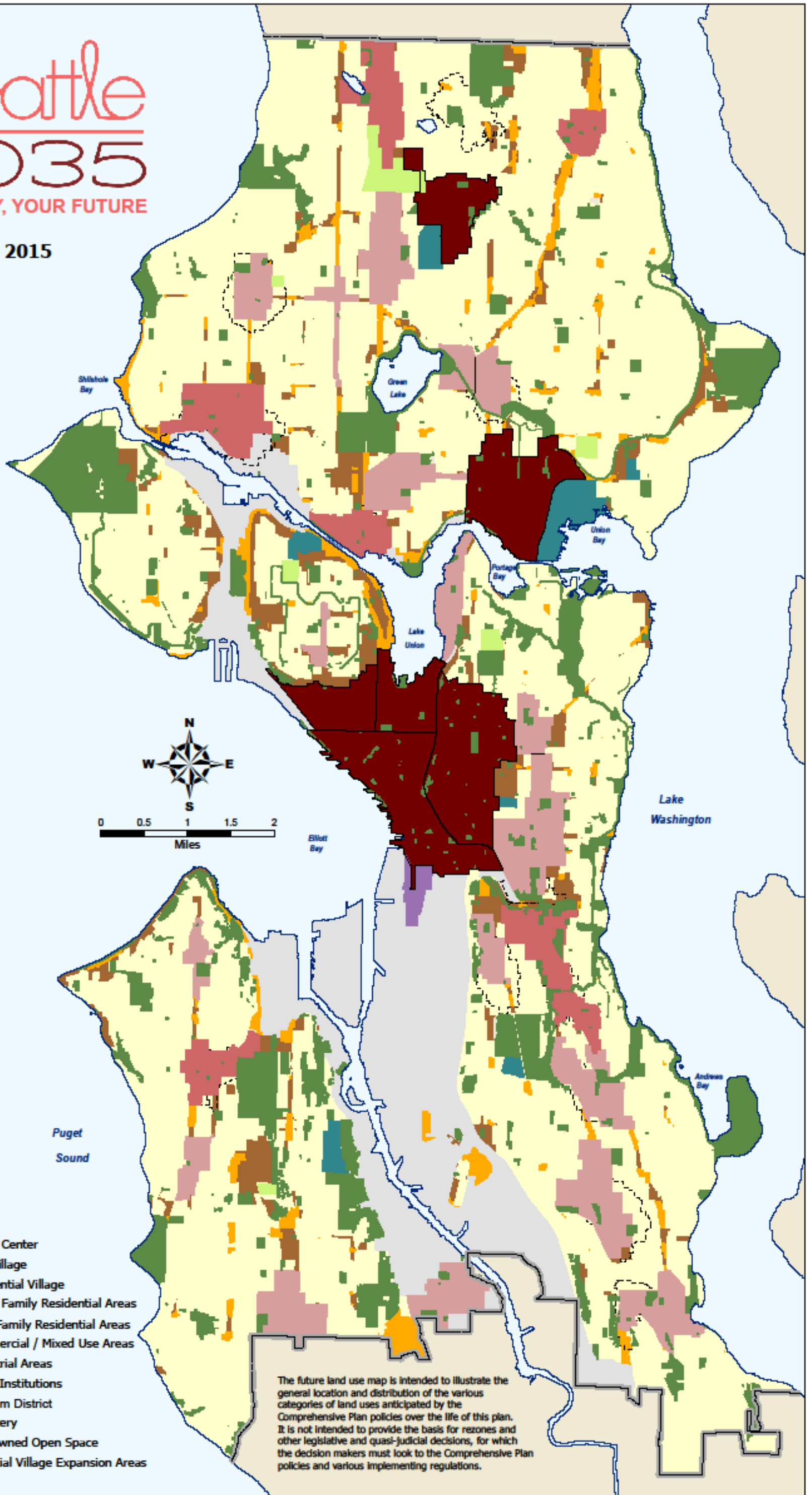
LU17.18 Establish a buffer area on every development site bordering adjacent bodies of water and strictly limit development within buffer areas and leave vegetation in its natural condition unless new plantings will enhance the functions of the buffer.

# Seattle 2035

YOUR CITY, YOUR FUTURE

Draft July, 2015

## 2035 Future Land Use Map



**Legend**

- Urban Center
- Hub Village
- Residential Village
- Single Family Residential Areas
- Multi-Family Residential Areas
- Commercial / Mixed Use Areas
- Industrial Areas
- Major Institutions
- Stadium District
- Cemetery
- City-Owned Open Space
- Potential Village Expansion Areas

The future land use map is intended to illustrate the general location and distribution of the various categories of land uses anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan policies over the life of this plan. It is not intended to provide the basis for rezones and other legislative and quasi-judicial decisions, for which the decision makers must look to the Comprehensive Plan policies and various implementing regulations.

# Transportation

## Introduction

The Transportation Element guides transportation investments to equitably serve current residents and future growth in Seattle. The Element's policies also advance this Plan's urban village strategy.

Hundreds of thousands of city and regional residents and businesses depend on the city's transportation system to access jobs, services, community facilities, and to deliver freight and goods. Tens of thousands more will depend on it in the next 20 years as the city and region continue to grow. A robust transportation system should:

- Contribute to a safer city by working to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities on City streets
- Create an interconnected city where people have reliable, easy-to-use travel options that get them to their destinations
- Develop a more vibrant city by creating streets and sidewalks that generate economic and social activity, and contribute to the city's overall health, prosperity and happiness
- Contribute to a more affordable city by providing high quality and affordable transportation options that allow people to spend money on things other than transportation

Seattle's transportation system in 2035 will likely look very different than it does in 2015. For example, the Alaskan Way viaduct will be gone, and Highway 99 will be in a tunnel through central Seattle. The light rail transit, streetcar, and frequent bus networks will be much more extensive, with light rail extending through the city and providing connections to Bellevue, Redmond, Shoreline, and Lynnwood. New technological innovations in transportation such as smart parking and shared transportation options will change the way people move through Seattle. This Plan will guide the City's future actions to address these changing circumstances.

As a mature, fully built city, Seattle's core street network is already in place. There is no room for major new streets. This limitation presents challenges and opportunities as the City plans for growth. Building new, large arterial projects is unfeasible and undesirable, from a cost and environmental standpoint. Therefore, the City's focus is on using the streets and sidewalks we have in the most efficient way possible. Efficiency means prioritizing uses of street space to serve the most people, at the most times of day, in the most ways. While many people still rely on a personal vehicle as their best or only transportation option, the City plans to make travel more efficient and predictable for all by offering high-quality travel options. Planning for the future also requires smart operations of streets using new traffic signal timing and other technologies to help move people and goods.

## Integrating Land Use and Transportation

### Discussion

The development pattern described in the Growth Strategy and Land Use Elements of this Plan has a major influence on the City's transportation system. The City's growth strategy focuses growth in urban centers, urban villages, and manufacturing/industrial centers. Serving these areas as they grow will require a transportation system that includes several travel modes to provide transportation options for all trips throughout the day, including evenings and weekends. Auto and freight access to property will remain important for accommodating growth throughout the city.

In all parts of Seattle, improvements that connect people to urban centers and urban villages, especially by transit and bicycle. Serving growth will need to be balanced with the need for an equitable transportation investment strategy that provides transportation service where it is needed, including those parts of Seattle which have historically had less investment in transportation.

### GOAL

TG 1 Ensure that transportation decisions, strategies and investments support the City's overall growth strategy are coordinated with this Plan's land use goals.

### POLICIES

- T1.1 Provide sufficient transportation facilities and services to promote and accommodate the growth this Plan anticipates in urban centers, urban villages, and manufacturing/industrial centers, while reducing dependence on personal automobile trips.
- T1.2 Design transportation infrastructure in urban centers and villages to support compact, accessible, and walkable neighborhoods for all ages and abilities.
- T1.3 Invest in transportation projects and programs further progress towards meeting Seattle's mode share goals and reduce dependence on personal automobiles, particularly in urban centers.

**Transportation Figure 1****Mode Share Targets for Work Trips to Seattle and Its Urban Centers**

Percentage of work trips made by travel modes other than driving alone

Area	2014	2035 Target
Downtown	77%	85%
First Hill/Capitol Hill	58%	65%
Uptown/Queen Anne	67%	75%
South Lake Union	48%	55%
University District	73%	85%
Northgate	30%	40%
<b>Seattle</b>	57%	65%

**Transportation Figure 2****Mode Share Targets for Residents of Seattle and Its Urban Centers**

Percentage of non-work trips made using travel modes other than driving alone

Area	2014	2035 Target
Downtown	88%	90%
First Hill/Capitol Hill	80%	85%
Uptown/Queen Anne	76%	85%
South Lake Union	82%	85%
University District	79%	90%
Northgate	46%	55%
<b>Seattle</b>	67%	75%

- T1.4 Design transportation facilities to be compatible with planned land uses and consider the planned scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- T1.5 Improve transportation connections to urban centers and villages from all Seattle neighborhoods, particularly by providing a variety of affordable travel options (pedestrian, transit, and bicycle facilities) and by being attentive to the needs of vulnerable and historically marginalized populations.

## Make the Best Use of the Streets We Have

### Discussion

The limited amount of public street space in Seattle is expected to accommodate several different functions to serve existing and future activity. Because it will be difficult to expand this space in any significant way, it is important for the City to use the existing streets efficiently and wisely. This section of the Plan establishes the policy framework for making decisions

The City has adopted master plans to address non-automobile modes of travel – pedestrian, bicycle, transit and freight movement – drawing on extensive community input. In addition to the networks



outlined in the modal master plans, rights-of-way need to accommodate several types of users in different parts of the street. The uses include pedestrians, travelways for various types of vehicles and a transition zone for passenger and freight loading. The pedestrian zone includes not only the sidewalk, but also planting areas, bus shelters, sidewalk cafés, and bike racks.

Enhancing mobility, by providing convenient transportation options that move people while taking up of the right-of-way space, will help move people and goods throughout the city. Introducing parklets, play streets and other activating uses in the right-of-way can provide a benefit to users, residents, and local businesses. Having a place to park a vehicle and load and unload trucks in commercial districts also contributes to the viability and character of thriving enterprises and neighborhood business districts. Meeting all of the functions efficiently helps make the most of a limited resource.

Not every function can fit in every street. The goals and policies in this section provide direction on integrating and, where necessary, prioritizing functions within the different zones of the street. These policies also recognize that collectively two or more streets can combine to serve as a “complete corridor”, since not every street can accommodate every mode.

## GOAL

TG2 Allocate space on Seattle’s streets to safely and efficiently connect people and goods to their destinations while creating inviting spaces within the right-of-ways.

## POLICIES

T2.1 Designate space in the public right-of-way to accommodate multiple travel modes, including transit, freight movement, pedestrians, bicycles, general purpose traffic, and shared transportation options.

T2.2 Consider safety concerns, modal master plans, and adjacent land uses when prioritizing functions in the pedestrian, travelway and transition zones of the right-of-way.

T2.3 Employ the following tactics to resolve potential conflicts for space in the firth-of-way:

- Allocate needed functions across a corridor comprised of several streets or alleys, if all functions cannot fit in a single street
- Share space between modes and uses
- Prioritize assignment of space to shared and shorter duration uses
- Encourage off-street accommodation for non-mobility uses, including parking and transit layover
- Implement transportation and parking demand management strategies to encourage more efficient use of the existing right-of-way

- T2.4 Use standards and safety requirements in the Right-of-Way Improvement Manual and from the modal master plans to determine adequacy of the pedestrian zone, before allocating space to the transition zone or travelway. Within the pedestrian zone, prioritize space to address safety concerns, network connectivity, and activation.
- T2.5 Allocate functions in the transition zone to accommodate access, activation and greening functions, except when use of the transition zone for mobility is critical to address safety or to meet connectivity needs identified in modal master plans. When mobility is needed only part of the day, design the space to accommodate other functions at other times.
- T2.6 Assign functions in the transition zone to support nearby land uses, provide support for modal plan priorities, and to accommodate multiple functions.

**Transportation Figure 3**  
 Priorities for Right-of-Way “Transition Zone by Predominant Use of Area

Commercial/mixed-use areas	Industrial areas	Residential areas
Access for commerce	Access for commerce	Access for people
Access for people	Access for people	Access for commerce
Activation	Storage	Greening
Greening	Activation	Storage
Storage	Greening	Activation

- T2.7 Prioritize mobility needs in the street right-of-way based on the recommended networks and facilities identified in the respective modal plans. Within the travelway, prioritize space to address safety concerns, network connectivity of modal plans and general purpose travel.
- T2.8 Develop a decision-making framework to direct the future planning, design and optimization of street right-of-way.
- T2.9 Identify different types of streets with standards that are consistent with street classifications and that reflect the objectives of adopted modal and land use plans.
- T2.10 Designate the following classifications of arterials:
  - **Principal Arterials:** roadways that are intended to serve as the primary routes for moving traffic through the city connecting urban centers and urban villages to one another, or to the regional transportation network.
  - **Minor Arterials:** roadways that distribute traffic from principal arterials to collector arterials and access streets.
  - **Collector Arterials:** roadways that collect and distribute traffic from principal and minor arterials to local access streets or provide direct access to destinations.

- T2.11 Preserve and enhance the boulevard network both for travel and as a usable open space system for active transportation modes.
- T2.12 Maintain, preserve and enhance the City's alleys as a valuable network for public spaces and access, loading and unloading for freight, and utility operations.

## Transportation Options

### Discussion

Transit, bicycling, walking and shared transportation services reduce collisions, stress, noise, and air pollution, while increasing social contact, economic vitality, affordability, and overall health. These travel modes are also more help use right-of-way space more efficiently and at lower costs. To help Seattleites take advantage of these options, the City's land use and transportation strategies must make them easy choices for people of all ages and abilities.

The City has adopted for individual travel modes (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) include strategies and projects about developing transportation choices in the city. In prioritizing investments, these plans recognize a need to balance density with equity, ensuring that people who are dependent on transit or vehicle use because of age, disability, or financial considerations are well served.

While not everyone can walk, bike, use a car share service, or ride transit for every trip they take, the City can reduce the number of drive-alone trips by offering people safe, affordable, and healthy travel choices. Improving transportation choices can also improve the environment, enhance the local economy, and support healthy and sustainable communities.

Part of making these transportation options effective is giving people information that will help them understand the options that are available and what will work best for them. This information can influence people's choices about where to live and how to travel to work, shop, and conduct personal business. The availability of free parking is also a key determinant in mode choice.

How the City manages curb space can affect the efficiency of various travel modes. Bicycles, buses, cars, taxis, food trucks, parklets, shared transportation vehicles, deliveries, and other uses all need curb space.

### GOAL

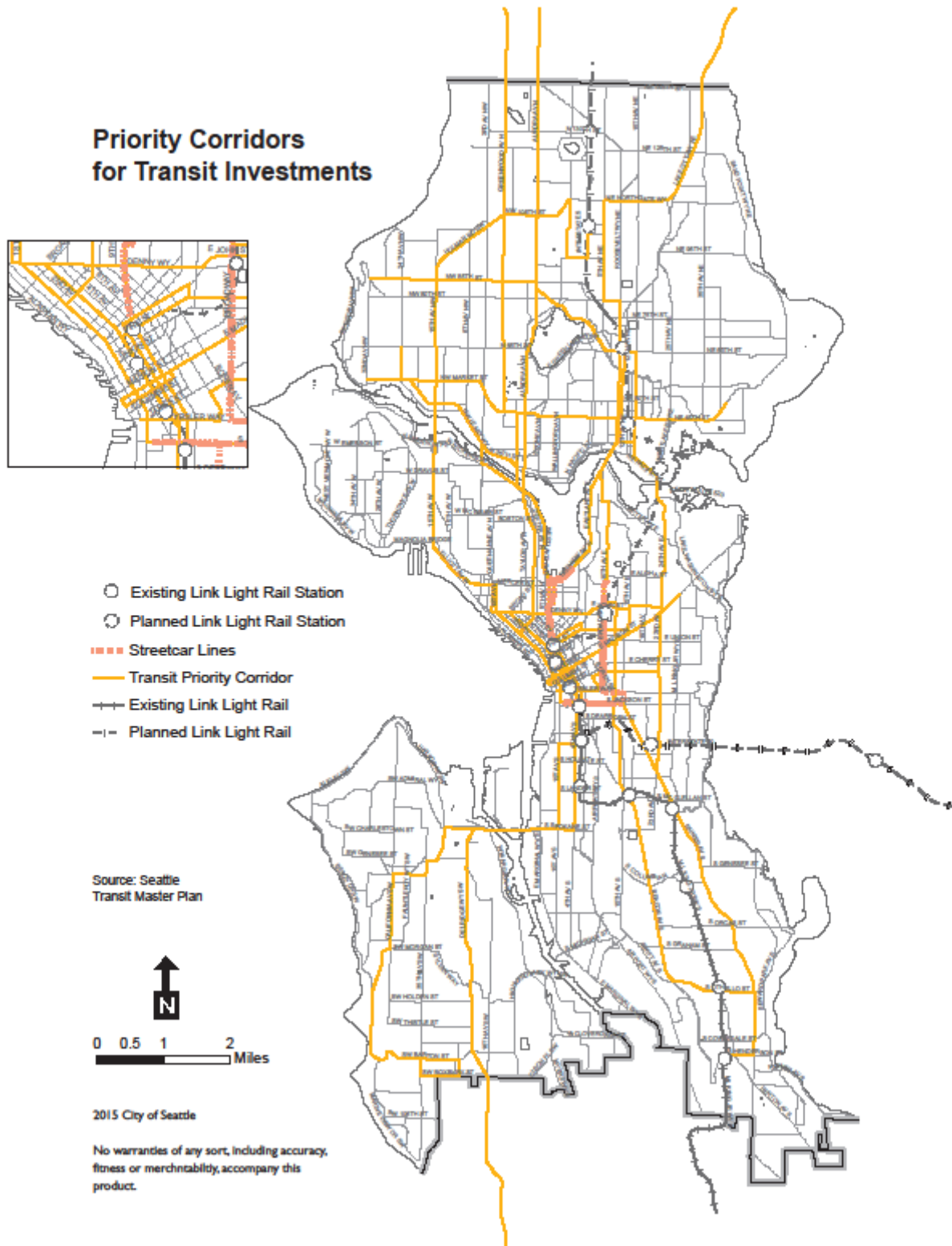
- TG3 Meet people's mobility needs by providing equitable access to, and encouraging use of, multiple transportation options.

## POLICIES

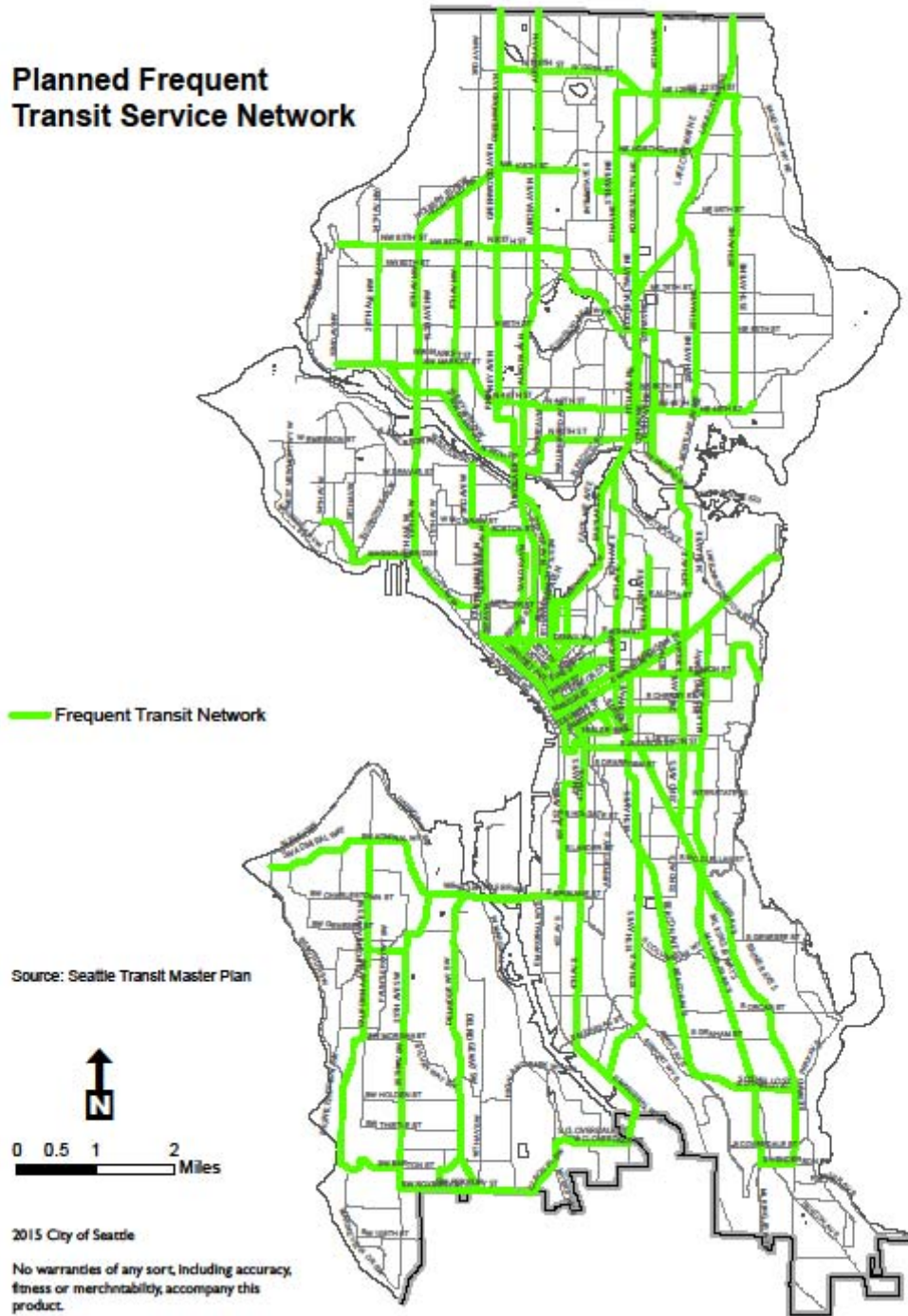
- T3.1 Develop and maintain high-quality, affordable and connected bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.
- T3.2 Improve transportation options to and within the urban centers and urban villages, where most of Seattle's job and population growth will occur.
- T3.3 Consider the income, age, ability, and vehicle ownership patterns of populations throughout the city in developing transportation systems and facilities so that all residents, especially those most in need, have access to a wide range of affordable travel options.
- T3.4 Develop a city-wide transit system that includes a variety of transit modes to meet passenger capacity needs with frequent, reliable, accessible, and safe service to a wide variety of destinations throughout the day and night.
- T3.5 Prioritize transit investments on the basis of ridership demand, service to populations heavily reliant on transit, and opportunities to leverage funding.
- T3.6 Expand light rail capacity and reliability in corridors where travel capacity is constrained, such as crossing the Ship Canal or the Duwamish River.
- T3.7 Optimize operations of bus and high frequency transit corridors by adjusting signals to promote faster travel times for transit than for general purpose travel.
- T3.8 Provide high-quality pedestrian, bicycle, and bus transit access to high-capacity transit stations, in order to support transit ridership and reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.
- T3.9 Develop and maintain pedestrian and bicycle facilities that enhance the predictability and safety of all users of the street and that connect to a wide range of destinations.
- T3.10 Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian investments on the basis of increasing use, safety, connectivity, equity, health, livability, and opportunities to leverage funding.
- T3.11 Develop programs and facilities, such as bike share, that encourage short trips to be made by walking or biking.
- T3.12 Develop and implement programs to educate all users of the street on rules of the road, rights, and responsibilities.
- T3.13 Support and plan for innovation in transportation options that enhance mobility.

- T3.14 Implement new technologies that will enhance access to transportation and parking options.
- T3.15 Create vibrant public spaces in and near the right-of-way that foster social interaction, promote access to walking, bicycling and transit options, and enhance the public realm.
- T3.16 Implement curb space management strategies such as time limits, on-street parking pricing, loading zones, and residential parking programs to promote transportation choices, encourage parking turnover, improve customer access, and provide for efficient allocation of parking among diverse users.
- T3.17 Consider replacing short-term parking that is displaced by construction or new transportation projects only when the project results in a concentrated and substantial amount of on-street parking loss.
- T3.18 Design and manage the transportation system, including on-street parking, so that persons with disabilities have safe and convenient access to their destinations, while discouraging use of disabled parking permits for commuter use in areas of high parking demand.

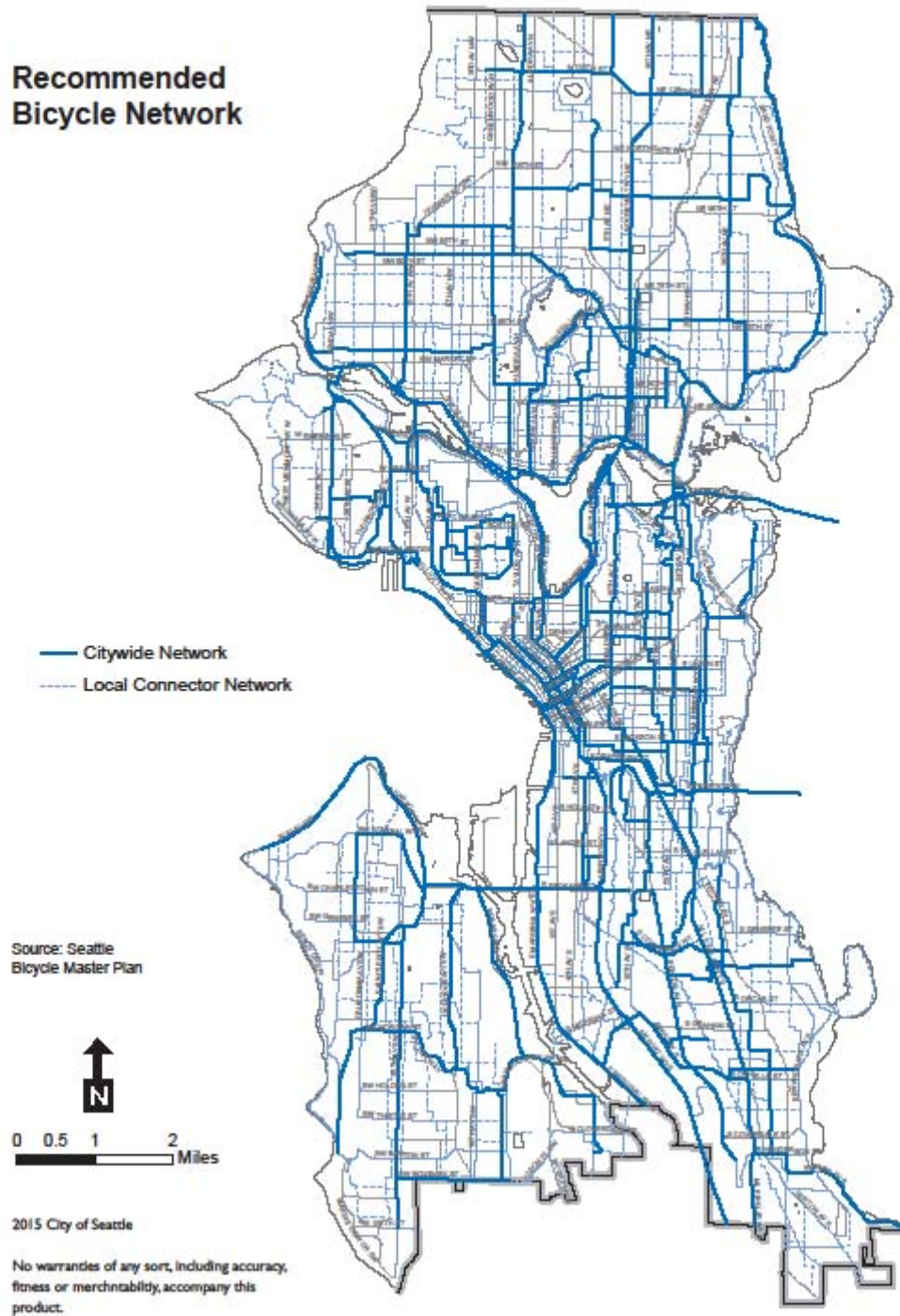
Transportation Figure 4



Transportation Figure 5

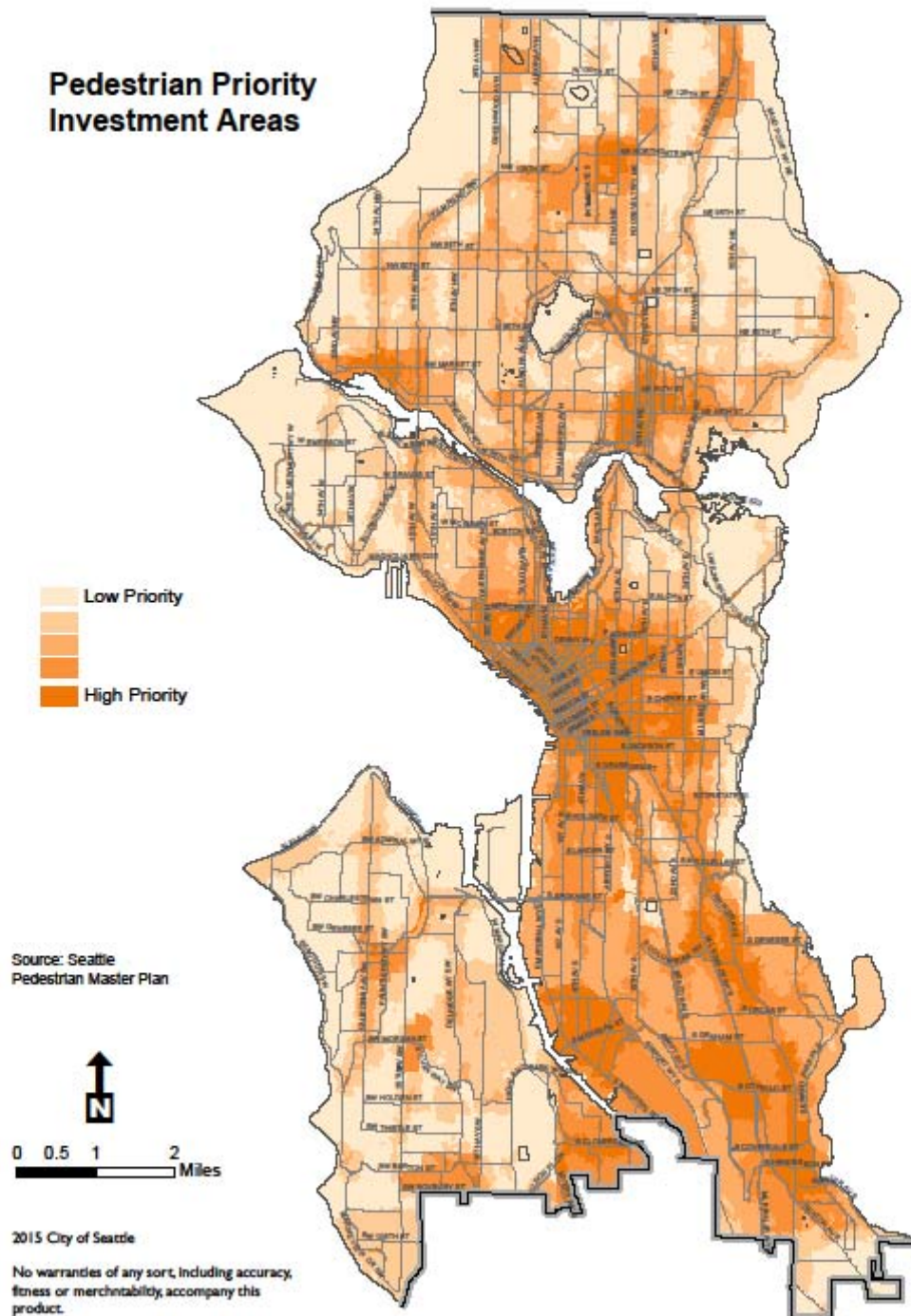


Transportation Figure 6





Transportation Figure 7



## Environment

### Discussion

Transportation policies that encourage use of travel options support not only the Urban Village Strategy, but also the City's environmental goals, including those related to climate change. Road transportation is Seattle's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Using more fuel-efficient transportation options on well-designed and well-maintained streets contributes to a healthy urban environment. By reducing personal automobile trips the City can also reduce congestion and provide more opportunities to reallocate public right-of-way for greening, where trees and landscaping can decrease water runoff and reduce noise and light pollution.

The City has set high standards for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Climate Action Plan. Providing and promoting a wider variety of transportation options is integral to the City achieving its environmental and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

#### GOAL

TG4 Promote healthy communities by providing a transportation system that protects and improves Seattle's environmental quality.

#### POLICIES

- T4.1 Design and operate streets to promote green infrastructure, new technologies, and active transportation modes while addressing safety, accessibility and aesthetics.
- T4.2 Reduce single-occupant vehicle trips, vehicle dependence, and vehicle miles traveled in order to help meet the City's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.
- T4.3 Reduce and mitigate air, water and noise pollution from motor vehicles.
- T4.4 Work to reduce the use of fossil fuels and to promote the use of alternative fuels.
- T4.5 Enhance the public street tree canopy and landscaping in the street right-of-way.

## Support a Vibrant Economy

### Discussion

The movement of goods and services is critical to economic development in Seattle and the region. Seattle's businesses and residents rely on freight routes for safe, efficient, and timely transportation of goods. Freight carriers depend on a well-functioning transportation network of rail, water, air, and truck transportation. The City is in the process of developing a *Freight Master Plan* which will outline Seattle's overall freight network and prioritize investments for freight mobility projects.

In addition to goods movement, a well-designed transportation network supports a thriving economy by adding to the vibrancy of the city's urban centers and urban villages. It also allows people to access jobs, businesses, employment, school, and leisure destinations.

### GOAL

TG5 Strengthen mobility and access for the movement of goods and services to enhance and promote economic opportunity throughout the City for all residents and businesses.

### POLICIES

- T5.1 Maintain Seattle as the hub for regional goods movement and as a gateway to national and international suppliers and markets.
- T5.2 Develop a freight network in the Freight Master Plan that enhances freight mobility, operational efficiencies, and promote the City's economic health.
- T5.3 Ensure that freight corridors are designed, maintained and operated to provide efficient movement of truck traffic.
- T5.4 Improve safety for all modes of transportation on streets heavily used by trucks.
- T5.5 Use Intelligent Transportation System technology to alert motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to the presence and anticipated length of closures due to train crossings and bridge openings for water vessels.
- T5.6 Evaluate the feasibility of grade-separation in locations where train-induced street closings result in significant delay and safety issues to other traffic.
- T5.7 Work with the Port of Seattle and others to improve inter-modal freight connections involving Port container terminals, rail yards, industrial areas, airports and regional

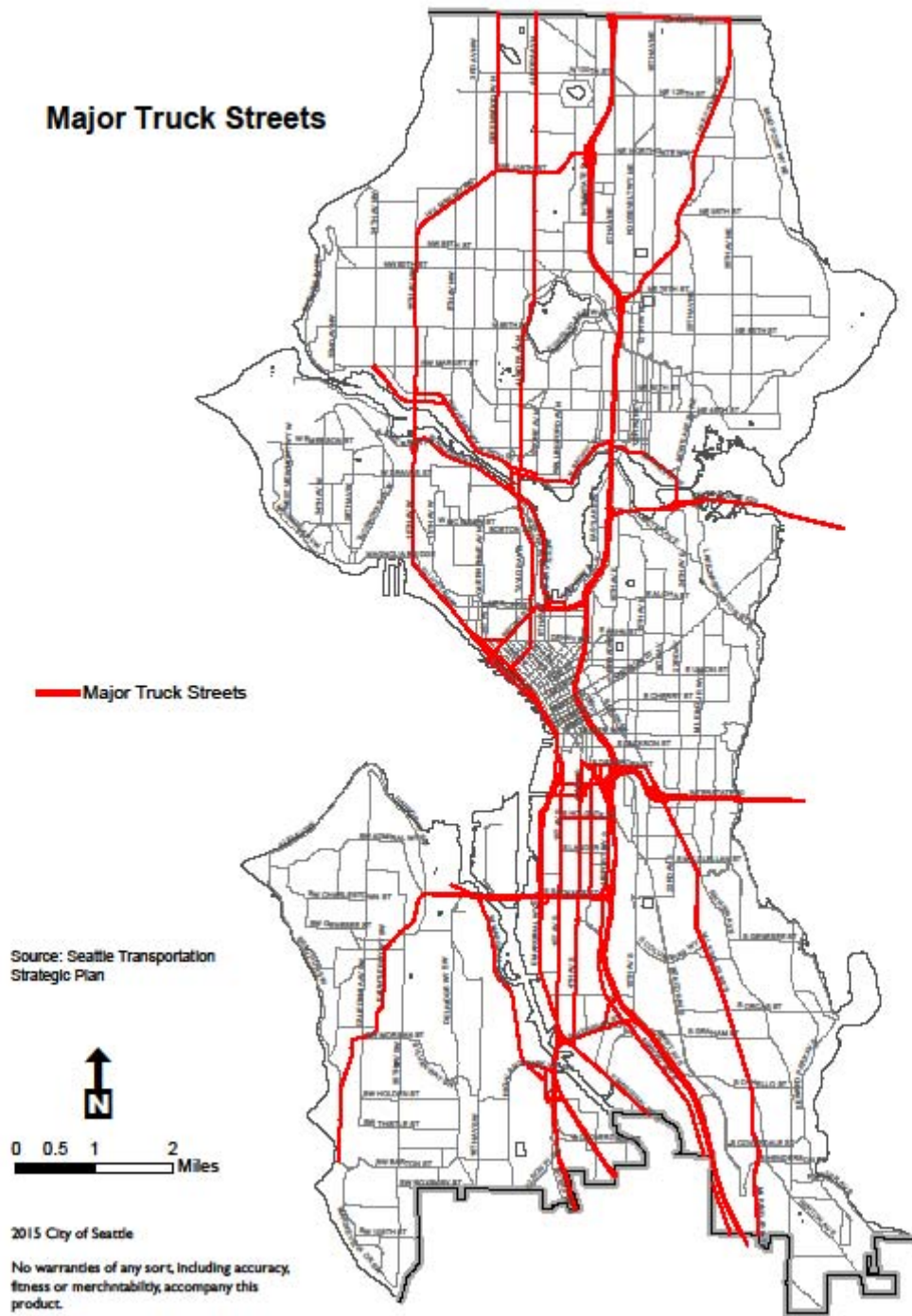
highways, and to minimize the impact of trucks idling and parking overnight on residential streets.

T5.8 Increase efficient and affordable access to jobs, education, and workforce training to promote economic opportunity.

T5.9 Improve access to urban villages and other neighborhood business districts for customers and delivery of goods.

T5.10 Build great streetscapes and activate public spaces in the right-of-way to promote economic vitality.

Transportation Figure 8



# Safety

## Discussion

Safety guides every decision that the Seattle Department of Transportation makes for transportation facility priorities and design. People expect to feel safe as they use streets, transit facilities, sidewalks, and trails. Investments that address safety for our most vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists, can encourage more city residents and visitors to walk or bike, especially for short trips. Collisions involving pedestrians and people riding bicycles are a relatively small percentage of overall collisions in the city, but represent a much higher percentage of the serious injuries and fatalities. Safer streets are also more efficient streets; they have fewer, and less severe, obstacles, allowing people and goods to move safely and efficiently. The City implements safety improvements and works to build a culture of mutual awareness that respects the right of all to travel safely regardless of how they choose to get around.

### GOAL

TG6 Provide and maintain a safe transportation system that protects all travelers, particularly the most vulnerable users.

### POLICIES

- T6.1 Reduce collisions for all modes of transportation and work toward a transportation system that produces zero fatalities and serious injuries.
- T6.2 Minimize right-of-way conflicts to accommodate all travelers.
- T6.3 Invest in education measures that increase mutual awareness among motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- T6.4 Implement innovative and effective measures to improve safety that combine engineering, education, evaluation, and enforcement.
- T6.5 Emphasize safety as a consideration in all transportation plans and projects, including in developing project prioritization criteria.
- T6.6 Consider lowering speed limits on residential streets and arterials as a way to reduce collision rates.
- T6.7 Use Complete Street principles, traffic calming and neighborhood traffic control strategies to promote safe neighborhood streets by discouraging cut-through traffic.

## Connecting to the Region

### Discussion

Seattle is the largest employment and cultural center in the Puget Sound region and is a destination for people from all over the area. The city is also served by a number of state and regional transportation facilities, including two interstate highways, several state highways, and a regional light rail, bus, and ferry network. While sections of this Transportation Element address transportation within the city limits, this section provides guidance for regional projects that affect Seattle, and for Seattle's participation in regional planning and funding efforts.

### GOAL

TG7 Engage with other agencies to ensure that regional projects and programs affecting Seattle are consistent with City plans, policies and priorities.

### POLICIES

- T7.1 Support regional transportation pricing and tolling strategies that help manage region-wide transportation demand.
- T7.2 Coordinate with regional, state and federal agencies, other local governments, and transit providers when planning and operating transportation facilities and services that reach beyond the City's borders in order to promote regional mobility for people and goods and support the regional growth strategy.
- T7.3 Support completion of the freeway high-occupancy-vehicle lane system throughout the central Puget Sound region and continued use of that system for promoting more efficient travel.
- T7.4 Limit freeway capacity expansions intended primarily to accommodate drive-alone users to allow only spot improves that enhance safety or remove operational constraints in specific locations.
- T7.5 Support a strong regional ferry system that maximizes the movement of people, freight and goods.
- T7.6 Support expansion of regional light rail and bus service to encourage more trips to and through Seattle on transit.

- T7.7 Work with regional transit agency partners to optimize cross-jurisdictional transit service planning and investments that function as a single, coordinated system.
- T7.8 Work with regional transit agencies to encourage them to provide service that is consistent with this Plan's growth goals and the urban village strategy.

## Operating and Maintaining the Transportation System

### Discussion

Thoughtful operation and maintenance of the transportation system promotes safety, efficiency, infrastructure preservation, and a high quality environment. Money spent on maintaining and preserving the system today can prevent spending more dollars for replacement later. This is particularly true for the more expensive and vital transportation assets, such as pavement, sidewalks, parking pay stations, Intelligent Transportation System devices, traffic signal infrastructure and bridges. Maintenance of these facilities also enhances safety and efficiency, for instance in managing high-volume traffic corridors.

As a good steward of taxpayer money, the City maintains a comprehensive inventory of transportation assets, reliable condition information on most high-value assets, and uses performance measures to identify the need repair or replace infrastructure at the right time. Optimal operation and maintenance of the transportation system means the City adequately plans for future maintenance activity and addresses the significant backlog of unmet maintenance needs that currently exists.

### GOAL

- TG8 Maintain and renew existing transportation assets to ensure the long-term viability of investments, reduce on-going costs, and promote safe conditions.

### POLICIES

- T8.1 Maintain the transportation system to keep it operating and maximize its useful life.
- T8.2 Operate the transportation system in a way that balances the following priorities: safety, mobility, accessibility, social equity, place-making, infrastructure preservation and resident satisfaction.
- T8.3 Employ state-of-the art intelligent transportation systems to increase the efficiency of movement for all modes.
- T8.4 Repair transportation facilities before replacement is necessary. Replace failed facilities when replacement is more cost-effective than continuing to repair.



- T8.5 Optimize traffic signal corridors, taking the needs of all types of transportation into account.

## Measuring Level of Service

### Discussion

The Growth Management Act requires that the Transportation Element include level of service (LOS) standards for all locally-owned arterials and transit routes to gauge the performance of the system. The City has decided to use a system-wide method as a basis to assess the performance of the transportation system. Because buses are the primary form of transit ridership in the city and buses operate on the arterial system, the City has chosen to use the same method to measure the level of service for the arterial system generally and the transit system. The City is currently also considering alternative methods of level of service standards that consider all travel modes, which is consistent with the multi-county planning policies in Vision 2040 and with other City policy objectives.

### GOAL

- TG9 Use level of service standards, as required by the Growth Management Act, as a gauge to assess the performance of the arterial and transit system.

### POLICIES

- T9.1 Define arterial and transit levels-of-service (LOS) to be the ratio of measured peak-hour traffic volumes to the calculated roadway capacity at designated screenlines, as shown on the map and table in the Transportation Appendix.
- T9.2 Pursue strategies to reduce vehicular travel demand across a screenline when the calculated LOS for that screenline approaches the LOS standard before increasing the operating capacity across the screenline.
- T9.3 Consider establishing level-of-service standards that include non-motorized modes in order to advance this Plan's goals of encouraging use of travel options, reduce dependence on drive-alone automobile use and accommodate growth in urban centers and urban villages.

## Funding

### Discussion

Adequately funding the continued operation, maintenance and improvement of Seattle’s transportation network is vital to preserving the City’s quality of life and ensuring shared prosperity and health for all its citizens.

In 2006, Seattle voters approved the 9-year “Bridging the Gap” transportation levy, which has provided increased funding for system maintenance and for safety, pedestrian, bicycle and transit improvements throughout the city. An oversight committee made up of community members monitors and reports on use of the funds. The Bridging the Gap measure expires at the end of 2015, and the Mayor has proposed a replacement levy that would provide funding for maintenance and transportation improvements for the period 2016-2024.

The City has also adopted a commercial parking tax, which supports large capital improvement and preservation projects. In 2010 the City also created the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD), which has authority to generate revenues from additional sources not otherwise available to the City. The STBD imposed a \$20 vehicle license fee, which provides an additional dedicated financial resource for addressing transportation needs.

This section identifies goals and policies related to providing and prioritizing funds for transportation projects, programs and services. It also identifies the types of multi-year investment plans to be developed that will support implementation of this Element.

#### GOAL

**TG10** Provide transportation funding at levels adequate to operate, maintain and improve the transportation system and to support the transportation, land use, environmental , equity, and other goals in this Plan.

#### POLICIES

**T10.1** Maintain and increase dedicated local transportation funding by renewing or replacing the transportation levy, and by maintaining the existing commercial parking tax and Seattle Transportation Benefit District.

**T10.2** Work with regional and state partners to encourage a shift to more reliance on user-based taxes and fees, and to revenues related to impacts on the transportation system, the environment.

- T10.3 Leverage local funding resources by securing grants from local, state and federal sources and through contributions from those who benefit from improvements.
- T10.4 Partner with other City departments, regional transportation, and public works agencies to coordinate investments, in order to reduce improvement costs, limit construction impacts on neighborhoods, and maximize project integration.
- T10.5 Make strategic investment decisions consistent with policies in this plan and other City transportation plans.
- T10.6 Prioritize investment by considering life-cycle costs, safety, environmental benefits, ability to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and benefits to public health. Race and social equity should be a key factor in selecting transportation investments.
- T10.7 Consider the use of transportation impact fees to help fund transportation system improvements needed to serve growth as envisioned in this Plan.
- T10.8 Prepare a six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that includes projects that are fully or partially funded.
- T10.9 Develop a prioritized list of projects, consistent with the policies of this Plan, for which the City will actively pursue funds.
- T10.10 Identify and evaluate possible additional funding resources and/or alternative land use and transportation scenarios if the level of transportation funding anticipated in the six-year financial analysis, below, falls short of the estimated amount.

**Transportation Figure 9**  
**Estimated Future Transportation Revenue**

Source	Estimated Revenue in Millions (2016-2021)	
	Low	High
Seattle Transportation Benefit District Funding (VLF and sales tax)	\$305	\$325
Seattle Dedicated Transportation Funding*	\$190	\$840
Grants and Partnerships	\$160	\$240
General Fund and Cumulative Reserve Fund	\$325	\$400
Seawall Levy and Waterfront Partnership	\$420	\$475
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,440</b>	<b>\$2,280</b>

\*High estimate assumes passage of 2015 levy proposal

**Transportation Figure 10**  
**Estimated Future Transportation Expenditures**

Category	Estimated Expenditures in Millions (2015-2020)	
	Low	High
Operations and Maintenance	\$325	\$430
Major Maintenance and Safety	\$325	\$700
Mobility and Enhancements	\$750	\$1,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,440</b>	<b>\$2,280</b>

# Housing

## Introduction

Seattle's vision is that all people should have safe, healthy, and affordable housing options in neighborhoods throughout Seattle. The city's housing supply should grow and adapt to meet the needs of all households, including those with low incomes and communities of color. As the city grows, people should be able to afford to stay in their neighborhoods with established community resources and cultural institutions. People of all races, ethnicities and abilities should have meaningful access to housing.

The recent few years have seen an unprecedented growth in the number of housing units in the city, due to booming demand. Rent prices are susceptible to sharp increases during periods of high demand, and this particularly impacts lower-income households. Growing income inequality, the effects of which are exacerbated by sharply rising housing prices, destabilizes the regional economy.

Housing costs unduly affect marginalized populations. Thirty-one percent of African American households struggle with severe housing cost burden, meaning they pay more than 50% of their income for rent. That compares the 17% of all Seattle households that are severely cost-burdened. Seattle's demographic patterns trace back to its history of racial segregation and displacement of communities of color caused by market pressures. The resulting cost burden and generational wealth gained from homeownership have resulted in inequity and racial disparities. Addressing these inequities and protecting marginalized populations is a primary focus of the Housing Element.

The City addresses race and social equity when financing, siting, preserving, and developing affordable housing. The City engages historically underrepresented communities in the development, implementation, and evaluation of land use and housing policies and programs in order to reverse known trends of social and racial inequality. Public investments in affordable housing serve to both prevent displacement and expand affordable housing options in historically unaffordable neighborhoods with access to jobs, schools, and transit.

This Housing Element establishes goals and policies that respond to the housing needs of all Seattleites and contribute to the building of vibrant, resilient, cohesive communities throughout our city. The goals and policies are grouped within the following five topic areas: equal access to housing, supply of housing, diversity of housing, housing construction and design, and affordable housing. Various policies in this Element refer to rent/income-restricted housing. That term refers to housing with conditions that legally restrict the income of tenants and the rents they may be charged.

## Equal Access to Housing

### Discussion

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits landlords from discriminating against or giving preferential treatment to people based on the definition of a protected class — a characteristic that cannot be used to discriminate against or in favor of any individual or group. The Fair Housing Act specifies the following seven protected classes: race, religion, national origin, sex, color, disability, and familial status (presence of children under 18 or pregnancy). The State of Washington and the City of Seattle have extended protection to additional classes, including marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, use of Section 8 voucher, political ideology, and veteran/military status. Educating Seattleites about and enforcing federal, state, and local fair housing laws is critical to making the city welcoming and inclusive and to increasing housing choices for people of all incomes and backgrounds.

The City also supports removing barriers that are preventing families and individuals from securing housing. This aligns with the City’s “Housing First” approach to homelessness, which eliminates a series of progressions from emergency shelter to transitional housing to permanent housing. Social service agencies nationwide have found that, without stable housing, it is extremely difficult someone to tackle problems such as health, mental health, or addiction that may have led to their homelessness. Housing First has proven to be a more effective approach to the problem of homelessness. Removing barriers to housing could help people avoid the humiliation and vulnerability caused by not having a home, and can reduce homelessness, particularly if implemented in coordination with other jurisdictions in the region.

### GOAL

HG1 Help ensure that all people have fair and equal access to housing in Seattle.

### POLICIES

- H1.1 Take the lead in creating a culture grounded in fair housing doctrine so that everyone fully understands the rights protected by federal, state, and local fair housing laws and the City becomes a leader in the protection of those rights.
- H1.2 Promote diverse, inclusive communities through housing programs that serve extremely low-income to low-income households.
- H1.3 Promote equitable housing practices for protected classes through fair housing education and enforcement.
- H1.4 Seek ways to promote use of tenant-based rental assistance in compact, complete communities in greater parts of Seattle.

- H1.5 Identify and remove barriers to stable housing for individuals and families, in coordination with other jurisdictions in the region.

## Supply of Housing

### Discussion

Seattle is a fast growing city, and as the population increases, demand for housing will continue to increase. The City is planning for 70,000 new housing units by 2035. Where housing should be located is being taken into consideration, since location can make a big difference in Seattleites' quality of life. The majority of new housing is planned for urban centers and urban villages where investments in transportation, open space, and services have been made or are planned. Based on Seattle's and other cities' experiences, it is unlikely that increased supply would be enough to cause housing prices to decline. However, providing more housing can help slow Seattle's increasing unaffordability, especially for households in the moderate- and middle-income levels. Accommodating growth must be done with an eye toward stabilizing marginalized populations in their communities. This may involve production or preservation of housing where the rents are subsidized for people at certain income levels, and robust tenant protections.

### GOAL

- HG2 Help meet current and future regional housing needs of all economic and demographic groups by increasing Seattle's housing supply.

### POLICIES

- H2.1 Allow and promote innovative, and non-traditional housing types and construction types to accommodate residential growth and provide a wider variety of affordable housing options.
- H2.2 Encourage using vacant or under-developed land for housing and mixed-use development, and promote turning vacant housing back into safe places to live.
- H2.3 Promote innovative strategies that increase the supply of housing that moderate- and middle-income households, including families with children, can afford.
- H2.4 Consider land use and building code regulations that allow for flexible reuse of existing structures in order to maintain or increase housing supply, while maintaining life safety standards.
- H2.5 Explore ways to reduce the cost of housing development.

- H2.6 Engage local communities, particularly in neighborhoods with marginalized populations, to identify and jointly address unique housing and community amenity or service needs.
- H2.7 Identify publicly owned sites appropriate for co-location of uses that include housing; prioritize use of sites for subsidized housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households.
- H2.8 Encourage the replacement of occupied housing that is demolished or converted to non-residential use.

## Diversity of Housing

### Discussion

Seattle needs a broader variety of housing types and spectrum of affordability. Seattle's high housing costs are making it increasingly difficult for lower- and moderate-income households to live in the city. Even middle-income families are struggling, given the high prices for Seattle home sales in almost all areas of the city. The City may need to consider expanding the use of areas currently zoned as "single-family" beyond individual detached single-family houses to other compatible low-density housing types. Rezoning areas within urban villages that are currently zoned single-family would allow for a greater number of housing units in areas where this Plan encourages growth. In areas with amenities attractive to families with children, courtyard housing, row housing, and flats are all housing types that could provide affordable and family-friendly housing options. An increased diversity of housing types will respond to demographic needs and contribute to expanded affordable housing choices. The policies below seek to accommodate a broader array of housing choices in Seattle.

### GOAL

- HG3 Achieve a mix of housing types that provide opportunity and choice throughout Seattle for people of various ages, races, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, household sizes, types, and incomes.

### POLICIES

- H3.1 Identify strategies for accommodating a variety of housing sizes and designs in ways that reflects the unique character of each neighborhood.
- H3.2 Explore ways to align development and design standards with strategies for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income housing, in order to encourage housing production and preservation in urban centers and urban villages in order to increase attractive and



affordable housing options for households of varied sizes, types, and income levels, including families with children and mixed generation households.

- H3.3 Allow and encourage housing for older adults and people with disabilities, including designs that allow for independent living, various degrees of assisted living, and skilled nursing care, in or near urban centers and villages with access to health care services.
- H3.4 Encourage the development of housing with affordable family-sized units in urban centers and villages with access to parks, and other child-focused amenities and services.
- H3.5 Considering allowing additional housing types that respect existing neighborhood character in single-family areas, particularly within or near urban centers and urban villages.

## Housing Construction and Design

### Discussion

Quality housing construction and design helps protect our natural environment and resources, prepare for challenges that climate change will present, and respond to housing needs resulting from demographic shifts. The safety, resilience, and maintenance of all Seattle housing is of utmost concern. People generally have a common understanding of what constitutes safe housing. The City's Department of Planning & Development (DPD) enforces numerous codes that protect public health, safety and general welfare, such as the Building Code and the Housing and Building Maintenance Code. Now that the majority of housing units in Seattle are rentals, the rental inspection program that DPD also implements is particularly important. Resilience enables individuals, households, communities, and regions to maintain livable conditions in the event of natural disasters, loss of power, or other interruptions in normally available services. This section considers vital factors in the physical design of housing, in order to improve the health and safety of residents and further goals for a more environmentally sustainable and resilient city.

### GOAL

- HG4 Promote housing design and construction that provides health, safety, environmental sustainability, and adaptability to changing demographic and environmental conditions.

### POLICIES

- H4.1 Provide programs, regulations, and enforcement to help ensure that all housing is healthy and safe and meets basic housing maintenance requirements.
- H4.2 Accommodate innovative designs and construction types, especially those that increase attractive and affordable housing options for extremely low- to middle-income households.

- H4.3 Implement green home-building and renovation requirements.
- H4.4 Encourage innovation in residential design, construction, and technology to conserve water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and otherwise minimize environmental impacts.
- H4.5 Consider providing assistance for seismic retrofit of residential buildings, particularly those occupied by extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households, to reduce risk of displacement in aftermath of an earthquake.
- H4.6 Increase housing opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities by promoting universal design features for new or renovated housing.
- H4.7 Adopt development standards and design guidelines that help achieve a variety of quality housing types and respond flexibly to unique neighborhood contexts.
- H4.8 Promote use of customizable modular designs and other flexible housing concepts to allow for households' changing needs, including in areas zoned single-family.
- H4.9 Promote opportunities to combine housing and historic preservation efforts through rehabilitation of structures of historic value for residential use.

## Affordable Housing

### Discussion

Providing housing affordable to lower income households is critical to ensuring that those populations have equal access to opportunities in the city and to reducing existing disparities. Research shows that investing in affordable housing for extremely low- to low-income households yields positive social and economic outcomes, beyond providing essential, especially for children and families. Protecting the natural environment and sustaining a strong economy require a sufficient affordable housing supply for households throughout the income spectrum.

The Housing Appendix provides an inventory and analysis of Seattle's existing and projected affordable housing needs. There are currently about 27,200 rent/income-restricted housing units in Seattle. Even with these units, large gaps remain between the demand for and supply of housing for households at the lowest income levels.

The needs analysis in the Housing Appendix indicates that the numbers of renter households in Seattle with incomes in the extremely low-income and very low-income ranges greatly exceed the existing number of rental units that are affordable and available to households with incomes at or below those

ranges. For instance, households making 30% of the area median income (AMI) outnumber, the affordable and available units by at least 23,500 units.

Only rental/income-restricted housing ensures that that housing will serve households with low incomes. Unless affordable housing units have some kind of a regulatory agreement or other long-term restriction, the overall number of units required to address need could be substantially higher than the estimated affordable housing gaps.

Meeting the need associated with the anticipated addition of 70,000 households in Seattle in the next 20 years will require creating many more affordable units beyond those needed to address existing gaps. To meet housing affordability needs associated with growth, 27,500 to 36,500 additional housing units affordable at or below 80% of AMI are estimated to be needed by 2035. This includes 10,500 rent/income-restricted housing units for extremely low-income households. (The Glossary contains definitions of the various “income levels,” used in this Plan.)

Seattle currently has some low-cost market-rate rental housing, although not nearly enough to meet demand. Higher income households occupy a portion of this housing; for example, an estimated 34% of the units that have rents affordable to low-income households are actually rented by households that have incomes greater than 80% of AMI, leaving an insufficient supply for those households who need it. While increasing rent/income-restricted housing continues to be a critical component of Seattle’s affordable housing strategy, preservation of quality low-cost housing is an increasingly important element of the City’s housing affordability strategy.

## GOAL

HG5 Advance the opportunity for households of all income levels to live affordably in Seattle and reduce over time the unmet housing needs of extremely low-, very low- and low-income households in Seattle.

## POLICIES

- H5.1 Recognize that the provision of housing affordable to lower income households can help increase access to education, employment, and social opportunities, support creation of a more inclusive city, and reduce displacement from a neighborhood or from the city.
- H5.2 Pursue new public and private funding sources for housing preservation and production to provide housing opportunities for lower-wage workers, people with special needs and for those who are homeless.
- H5.3 Prioritize efforts to address the housing needs of Seattle’s extremely low-income households where possible and consistent with local, state, and federal laws and program requirements.

- H5.4 Collaborate with King County and other jurisdictions in efforts to prevent and end homelessness and ensure that those efforts focus on providing permanent housing with wrap-around services and on securing the resources to do so.
- H5.5 Increase housing choice and opportunity by funding extremely low-, very low-, and low-income rental housing throughout Seattle, especially in areas where less rent/income restricted housing is available, including in high-cost areas with high frequency transit, parks, quality public schools, and other amenities where greater subsidies may be needed.
- H5.6 Consider access to high frequency transit and estimated housing and transportation costs when funding extremely low-, very low-, and low-income housing.
- H5.7 Consider implementing programs that preserve or enhance affordability, preferably long-term, of market-rate housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households, including for families with children.
- H5.8 Encourage no net loss of rent/income restricted housing.
- H5.9 Address the needs of communities most vulnerable to displacement due to redevelopment pressure through policies and funding decisions related to extremely low-, very low-, and low-income housing.
- H5.10 Encourage rental housing owners to preserve, rehabilitate, or redevelop their properties in ways that minimize housing displacement and maintain affordability, health, and safety for current residents, and considers cultural and economic needs of the surrounding neighborhood.
- H5.11 Require advance notice to tenants and payment of relocation assistance to extremely low- and very low-income tenants before issuing permits for housing demolition, change of use, or substantial rehabilitation or before removing use restrictions from rent/income-restricted housing.
- H5.12 Require neighborhood notification when agencies apply for City funding for rental housing preservation and production projects and provide guidelines for effective communication between housing owners and neighbors.
- H5.13 Ensure that City strategies for community revitalization help meet the needs of marginalized populations in underserved areas or where people are at risk of displacement due to increasing housing costs.

- H5.14 Seek to reduce the number of Seattle households who are burdened by housing costs by supporting the production and preservation of affordable housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households.
- H5.15 Encourage new federal, state, and county laws, regulations, programs, and incentives that would increase the production and preservation of extremely low-, very low-, and low-income housing.
- H5.16 Encourage a shared responsibility between the private and public sectors for addressing affordable housing needs.
- H5.17 Consider providing incentives to help ensure that a portion of newly constructed housing is affordable to a range of lower income and middle-income owner households.
- H5.18 Require planning for affordable housing needs for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income households as part of major institution master plans and development agreements approved by the City when such plans would lead to housing demolition or employment growth.
- H5.19 Implement strategies and programs to help ensure a range of housing opportunities affordable to Seattle's workforce.
- H5.20 Encourage major employers to develop housing assistance programs for their very low- to middle-income employees.
- H5.21 Continue to promote best practices in use of green building materials, sustainability, and resiliency in rent/income-restricted housing policies.
- H5.22 Support programs that enable Seattle's extremely low- to low-income homeowners to remain safely and affordably housed.
- H5.23 Promote financially sustainable strategies to provide homeownership opportunities for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households, especially for families with children, in part to enable these households to have a path toward wealth accumulation.

# Capital Facilities

*NOTE: This Draft Plan includes a new Parks and Open Space Element, and the Capital Facilities Element no longer addresses open space issues.*

## Introduction

Seattle has a comprehensive network of capital facilities that is critical for providing a high quality of life, particularly as the city grows. The facilities governed by this element include City-owned and managed facilities, such as police and fire facilities, libraries, Seattle Center, neighborhood service centers, and City office space; and other facilities that the City funds or otherwise supports, such as schools and health clinics. While non-City organizations and agencies, such as the Seattle Public Schools and Public Health Seattle & King County, are not required to meet the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, the City works with these groups to encourage them to strive for similar goals. Though this section applies to buildings occupied by a variety of departments, it does not apply to transportation infrastructure, utility infrastructure, or affordable housing projects, which are all discussed in other elements.

Overall, the City's network of capital facilities is generally sufficient to accommodate forecasted housing and job growth through 2035. Unlike utilities and transportation, demand for capital facilities is determined largely by factors other than population, such as by service areas or response times. However, the City continues to invest in existing and new facilities to improve the system and ensure that it remains relevant and useful to changing populations. Over the next twenty years, the City will aim to ensure that Seattle's capital facilities and programming:

- Contribute to a high degree of personal and public health and safety
- Are equitably distributed based upon the different needs of individuals and communities
- Provide services that are relevant to neighborhoods throughout the city and are consistent with the community priorities
- Support the City's goals of protecting and restoring the natural environment, particularly reducing the impacts of and adapting to climate change
- Encourage the healthy physical, educational, and cultural development of children and adults
- Respond to increasing diversity, changing use of technology, and increased demand on limited facilities
- Are resilient to the effects of natural and man-made disasters

To meet this vision, the City will have to act strategically and leverage finite resources in order to create a capital facilities system that is an exceptional resource for all Seattleites.

## Strategic Investment

### Discussion

The City has finite physical and financial resources available to maintain and improve our capital facilities network and investment decisions that we make will have long-term implications for our ability to serve a changing population. Consequently, it is critical to think strategically about how we invest our resources. This section describes the overarching goals and policies that apply to all aspects of capital facility development and management in order to guide our actions across maintenance, acquisition, design/construction, and service provision operations.

#### GOAL

CFG1 Develop and manage capital facilities to maximize the long-term environmental, economic, social, and health benefits of available money, land, and facilities.

#### POLICIES

CF1.1 Assess the policy and fiscal implications of potential major capital facility investments as part of the City's capital decision-making process. The evaluation should include consideration of a capital project's:

- Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and functional plans
- Effects on Seattle's environmental, social, economic, and human health over the lifetime of the investment
- Contributions to an equitable distribution of facilities and services
- Ability to support urban centers and villages that are experiencing or expecting high levels of residential and employment growth
- Total costs of ownership over a project's life including construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning

CF1.2 Prioritize the maintenance of existing facilities, making efficient use of limited financial and physical resources.

CF1.3 Provide capital facilities that are models of environmental, economic and social stewardship and that demonstrate a high standard for private development.

CF1.4 Provide capital facilities that will keep Seattle attractive to families with children.

CF1.5 Encourage the protection, enhancement and adaptive reuse of City-owned historic facilities.

- CF1.6 Develop resilient capital facilities by considering the potential impacts of changing demographics, conditions, and events—such as climate change, technological changes, and natural and man-made disasters—in planning and investment decisions.
- CF1.7 Structure user fees and scholarships to mitigate disproportionate cost burdens on low-income households.
- CF1.8 Leverage investments to create training and living wage job opportunities, particularly for low-income and local residents.

## Facility Operations & Maintenance

### Discussion

Given the substantial investments that have been made to develop existing facilities, the operation and maintenance of those facilities is a key aspect of making efficient use of resources. This section applies to daily operations, monitoring, and minor improvements.

#### GOAL

- CFG2 Operate and maintain existing capital facilities to reduce ongoing resource consumption and day-to-day costs and to ensure their long-term viability, while serving the needs of the people that use them.

#### POLICIES

- CF2.1 Use maintenance plans for capital facilities to make efficient use of limited financial and physical resources.
- CF2.2 Manage existing facilities in an overall effort towards resource conservation with the specific aims of continuously reducing energy use, water use and stormwater impacts, as well as lowering utility costs.
- CF2.3 Seek to achieve 20% energy savings from a 2008 baseline across the City's portfolio of buildings by 2020 and achieve net carbon neutrality by 2050.
- CF2.4 Manage existing facilities to maintain healthy environments for occupants and users.



## Facility Siting

### Discussion

New capital facilities represent substantial long-term investments. Since the location and design of these facilities can have major impacts on the long-term cost of providing services, as well as benefits for local communities, it is important to consider a wide range of perspectives in making these decisions. This includes how potential locations may impact the efficiency of operations, equity of service provision, environmental consequences, and our ability to serve a growing population.

### GOAL

CF3 Locate capital facilities to achieve efficient citywide delivery of services, support an equitable distribution of services, minimize environmental impacts and maximize facilities' value to the communities in which they are located.

### POLICIES

- CF3.1 Encourage the location of new capital facilities in urban centers and villages to support future growth and attract both public and private investments.
- CF3.2 Encourage the location of new capital facilities where they would support equitable distribution of services and address the needs of underrepresented communities.
- CF3.3 Locate capital facilities so that the majority of expected users can reach them by walking, bicycling and/or taking public transit.
- CF3.4 Seek to avoid siting new facilities in areas known to be prone to the effects of natural or man-made hazards, such as earthquake liquefaction-prone areas.
- CF3.5 Encourage the joint-use, reuse and repurposing of existing City-owned land to further the City's long-range goals.
- CF3.6 Consider future climate conditions during siting, particularly sea level, to help ensure capital facilities function as intended over their planned life-cycle.

## Facility Design & Construction

### Discussion

The design and construction of capital facilities has a profound impact on long-term cost of service delivery, environmental impact, and site usability. By considering a range of perspectives and desired outcomes, the City can design facilities that better suit the needs of Seattleites, now and in the future. The following policies address design and construction of the City's capital facilities, including major improvements and rehabilitations.

#### GOAL

CFG4 Design and construct capital facilities so that they are considered assets to their communities and act as models of environmental, economic and social stewardship.

#### POLICIES

- CF4.1 Seek to make all capital facilities accessible and relevant to people of all abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, ages, and cultures.
- CF4.2 Maximize facilities' energy and water efficiency.
- CF4.3 Use materials efficiently, prioritize local and environmentally preferable products, and minimize waste.
- CF4.4 Create healthy indoor and outdoor environments for both users and occupants.
- CF4.5 Provide building design strategies that promote active living through the placement and design of stairs, elevators, and indoor and outdoor spaces.
- CF4.6 Encourage a wide range of transportation options by promoting car sharing and by providing bicycle, transit and electric-car-charging facilities.
- CF4.7 Consider future climate conditions during design, including changes to temperature, precipitation, and sea level, to help ensure capital facilities function as intended over their planned life-cycle.

## Relationships with Non-City Entities

### Discussion

In addition to directly providing services, the City works with many other entities including Seattle Public Schools, Public Health Seattle & King County, Washington State, King County, other jurisdictions, and non-profits to improve service provision. This includes joint planning, funding other service providers, and allowing use of City-owned property.

#### GOAL

CFG5 Make efficient use of resources when investing in facilities and service delivery that involve other agencies and organizations.

#### POLICIES

- CF5.1 Collaborate with other public and non-profit entities to include location within urban villages as a major criterion for selecting sites for new or expanded community-based facilities or public amenities.
- CF5.2 Work with other public or non-profit agencies to identify and pursue new co-location and joint-use opportunities in public facilities for community programs, services, and meetings.
- CF5.3 Partner with Seattle Public Schools to plan for expected growth and to encourage the siting, renovation, and expansion of school facilities in or near urban centers and villages.
- CF5.4 Join with other jurisdictions in King, Snohomish, and Pierce Counties to explore regional funding strategies for capital facilities, especially those that serve or benefit citizens throughout the region.
- CF5.5 Use non-traditional strategies for service delivery, such as the leasing of City-owned buildings or funding of non-City facilities, where they would provide greater benefit to the City.

# Utilities

## Introduction

Utilities are basic functions that keep the city working. As a highly urbanized area, Seattle has a fully developed and comprehensive utility infrastructure system that provides energy, drinking water, water for fire suppression, drainage, sewer, solid waste, and communications services throughout the city. These services are provided by diverse public and private providers that must share space within the street right-of-way. Seattle City Light provides electricity throughout the city and beyond the city boundaries. Seattle Public Utilities provides drinking water, drainage, sewer, and solid waste services within the city limits. In addition, it provides water service directly or indirectly to much of King County. King County also provides combined drainage and sewer services in portions of Seattle and is responsible for treating all wastewater generated in the city. The City's Department of Information Technology maintains an extensive data and fiber optic network, shares conduit installation and maintenance with multiple partners, and leases excess fiber capacity to private providers.

Investor-owned utilities also serve Seattle, providing natural gas, district steam, and communications infrastructure and services. Additionally, various companies operate wireless communications facilities such as television, radio, and cellular phone towers and antennas. The City has limited control of private utilities as the regulator for public right-of-ways. Agreements with cable companies help ensure technical quality, customer rights and support public services.

Over the coming years, as Seattle continues to grow, the existing utilities infrastructure is well poised to accommodate new buildings, although some development strategies and construction modifications may be required to bring services to individual lots. The infrastructure will also be able to support the Plan's broader goals of sustainability, economic efficiency, and equitable service access for all Seattleites.

The utilities will need to address historic conditions and changing needs, technologies, and other factors in order to thrive over the next twenty years. The electrical system will have to increase capacity and reliability to adapt to emerging technologies such as local solar energy production and electric vehicles, while continuing to address climate change and maintaining a significant distribution system. The drinking water, drainage, and sewer systems will have to respond to new goals and regulatory mandates for water quality and the impacts of a changing climate. At the same time, the Drainage and Wastewater Utilities need to update historic systems that have produced combined sewer overflows and degradation of creeks. The communications systems will need to grow to continue to address City, business, resident, education, health, service sector and mobile communication needs.

Future investments will need to contribute to the City's vision of achieving race and social equity by ensuring the burdens and benefits of high quality utilities infrastructure are distributed equitably

throughout the city. Seattle’s infrastructure investments will need to help rectify existing environmental and service disparities and support the health and economic opportunity of underinvested communities, which are disproportionately impacted by environmental contaminants or lack of service such as high speed Internet services and training.

The Utilities Element outlines goals and policies that will guide City decisions about providing services and addressing emerging issues the utilities face. An inventory of existing infrastructure and forecasted future needs for City-owned utilities are discussed in this element’s appendix. The capital programs planned over the next six years are included in the City’s most recently adopted Capital Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, though this element focuses on how the City operates its own utilities, it also extends the discussion to how we influence non-city utilities, such as communications, natural gas, and district steam.

## Service Delivery

### Discussion

It is critical for the utilities to plan strategically for investing resources to maintain and improve service delivery within finite physical and financial resources available. Decisions we make today will have long-term implications for our ability to serve a changing population. This section describes the overarching goals and policies that apply to all aspects of service delivery.

#### GOAL

UG1 Provide safe, reliable, and affordable service that is consistent with the City’s aims of environmental stewardship, race and social equity, economic opportunity, and the protection of public health.

#### POLICIES

- U1.1 Provide equitable levels of service by accounting for existing community conditions, considering how decisions will impact varied geographic and socioeconomic groups, and embedding service equity criteria into decision-making processes.
- U1.2 Coordinate planning, programs, and projects for City utilities with those of other City departments to lower costs, improve outcomes, and minimize construction and operational impacts.
- U1.3 Strive to develop a resilient utility system where planning and investment decisions account for changing conditions, such as climate change, technological changes, increased solar energy generation, and natural disasters.

- U1.4 Support innovative approaches to service delivery, such as the development of distributed systems or joint ventures by city and non-city utilities, where they could further overall goals for utilities.
- U1.5 Ensure that new private development provides adequate investments to maintain established utility service standards.
- U1.6 Make utility services as affordable as possible through equitable delivery of utility discount programs and incentives.
- U1.7 Leverage investments and agreements with private utilities and vendors to create training and living wage job opportunities, particularly for low-income and local residents.
- U1.8 Support proactive asset management programs for the renewal and replacement of utility infrastructure to ensure compliance, safety and reliability.

## Utility Resource Management

### Discussion

Natural resources such as water, fuel, hydropower capacity, and materials comprise the basic inputs and outputs of every utility. The issues of energy supply, water supply and disposal, and waste management are essentially about how these resources are used, changed, and released. While the City has adequate existing capacity to provide electricity, drinking water, and waste disposal over the next twenty years, proper stewardship of these resources is vitally important for meeting the utilities' key goals such as reducing impacts on the environment and preparing for climate change and a growing population.

This section describes how the utilities manage energy supply, water supply and disposal, and materials to make the most effective use of these resources.

#### GOAL

- UG2 Maximize the conservation of potable water, drainage function, electricity, and material resources by the utilities and their customers.

#### POLICIES

- U2.1 Use cost-effective demand management to meet the City's utility resource needs and support such practices by wholesale customers of City utilities.
- U2.2 Consider short-term and long-term environmental and social impacts related to acquiring and using natural resources.

- U2.3 Remain carbon neutral in the generation of electricity by relying first on energy efficiency, second on renewable resources, and, when fossil fuel use is necessary, offsetting the release of greenhouse gases.
- U2.4 Strive to be carbon neutral in the delivery of drinking water, drainage, sewer, and solid waste services.
- U2.5 Pursue the long-term goal of diverting most of the city's solid waste away from landfills by maximizing recycling, reducing consumption, and promoting products that are made to be reused, repaired or recycled back into nature or the marketplace.
- U2.6 Prevent pollutants and high flows from damaging aquatic systems by minimizing impervious surfaces, minimizing stormwater runoff, reducing contamination of street runoff and storm water, addressing combined sewer overflows, and minimizing illegal discharges into water bodies.
- U2.7 Provide opportunities for marginalized populations to participate in conservation programs.

## Utility Facility Siting and Design

### Discussion

New substations, reservoirs, pump stations, green stormwater facilities, treatment facilities and other utility infrastructure represent substantial long-term investments. Increasing capacity and changes in demand in parts of the City may necessitate the addition of new utility facilities in some cases. Since the location and design of these facilities can have major impacts on the long-term cost and effectiveness of service provision, it is important to consider a wide range of perspectives in making these decisions. This includes how potential locations may impact the efficiency of operations, equity of service provision, environmental consequences, and our ability to serve a growing population as well as existing conditions such as the historic concentration of large polluting industries and utility operations in areas that also house low income, racially diverse communities. By considering a range of desired outcomes for new facilities, the City can also design facilities that meet a broad range of utility goals.

The following policies address the siting and design of Seattle's utility facilities.

#### GOAL

- UG3 Site and design facilities so that they help to efficiently and equitably provide services to all Seattleites and maximize their value within the communities where they are located.

## POLICIES

- U3.1 Consider and budget for the potential operation and maintenance costs of new facilities when developing them.
- U3.2 Discourage siting and design alternatives that may increase negative impacts, such as traffic, noise, and pollution, particularly on communities that already bear a disproportionate amount of these impacts.
- U3.3 Apply consistent and equitable standards for the provision of community and customer amenities when they are needed to offset the impact of construction projects, ongoing operations, and facility maintenance practices.
- U3.4 Build facilities that are models of environmental stewardship by maximizing energy, water, and material efficiency, maximizing on-site stormwater management, prioritizing local and environmentally preferable products, and minimizing waste.
- U3.5 Consider opportunities for co-locating facilities, allowing mixed-use development, or creating accessible open space when siting and designing utility facilities, provided doing so would still allow for safe and secure utility operations.
- U3.6: Consider future climate conditions during siting and design, including changes to temperature, rainfall, and sea level, to help ensure capital facilities function properly as intended over their planned life-cycle.

## Coordination within the Right-of-Way

### Discussion

Above, below, and on the ground, Seattle's roads, paths, and other right-of-way spaces contain a vast array of utility infrastructure. Pipes, conduits, wires, poles, service vaults, storage tanks, pollution control structures, streetlights, gutters, swales, and infiltration facilities are carefully integrated into the City's overall landscape. Due to limited space, however, the way these facilities are placed and maintained must be carefully managed in order to minimize conflicts between the utilities and other uses of the right-of-way, as well as to make sure that infrastructure investments are well maintained.

At the same time, new investments in these facilities, particularly projects that result in opening the pavement, also provide opportunities to improve existing facilities and meet multiple objectives. Consequently, the City should look for opportunities to share costs, undertake joint projects, or otherwise consider the goals of other departments when undertaking projects in the right-of-way.



**GOAL**

- UG4 Coordinate right-of-way ventures among departments to meet transmission, distribution, and conveyance goals; minimize the costs of infrastructure investment and maintenance; control stormwater; and support other uses such as transportation, trees, and public space.

**POLICIES**

- U4.1 Engage in early coordination and collaboration among departments on transportation and utility projects in the right-of-way to avoid space conflicts, identify joint project opportunities, and minimize life-cycle costs across all City departments.
- U4.2 Coordinate construction to ensure minimal cost and public inconvenience in terms of road and right-of-way disruption.

## Relationships with Non-City Utilities

### Discussion

Communications with non-City utilities, such as natural gas, district steam, and communication providers, take place primarily through the review of street use permits, project coordination, development and leasing policies, and the execution of franchise agreements or programmatic term permits. These relationships offer opportunities to improve service provision for customers, reduce the impacts of construction, and encourage non-City utilities to work toward City goals. Specific policies about the location of communication facilities are included in the Land Use Element. The following policies address the operation of non-City utilities in Seattle generally.

**GOAL**

- UG5 Work with non-City utilities to promote the City's overall goals for utility service and coordinated construction within the right-of-way.

**POLICIES**

- U5.1 Provide interested non-City utilities with timely and effective notices of planned road and right-of-way trenching, maintenance, and upgrade activities.
- U5.2 Support competition among private providers by providing equitable access to the right of way for all data and telecommunication service providers to reach their customers.
- U5.3 Encourage improvements in the communications system to achieve the following:

- Universal and affordable access for residents, businesses and institutions within Seattle, particularly for marginalized populations
- Customer options and competitive pricing
- Consumer privacy, system security, and reliability
- State-of-the-art services.

# Economic Development

## Introduction

The vital center of the Puget Sound economy, Seattle is also a leading west coast hub. Over the past 50 years, Seattle's economy has successfully transitioned from one focused on timber, shipping, aerospace and the military to a more diverse economy that reflects both traditional industry and emerging technology and innovation-driven sectors. After a challenging decade that included the Nisqually earthquake, September 11, and the Great Recession, Seattle recovered economically more quickly than other places. As of 2013, Seattle regained the 35,000 jobs lost during the recession, pushing unemployment below 5 percent for the first time since 2008. The highest jobs growth occurred in the services sector. Although the number of jobs in manufacturing/industrial centers has shrunk, they still account for 16 percent of all jobs.

The City is planning for an additional 115,000 jobs over the next 20 years. The Urban Village strategy identifies the geographic areas best suited for job growth—urban centers, urban villages and manufacturing/industrial centers. Some businesses and jobs are best suited to the mixed-use, walkable urban centers and villages. Others require unique features, services and targeted land uses that fit best in manufacturing/industrial centers. Seattle must balance these varied demands in order to sustain existing businesses while also anticipating the needs of emerging business and industry.

The purpose of the Economic Development Element is to provide direction about how to maintain and grow Seattle's vibrant, diverse, and increasingly global economy in ways that benefit individuals across all income levels, business and industry sectors, and the city's diverse communities. The City will strive to reduce income inequities, and also identify and address policies that contribute to or create inequity.

Seattle's attractiveness as a place to live, work, and visit is a competitive advantage. Seattle's beautiful physical setting, thriving cultural scene, walkable neighborhoods, diverse restaurants, unique shopping, accessible nature, and historic assets generate direct economic benefits. They also contribute to the high quality of life that draws business, people and tourists. Another advantage is Seattle's collaborative culture in which leaders from public and private sectors work together to encourage innovation and to support business formation, retention, and expansion.

However, not all residents have shared in Seattle's economic prosperity. Communities of color have higher rates of unemployment, lower incomes, and less education. Widening gaps in income and opportunity hurt Seattle's future prospects. Closing these inequities will require more training and education for the city's marginalized populations. Improving their skills and education will reduce the need to import workers from elsewhere. Community-led economic development in under-invested neighborhoods can spur small business start-up and growth, and provide economic opportunities for

current resident, immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs. Shared prosperity is not just about what low-income communities need, it is about what they can contribute.

## Commercial Districts

### Discussion

Seattle enjoys an attractive, flourishing downtown core that accounts for about 30 percent of all jobs within the City. Outside of downtown and other urban centers, a network of distinctive, traditional, walkable places (known as hub urban villages and residential urban villages) exists. This is where small businesses thrive, communities engage, and many local jobs are created. About 12 percent of Seattle's jobs are located in these districts.

#### GOAL

EDG1 Encourage vibrant commercial districts in urban centers and villages.

#### POLICIES

- ED1.1 Enhance the downtown core as the economic center of the city and the region, and strengthen its appeal as home to many of Seattle's vital professional service firms, high technology companies and regional retail, as well as cultural, historic, entertainment, convention and tourist facilities.
- ED1.2 Promote a comprehensive approach to strengthen neighborhood business districts through organization, marketing, business and retail development, and a clean, safe, walkable and attractive environment.
- ED1.3 Prioritize commercial districts for assistance in areas of lower economic opportunity.
- ED1.4 Enrich the vibrancy of neighborhood business districts through the integration of design, public art, public space, historic preservation and cultural spaces and programming.
- ED1.5 Support independently owned and operated retail and restaurants in commercial districts to reinforce local neighborhood and cultural identity and strengthen the local economy.

# Industry Clusters

## Discussion

Seattle's best prospects for future economic growth reside with so-called industry clusters—concentrated networks of interdependent firms, research and development institutions, and others. Manufacturing, maritime, life sciences, information and communications technology, global health/healthcare, clean technology, tourism, and film and music are the identified industry clusters in our city.

These clusters not only help the associated businesses, which benefit from the rapid exchange of information, leading to innovative and efficient operations, but they also are an asset to the overall economy. Generally, businesses in industry clusters pay higher than average wages, bring new capital into the economy, are environmentally minded, and add variety to the economic base. By identifying key sectors of the economy in which Seattle has a competitive advantage, the City can better achieve a vibrant, balanced, and diversified economy that benefits individuals across all income levels.

### GOAL

EDG2 Enhance strategic industry clusters that build on Seattle's competitive advantages.

### POLICIES

- ED2.1 Improve linkages between industry clusters and research institutions, hospitals, educational institutions and other technology-based businesses.
- ED2.2 Encourage collaboration among businesses within and across industry clusters in the areas of marketing, research, capital and talent acquisition, and expansion of highly skilled jobs.
- ED2.3 Improve the ability of industry clusters to transfer technology in cooperation with other jurisdictions and with major education and research institutions.
- ED2.4 Promote better coordination of economic and community development activities among City departments as well as with all levels of governments, the business community and nonprofits to strengthen industry clusters.

## Business Climate

### Discussion

Business climate refers to the external factors that attract and sustain businesses in a place. Factors include quality of the workforce, taxes, regulations, incentives, and other government policies and investments, as well as overall quality of life. Seattle is renowned for its mild climate, extraordinary access to recreation and natural resources, and diverse cultural offerings. Seattle's collaborative culture proves another economic advantage, as leaders from public and private sectors work together to encourage innovation and support the creation, growth, retention and expansion of new local businesses. Some aspects of Seattle's business climate are challenging for business, such as complex development regulations, earthquake risk, and underfunded transportation and education systems.

### GOAL

EDG3 Encourage a business climate that supports new investment, job creation, and resilience.

### POLICIES

- ED3.1 Promote the expansion of international trade within Seattle and throughout the region.
- ED3.2 Strive to make the business climate more competitive through use of transparent and predictable regulations, efficient approval processes, and reasonable taxes, fees and utility rates.
- ED3.3 Foster partnerships between the public and private sectors to improve business climate.
- ED3.4 Improve coordination of information and services between city, county, regional, state, and federal agencies to develop and implement economic development policies and programs.
- ED3.5 Consider the needs and priorities for long-term economic recovery in post-disaster recovery and mitigation planning.

## Workforce

### Discussion

The success of industry clusters depends on a skilled and competitive workforce. However, many workers do not have the necessary skills to meet job qualifications, and employers have noted a lack of qualified job applicants for some positions in Seattle. This includes a variety of industries unable to find enough local college graduates in certain engineering, computer, and life science fields, as well as

traditional industries looking to replace an aging highly skilled workforce. As a result, many employers look to attract talent from elsewhere. Better education and training of local workers can connect displaced workers, disadvantaged youth, and recent immigrants to higher skilled job opportunities. Full participation in the economy, also requires skill building that lead to job progression for local workers.

## GOAL

EDG4 Encourage the development of a highly trained and well-educated local work force that effectively competes for meaningful and productive employment, earns a living wage, meets the needs of business and increases opportunities for social mobility.

## POLICIES

ED4.1 Create a coalition of business, labor, civic, social service agencies and educational institutions in order to develop education and training programs targeted to the needs of business, especially for high-demand science, technology, engineering, and mathematics skills.

ED4.2 Increase job training, internships and placement to overcome high barriers to employment and achieve greater racial and social inclusion in the workforce.

ED4.3 Encourage all businesses to pay a living wage, provide necessary employment benefits and hire local residents.

# Entrepreneurial and Small Business Development

## Discussion

Our City is home to major national companies such as Starbucks, Amazon and Nordstrom. However, most Seattle businesses have fewer than 10 employees. Sectors with an especially high proportion of small businesses include construction, wholesale trade, manufacturing, retail and related services, and increasingly, start-ups in technology and other creative industries. In addition, food growers, processors, and distributors are a quickly expanding presence within the local economy.

As technological advances continue to lower the cost of starting new businesses, the rate of new entrepreneurs will rise. In addition to attracting new types of businesses, we must redouble our efforts to retain the small, culturally diverse businesses that support equally diverse communities.

## GOAL

EDG5 Strengthen the entrepreneurial environment for start-ups and small businesses.

## POLICIES

- ED5.1 Encourage institutions of higher education towards commercialization of research innovations to fuel the growth of start-ups.
- ED5.2 Enhance arts and culture activities to attract creative class workers, living wage employers and tourists to Seattle, as well as to enrich our overall culture of innovation.
- ED5.3 Create a network for technology and innovation entrepreneurs to learn about services and jobs, build relationships and find resources—all of which will help enable their businesses to flourish.
- ED5.4 Establish incentives to encourage property owners and building owners to offer affordable spaces for startups and small businesses.
- ED5.5 Reduce barriers to business startup and entrepreneurship.
- ED5.6 Promote the growth of local small businesses.



# Environment

## Introduction

Choices the City makes about how to grow and operate deeply affect the health and sustainability of our natural environment. Over the next 20 years, the City will have an amazing opportunity to protect the climate and restore the natural environment in ways that can improve human health, make vibrant green spaces, create habitat for wildlife, generate jobs, and reduce the burdens of a degraded environment. As a city of outstanding creativity and appreciation of the natural environment, Seattle can set an example that can inspire others and lead to improvements beyond the City's actions by demonstrating what a strong, climate-friendly economy can look like. City actions could include making investments to restore green spaces and creeks, developing a 21st century transportation system that integrates old (walking, biking, cars) and new (light rail, car sharing) approaches. Measures like these can help a growing region accommodate people and jobs in urban areas to reduce the impacts of sprawl and create livable communities.

Seattle is committed to understanding how decisions impact different individuals and communities in order to fulfill the City's vision for race and social equity that environmental benefits are equitably distributed and burdens are minimized and equitably shared. While the City must push to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions, past emissions mean that some amount of climate change is now inevitable, and the City must learn to understand and adapt to these changes.

This element of the Plan contains the goals and policies that are relevant across all other elements. Other elements also contain environmental policies that are specific to those topics. For example, the Plan's Land Use Element takes into account policies that regulate development near environmentally critical areas such as wetlands and stream corridors, and the Transportation Element addresses how various types of transit could impact or improve outcomes for the environment.

Goals and policies in this Element's different sections overlap and interrelate with goals and policies in other elements that address environmental concerns. Therefore, implementation of these goals and policies will be most effective when this element is considered as a whole — fostering opportunity to identify strategies, which will advance all of the Plan's goals.

## Land

### Discussion

Seattle's growth and identity has been profoundly shaped by our stunning natural landscape. The first native and European settlers were drawn here by natural bounty as well as the economic value of the land for logging and resource extraction. Today, our city has instead become a magnet for people

attracted to its lush landscapes, fresh food, and location in a region of exceptional places. Over time, our relationship and interaction with the land has changed dramatically, but its critical importance in our lives has remained the same.

Although the region looks very different than it did when European settlers first arrived 150 years ago, Seattle's trees, vegetation, and soils still make up a vitally important system that manages water run-off, cleans the air, mitigates climate change emissions and impacts, improves human health, and reduces the heat island effect. This natural system also provides wildlife habitats, supports livable neighborhoods, and is integral to the essential character of the Emerald City.

## GOAL

EG1 Foster healthy trees, vegetation, and soils to improve human health, provide wildlife habitats, reduce drainage costs, give residents across the city access to nature, and increase the quality of life for all Seattleites.

## POLICIES

- E1.1 Seek to achieve an urban forest that contains a thriving and sustainable mix of tree species and ages, and that creates a contiguous and healthy ecosystem that is valued and cared for by the City and all Seattleites as an essential environmental, economic, and community asset.
- E1.2 Strive to increase citywide tree canopy coverage to 40% over time.
- E1.3 Use trees, vegetation, green stormwater infrastructure, amended soil, green roofs, and other low-impact development features to meet drainage needs and reduce the impacts of development.
- E1.4 Increase the amount of permeable surface by reducing hardscape surfaces where possible and maximizing the use of permeable paving elsewhere.
- E1.5 Promote sustainable management of public and private open spaces, trees, and vegetation by preserving or planting native and naturalized vegetation, removing invasive plants, improving soil health, using integrated pest management, and engaging the community in long-term stewardship activities.
- E1.6 Strive to manage 700 million gallons of stormwater runoff each year with green stormwater infrastructure by 2025.
- E1.7 Promote the care and retention of trees and groups of trees that enhance Seattle's historical, cultural, recreational, environmental, and aesthetic character.

# Water

## Discussion

Puget Sound, Lake Washington, Lake Union and the Ship Canal, the Duwamish River, urban creeks, and small lakes all enhance the quality of life for the people, fish, birds and other wildlife that live here. Four species of salmon—including the threatened Chinook salmon—call this area home, as do resident trout, blue heron, bald eagles and a variety of other water-dependent species. In addition, Seattle’s major waterways bustle with water-oriented business and recreational opportunities, as well as supporting one of the premier industrial seaports on the West Coast. Moreover, Seattle’s aquatic areas also give residents the chance to enjoy and experience nature close to home.

Yet despite their integral place in local culture, landscape, and economy, Seattle’s aquatic resources have been significantly degraded over the past 150 years of urban growth. As a result, a six-mile stretch of the Duwamish River is a federal Superfund site. Over 90% of Seattle’s 146 miles of shoreline have been modified and now lack natural connections to the water. The City’s creeks have seen stormwater flows equivalent to some rivers. Fish in local waters contain high amounts of mercury and PCB’s, and some of our coho salmon are dying before they can reach Seattle streams to spawn. Yet, even though they are considered polluted, these aquatic environments still have amazing vitality and resilience, maintaining the potential to become an even greater asset to Seattleites.

### GOAL

EG2 Foster healthy aquatic systems, including Puget Sound, the lakes, creeks, rivers, and the associated shorelines, to provide a high quality of life in Seattle for all its residents and valuable habitat for fish and wildlife.

### POLICIES

- E2.1 Protect and improve water and sediment quality by controlling pollution sources and treating stormwater through best management practices.
- E2.2 Reduce combined sewer overflows by reducing stormwater inflows and increasing storage in combined system areas.
- E2.3 Seek to clean-up existing contaminated sediments.
- E2.4 Limit the use of chemicals that have negative impacts on aquatic or human health, especially on City-owned property or rights-of-way.
- E2.5 Achieve and manage flows in creeks to support a variety of aquatic life and control flooding and property damage caused by unregulated flows.

- E2.6 Promote quality wildlife habitats in Seattle's waterways by protecting and improving migratory fish passageways, spawning grounds, wetlands, estuaries, and river mouths.

## Climate

### Discussion

Climate change is a challenge of sobering magnitude and urgency, requiring us to draw on Seattle's extraordinary capacity for resilience and innovation. How we use our land, how we design our buildings, and how we get around significantly impact the amount of energy we use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions we produce. One of the key ways the City aims to achieve its climate goals is the Urban Village Strategy. Since cars and trucks are Seattle's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, concentrating new housing and jobs near one another and near frequent transit service in urban centers and urban villages will reduce motorized vehicle use in the city.

While concerted efforts to decrease greenhouse gas emissions are critical, emissions from past decades and ongoing emissions will continue to affect the global climate. The most significant changes projected for the Pacific Northwest will be to temperature, precipitation, and sea level. The projected flooding, heat waves, and extreme high tides are not new challenges in Seattle, and the City has strategies for responding to them. However, climate change will shift the frequency, intensity, magnitude, and timing of these events. Without preparation for these changes, these events will significantly impact the community's health, infrastructure, and economy.

Marginalized populations are at greater risk from the impacts of climate change and often have the fewest resources to respond to changing conditions. Taking action to reduce impacts and foster resilience in these communities, and supporting their recovery after extreme events is critical.

### GOAL

- EG3 Reduce Seattle's greenhouse gas emissions by 58 percent from 2008 levels by 2030 and become net carbon neutral by 2050.

### POLICIES

- E3.1 Expand transit, walking, bicycling, and shared transportation infrastructure, and services to provide safe and effective options for getting around that also produce low or zero emissions.
- E3.2 Aspire to meet the growing demand for conveniently located homes and businesses in pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods where residents can walk to a variety of recreation and service offerings.

- E3.3 Implement innovative policies, such as road pricing and parking management, that better reflect the true cost of driving and therefore lead to less automobile use, while employing strategies which mitigate impacts on low income residents.
- E3.4 Encourage energy efficiency and the use of low-carbon energy sources, such as waste heat and renewables, in both existing and new buildings.
- E3.5 Reduce the amount of waste generated while at the same time increasing the amount of waste that is recycled and composted.
- E3.6 Reduce the emissions associated with the lifecycle of goods and services by encouraging the use of durable, local products, recycled-content or reused materials, and recycling at the end of products' lives.
- E3.7 Support a food system that encourages consumption of local foods and healthy foods with a low carbon-footprint, minimizes food waste, and fosters composting.

#### GOAL

- EG4 Prepare for the likely impacts of climate change including changing rain patterns, increased temperatures and heat events, shifting habitats, more intense storms, and rising sea level.

#### POLICIES

- E4.1 Consider projected climate impacts when developing plans or designing and siting infrastructure, to maximize the function and longevity of infrastructure investments, while also minimizing impacts on marginalized populations, and fostering resilient social and natural systems.
- E4.2 Prioritize actions that reduce risk and enhance resilience in populations nearest the likely impacts of climate change, including especially marginalized populations and seniors since these groups often have the fewest resources to respond to changing conditions and therefore may be more severely impacted.

## Environmental Justice

#### GOAL

- EG5 Seek to ensure that environmental benefits are equitably distributed and environmental burdens are minimized and equitably shared by all Seattleites.

## POLICIES

- E5.1 Consider the cost and benefits of policy and investment options on different communities, including the cost of compliance as well as outcomes.
- E5.2 Prioritize investments, policies, and programs that address existing disparities in the distribution of environmental burdens and benefits.
- E5.3 Prioritize strategies with co-benefits that support other equity goals such as promoting living wage jobs or enhancing social connectedness.

# Parks and Open Space

## Introduction

Seattle's parks and open space help make this city a great place to live, play and raise families. These places contribute to Seattle's physical, mental, and environmental health, and support the City's economic vitality. Access to open space and recreation areas can improve peoples' health by giving them places to exercise their bodies and refresh their minds. Open spaces also provide valuable wildlife and vegetation habitat that might otherwise be scarce in the city.

The City-owned park and recreation system comprises about 11 percent of the total city land area and includes gardens, community centers, boating facilities and environmental education centers. From the magnificent views off the bluffs of Discovery Park to the boulevard system and the most intimate pocket park, these areas provide opportunities for residents and visitors to relax, enjoy competitive games, jog or meet with friends and neighbors.

Developed parks are not the only sources of open space that people in the city enjoy. There are also open spaces and recreation opportunities in public rights-of-way, such as the Cheasty and Ravenna Boulevards and Bell Street Park. Off-road bike trails, including the Burke-Gilman Trail and Alki Beach Park provide a different kind of active recreation. There is an extensive system of P-patches and community gardens throughout the city offering gardening spaces for residents to grow their own fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Seattle Center, which is not part of the City parks system is a unique urban amenity that offers both open space and a wide variety of cultural activities.

Other agencies also provide open spaces in the city, such as the federal Chittenden Locks, several waterfront access points provided by the Port of Seattle, and the open spaces on the University of Washington campus. Numerous private developments provide plazas and other open areas, such as Waterfall Park in Pioneer Square, that are often available to the public.

In addition, there are many private open spaces in the city, such as yards that provide usable space for residents in single-family and multifamily areas. Those spaces also provide light, air, and breathing room that benefit everyone in the city.

Puget Sound and the city's lakes provide another form of open space as areas open to the sky that offer visual relief from the urban environment, as well as visual connections across wide expanses

In 2014 voters in Seattle approved the formation of the Seattle Park District, which establishes a new taxing authority and funding source for the maintenance and improvement of City parks. The City uses several mechanisms to help obtain new parkland, including leveraging of state funds, acquisition of surplus federal land, zoning requirements, incentives for developers, and the creative use of public rights-of-way.

## Access to Open Space

### Discussion

The City of Seattle has a robust citywide park and open space system that is available and accessible for use by all of the City's residents. However, the City also continues to look for ways to improve this system. . Given that Seattle is already highly developed, creating the system that we desire will require new strategies that take advantage of limited opportunities for new land and to improve the capacity of existing parks. This section addresses the design and distribution of our citywide park and open space system, including the acquisition and development of new parks and open space. The Parks Development Plan also contains specific goals for parks, open space and facility distribution such as community centers, athletic fields, and playgrounds.

#### GOAL

PG1 Provide a variety of outdoor and indoor spaces throughout the city for all people to play, learn, contemplate, and build community.

#### POLICIES

- P1.1 Continue to expand the City's park holdings, with special emphasis on serving urban centers and urban villages and areas that have been traditionally under-served.
- P1.2 Identify goals for the City's future open space system that are realistic about the quantity of land that could be acquired, consider land managed by other agencies, and that drive improvements in the quality and usability of those spaces.
- P1.3 Provide urban trails, green streets, and boulevards in public rights-of-way as recreation and transportation options and as ways to connect open spaces and parks to each other, to urban centers and villages, and to the regional open space system.
- P1.4 Make rights-of-way available on a temporary basis to provide space for community events, such as street fairs, farmers' markets, or neighborhood celebrations.
- P1.5 Provide natural areas to preserve important natural or ecological features in public ownership and allow people access to these spaces.
- P1.6 Provide public access to shorelines by using street ends, regulation, or acquisition.



- P1.7 Encourage or require private developers to incorporate on-site publicly accessible open space or to provide appropriate recreation opportunities for building tenants within new developments.
- P1.8 Use cooperative agreements with the Seattle School District and other public agencies to provide access to open spaces they control.
- P1.9 Create healthy places for children and adults to play, as well as areas for more passive strolling, viewing, and picnicking.
- P1.10 Design open spaces that protect the natural environment and provide light, air, and visual relief within the built environment.
- P1.11 Make the most of the limited available land by developing parks and open spaces so that they can accommodate a variety of active and passive recreational uses.
- P1.12 Consider access by transit, bicycle, and on foot when acquiring new park facilities or improving existing ones.

## Park Activities

### Discussion

Seattle Parks and Recreation provides programs and facilities where people can play, learn, and lead healthy, active lives. People gather, take classes, exercise, and play sports at community centers, pools and lakes. The City also has numerous facilities, such as golf courses, boating centers, and tennis courts. Parks also offers programs for teens and classes that provide opportunities for life-long learning and recreation for those with disabilities.

### GOAL

- PG2 Continue to provide opportunities for all people across Seattle to participate in a variety of recreational activities.

### POLICIES

- P2.1 Develop activities at community centers that make them focal points for the neighborhoods they serve and where people can enhance their individual health and well-being and strengthen a sense of community.

- P2.2 Promote the use of open spaces and park facilities in the city for events that celebrate the many cultures of our community.
- P2.3 Provide recreation and social programs that allow older adults to remain healthy and actively involved in their community.
- P2.4 Provide athletic fields that can serve as places where people of diverse ages, backgrounds, and interests can engage in a variety of sports.
- P2.5 Offer fun and safe water experiences through a diverse range of healthy and accessible aquatic programs at outdoor and indoor venues throughout the city.
- P2.6 Provide welcoming, accessible, and affordable recreation and social programs for people with disabilities and their families.
- P2.7 Engage teens with activities that help them to build their identity and to acquire skills that will lead to healthy and productive lives.
- P2.8 Develop programs that foster awareness and appreciation of nature from the neighborhood scale to the regional scale and provide activities for residents to help protect or restore the environment.
- P2.9 Provide programs that are accessible and welcoming to communities of color and to immigrant and refugee communities.
- P2.10 Develop partnerships with organizations that include race and social justice as fundamental to their operations and business practices.

## Maintaining Park Facilities

### Discussion

The City's park system constitutes a significant land holding in the city, and that land contains many types of buildings, swimming pools, trails, landscaped and natural areas, and urban forests. Keeping these facilities safe and enjoyable requires constant attention.

#### GOAL

- PG3 Manage the City's park facilities to provide safe and welcoming places.

## POLICIES

- P3.1 Maintain the long-term viability of parks facilities by regularly addressing major maintenance needs.
- P3.2 Look for innovative ways to approach construction and major maintenance activities to limit water and energy use and to maximize environmental sustainability.
- P3.3 Enhance wildlife habitat by restoring forests and expanding the tree canopy on City-owned land.
- P3.4 Protect habitat and wildlife areas through education, interpretation, and wildlife management programs.
- P3.5 Increase access to public land by assessing, managing, and cleaning up contaminated sites.
- P3.6 Preserve and reclaim Parks' property for public use and benefit and ensure continued access to parkland for the growing population.

## Major Open Space Attractions

### Discussion

Some of the facilities maintained by Seattle Parks and Recreation and certain other open spaces in the city attract many visitors from outside the immediate neighborhood. Washington Park Arboretum, Woodland Park Zoo, Kubota Garden, Seattle Aquarium, Magnuson Park, the Olympic Sculpture Park, and Seattle Center are examples of facilities that offer natural and cultural attractions and bring users from across the region into Seattle neighborhoods.

### GOAL

- PG4 Plan and maintain regional parks and facilities to accommodate the people who will want to visit them, while respecting the facilities' neighbors.

## POLICIES

- P4.1 Develop plans for regional and special-use parks to take advantage of unique natural and cultural features in the city, enhance visitors' experiences, and nurture partnerships with other public agencies and private organizations.

- P4.2 Design parks and program activities in downtown in ways that create a welcoming and safe environment.
- P4.3 Integrate the proposed Central Waterfront Park with existing nearby parks, trails and open spaces.
- P4.4 Recognize that visitors to major regional attractions can impact the neighborhoods surrounding those facilities and look for ways to limit those impacts, including through enhanced walking, biking, and transit connections

# Arts and Culture

## Introduction

Arts and culture are part of Seattle’s legacy and its future as a vital, thriving city. As in any dynamic urban area, arts and culture contribute to civic identity and to a sense of place. They also enrich lives, and inspire creativity and innovation.

Arts and culture extend to all aspects of civic life. Students can use the tools of art and culture to learn new skills—not only in the arts, but also in math, science and reading—that will help them be successful in school and in the workplace. They create jobs, attract visitors, customers, and highly skilled workers to the area. At the same time, arts and culture play an important social role by nurturing a welcoming and diverse urban community. Arts and culture can expand perspectives and encourage empathy about other experiences and backgrounds and help cultivate a greater appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures across Seattle.

The Arts and Culture Element outlines goals and policies related to the arts, culture and historic preservation, all of which encompass a broad range of people, activities, spaces and levels of involvement. The City is committed to supporting the arts and artists and to offering great experiences for art consumers and creators across Seattle. Making arts and culture accessible to all requires that the City take extra effort to promote inclusion, ensure everyone feels welcome and offer programs that reflect Seattle’s diversity.

Experiencing arts and culture should be fun, challenging and enjoyed regularly by all residents. Practiced by everyone from famous professional artists to amateurs, art encompasses a wide range of creations, from tangible, physical objects, books, and digital works to experiences, gatherings, performances, and oral histories. Cultural spaces may likewise include a wide range of types, ranging from traditional theaters, galleries and studios to schools, parks, and coffee shops.

Historic preservation recognizes and protects aspects of the culture in the built environment – buildings, districts, and designed landscapes that link to Seattle’s past. From the Native Americans who first established trading centers along the Duwamish, to waves of newcomers from around the world, all have left their mark. Over time, Seattle has acquired features that have become part of the city’s civic identity. Through the preservation of icons such as the Space Needle, the Olmsted network of parks and boulevards, or historic neighborhoods like Pioneer Square, the city can continue to celebrate its heritage and maintain its unique sense of place.

The benefits of historic preservation are not merely aesthetic. Preservation is integral to our economic development planning, and it enhances our city’s attraction as a center for tourism, an important source of local jobs. The preservation of historic buildings can help incubate small businesses, revitalize

commercial districts, and generate local jobs. Historic preservation promotes sustainability through the reuse, repair and upgrading of existing built resources.

Arts and culture can help revitalize historically underinvested communities of color while supporting cultural stability through periods of growth and change. Investments in arts and culture can help preserve the cultural traditions and artistic expressions of existing communities of color, as well as newly arrived immigrants and refugees.

## Public Art

### Discussion

Integrating art into diverse public settings has helped give rise to Seattle's reputation as a cultural center of innovation and creativity. Letting both visitors and locals alike encounter art in parks, libraries, and community centers, as well as on roadways, bridges and other public venues, both enrich peoples' daily lives and gives voice to artists. As of 2014, the city's public art collection includes more than 400 permanently sited and integrated works and 3,000 portable works. The collection will continue to grow through the city's 1 percent for art program, in which 1 percent of eligible capital improvement project funds are set aside for the commission, purchase and installation of artworks in a variety of settings. Public art is commissioned through an evaluation and panel process, made up of fellow artists and arts professionals, along with community and city representatives. All of the public art is cared for through an ongoing program of coordinated conservation activities, which include inspections, major restorative work and routine maintenance.

### GOAL

ACG1 Strengthen the diversity of public art and expand the City's collection of public artworks.

### POLICIES

- AC1.1 Continue to set aside funding for new public art as part of capital improvement projects.
- AC1.2 Encourage the inclusion of artists early in the design of capital improvement projects.
- AC1.3 Prioritize locations for new public art where it is desired by the community, can be accommodated safely, and will be enjoyed by many people in locations throughout the city.
- AC1.4 Enhance the diversity of panelists and community representatives that are included in the public art selection process.
- AC1.5 Strengthen the diversity of expression in public art to embrace a variety of artists, sites, disciplines and media.

AC1.6 Encourage public participation in the planning and implementation of public art projects.

## Creative Economy

### Discussion

Partnering with individual artists, as well as arts and cultural organizations, the City strives to offer all Seattleites a rich array of quality art opportunities while promoting a healthy and diverse cultural community. Encompassing a wide variety of arts and cultural businesses, ranging from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and advertising companies, the creative economy also includes thousands of independent artists working in Seattle.

When supported, arts and culture can help drive the City's future economic growth. Arts companies and their employees stimulate innovation, playing an important role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy in Seattle. They employ a creative workforce, spend money locally, generate government revenue, and are a cornerstone of tourism. The arts are also an economic development tool, creating neighborhoods where businesses want to operate and employees want to live. The creative economy also contributes to Seattle's high quality of life, helping our city and region attract talent from across the globe. In other words, the impact of the arts reaches far beyond aesthetics.

### GOAL

ACG2 Enhance support for artists, creative professionals and cultural organizations, allowing them to grow and mature.

### POLICIES

AC2.1 Recognize and expand the economic impact of arts and culture.

AC2.2 Encourage collaboration across the spectrum of traditional and creative economy businesses, especially businesses that rely on innovation and design to be competitive.

AC2.3 Encourage access to affordable workspaces for artists, arts, and cultural organizations.

AC2.4 Improve technical and financial assistance programs to better target and serve both artists and arts organizations of various sizes and at various stages of growth, representing a broad range of cultures.

AC2.5 Enhance equitable access to technical and financial assistance for all artists and organizations.

## Youth Development

### Discussion

All students in all schools should be given the chance to learn through the arts. The arts are a core component of basic education, uniquely suited to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as creative and critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and perseverance — skills directly linked to student success in school, career, and life.

Partnerships, both in and outside of City government, are needed to bring back equitable access to arts education for all K-12 students. These collaborations will also help support after-school arts programs in diverse neighborhoods throughout the city. Through these in-school and after-school programs, experienced teaching artists, community groups and cultural organizations can introduce children to all types of art, including visual arts, theater, dance, and film. Such programs give young people a chance to shine, to express themselves, and to develop positive goals for the future. Providing arts programs in schools with high numbers of low-income students is especially important as many schools provide arts programs with additional funding from parents. This may not be possible in some schools.

### GOAL

ACG3 Improve access to arts education in all schools and outside the school setting so that students are prepared to be successful in school and life.

### POLICIES

- AC3.1 Encourage schools to offer culturally relevant K-12 arts curricula that emphasize development and assessment of 21st-century skills.
- AC3.2 Encourage schools to provide professional development in the arts for teachers and community arts partners.
- AC3.3 Expand partnerships with educational institutions, arts institutions, youth service agencies, foundations, business, and arts and cultural organizations to increase participation in arts and culture programs, creative learning opportunities and creative economy careers.
- AC 3.4 Enhance access to a variety of arts and cultural institutions and programs for the following groups: at-risk youth, non-English-speaking residents, seniors, the visually and hearing impaired, and people with other disabilities.
- AC3.5 Prioritize arts and culture opportunities for youth and communities with limited or no access to the arts.



## Cultural Space and Placemaking

### Discussion

Every successful neighborhood includes cultural spaces, which not only house a range of cultural activity, but also help define the very social character and identity of neighborhoods. These spaces include traditional spots such as theaters, galleries, art-house cinemas, and museums, as well as non-traditional areas such as music clubs, coffeehouses and bars that hang art and bookstores, along with behind-the-scenes places such as artists' studios, rehearsal rooms, and offices. Creative placemaking uses arts and culture to increase the vibrancy of neighborhoods, cities and regions. Instead of a single arts center or a cluster of large arts and cultural institutions, placemaking enriches public and private spaces, structures and streetscapes to enhance quality of life and strengthen neighborhood identity. Creatively attracting people to places that need revitalization, are vacant or underutilized can also improve local business and public safety while bringing diverse people together.

### GOAL

ACG4 Support affordable cultural spaces in all neighborhoods, especially urban centers and villages where they are accessible to a broad range of people and where they can help activate the public realm.

### POLICIES

- AC4.1 Create and maintain an inventory of both public and private cultural spaces.
- AC4.2 Create incentives to preserve or expand space for artists, arts organizations and other cultural uses.
- AC4.3 Consider making surplus city-owned property available to both artists and arts and cultural organizations.
- AC4.4 Consider public-private partnerships as a way to provide affordable space to both artists and arts and cultural organizations.
- AC4.5 Encourage using public and institutional spaces, such as parks, community centers, hospitals, schools, universities, and City-owned places for arts and culture.
- AC4.6 Encourage the designation of existing clusters of cultural spaces as cultural districts.
- AC4.7 Encourage partnerships with the public, private and nonprofit sectors to engage in creative placemaking projects.

- AC4.8 Share a toolkit of ways communities can make their own art and culture, created in partnership with city departments and community interests.
- AC4.9 Establish creative placemaking as part of local area planning.
- AC4.10 Encourage the creation of cultural spaces for informal gathering and recreation, especially in more densely populated urban centers and villages.

## Historic Preservation

### Discussion

With little undeveloped land, Seattle must grow by reusing existing sites and buildings. Distinctive buildings, landscapes, boulevards, and districts all contribute to Seattle's historic identity, and by protecting important parts of the city, links to the past are sustained. Seattle's most iconic places, such as the Space Needle, require much care and protection, while other areas around Seattle need more flexibility in carefully helping the old and new evolve together.

#### GOAL

- ACG5 Preserve assets of historic, architectural, archeological or social significance.

#### POLICIES

- AC5.1 Establish historic districts and landmarks to protect significant historic and cultural resources.
- AC5.2 Consider the use of conservation districts to recognize and sustain the character of unique residential or commercial districts.
- AC5.3 Work with neighborhoods to identify additional historic and cultural resources that should be considered for protection.
- AC5.4 Improve incentives for property owners to adapt historic buildings for new uses.
- AC5.5 Create and promote interpretative educational programs and activities about historic and cultural resources through city and nonprofit partnerships.
- AC5.6 Establish a high standard for the care of City-owned historic and cultural resources, and encourage private owners of historic and cultural resources to do the same.

# Community Well-Being

## Introduction

The City of Seattle invests in people so that all families and individuals can meet their basic needs, share in our economic prosperity, and participate in building a safe, healthy, educated, just and caring community.

The Community Well-Being Element connects the physical features of the city and its neighborhoods with the overall well-being of Seattleites. While physical features such as walkable land use patterns, good quality housing, and accessible parks and open spaces can enhance Seattleites' health and well-being, the overall well-being of a community depends on much more than its physical form. This element emphasizes the importance of the human and social infrastructure that is provided through social relationships formed around common values, arts and culture, ethnicity, education, family, and age groups.

The Community Well-Being Element recognizes that the City provides many services directly while also supporting the work of other public and private organizations. This element is about building community capacity through programs, services, activities, and citizen involvement to make the places we live, work and play, welcoming, safe, and engaging.

## Supportive and Healthy Communities

### Discussion

Healthy, sustainable, and safe communities are products of people working together, respecting one another, and investing time, energy, and commitment. City government has important roles to play, but institutions alone cannot create or sustain community. Children and youth are critical to the future, and elders can help sustain our history and culture. Through involvement in civic and neighborhood activities, people see the impact of their actions, recognize the difference they make, and can build supportive relationships with the people around them. This reinforces the understanding that personal well-being and connection to community are crucial to the development of a vibrant, growing community. The City can support relationship-building by encouraging the participation of all members of the community.

### GOAL

**CWG1** Make Seattle a place where everyone feels they can be active in family, community, and neighborhood life; where they help each other, contribute to the vitality of the city, and create a sense of belonging among all Seattleites.

## POLICIES

- CW1.1 Promote opportunities for people to build connections with their peers, neighbors, and the greater community by supporting intergenerational and inter-cultural programs, activities and events.
- CW1.2 Use relevant and respectful ways to encourage broad participation in neighborhood and community activities and events.
- CW1.3 Promote volunteerism and community service among people of all ages and cultures by providing information about opportunities to contribute their time, energy, or resources.
- CW1.4 Partner with other governments, schools, institutions, and community-based organizations to involve people of all backgrounds meaningfully in planning and decision-making that impact their community and their personal well-being.
- CW1.5 Enhance opportunities for children and youth to gain skills, increase self-esteem, and envision a positive future.
- CW1.6 Reinforce efforts that strengthen the ability of children, youth, and families to participate in their health, wellness, and education, and contribute to the development of a vibrant, growing community.
- CW1.7 Celebrate young people's accomplishments and promote activities for children and youth to increase their participation in the community.
- CW1.8 Engage older residents in community conversations and volunteer opportunities so they can find fulfillment in ways that benefit themselves and the community.

## Access to Food and Shelter

### Discussion

Seattle's quality of life and economic future depend on the overall health of its people, and the City's ability to be innovative and responsive in helping people meet their basic needs. There are people who lack food or shelter, who are vulnerable, or who face barriers to functioning independently. The City recognizes its role in making Seattle the kind of place all people want to live and raise their families, and where those who are most vulnerable will have access to assistance they need. The Housing Element of this Plan specifically addresses ways in which the City supports the provision of housing for low-income

households. The safety of our communities may also need special attention before and after an emergency or disaster.

#### GOAL

CWG2 Reduce poverty and its effects that make people, especially children and elderly adults, vulnerable.

#### POLICIES

CW2.1 Encourage coordinated service delivery for food, housing, health care, and other basic necessities for people and families in need.

CW2.2 Contribute to efforts that help people meet their basic needs, maintain their independence as long as possible, and remain in their neighborhoods of choice.

CW2.3 Allow temporary shelter for those who are homeless and invest in services and programs that provide a pathway to permanent housing and.

CW2.4 Develop an increased level of emergency preparedness among all segments of the population to help coordinate governmental response and recovery efforts that seek to minimize the adversity of a major emergency or disaster.

## Healthy Growth, Aging and Lifestyles

### Discussion

Health is a major determinant of quality of life and of a person's ability to participate fully in the community. Social and environmental factors, as well as access to health care, all contribute to an individual's overall personal health. City efforts can both promote healthy choices to avoid risk and provide assistance to those who encounter health problems.

#### GOAL

CWG3 Create a healthy environment where community members of all ages, stages, and life circumstances are able to aspire to and achieve a healthy life, are well nourished, and have access to affordable health care.

## POLICIES

- CW3.1 Encourage Seattle residents to adopt healthy and active lifestyles to improve their general health and well-being and to promote healthy aging. Provide affordable opportunities for people to participate in fitness and recreational activities and to enjoy available open space.
- CW3.2 Work toward the reduction of health risks and behaviors leading to chronic and infectious diseases and infant mortality, with particular emphasis on populations disproportionately affected by these conditions.
- CW3.3 Collaborate with Public Health – Seattle & King County, private hospitals and community health clinics to maximize opportunities under health care coverage for preventive care, behavioral health, and long-term care.
- CW3.4 Seek to improve the quality and equity of access to health care, including physical and mental health, emergency medical, addiction services, and long-term care by collaborating with community organizations and health providers to advocate for quality health care and broader accessibility to services.
- CW3.5 Support efforts to provide access to healthy, affordable food for all people in Seattle.
- CW3.6 Encourage public and private efforts that support culturally appropriate food opportunities, including grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks and nutrition programs, especially to meet the nutritional needs of infants, children, elders, and other vulnerable populations in their neighborhoods.
- CW3.7 Seek to expand access to healthy food by encouraging better distribution and marketing of healthy options in the greatest variety of places and by addressing nutrition standards in City purchasing programs.
- CW3.8 Encourage local food production, processing, and distribution through the support of home and community gardens, farmers markets, community kitchens, and other collaborative initiatives to provide healthy foods, promote food security, and build community.
- CW3.9 Consider using City land, including parks and surplus property, to expand the capacity to grow, process, distribute, and access local foods.
- CW3.10 Support access to preventive interventions at agencies that serve the homeless, mentally ill, and chemically dependent populations.

- CW3.11 Support efforts to reduce exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke in indoor and outdoor areas, particularly where vulnerable populations, such as children and seniors are likely to be present.
- CW3.12 Require healthy building methods and materials in City-funded projects, and encourage private development to use construction methods and materials that result in healthy indoor environments for all Seattleites.

## Lifelong Learning

### Discussion

Well-educated people will have the skills to pursue opportunities and careers of their choice. Achieving this requires coordination with Seattle Public Schools, as with other public agencies, nonprofit agencies, community groups and business organizations to make quality education and opportunities for learning and training available to children, youth and adults.

### GOAL

- CWG4 Support an education system and opportunities for life-long learning that strengthen literacy and employability for all Seattle residents.

### POLICIES

- CW4.1 Create equitable access to high quality early learning services and support families so that their children are prepared for school.
- CW4.2 Support schools' efforts to develop culturally competent disciplinary practices that keep children engaged with their schools, while still requiring behavioral accountability.
- CW4.3 Encourage parent, volunteer, business, and community support for education and their involvement in schools.
- CW4.4 Support the Seattle Public Schools efforts to create safe learning environments in and after school that promote academic and personal achievement for all children and youth.
- CW4.5 Support opportunities for community-based learning through service projects that have value to both the students and the community.

- CW4.6 Work with schools, higher education, libraries, community centers, arts and cultural agencies and organizations to link services into a seamless system that helps students stay in school, such as through co-location or services and joint use of facilities.
- CW4.7 Support programs that help people who have dropped out of high school to achieve education, personal, and employment goals.
- CW4.8 Provide literacy development and related resources for English language learners.
- CW4.9 Work with colleges, universities, other institutions of higher learning, and community-based organizations to promote life-long learning opportunities and encourage the broadest possible access to libraries, community centers, schools, and other existing facilities throughout the city.
- CW4.10 Work with schools and other educational institutions, community-based organizations, businesses, labor unions and other governments to develop strong educational and training programs that provide pathways to successful employment.
- CW4.11 Support youth-based job training opportunities that provide classes, coaching, and the development of skills leading to jobs with livable wages.

## Public Safety

### Discussion

Public safety is an individual, family, and community responsibility. It includes pro-active and responsive human service efforts that prevent unsafe situations from occurring and that intervene early before they become serious. Building safer communities requires the commitment of all Seattle's residents - youth and adults alike. City government can act as a catalyst in this effort. It can help build partnerships and make connections between the individuals, agencies and other groups that work to address persistent individual, community, and neighborhood safety needs.

### GOAL

- CWG5 Reduce violence and the incidence of crimes, and increase the sense of security throughout the city.

### POLICIES

- CW5.1 Coordinate across City departments and with other agencies to address violence, abuse, and exploitation and to hold offenders accountable.



- CW5.2 Plan and implement best and promising practices that focus on preventing violence.
- CW5.3 Ensure that violence prevention, intervention, and offenders accountability programs are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- CW5.4 Increase awareness of all forms of violence and abuse and the resources that exist to assist in dealing with these issues.
- CW1.5 Emphasize education, prevention, and early intervention to reduce the risk of exposure to negative health impacts, violence and injury.
- CW5.6 Encourage efforts that enhance strong family relationships and healthy child development to help prevent child abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence.
- CW5.7 Work in partnership with the state, county and community agencies to prevent violence, firearms injury, and violence associated with substance abuse.
- CW5.8 Encourage a policing strategy that works in partnership with the community to reduce crime through education and enforcement, and encourage communities to build block-by-block networks to prevent crime, develop social networks, and solve common problems.
- CW5.9 Provide competent, professional, and efficient City criminal justice services that hold those who commit crimes accountable, reduce recidivism, and achieve a fair and just outcome.
- CW5.10 Reinforce the linkage between public safety and human services to encourage lawful behavior, reduce vulnerabilities of street populations, and address family violence and sexual assault.
- CW5.11 Strive to prevent youth crime, youth violence, and gang activity by promoting efforts that strengthen the community and create capacity for youth to be involved in programs and activities that are alternatives to crime and violence.
- CW5.12 Work with the Seattle Public Schools to make schools safe places where all youth can experience success in education and preparation for future productive lives.
- CW5.13 Promote information sharing and resource coordination among the courts, jails, prosecutors, and police for greater efficiency in the criminal justice system.
- CW5.14 Report crime statistics periodically to guide future decisions about programs and resource allocation that can help control crime and make Seattle residents feel safer in the city.

## A Multi-Cultural City

### Discussion

Seattle benefits from diversity. We can celebrate the richness of our diverse heritage, talents and perspectives to build a stronger Seattle. Seattle is committed to the Race and Social Justice Initiative and envisions a city where racial inequities have been eliminated and racial equity achieved. The mission of the Race and Social Justice Initiative is to end institutional racism in City government, eliminate race-based disparities, and promote multiculturalism and full participation by all residents.

#### GOAL

CWG6 Provide equitable opportunity and access to services for all Seattle residents.

#### POLICIES

- CW6.1 Enhance opportunities for people with low incomes, disabilities, limited English, cultural barriers, time constraints, transportation limitations, and other barriers to gain access to services they need.
- CW6.2 Promote culturally responsive and relevant service delivery from City departments and other agencies.
- CW6.3 Provide opportunities for, and actively recruit, diverse representation on City of Seattle boards, commissions, and advisory committees that contribute to City decision-making.
- CW6.4 Promote respect and appreciation for diversity of ability, age, culture, economic status, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation, including economic, racial, cultural and individual differences; and support efforts to achieve diversity throughout the city.
- CW6.5 Promote race and social justice, human and civil rights, and mutual respect to reduce intolerance.
- CW6.6 Celebrate the richness of diversity through cultural activities and events that bring people together to experience ethnic and cultural traditions.

## Coordination of Services

### Discussion

The City plays an important role in building culturally responsive, efficient human service and public safety systems that provide easy access for all people. The City of Seattle contracts with multiple community-based organizations to help build capacity for developing and delivering high quality services to community residents. Co-location of services in neighborhoods can make it easier for people to find and use the services they need.

### GOAL

CWG7 Develop a flexible, comprehensive, coordinated and efficient system of human services that addresses the needs of people, families and communities.

### POLICIES

CW7.1 Encourage cooperative planning, decision-making and funding for health and human service delivery throughout the region.

CW7.2 Join with other public and private institutions in the region to develop a stable and adequate funding base for services that support safe and healthy communities.

CW7.3 Strive to disseminate more coordinated information about the availability of services in the community.

CW7.4 Use feedback from participants to develop customer-focused services, using feedback from participants, and involve consumers in identifying needs and planning for service delivery.

CW7.5 Consider related issues, such as transportation and the need for dependent care, when planning for health, human services, employment, and recreation programs.

CW7.6 Encourage neighborhood organizations to address a broad range of human service issues to match neighborhood or community strengths and needs, and to identify solutions that make service delivery more relevant, responsive, accessible, and user-friendly.

CW7.7 Site human service providers using good neighbor guidelines that consider the needs of consumers and the community and focuses new facilities in or near urban villages.

- CW7.8 Encourage use of existing facilities and co-location of services, including joint use of schools and City and community facilities, to make services available in underserved areas and in urban village areas.
- CW7.9 Collaborate with community organizations and other jurisdictions to advocate for strong health, human service and public safety systems, including services for mental health and substance abuse.
- CW7.10 Identify and implement effective ways to measure program performance and results, balancing accountability and efficiency with the need to encourage service innovation.

# Neighborhood Planning

## Introduction

Neighborhood planning is a way to make the Comprehensive Plan relevant at a local level and to reflect the history, character, and vision of the local community. The purpose of these plans is to provide more neighborhood-specific guidance than the citywide policies do for areas where growth and change are occurring or desired. In some cases, neighborhood plans address topics not covered elsewhere in the Plan, while in other cases they give local examples for how a citywide policy would be best implemented in that neighborhood.

Seattle has a long history of planning for its neighborhoods. After the original adoption of this Comprehensive Plan in 1994, the City offered funds to neighborhoods that either contained an urban center or urban village or were identified as economically distressed so that they could prepare plans. Thirty-seven neighborhoods took advantage of that offer, and those neighborhoods all produced plans between 1995 and 2000. Those efforts replaced plans prepared in the 1970s and 1980s and form the basis for most of the plans contained in this element of the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council adopted goals and policies resulting from those efforts into the Comprehensive Plan. Nearly half of these plans have been – or are being – updated since their initial adoption. The plans in this element are the most recent versions of the adopted neighborhood plans.

The process for preparing neighborhood plans has varied over time and according to the particular neighborhood's circumstances and concerns. The plans that were prepared in the late 1990s were led by neighborhood groups, with logistical support from City staff and technical support from consultants the neighborhoods hired with funds provided by the City. Results from those planning efforts produced the goals and policies for each neighborhood, which are included in this element of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as lists of actions and programs for each neighborhood. The goals and policies in this element constitute the adopted neighborhood plans. For many of the neighborhood plans, the vision, goals and policies remain relevant, and updates to them have brought more focus to detailed planning and implementation. As City departments develop functional plans or carry out programs in neighborhoods, they can draw some guidance from the neighborhood plans.

In recent years, updates to some of the plans have involved City staff and neighborhoods in reconsidering the original vision of the neighborhood plan, identifying specific actions to implement those visions or preparing urban design frameworks that describe a possible future physical layout for the neighborhood. These processes engage broad cross-sections of a neighborhood's residents and businesses and include focused attention from relevant City departments and other public agencies. One of Seattle's great assets is the richness of its community -- renters and property owners, foreign born and native born, youth and seniors, communities of color and mainstream communities. The City's neighborhood planning process embraces this richness. Through both the planning process and the

implementation of the plans, the City fosters meaningful engagement with the diverse communities, and collaborative efforts among residents, City, partner agencies and private interests help achieve the shared vision.

Future planning in neighborhoods could use a variety of appropriate tools to refine the current visions and to identify the necessary steps to get there. The key will continue to be collaborative efforts between the neighborhoods and City staff. It will be important for each of those plans to clearly assign roles for the implementation steps and to identify desired outcomes, so that it will be easy to monitor the success of the plans. Many neighborhood plans contain policies that seem redundant with policies in other elements of this Plan. Future planning processes in neighborhoods should consider ways to limit such redundancy in order to provide more focus on the unique circumstances and aims for the individual neighborhoods.

## GOAL

**NPG1** Help fulfill this Plan's values, vision, and goals by maintaining plans for neighborhoods where the City wants or expects growth to occur and by including growth strategies in those plans that are appropriate to each neighborhood.

## POLICIES

**NP1.1** Prioritize neighborhood planning in areas expecting or experiencing significant change, primarily urban centers and urban villages, especially those that have not equitably benefitted from the city's growth.

**NP1.2** Engage a wide range of people from the neighborhood in each neighborhood planning process, including homeowners, renters, business owners, and employees, with special emphasis on groups who have historically been under-represented.

**NP1.3** Develop neighborhood plans to be consistent with this Plan's vision and allow neighborhood plans to focus on issues that are unique to their areas.

**NP1.4** Consider neighborhood plan recommendations when prioritizing City capital investments and service allocations.

**NP1.5** Support neighborhood plan implementation to enhance the quality of these urban environments and to promote continued collaboration between the City and neighborhood groups.

# Glossary

Word	Definition
abut	Having property or zone district boundaries in common; for example, two lots are abutting if they have property lines in common.
accessory dwelling units	A housing unit that is in addition to the primary residence on a site. An accessory unit may be attached to, or detached from, the primary residence.
affordable housing	A housing unit for which the occupant(s) are paying no more than 30 percent of household income for gross housing costs, which includes rent and basic utilities
buffer areas	An area of land separating two distinct land uses that softens or mitigates the effects of one land use on the other. The term may also describe a zone that separates two unlike zones, such as a multifamily housing zone between single-family housing and commercial uses.
built-out city	A city with little or no undeveloped land. Seattle is considered a built-out city because nearly all of its land is platted and served by roads, water and sewer and because very little of the land is vacant.
capital facilities	Physical features that support urban development; usually refers to features provided by public agencies, such as roads, developed parks, municipal buildings and libraries.
carbon neutral	Making no net release of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere.
capital improvement program (CIP)	The portion of the City's budget that describes revenue sources and expenditures for funding capital facilities.
clean technology	Clean technology includes recycling, renewable energy (wind power, solar power, biomass, hydropower, biofuels, etc.), information technology, green transportation, electric motors, green chemistry, lighting, Greywater, and many other appliances that are now more energy efficient.
climate change	A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.
commercial land use	Activities that include the buying and selling of commodities and services. These activities are usually housed in office or retail spaces.
complete streets	Streets that provide appropriate accommodation for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and persons of all abilities, while promoting safe operation for all users.
conditional use	A use that may locate within a zone only upon taking measures to address issues that may make the use detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare and will not impair the integrity and character of the zoned district.
core values	Core values are principles that underlie the City's work, and they help guide selection of strategies the City will use employ to fulfill its various missions.

Countywide Planning Policies	The Growth Management Act requires that counties prepare countywide planning policies (CPPs) to ensure that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent. The CPPs define the county's urban growth boundary and set growth targets for all jurisdictions in the county, as well as set expectations for growth urban centers and transportation priorities. The King County Countywide Planning Policies were developed and recommended by the Growth Management Planning Council, a group of elected officials who represent all the jurisdictions in the county.
cultural resources	Buildings, objects, features, locations, and structures with scientific, historic, and societal value.
demand management	The strategy of reducing demand for services such as energy, water or vehicle trips rather than increasing production to ensure adequate supply.
density	A measurement of the concentration of development on the land, often expressed in the number of people, housing units or employees per acre. In Seattle, housing density ranges from areas that contain primarily single-family houses on large lots to high-rise apartment buildings in one of the city's urban centers.
development pattern	The arrangement of buildings, lots and streets in an urban environment.
development regulation	Controls the City places on buildings or land uses, including primarily the Land Use Code.
displacement	The involuntary relocation of residents from their current residence. Direct displacement is the result of eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of property, or the expiration of covenants on rent/income restricted housing. Indirect displacement occurs when residents can no longer afford escalating rents or property taxes. Businesses can also be impacted by physical and economic pressures.
distributed systems	Systems where the supply of water, energy, or other resources come from many sources, such as small solar energy generators or the capture of waste heat, rather than from a central source, such as a power plant.
economic mobility	Economic mobility is the ability of an individual, family or some other group to improve (or lower) their economic status—usually measured in income.
environmentally critical area (ECA)	Locations in the city that provide critical environmental functions, such as wetlands protecting water quality and providing fish and wildlife habitat. ECA also include areas that represent particular challenges for development due to geologic or other natural conditions, such as steep slopes, landslide prone areas and liquefaction areas.
floor area ratio (FAR)	The gross floor area of a building divided by the total area of the site. For example, a 20,000 square foot building on a site with of 10,000 square feet has a floor area ratio of 2.0. This applies regardless of the building's height; so, the building could have 5 stories of 4,000 square feet each, or two stories of 10,000 square feet each.
frequent transit	Generally, bus or train service that arrives every 15 minutes or less.
Future Land Use Map (FLUM)	A required component of a comprehensive plan in Washington that shows the proposed physical distribution and location of the various land uses during the planning period.
goal	In the planning process, a goal identifies a desired end state.



green streets	A Green Street is a street right-of-way that includes a variety of design and operational treatments to give priority to pedestrian circulation and open space over other transportation uses. The treatments may include sidewalk widening, landscaping, traffic calming, and other pedestrian-oriented features.
Growth Management Act (GMA)	The Growth Management Act (GMA) is the state law that requires local governments to prepare comprehensive plans. It establishes state goals, sets deadlines for compliance, gives direction on how to prepare local plans and development regulations and calls for early and continuous public participation. (RCW 36.70A)
healthy communities	Neighborhoods where there are opportunities for people to be physically active by providing goods and services within walking/biking distance; where there is access to parks, open space and healthful food; and where people can engage with others.
high-capacity transit	In Seattle high-capacity transit consists of both rail and rubber-tired transit modes that can operate in exclusive right of way or in mixed traffic. It can include technologies such as light rail or bus rapid transit.
historic district	Seattle has established eight historic districts: Ballard Avenue, Columbia City, Fort Lawton, Harvard-Belmont, International District, Pike Place Market, Pioneer Square, and Sand Point. A citizens' board or the Landmarks Preservation Board reviews the appearance of development activity in these districts to maintain the historical integrity of structures and public spaces within each district.
historic landmark	Properties that have been designated by the City of Seattle as important resources to the community, city, state or nation. Designated landmark properties in Seattle include individual buildings and structures, vessels, landscapes and parks, and objects such as street clocks and sculptures. The Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board is responsible for determining which properties meet the standards for landmark designation.
housing cost burden	Housing costs, including basic utility costs, greater than 30 percent and less than or equal to 50 percent of household income.
hub urban village	Geographic area designated by the City of Seattle where both housing and job growth are expected to occur, at somewhat lower scales and densities than in urban centers.
impervious	A surface that cannot absorb water such as asphalt or concrete.
income levels	<p>Extremely Low-Income: a household whose income is equal to or less than 30 percent of median income; also refers to housing that extremely low-income households can afford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very Low-Income: a household whose income is greater than 30 percent of median income and equal to or less than 60 percent of median income; also refers to housing that very low-income households can afford</li> <li>• Low-Income: a household whose income is greater than 60 percent of median income and equal to or less than 80 percent of median income; also refers to housing that very low-income households can afford</li> <li>• Moderate-Income: a household whose income is greater than 80 percent of median income and equal to or less than 100 percent of median income; also refers to housing that moderate-income households can afford</li> <li>• Middle-Income: a household whose income is greater than 100 percent of median income and equal to or less than 150 percent of median income; also refers to housing that middle-income households can afford</li> </ul>

industrial land use	Activities that include production, distribution and repair of goods; includes uses such as factories, container terminals, rail yards, warehouses and repair of heavy equipment.
industry clusters	A geographical concentration of similar or related industries that gain economic advantages by their location.
infill development	Development of vacant or underused land within areas that are already largely developed.
infrastructure	Public services and facilities such as sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems, other utility systems, schools, roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit systems.
intelligent transportation systems (ITS)	Systems in which information and communication technologies are used to facilitate transportation operations; ITS may include technologies such as technologies applied, from basic management systems such as car navigation, traffic signal control systems, and variable message signs.
land use code	The portion of the Seattle Municipal Code that contains regulations that govern development activities. The Land Use Code describes the processes and standards that apply for each zone in the City.
landscape screening	Use of trees, shrubs or other plantings to block the view of nearby activities.
life cycle costs	A method of evaluating a capital investment that takes into account the sum total of all costs associated with the investment over the lifetime of the project.
light rail	A mode of urban transportation predominantly using dedicated (but not necessarily grade-separated) rights-of-way. Electrically propelled rail vehicles operate singly or in trains.
liquefaction	The transformation of loose, wet soil from a solid to a liquid state, often as a result of ground shaking during an earthquake.
livability	Livability is the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.
major institutions	Colleges, universities and hospitals that the City regulates through specific master plans that are developed in cooperation with the surrounding communities.
manufacturing/ industrial center	One of the two areas the Comprehensive Plan designates as places where industrial activities are encouraged and non-industrial activities are either prohibited or strictly limited.
master plan	A document that describes the long-term expectations for growth on a large property controlled by a single entity, such as the campus of a college or hospital.
mixed-use	Development that contains residential use plus some other, usually commercial use, such as office or retail.
multifamily land use	Freestanding buildings composed of two or more separate living units, with each unit having its own bedroom, kitchen and bathroom facilities.

natural drainage systems	The use of trees, plants, ground covers, and soils to manage stormwater runoff from hard surfaces (like roofs, roads, parking lots, and sidewalks) in ways that mimic nature – slowing and cleaning polluted runoff close to its source and reducing the volume of runoff by allowing it to soak back through the soil and recharge groundwater.
neighborhood character	The unique “look and feel” of a particular area within the city. This is a subjective concept – one that varies not only by neighborhood, but also by each person’s view of that neighborhood.
non-conforming use	A use or structure that was valid when brought into existence, but that does not meet subsequent regulations. Typically, non-conforming uses are permitted to continue, subject to certain restrictions.
one-in-100 year event for seismic activity	An earthquake with an intensity that has a probability of occurring once every 100 years.
open space	Any parcel or area of land that is essentially unimproved and devoted to the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, or public health and safety.
overlay district	A land use designation on a zoning map that modifies the basic underlying designation in some specific manner. Overlay zones often deal with areas that have special characteristics, such as shoreline areas or historical areas. Development of land subject to an overlay must comply with the regulations of both the underlying zone and the overlay.
pedestrian-oriented commercial area	The pedestrian zone (P Zone) designation, also referred to as Pedestrian Retail Areas, is an overlay intended to “preserve or encourage intensely retail and pedestrian-oriented shopping districts where non-auto modes of transportation to and within the district are strongly favored.”
performance standards	Zoning regulations that permit uses based on those uses meeting prescribed standards of operation, such as limits on traffic impacts.
place making	Place making is a people-centered approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces such as parks, plazas, streets, parking lots, etc.
policy	A statement of principle intended to guide future action in a way that will help achieve an adopted goal or goals.
rent/income-restricted housing	Housing with a regulatory agreement, housing covenant, or other legal document on the property title that sets a limit on the income of households that may rent the units and controls the rents that may be charged for a specified period of time.
residential urban village	Geographic area designated by the City of Seattle where primarily housing growth is expected to occur, at somewhat lower scales and densities than in hub urban villages.
resilience	The capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of stress or disturbance. The ability of individuals, households, communities, and regions to maintain livable conditions in the event of natural disasters, loss of power, or other interruptions in normally available services.

rezone criteria	A set of considerations specified in the Land Use Code that help determine the appropriate locations for applying the City's various zoning designations.
right-of-way	A strip of land occupied or intended to be occupied by certain transportation and public use facilities, like roads, railroads, and utility lines.
setbacks	The minimum distance required by zoning to be maintained between two structures or between a structure and a property line.
severe housing cost burden	Housing costs, including basic utility costs, greater than 50 percent of household income.
shared parking	Parking spaces that may be used by more than one user, such as a parking lot that is used by a church on weekends and by commuters during the week.
single-family land use	Stand-alone structures on a parcel of land containing only one living unit.
single-occupant vehicle	A privately operated vehicle whose only occupant is the driver.
social equity	Fair access to livelihood, education, and resources; full participation in the political and cultural life of the community; and self-determination in meeting fundamental needs.
special review district	An area of the city where unique development standards and review procedures apply, such as Pioneer Square.
stewardship	Responsibility for monitoring or encouraging actions that affect the natural or built environment.
stormwater	Water that falls as rain and flows across the surface. In an urban area, most stormwater is directed to drains that collect and direct the water eventually to streams, lakes or other large water bodies.
sustainable communities	Areas of human development that are able to meet the needs of growth, while not exhausting the natural resources that will be necessary for future generations.
topography	Variations in the elevation of land.
transit-oriented communities	Moderate- to higher-density development, located within easy walk of a major transit stop, generally with a mix of residential, employment, and shopping opportunities designed for pedestrians without excluding the auto.
urban center	Urban centers are key features of the regional growth strategy. They are relatively small areas that are expected to take the highest densities of development for both housing and employment.
urban forest	The trees and lower-growing plants that are found on public and private property within the city. This includes developed parks and natural areas, as well as the trees along streets and in yards.
urban growth boundary	An officially adopted and mapped line dividing land to be developed from land to be protected for natural or rural uses. Under the Growth Management Act, sewers are not permitted to be extended beyond the urban growth boundary.
urban village	Areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan for future growth. These are generally areas that include long-standing neighborhood business districts along with zoning that can accommodate further development. The three types of urban villages in Seattle are urban centers, hub urban villages and residential urban villages.

zone	Designations adopted by City ordinance and applied to areas of land to specify allowable uses for property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas.
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