

Draft One Seattle Plan – FAQ

What is the Comprehensive Plan and why update it now?

- The Comprehensive Plan is a 20-year plan for growth that guides where and how we will make public investments, including transportation, utilities, parks, and other facilities and programs to meet the needs of existing communities and projected population and employment growth. We are calling this update the **One Seattle Plan**.
- Seattle updates its Comprehensive Plan about once a decade. The existing Comprehensive Plan, **Seattle 2035**, was adopted in 2015.
- Since the last major update, Seattle has grown rapidly. Since 2020, the city has added over 44,234 new residents to reach a population of 784,754. Seattle has also experienced a persistent housing crisis, impacts of climate change, heightened awareness of racial inequities, and effects of the pandemic.
- Over the past decade, the Seattle metro area leads the nation and Washington state’s large cities in housing units added per capita, largely due to the historically high growth rate within the city. In 2023 alone, Seattle added a record 13,000 housing units.
- We expect Seattle’s population to approach 1 million (we are currently at about 800K) over the next 20 years. We need a new plan to address these challenges.

What’s new in this Comprehensive Plan update?

The One Seattle Plan centers four “key moves”:

1. **Housing and affordability:** Expands housing opportunities across the city. Adds significant new capacity to increase the supply and diversity of housing. The Plan includes a new Growth Strategy and expanded Housing element.
2. **Community and neighborhoods:** Focuses growth and investment in complete, walkable, communities. Provides new opportunities for people to live in walkable mixed-use centers across the city. Examples include our new Neighborhood Centers and opportunities to add corner stores in existing neighborhoods.
3. **Equity and opportunity:** Promotes a more equitable Seattle as we grow, including addressing the history of racial exclusion in our neighborhoods, displacement, and unmet community investment needs.
4. **Climate and sustainability:** Features a new and expanded Climate and Environment element that redoubles our commitment to reducing our GHG **emissions** from sources such as transportation and buildings and it promotes a range of strategies to build community **resiliency** and adapt to climate impacts like smoke, heat, and flooding.

What policy areas does the One Seattle Plan cover?

The Comprehensive Plan includes a range of policy elements with goals and policies that guide coordinated action across City departments to meet Seattle's needs as we grow. Policy elements include: Growth Strategy, Housing, Climate and Environment, Land Use, Capital Facilities, Parks and Open Space, Transportation, Utilities, Arts and Culture, Economic Development, Container Port, and Shoreline Areas. The goals and policies in the One Seattle Plan reflect to the requirements of the State Growth Management Act, input from the public, analysis of current conditions and future challenges facing the city, and the priorities and programs of multiple city departments.

What is the Growth Strategy?

The growth strategy is a central element of the Comprehensive Plan, with goals, policies, and maps guiding the location and types of development we want in the future. The new growth strategy in the One Seattle Plan will accommodate growth needs through the year 2044. The growth strategy is implemented through zoning changes, including changes to the types of uses and densities allowed in different areas of the city. Later in 2024, OPCD will release more detailed information in the form of proposed zoning maps for public review.

How does the One Seattle growth strategy differ from the Urban Village strategy in our current comprehensive plan?

- The Urban Village strategy has been successful in guiding residential, office, and retail development into compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods linked by transit – our designated Urban Centers and Urban Villages. Relatively little growth or housing development has occurred outside of these locations.
- Our One Seattle Plan growth strategy builds upon the successes of this strategy by promoting transit-oriented development in more places, while at the same time adding new opportunities to expand the supply and diversity of housing in all neighborhoods.

The growth strategy focuses growth in the following types of places that are designated in the One Seattle Plan:

- Regional Centers (formerly “Urban Centers”), e.g., Downtown, U-District, Northgate
- Urban Centers (formerly “Urban Villages”), e.g., Roosevelt, Columbia City, West Seattle Junction
- Neighborhood Centers, a new designation which would allow more housing within a short walk of frequent transit and neighborhood business districts

- Urban Neighborhoods, a new place type which would provide opportunities for middle housing across the city and a mix of low-to-moderate density housing along arterials with access to frequent transit
- Manufacturing and Industrial Centers, e.g., Ballard-Interbay, Greater Duwamish

How does the proposed growth strategy meet our projected housing need?

- King County has set targets for Seattle to accommodate a minimum of about 80,000 housing units and 160,000 jobs over the 20-year period this Plan covers (2024-2044).
- The draft One Seattle Plan, which is anticipated to provide zoned capacity for at least 200,000 additional housing units and 245,000 additional jobs, more than accommodates our growth needs even if they exceed what is envisioned in regional policy.
- In addition to overall housing need, the growth strategy is designed to increase the diversity of housing types and affordability levels to meet a broader range of housing needs.

Alternative 5 (Combined), which is studied in the DEIS, provides for more housing supply and density in more areas of the city. Why was this option not chosen?

The purpose of defining alternatives in the DEIS is not that we choose one or another of the alternatives, but to study a broad range of approaches that could potentially meet our growth needs. As a mixed approach, the growth strategy in the Draft One Seattle Plan is most similar to Alternative 5. The strategy adds diverse housing types across the city, while focusing growth near transit and amenities. It provides a significant boost to our capacity to meet future housing needs in the coming decades. The proposed growth strategy responds to community input asking for a Plan that creates more housing options citywide, especially near transit, and fosters walkable neighborhoods close to shops, services, and amenities.

How were the 24 proposed Neighborhood Centers selected?

As part of the Draft EIS, we studied 40 potential locations for the new Neighborhood Center place type designation. The growth strategy proposal in the Draft Plan includes 24 Neighborhood Centers. These were selected based on a variety of factors including:

- Access to Frequent Transit, including BRT (RapidRide) stations
- Access to Shops and Services
- Geographic coverage (i.e. creating opportunities for apartments in areas that currently have few apartment units)

- Areas with lower risk of displacement

How does the One Seattle Plan implement HB 1110, the state's middle housing bill?

The Draft Plan embraces middle housing across the city. Existing Neighborhood Residential zoning allows up to three units on most lots, including one principle residence and two accessory dwelling units. The growth strategy in the Draft Plan identifies Urban Neighborhood areas within which new updated Neighborhood Residential (NR) zoning would allow a broader range of housing types and densities.

The proposal for new zoning, which is described in the ["Updating Seattle's Neighborhood Residential Zones"](#) companion document, would allow for at least four units on all lots, and at least six units on lots near major transit or if a project has at least two affordable units on site. Examples of middle housing types include: fourplexes, sixplexes, cottage housing, townhomes, and stacked flats.

Development standards for the new NR zones, including standards for density, floor area ratio, setbacks, and other requirements that shape new housing development, were designed to allow and encourage smaller, more affordable middle housing options to meet needs for aging residents wishing to downsize and first-time homebuyers who have been left out of the market. The proposal also includes an additional incentive for affordable housing that provides more height and building area.

All areas zoned for Neighborhood Residential will see a zoning change to allow more middle housing. However, using the flexibility allowed under HB 1110, we are considering zoning for lower densities (3 units per lot) in some areas at greater risk for displacement with the aim of reducing displacement pressures it. We continue to research whether this strategy will be effective, as opposed to allowing greater density in these areas. We are also interested in hearing from communities living in these areas.

What is the timeline for completing/adopting the One Seattle Plan?

- This spring we are doing public engagement to get input from the community on the Draft Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- The Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) will release a draft zoning proposal in late summer/early fall 2024. This will be followed by another phase of public engagement to get feedback on proposed land use changes in each neighborhood.
- Next, the Mayor will release a final One Seattle Plan along with a Final EIS. Legislation to formally adopt the One Seattle Plan will go to City Council.

What documents are available for public review right now?

Draft One Seattle Plan: An update to the Comprehensive Plan. It includes goals and policies on a range of topics and, most important, a new growth strategy for the next 20 years.

Draft Environmental Impact Statement: A state-required analysis that compares the potential impacts of five different growth strategy alternatives. The purpose of the EIS is to inform decision making on a final growth strategy and plan.

Housing Appendix: Provides data and analysis to inform One Seattle Plan policies on housing consistent with requirements of the state Growth Management Act and regional and countywide frameworks. This appendix includes analysis of existing and projected housing needs, the types and affordability levels of housing in the city, racial disparities in housing outcomes, and current barriers to more fully meeting needs.

Updating Seattle's Neighborhood Residential Zones Report: A separate report on the future of Neighborhood Residential zoning. Report features an overview and illustrations of a proposal to update our zoning code to implement new state requirements for middle housing in HB 1110.

Draft Anti-Displacement Framework: A summary of the City's existing anti-displacement efforts and the goals and policies in the Draft Plan that support our approach to preventing displacement as the city grows.

How can I make public comment?

To comment on the Draft One Seattle Plan:

- Visit [Engage.OneSeattlePlan.com](https://engage.one-seattle-plan.com)
- Visit the Engagement station to learn more.
- Or you can email OneSeattleCompPlan@seattle.gov

To comment on the DEIS:

- Visit the DEIS StoryMap: <https://maps.seattle.gov/OneSeattlePlan-EIS>
- Email PCD_CompPlan_EIS@seattle.gov

To give feedback on the zoning changes proposed in the Updating Seattle's Neighborhood Residential Zones Report:

- Email: OneSeattleCompPlan@seattle.gov

What will the City do with my public comments?

- Our public comment period runs through May 6th.

- The City will compile all of the comments and use them to inform changes to the Plan that will be reflected in the Mayor's Final Plan and in a more detailed draft zoning proposal that will be released for additional public comment later in 2024.
- Comments on the Draft EIS addressing its analysis, conclusions, and mitigation strategies will be included in the Final EIS with a response and revisions to the DEIS where warranted.