

One Seattle Plan

Detailed EIS Scoping Comment Summary | November 2022

Prepared by the City of Seattle and BERK Consulting

1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Seattle is updating its Comprehensive Plan which sets the vision for how the city grows and makes investments. The One Seattle Plan project was launched in March 2022 with the goal of adopting an updated Plan in 2024. The City initiated environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) through scoping. Scoping is a process to ask for community and agency feedback on potential growth alternatives and environmental topics. This Detailed EIS Scoping Comment Summary document encapsulates the methods to provide comments, and themes of the comments received. A high-level summary of scoping comments and how the EIS topics and alternatives to be analyzed are proposed to be updated is contained in the [One Seattle Plan EIS Scoping Report](#).

The City published a scoping notice and fact sheets on June 23, 2022. While the typical scoping comment period is 21-30 days, the City extended the period to 60 days and closed the comment period on August 22, 2022.

The City gathered public feedback in many ways:

- Comments offered via the One Seattle Hub at engage.oneseattleplan.com;
- Written comments sent to the Office of Planning & Community Development via email or mail; and
- Three Scoping Meetings on June 29, July 19, and July 21, 2022.

In addition, the City has conducted other engagement efforts with community-based organizations (CBOs); two debriefs with community liaisons were held during the scoping period on August 11 and 16, 2022.

What is an EIS?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is an informational document that provides the City, public, and other agencies with environmental information to be considered in the decision-making process. An EIS is required under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) to address public agency actions like new plans, regulations, or permits.

The EIS will share existing conditions, potential impacts of alternatives, and mitigation measures to reduce impacts.

The One Seattle Comprehensive Plan EIS evaluation and mitigation measures will help inform the development of the One Seattle Plan.

Through these efforts, Seattle received more than 1,000 comments.

- One Seattle Hub—[Shaping the Plan](#): 851 Comments with 1,439 participants.
- Letters or emails: 102 pieces of correspondence. See [Attachment A](#).
 - Approximately 35 organizations submitted comment letters separately or jointly including a mix of advocacy, affordable housing, labor, business, development, and environmental groups.
 - About 18 of these groups signed on to a single letter coordinated by the Housing Development Consortium.
 - One comment letter was also received from City Council member Pedersen.
- Scoping meetings: three meetings with 82 participants. See [Attachment B](#).
- Debriefs with five community liaisons. See [Attachment C](#).

This scoping summary is organized to share participants and major themes in the following sections:

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2 SUMMARY OF ALL SCOPING COMMENTS

2.1 Overview of Themes

Across all forms of comments key themes include:

- **Growth Strategies and EIS Alternatives:** Support or refinements of alternatives to be studied. Alternative 5 with all types and locations of housing in nodes, corridors, and across neighborhood residential areas was supported the most followed by a suggested new alternative.
- **Housing:** Need for housing especially affordable housing and avoiding displacement.
- **Environmental Quality and Amenities:** Enhance green space, parks, urban tree canopy, and addressing climate change and sustainable development patterns.
- **Transportation Connections:** Improve connections for walking, biking, transit, other.

Each major theme is addressed below.

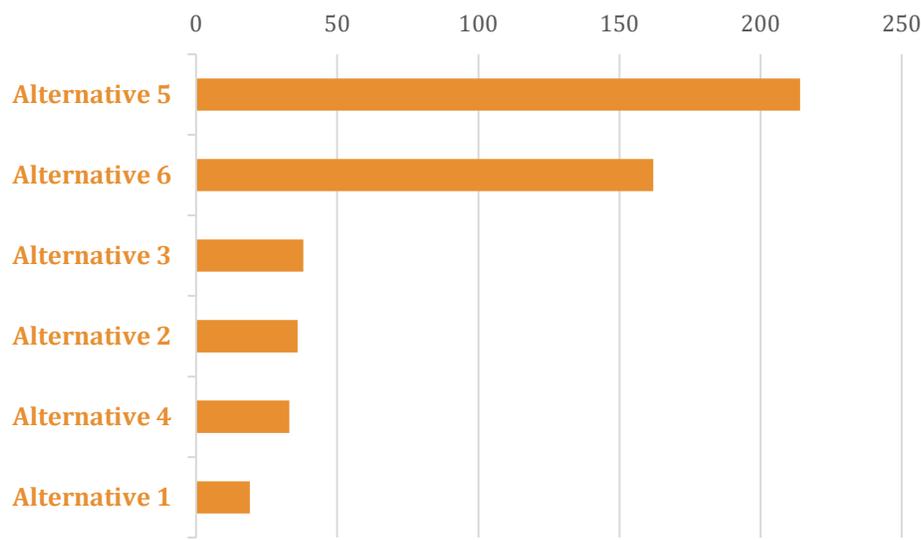
2.1.1 Growth Strategies & Alternatives

Citywide Alternatives

The City proposed five alternatives for study (see sidebar on following page). Most comments supported implementing a growth pattern that would lead to significant increases in the supply and diversity of new housing.

Most comments focused on which alternative they preferred. There was common support for Alternative 5 followed by support for a new “alternative 6” with even more housing, followed by support for Alternatives 2 and 4 (sometimes in combination). See [Exhibit 1](#).

Exhibit 1. Relative Number of Comments on Alternatives



Note: Comment from letters, meetings, hub. Some commenters provided input on more than one alternative.
Sources: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Few commented on Alternative 1 compared to other alternatives. Several felt Alternative 1 job and housing numbers seem too small for expected growth. Those that supported Alternative 1 felt that preserving Seattle’s single-family zoned neighborhoods was important for raising families or that current zoning already allows a variety of housing across all zones in the city.

Comments supporting Alternatives 2 and 4 identified the importance of:

- Focusing growth in areas with transit and parks.
- Supporting transit-oriented development.
- Limiting impact on trees.
- Preserving existing homes and existing architectural character in some areas.
- Preserving detached homes on large lots for people who want that type of housing.
- Reducing impact on infrastructure (roads and utilities in particular) compared to Alternative 5.

Some commented on Alternative 3 concerned with the pace of adding duplex/triplex/fourplex units towards a need for more housing supply and expressed concern over who would initially profit from those. Some thought six-plex or other missing middle housing options should be added.

Comments supporting Alternatives 5 and 6 tended to focus on importance of:

- Increasing supply and diversity of housing.
- Preventing race, economic, and social exclusion.
- Allowing people to walk to businesses.

- Preventing very rapid development in few areas, especially high displacement risk areas.
- Allowing more family-sized homeownership options.
- Preventing regional sprawl.
- Reducing impact on housing in more affordable areas like South King County.
- Supporting climate and transportation goals.
- Allowing more people access to large parks, shoreline access.
- Allowing affordable housing to be built in more neighborhoods.
- Addressing the housing prices that lead to higher rates of homelessness.
- Allowing flexibility for property owners to build housing and creating options to help them stay in place or create space for family members.
- Preparing for a range of things that could happen over next 20 years.

The City’s draft alternatives considered 5 options. Commenters requesting an alternative 6 varied in their description of what that meant, but the most comment elements included:

- Allowing more high-rise towers in existing urban centers and villages.
- Allowing more space for apartments and condominiums near transit and parks.
- Allowing a diversity of housing types including cottage housing and small apartments and condominiums in all Neighborhood Residential zones.

City Proposed EIS Alternatives

Alternative 1: No Action

- Required under SEPA.
- Assumes no changes to the Comprehensive Plan are made.
- Maintains strategy of focusing most housing and jobs within the existing **urban centers** and **urban villages** with no change to land use patterns

Alternative 2: Focused

- Adds areas of focused growth called **neighborhood anchors** to create more housing around shops and services.
- Addresses City Council’s request for an alternative that supports the development of “**15-minute neighborhoods**” where more people can walk to everyday needs.

Alternative 3: Broad

- Allows a wider range of low-scale housing options, like triplexes and fourplexes, in all **Neighborhood Residential zones**.
- Addresses City Council’s request for an alternative that provides additional housing capacity and housing type diversity in neighborhood residential areas.

Alternative 4: Corridor

- Allows a wider range of low-scale housing options only in **corridors** near frequent transit and amenities.

Alternative 5: Combined

- Assumes more housing growth over 20 years to better meet demand.
- Distribution of housing would **combine other alternatives**, resulting in more areas identified as appropriate for more housing and mixed uses.

Selected Comments on Alternative 5 & Alternative 6

Of the current options, Alternative 5 is the bare minimum, but will still not be enough to resolve the many crises our city faces and will certainly not be enough to create a vibrant, equitable place to live into the future.

Option 5 is the only option that starts to address Seattle's pressing issues, but it doesn't think big enough. We have a severe shortage of housing causing an ever-increasing homelessness crisis. We also have a severe shortage of rental units that are large enough for families. Three of my kids' closest friends' families have moved out of Seattle THIS MONTH because housing is too expensive for families to rent or buy. A city that doesn't have space for kids and young families isn't a place that can remain vital for long.

I grew up in Seattle but have lived away from the city for 10+ years. I want to move back but simply cannot afford a house or an apartment in the city right now. I am not alone in wanting to move to Seattle. Hundreds of thousands of people will move to Seattle in the upcoming decades. If they displace current residents, exacerbating the housing/homelessness crisis is up to you. Only option #5 will allow Seattle to grow and accommodate all of the people who live here now and will move here in the future

I support a phased option 5. We are in a housing crisis and the city is becoming unlivable. We must implement an all-of-the-above approach. Affording a one-bedroom apartment is becoming a luxury even for professionals. Nonprofit, service industry, blue-collar, and industrial workers should be able to live in the city in which they work, instead of commuting from neighboring communities, which increases traffic, pollution, and noise for everyone.

"I am writing to support the inclusion of a robust version of option 5 in the EIS scoping. Seattle has been suffering from a severe lack of housing for years now with the city taking little or no action. This has resulted in a radical increase in residents living on the street, being displaced out of the city and the state, and housing cost burdens where folks are spending huge portions of their incomes on housing. This is both unsustainable and unacceptable. ...Option 5 also supports our climate and transportation goals by increasing density which makes transit, walking, and biking viable as daily forms of transportation. To further these goals and support the vision of the 15 minute city, the options should include allowing greater commercial activity throughout the neighborhoods. The city should also recognize the unpredictable and provide for the flexibility to accommodate greater growth than predicted and allow new neighborhood nodes to develop rather than simply reenforcing what already exists."

I am a union member in Seattle, and I believe that Seattle needs to create an Alternative 6 ...which at a minimum would: - Allow much more multi-family housing to be built away from noisy, polluted arterials - Encourage tree cover by allowing multi-story housing everywhere as long as it incorporates open spaces such as courtyards and plazas - Expand transit coverage, frequency, and reliability - Expand the bike lane and trail network...

As proposed, the five draft alternatives are too similar to one another and lack imagination for what Seattle could be. ...Seattle's comprehensive plan process asks us to imagine the Seattle of 2044. ... We urge OPCD to expand the alternatives to include

*scenarios with zoning changes to allow for housing growth far exceeding the limits set in Alternative 5. ... Furthermore, ... modify the alternatives to explore innovative approaches that incorporate worldwide best practices for what a city can be. For example: **
Singapore on the Sound - a garden city of high-rise towers and abundant public housing.
** Paris, Vienna, Barcelona - mid-rise buildings legalized everywhere, with pedestrian streets and plazas, social housing, and well-planned Eco districts ...*

Comments on how to shape alternatives included:

- Villages and nodes:
 - Consider adding more urban villages rather than just smaller nodes.
 - Consider allowing more apartments in existing urban villages.
 - Consider changing residential urban villages to hub urban villages.
 - Encourage a wide range of shops and services around each node.
 - Consider doing separate EIS for expansions of urban villages and new nodes first since it may be easier to implement without appeal
- Transit and higher densities:
 - Everything within 10-minute walk of light rail stations should be zoned for apartments.
 - Expand corridors to a broader area such as a 15-minute walk.
 - Consider an Eco district model approach.
- Locations with special considerations:
 - Consider treating corner lots differently.
 - Historic districts should not affect zoning unless they are City designated.
- Suggested areas to place growth:
 - Areas of low displacement risk generally.
 - Neighborhoods: Madison Park, Queen Anne, Magnolia, Laurelhurst, and Sunset Hill, Wedgwood, Northgate, Montlake, East side of Capitol Hill, Central District.
- Areas to avoid growth included larger arterials:
 - Current zoning concentrates apartments on arterial streets which are loud and have higher concentrations of pollution.
 - Multi-lane streets with higher traffic are places where there are more accidents, and streets need redesigns if putting more housing along them.
 - Regarding air quality, the area most affected appears to be 300 to 500 meters from the highway or other major road.
- Commercial spaces:
 - Allow more flexibility for commercial spaces including creating more neighborhood commercial districts, allowing more corner stores, encouraging grocery stores in more neighborhoods, and allowing at-home and low-impact commercial everywhere.

- Some people expressed concern about allowing commercial uses in the middle of Neighborhood Residential zones.
- Consider impact of economic and social changes (work from home, light rail, increasing building costs).

Growth Pattern Comments

“The City of Seattle should up-zone all of the low density districts to allow missing middle housing types from attached housing or townhouses to small apartment buildings. The plan should focus on incentivizing redevelopment of single family lots into multi-unit buildings where individual units can be owned. Creating housing ownership options for various income levels and socioeconomic statuses should be a key priority. The City should work with and help create BIPOC housing trusts to enable home ownership within their respective communities. Continue building high density near transit but incentivize multi-bedroom units that support families and larger households. Limit the influence of single-family neighborhood associations.”

“Seattle needs way more small nodes. The “grandfathered-in” tiny nodes that we already have in some of the older neighborhoods are some of the most loved community spots in the city (and the most convenient). But in many newer neighborhoods, these nodes don't exist at all, because the misguided overly-compartmentalized zoning of the recent past didn't allow them. We also should have much higher density allowed along all of our transit corridors. We currently have so many bus routes that just go through expanses of [Neighborhood Residential] NR zoned areas, which is a waste of our investment in bus service. To maximize the benefit of a transit corridor, there should be substantial up zoning several blocks on either side of that transit street, continuously (not just at nodes). I do not think that every NR zoned area needs to be rezoned for rowhouses and apartment buildings; however, I do think that smaller lot sizes should be allowed, especially in areas with alleys. We should turn a lot of alleys into named streets, so that the back half of a lot could be sold off and have its own address and access.”

We need a plan for increased housing density that also prioritizes mixed zoning. Sufficient, dense, affordable housing is absolutely important, but housing isolated from meaningful organic community interaction and more-than-novelty commercial activity leaves our living spaces sterile and hostile, and also entrenches our reliance on cars, which in turn raises air and noise pollution, and increases the need for more parking. But in planning for this level of development, we must prioritize our urban tree canopy-- specifically with regard to the preservation and care of large, old, established trees. ...

130th & 145th Street Station Areas Alternatives

The City is conducting additional in-depth analysis of the NE 130th and 145th Street station areas in preparation for zoning changes under consideration ahead of the opening of new light rail stations. The 130th and 145th Street station areas analysis will be folded into the citywide EIS. The scoping process included three station area alternatives nested in the citywide alternatives as summarized in [Exhibit 2](#).

Exhibit 2. 130th and 145th Street Station Area Alternatives Summary

Citywide Alternative	Alternative 1: No Action	Alternative 2: Focused	Alternative 5: Combined
Approach in 130 th and 145 th .	Baseline growth and pattern with existing zoning.	Cluster growth in newly designated neighborhood anchors.	Potential new urban village at NE 130 th Street station and neighborhood anchor at NE 145 th Street.

Comments received regarding the 130th and 145th Street Station area alternatives and environmental topics include:

- Support for local Alternative 3 (nests into citywide Alternative 5).
- Desire to study redevelopment of Jackson Park golf course near 130th Street.
- Consider a range of building heights – there was an interest in having maximum building heights and towers, with some concern that it would have a significant impact on natural light.
- Provide for housing affordability, income-restricted housing, and housing needs within the station areas.
- Include zoning recommendations that support new businesses.
- Create a node at the old 7-11 on Roosevelt by 1st Avenue.
- Provide more walkable neighborhoods at both station areas with more housing and economic development opportunities.
- Consider ways to pedestrianize or make 1st Avenue a school street and either 133rd or 135th funnel into Ingraham High School.
- Consider options for mitigating sound.

See selected comments below and [Attachment B](#).

Why aren't we going to study adding skyscrapers or high-rises here? That would be amazing and would enable a lot of people to live close to light rail, thus reducing GHG emissions.

I'm concerned about NOT going to maximum heights lol. That would allow many more ppl to be housed. ...

I support the EIS tracking impacts to minority-owned businesses in the study area

I also support increased connectivity throughout the entire area. Right now, there are a lot of routes that are hard to navigate on foot or on bike because the big streets aren't

bike friendly and the smaller streets don't connect all the way through. Connectivity TO the station area (especially across Aurora Avenue) is also pretty important, so please don't ignore that just because the study area abuts Aurora. I also would support converting the golf course into transit oriented development.

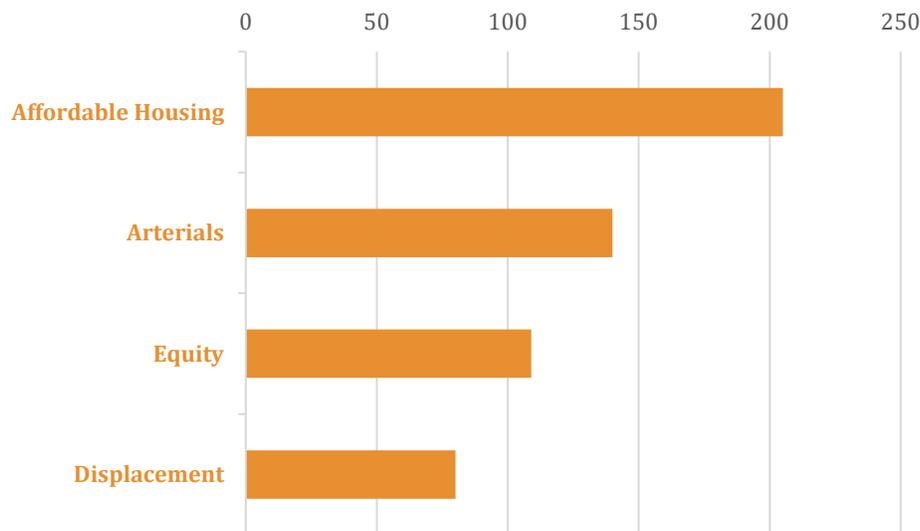
I am a resident in this area and would like to comment on zoning changes proposed for our area. Alternative 1 with minimal changes to the neighborhood would be ideal, but if that isn't possible, Alternative 2 with some multi-family and some shops close to stations but no development of more than 3 or 4 stories maximum would be fine, if it actually was affordable, unlike most of the developments going in in Shoreline since the zoning has changed there. We are already a very racially diverse area and most of us appreciate being able to have yards and gardens. We live in an area with lots of evergreen trees that are amazing and are habitats for lots of birds and wildlife. We see eagles in our neighborhood often too. Most of those trees would be lost if large, tall complexes go in. They combat climate change, insulate us from some of the freeway noise also. With 145th street being a state highway, we are not a great site for an urban village with diverse shops and apartments that could be surrounded with public green spaces. ...Changes will need to come to make affordable housing available in Seattle in every neighborhood, but can't this be done in small steps instead of allowing 9 story buildings in residential areas that has some of the most affordable housing in Seattle already?

I'm very excited that the EIS is being performed for the 130th/145th station areas, however, it would be EXTREMELY unwise and short-sighted to not explicitly include redevelopment option(s) of the Jackson Golf Course within one of the alternatives being investigated. Investigating this option does not mean it's going to happen - it shows the City is performing it's due diligence in using it's land to the highest and best use for it's citizens. It will allow the city to explicitly show the hurdles that need to be addressed to realize development (or alternative uses) on this park land instead of just dismissing it outright. This needs to be explored and the EIS is the forum to explore it. We are investing HUGE funds in these station areas, so we need the land use to morph to meet the investment and make these station areas vibrant hubs of life, culture, and opportunity. The huge public asset in this area needs to be leveraged to achieve this.

2.1.2 Housing & Displacement

Housing affordability and equity were key topics of the scoping comments, whether on the hub or in emailed letters. Many commented on the need for affordable housing and were concerned about how density was placed along arterials. Several commented on the need for equitable planning, environmental justice, and avoiding displacement of vulnerable communities. See [Exhibit 3](#).

Exhibit 3. Housing and Equity Related Comments



Source: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Affordability

The high cost of housing was a major issue across a wide range of comments. Many commenters felt Seattle needed substantially more housing to help slow or reduce the cost of housing. A smaller number of people felt that new housing was so expensive that it wouldn't necessarily be helpful or might replace existing housing that is affordable.

Several organizations suggested that Seattle plan for rate of growth equal to past 10 years (would be about 127,000 units over the next 20 years).

Comments requesting a less intensive change in capacity for new housing tended to suggest Seattle should:

- Focus growth near transit where it will have the least impact on traffic and car ownership.
- Limit change in other areas to retain existing housing, preserve tree canopy, and support architectural character.
- Preserve existing rental properties by allowing more housing on fewer lots.

- Preserve detached homes with large yards for those people who want them.
- Reduce impact on infrastructure.
- Recognize that new housing is expensive and will not necessarily help low-income households.

Potential approaches to housing affordability and design included:

- Purchase older apartments to preserve their affordability.
- Create a height bonus for affordable housing across the city.
- Incentivize mass timber and passive house construction.
- Create more accessible units.
- Implement rent control.

Council member Pedersen requested an alternative “L” which would limit changes in Neighborhood Residential zones to projects that are 100% low-income housing and located in frequent transit corridors.

Example Housing Related Comments

The city should open ALL neighborhoods to a wide range of multifamily housing options, not just duplexes and townhomes, but cottage courts, rowhouses, and yes, apartment and condo buildings.

“If we want to live in a city with more affordable housing and is more easily walkable for more of its residents, meaning less emissions from transport and a healthier population, then option 5 is clearly the best option.”

“We need to rezone Seattle to build higher density housing, this will better address our housing crisis and make it more affordable to rent here or buy a condo/townhome/house. It will also create more walkable communities that will be better for the environment and create more retail space that people can utilize more effectively.”

I want to see a comp plan that recommends the elimination of ALL exclusionary zoning. Seattleites are creative, entrepreneurial folks. We should have cottage clusters and fourplexes in our neighborhoods. We should be able to combine lots and build DADUs for our elders across the previous existing property lines. We should be allowed to start salons, co-working spaces, or microbreweries in refinished garages. This will not “destroy” single family zones. It will make them vibrant walkable places. It will build community and introduce racial and age diversity. Current zoning limits our ability to live our lives to the fullest. This new approach would rely on ingenuity and give the power back to the people.

The One Seattle Plan should be a bold, visionary plan to make Seattle denser, more affordable, and walkable. It should create an abundance of housing choices citywide. As a homeowner in Upper Fremont, I’ve seen how a mix of housing types – many of which are outlawed today – add vibrancy and create community. On the lot behind my house are townhomes. On one side, an apartment building. The other, a single-family home. Across

the street, a mid-rise condo building. The diversity of options does not detract from the neighborhood character – in fact, they enhance it. (I’ll add that I can always find on-street parking.) This abundance of housing choices also creates the density that helps support our small Upper Fremont commercial district of Marketime Foods, several restaurants, and retail. The alternatives considered in the One Seattle Plan should allow for and further expand this sort of density and housing choice citywide. Great cities around the world have embraced zoning and policies that create walkable, vibrant 15-minute neighborhoods which allow residents to walk and bike to everyday needs. ...

What we are lacking is affordable housing - both for renters and for people who want to be homeowners. Building more housing is one way of addressing this. However, it doesn’t guarantee that the housing will be affordable. But it isn’t the only way. Expanding housing vouchers to help people with rent will help people stay, or get, housed. For those who want to buy the city should explore how it can become a partner in home ownership with people who want to buy. We need to look at alternative options that avoid depleting resources by tearing down usable, functional buildings and then using more resources to build more buildings. Instead, we should capitalize on how to best use the resources that the city currently has. Again, ADU, AADU, DADU.

I strongly prefer Alternative 1, which supports preserving Seattle’s single-family zoned neighborhoods as one type of neighborhood in the city – one where many families prefer to live and raise their children. Many single-family zoned neighborhoods are beautiful, historic, and will attract people for generations to come who desire the strong communities they engender. Allowing developers to tear up such communities with cookie-cutter, box-like housing is short-sighted and unnecessary and will not solve Seattle’s housing problem.

Equity, Environmental Justice, & Displacement

Commenters were concerned about past and potential displacement of vulnerable communities and the ability to achieve a more equitable and just community with affordable housing, amenities, climate resilience, etc. As noted in prior comments about alternatives, commenters were concerned about placing more density on corridors from a health and safety perspective.

Some commenters desired that the City:

- Include a discussion of commercial displacement (in the EIS rather than in a separate document).
- Model potential outcomes for location of low-income households, and BIPOC¹ communities, immigrants and refugees, queer people, and disabled persons.
 - Create a goal to have “up to 1/3 of land in high displacement risk areas be owned and stewarded by non-profit or public entities” (submitted by Puget Sound Sage)
 - Consider giving land to local tribes

¹ Black, indigenous, and persons of color.

- Implement anti-displacement measures
- Quantify the regional benefits of preventing sprawl and adding housing in the existing urban core including GHG emission reductions.

Example Comments on Equity, Environmental Justice, & Displacement

“We need a city that’s welcoming and accessible to everyone. I’ve lived in Seattle most of my life and the CD the past 20 years, and have seen our exclusionary zoning policies lead to a host of growing problems: the displacement of whole communities, increasing houselessness, skyrocketing costs, the transformation of middle- and working-class neighborhoods into enclaves for the wealthy, young people who grew up in this city leaving because they can’t afford to live here, disparities in health outcomes and recreational opportunities, increased traffic and congestion with all their climate-related impacts, to name but a few. Restrictive “neighborhood residential” zoning, a legacy of racist policies and practices, has been a huge part of the problem. The “urban village” approach has contributed to displacement in neighborhoods like the CD. We need a new approach that fairly distributes growth across the city. Proposals that concentrate new housing primarily in neighborhoods with high displacement risk or along busy arterials are inconsistent with racial and social equity goals. New zoning alone won’t be enough but has to be accompanied by related programs to contribute to affordable housing and equitable opportunities, developed through both economic and racial justice lenses. ...

“Creating denser housing in high opportunity/low displacement areas of Seattle”

Data analysis with a climate and equity lens should be conducted to discern which industries are appropriate for neighborhoods and which should stay in commercial districts. Data analysis for just transition training/development to be able to participate equally in these new opportunities.

I’m writing today to express my concern for the viability of the trees in Seattle. ... They can promote equity in the city by placing more trees in chronically underserved areas where there are few trees.

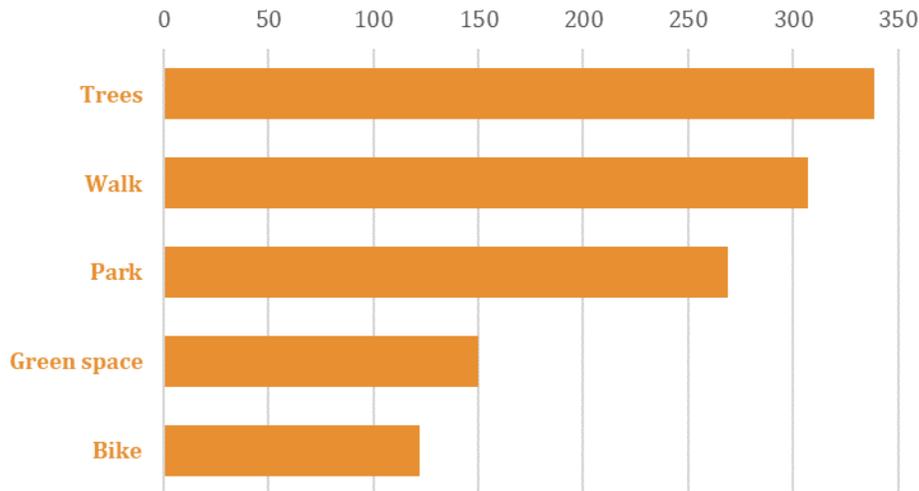
Equity: All the EIS alternatives should center equity by seeking to reverse displacement and create housing for all by radically rethinking our land use policies to allow people of all incomes to live and thrive in Seattle. Furthermore, the plan should seek to foster affordable commercial and creative spaces so that it is easier for small local businesses and artists to get started or stay in town.

Many of us who live in the neighborhood by 145th and the new station are middle income folks (teachers, non-profit works, government workers, people of color & LGBTQ, immigrants). We are concerned about being displaced and losing our walkable neighborhood that is quiet and green.

2.1.3 Amenities & Connections

On the hub and in written letters or emails, many people expressed a desire for adding more amenities as Seattle grows. The most common comments focused on green space, green streets, trees, bike infrastructure, street calming, and bus-only lanes.

Exhibit 4. Comments on Amenities



Source: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Comments on desired amenities in areas of growth included:

- Parks
- Trees
- Bike Infrastructure
- Sidewalks
- Street calming
- Bus only lanes
- Neighborhood to neighborhood transit (not just hub and spoke)
- Green streets, active streets, carless streets, woonerfs, superblocks, narrow streets
- More waterfront access
- Green Infrastructure
- Incorporating green space into buildings like rooftop gardens

Comments on additional actions that the City should take:

- Remove or reduce existing regulations such as parking requirements and design review
- Strengthen tree regulations
- Increase transit

Comments on the analysis proposed for the EIS suggest that the City should study the impact on trees and green space. Some asked for an updated tree canopy assessment (2022 instead of 2016).

2.2 Elements of the Environment

The EIS is proposed to cover a range of environmental topics addressing the natural and built environment. Commenters provided comments across the range of those topics.

Exhibit 5. Environmental Topics and Comments

EIS Category	Specific Topics Mentioned
Earth & Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permeable area ▪ Runoff (at 145th)
Air Quality/GHG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GHG emissions ▪ Light and air quality concerns ▪ People within distance of high-volume roadways experience highest pollution levels within the first 500 feet of a roadway.
Plants & Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urban ecosystem services ▪ Biodiversity
Energy & Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential changes to state building codes, SCL green energy, and plans for electrification
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Airplane noise ▪ Arterial and major roadway noise and proximity to housing
Land Use Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Localized impact of development in specific areas ▪ Where development is most likely to occur (particularly under a scenario of comprehensive rezones) ▪ Heat impacts and impervious areas ▪ Height/scale ▪ Access to shops and services ▪ People within distance of high-volume roadways
Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources that exist in communities throughout Seattle beyond formal local designation and/or National Register listing (individual or district)
Population, Employment, & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ diversity of housing types ▪ Number, type, and cost of new homes ▪ Impact on homelessness including urban camping and RV camping ▪ Metrics that measure specific impact on BIPOC households
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distance to shops and services ▪ Pedestrian safety ▪ Car ownership
Public Services & Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to amenities such as parks, waterfront ▪ Capacity at north precinct police station ▪ Capacity of system and water systems

Example environmental comments are shared below.

Greenhouse Gas, Trees, Plants & Animals Comments

“Seattle has climate goals for reducing emissions that we are way behind in meeting. These plans effect both transportation and buildings which are the biggest contributors to GHG emissions in our city. There are some good ideas on reducing transportation but not anything on building emissions. We need to reduce GHG emissions in buildings by 26% by 2030 to meet our goals. The plans should therefore also include requirements that existing buildings and housing be upgraded (especially smaller buildings >20,000 sf) - for efficiency and to get off fossil fuel heating which contributes 75% of GHG emissions for buildings. New buildings are already well on their way, and we will soon have something for large existing buildings.”

“It's important for Seattle to build more affordable housing to address the unsheltered crisis people are faced with. But at the same time, we need to be doing something right now to address our climate crisis. There is no reason that the two can't go hand in hand and have some thoughtful planning that saves our much needed trees that reduce air and water pollution, provide shade so it lessens heat island, provides habitat for birds and animals, and reduces stress and noise. And this needs to be equitable throughout the city.”

Land Use Patterns & Urban Form Comments

“The city needs to open up for development citywide. Yes, to focused high rises in villages, yes to development on good transit corridors, yes to allowing infill in what are now single home per lot neighborhoods, yes to neighborhood nodes. This is how the city originally developed. The street I grew up on is unchanged in 50 years, except now there are mostly just houses with one couple in a 3-4 bedroom house and hardly any kids on the whole street. Open this up to 2,3,4 plexes and allow those same homeowners to age in place while new families or singles can join the neighborhood. Improve transit, expand bike lanes, make living car-free an easy choice for anyone living city-wide.”

“I'd like the city not to lose its essence. With so many new tall buildings and the disappearance of old buildings and trees, Seattle seems to be losing its identity and becoming just another big city. I would like to see respect for the iconic buildings in the community and the trees that do us so much good on so many levels. Lately, with so many trees being cut down it looks like a gray city. The trees, besides the many benefits they give us, give life to a great gray city. Thank you.”

Population, Employment, & Housing Comments

I'm a Garfield High graduate who's slowly watched the prospect of living in Seattle slip away from me and my peers. The city has under built and over regulated housing options to the extent that the cost of living has jumped many middle-class incomes. Let's build more housing in more neighborhoods to make our city remain vibrant, carbon neutral, become increasingly car-optional, and remain economically diverse. Let's update our zoning to reflect the world class city that we are.

“To protect the natural resources of the State of Washington will require an order-of-magnitude increase in density for Seattle. This can only be accomplished with pedestrian-

friendly neighborhoods, frequent citywide transit, and abundant housing throughout the City. By doing so, Seattle will improve neighborhood health, foster business creation and job growth, attract tourism and conventions, and mitigate the impact of the irreversible trend toward remote work in the technology industry.

Transportation Comments

“Please include plans for social housing, more robust fully protected bike lanes, expanded transit, & broad up zoning across the entire city. Our current up zoning practices have primarily impacted poor working class people of color and pushed many of them out of the city. With the housing crisis the way it is, Seattle needs to end apartment bans & incentivize broad changes that make our city affordable for all, not just those with generational wealth or high wage tech jobs. With the looming climate crisis - we need to ensure our city is less car reliant. Prioritizing fully connected bike lanes & expanded transit will allow more people to get their cars off the road.”

Public Services & Utilities Comments

“... I would like a plan that includes increasing public spaces along with this density. This would mean more places to hang out, parks, dog parks, playgrounds, and things like outdoor gyms. Thank you”

“Population growth and demand for services has far outpaced housing and infrastructure development in the past decade plus. Housing and infrastructure need to catch up, and ideally get ahead of the next decade or more of growth.”

2.3 Other Policy & Regulatory Ideas

Some comments addressed policy, regulatory, or budget actions that are more detailed than the non-project alternatives to be examined in the EIS. These ideas may be useful to consider as Comprehensive Plan policies or regulatory concepts.

Housing

- Add more accessible units
- Allow additional FAR on sites with more units or sites that provide affordable units
- Consider opportunities to negotiate unique development agreements for large lots that get more housing and green infrastructure
- Consider ways to prevent building of large new single-family homes
- Encourage converting offices to residential
- Ensure new housing allowed in existing NR zones is sensitive to the existing context.
- Focus on preserving older apartment buildings
- Increase design standards with increased density
- Lobby for changes to state condo rules
- Plan for more family-sized housing
- Provide incentives for mass-timber construction
- Provide support to people who want to build ADUs
- Recalibrate MHA [mandatory housing affordability] not to punish small developers
- Regulate short-term rentals
- Rent control
- Require that all developers provide low-income housing in their buildings
- Revisit rule requiring two sets of stairs
- Effect of Plan or Alternatives on urban camping and RV camping
- Declare a housing emergency and pass legislation to allow more housing types in NR zones quickly like Spokane

Transportation

- Better transit connections to light rail
- Implement congestion pricing
- Rethink role of alleys
- Car ownership
- Commercial vehicle travel

Zoning, Permits, Standards

- Allow more zoning to 120' with mass timber
- Consider incentive zoning as part of rezones
- Reform the permitting process
- Remove parking requirements
- Require commercial space on ground floors in some areas
- Simplify the land use code
- Streamline or remove design review

Trees

- Create room for trees and tree root zones
- Make street trees required for all development

Land for Public Purposes

- Repurpose City-owned golf courses
- Investigate giving land back to local tribes

SEPA provides a list of environmental elements in [WAC 197-11-444](#). While relevant for comprehensive planning or governmental services, some topics raised are topics not part of SEPA including health impact analysis or cost-benefit analysis.

Comments suggested the City consider which alternatives result in the best health outcomes for the most people. While the EIS will address air emissions and noise levels and effect on sensitive land uses (e.g., residences), it will not provide an evaluation of public health.

Other topics that are not required topics under SEPA include: cost-benefit analysis, finance, profits, incomes, wages, etc. ([WAC 197-11-448](#) and [450](#)). Example comments that fall into economic/cost categories include:

- Impact on property taxes
- Tax land value higher than improvement value
- Tax long-term vacant units at a higher rate
- Tax second properties at higher rate
- Tax unimproved land at higher rate

These may also require coordination with state and county governments.

3 TOPICS & RESPONDENTS

3.1 One Seattle Comment Hub

As described in the introduction the largest source of comments was through the One Seattle Hub, which gathered 851 Comments with 1,439 participants. Comments submitted through the [One Seattle Hub](#) are available to review online and included in Attachment B. The Hub allowed participants to “tag” their comments and also to share demographic characteristics (see sidebar).

Top “tags” included:

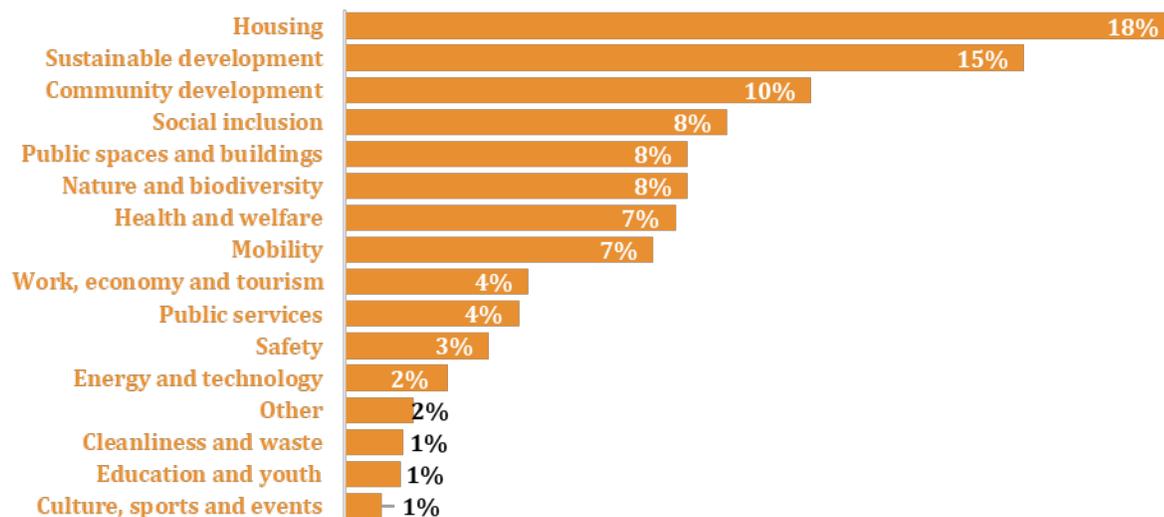
- Housing
- Sustainable Development
- Community Development
- Social Inclusion
- Public Spaces and Buildings
- Nature and Biodiversity

One Seattle Hub Tags

- Cleanliness and waste
- Community development
- Culture, sports, and events
- Education and youth
- Energy and technology
- Health and welfare
- Housing
- Mobility
- Nature and biodiversity
- Public services
- Public spaces and buildings
- Safety
- Social inclusion
- Sustainable development
- Work, economy, and tourism
- Other

See [Exhibit 6](#).

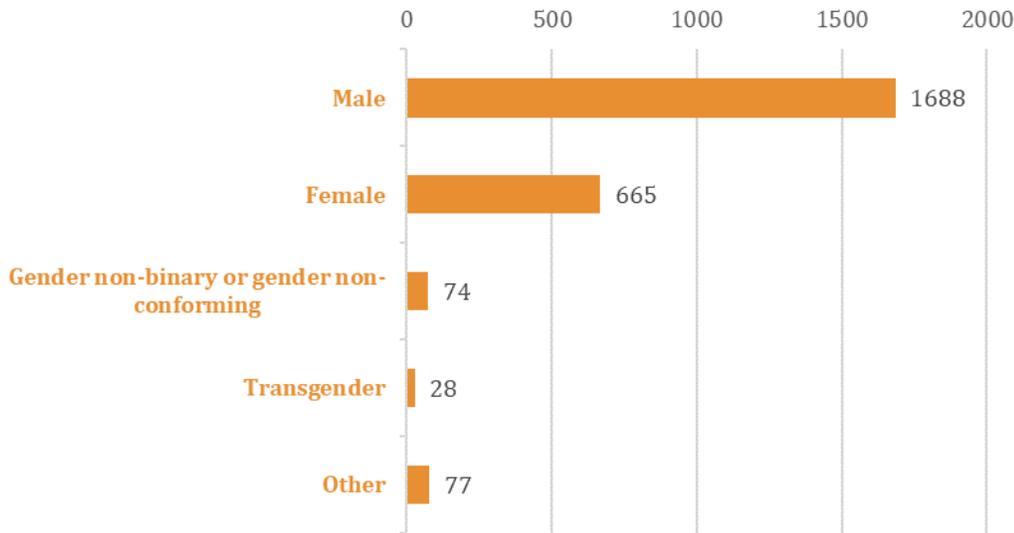
Exhibit 6. Top Tags/Themes: All Comments and Respondents



Sources: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Comments were primarily made by persons who identified as male.

Exhibit 7. Tagged Comments and Gender

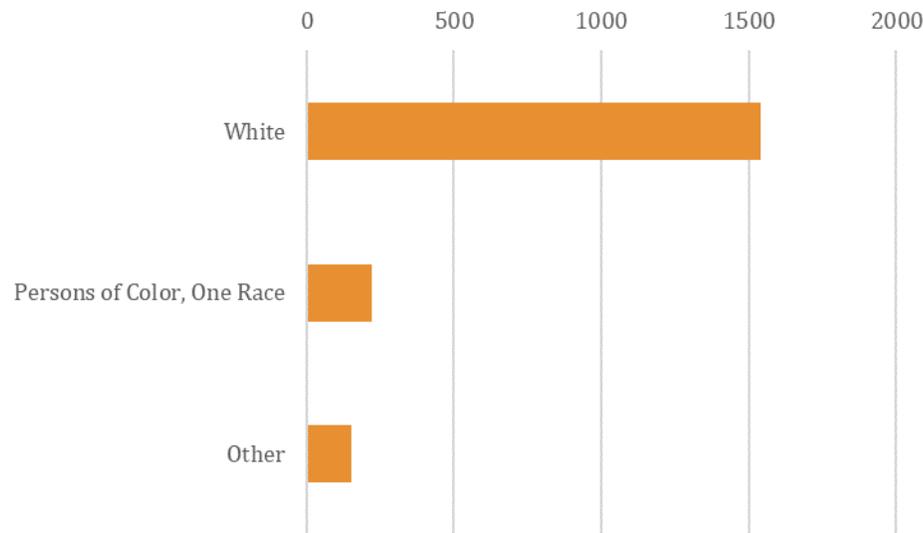


Sources: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Comments did not markedly vary by gender with the top answers including housing and sustainable development. Nature and biodiversity ranked third for females while for males and gender non-binary persons community development was third.

Most respondents were white. See [Exhibit 8](#).

Exhibit 8. Tagged Comments and Race

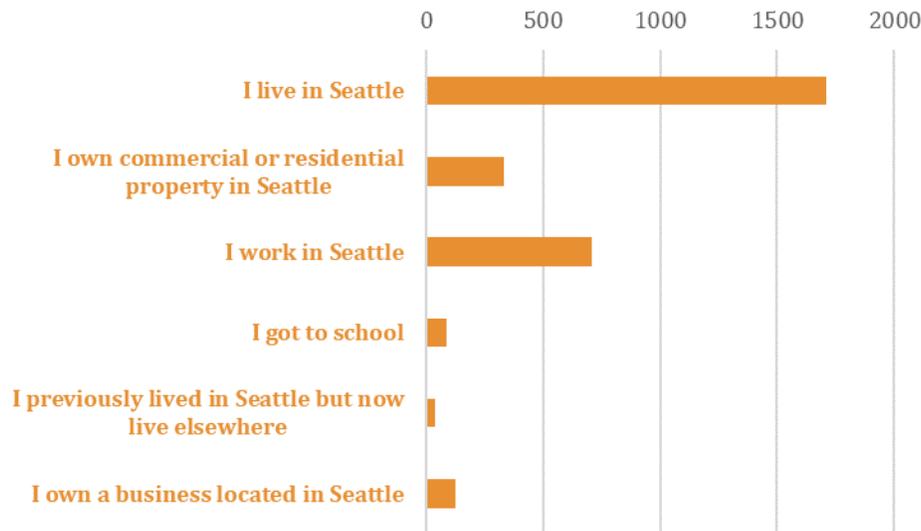


Sources: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

Top comments included housing, sustainable development, and community development for those identifying as white, or persons of color, or other (e.g., biracial).

Most respondents live in Seattle, and a high number work in Seattle. See [Exhibit 9](#).

Exhibit 9. Tagged Comments and Relationship to Seattle



Sources: City of Seattle, 2022; BERK, 2022.

For those that live, work, or go to school in Seattle the top issues were housing, sustainable development, and community development. A fourth unique key issue for those in school is mobility.

For those that own businesses or own commercial or residential property, the top issues differ in order: sustainable development was first rather than housing that was second; other tags included health and welfare and community development.

3.2 Community Based Organizations

The City Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD contracted with Department of Neighborhoods to engage 10 community liaisons that are implementing public engagement strategies in the historically underserved communities they serve. In August, the City met with the community liaisons and asked:

We are going to do an EIS – based on your own opinions and what you’ve been hearing, are there any topics that people would like to see more analysis or research on? This can include technical work, studies, etc.

The key topics addressed in the conversations with representatives of each of the communities included:

- Amharic/Oromo Speaking Community; Southeast Seattle: Housing, Jobs, Environmental Justice, Transportation
- Seniors & the Disabled Community: Housing, Climate, Language Access
- Unhoused Community: Accessibility (transportation), Work/Life Balance and Public Health, Housing, and Climate
- Vietnamese Community, CID, MLK, Rainier Valley: Housing and Safety

Example comments are below.

Housing Comments

Looking at smaller housing units, not big high rises; at my age – duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes – you can get out easily, elevators don’t break

Affordable housing is the most frequently cited need in the East African community and in Southeast Seattle generally

Housing is generally unstable for elders, notes that 30-40 years ago children would grow up and then have houses, but this is no longer the case—children do not have the option to house their elders in traditional multigenerational units, so elders are increasingly dependent on a LIH system that is at capacity and unstable

Climate Comments

Consider geography when siting housing since geography impacts both effects of climate change and accessibility on housing

We build affordable homes on land that will be vulnerable to climate extremes, pollution, has already been poisoned—we need to be cautious of that and not push people who are in poverty into dangerous situations.

Jobs Comments

Need ESL [English as a second language] training, job readiness.

Access & Transportation Comments

Are we doing things (housing, events, etc.) and placing them on hills where the grade is inaccessible unless you do have a motor? Or a cane? Or a walker?

Many in this community are car-dependent, and due to rising gas prices and inflation are increasingly looking at mass transit as an economic solution; this increases the critical issue of transit access for jobs and makes it increasingly important for housing to be located near viable transit options

Safety Comments

Language access, engagement, and community policing play important roles in this [Asian] community's struggle to reestablish pre-COVID sense of security.

4 NEXT STEPS

The City of Seattle used these comments to update the proposed approach to the EIS analysis. A high-level summary of scoping comments and how the EIS topics and alternatives to be analyzed were updated is contained in the One Seattle Plan EIS Scoping Report. The City has now begun analysis and anticipates releasing a Draft EIS in mid-2023.

5 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment	Description
A	Comment Letters and Emails
B	Engagement Hub Comment Matrix
C	Scoping Meeting Summaries: June 29, July 21, and July 23, 2022
D	Community Liaison Debrief, August 2022