



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Xio Alvarez and Nick Whipple, Co-Chairs
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, August 13, 2026

Approved Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Xio Alvarez, McCaela Daffern, Andrew Dannenberg, Amir Ehsaei, Dylan Glosecki, Hailey Karcher, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Dhyana Quintanar, Dylan Stevenson, T.J. Stutman, Margaret Szeles, Kelabe Tewolde

Commissioners Absent: Cecelia Black, Rebecca Brunn, Patrick Taylor, Nick Whipple

Commission Staff: Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Planning Analyst; Robin Magonegil, Commission Coordinator

Seattle Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair Xio Alvarez called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm. Co-Chair Alvarez offered the following land acknowledgement:

'As we begin our meeting, we respectfully acknowledge that our meeting today is taking place on occupied Coast Salish land. We pay respect to Coast Salish Elders past and present and extend that respect to their descendants and to all Indigenous people. To acknowledge this land is to recognize the history of physical and cultural genocide and settler colonialism, which continues to displace Indigenous people today. It is to also recognize these lands, waters, and their significance for the resilient and wise peoples who continue to thrive in this region despite the consequences of displacement and broken treaties. Those who hold settler privilege in this city must work towards supporting the Coast Salish people and all Indigenous people using the various forms of wealth and privilege they reap due to it.'

Co-Chair Alvarez noted that this meeting is a hybrid meeting with some Commissioners and staff participating remotely while other Commissioners and staff are participating in the Boards and Commissions Room at Seattle City Hall. She asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms and asked for volunteers to select one or more of the norms to read aloud. She suggested to Commissioners that they collectively agree to abide by these norms.

Announcements

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, announced several upcoming Commission meetings and reviewed the format of this meeting.

ACTION: Commissioner McCaela Daffern moved to approve the July 25, 2026 meeting minutes. Commissioner T.J. Stutman seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.

Ms. Murdock acknowledged that this is the last meeting for Get Engaged Commissioner Margaret Szeles. She thanked Commissioner Szeles for her service and wished her well in her future endeavors.

Public Comment

Ms. Murdock noted that public comment may be provided in person at City Hall, submitted in writing via email at least eight hours before the meeting, or offered on the hybrid meeting platform MS Teams. Public comment must be able to be given in two minutes or less.

There was no public comment.

Briefing: Comprehensive Plan Implementation Anti-Displacement Strategies

Michael Hubner and Jonathan Morales, Office of Planning and Community Development

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of four key moves included in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Housing and Affordability
- Equity and Opportunity
- Community and Neighborhoods
- Climate and Sustainability

He stated that one of the first steps in the update process was development of a Racial Equity Toolkit. He then provided the following information on displacement pressure.

A key challenge: While expanding housing supply reduces upward pressure on prices overall, there can be localized impacts where new development replaces existing housing or businesses.

Types of Displacement:

- Physical displacement can occur through eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of housing or when covenants expire on rent-restricted housing.
- Economic displacement happens as housing becomes less affordable and residents can no longer weather rising rents or the costs of homeownership, like property taxes.
- Commercial displacement is when these pressures affect small businesses, many of which rent their space and are subject to market prices.
- Cultural displacement occurs as residents relocate because their cultural community, including culturally relevant businesses and institutions, is leaving.

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of data tools for monitoring and addressing displacement risk. These include the following:

- Displacement Risk Index: Consolidated, long-range view useful for informing long-range plans and investments
- Displacement Risk Dashboard: Regular updates for spotting changes in individual indicators

He stated that the City has a range of existing anti-displacement strategies in several categories:

- Plan ahead by anticipating displacement pressures and responding with appropriate policies and programs
- Produce new housing for people of all incomes
- Protect residents from displacement pressures by giving them more freedom and time to make the choice to stay or move
- Preserve existing affordable housing and reduce the likelihood they exit the affordable housing stock

The City's Anti-Displacement Action Plan details the programs in each category.

Mr. Hubner summarized the displacement analysis prepared for the Centers and Corridors legislation. Resolution 32183 calls for new zoning legislation to be accompanied by 1) analysis of potential displacement impacts and 2) identification of strategies to reduce displacement pressure. The Centers and Corridors zoning legislation response to Resolution 32183 included:

- OPCD memo sent to the Select Committee on March 13, 2026
- Identifies ways that zoning changes will reduce displacement citywide, including:
 - Increasing supply and diversity of housing
 - Expanding housing capacity in areas at low risk of displacement
 - Generating new affordable homes through MFTE and MHA
- Highlights the City's anti-displacement toolbox of strategies to address potential local impacts

Mr. Morales described additional zoning changes proposed for Phase Three of the One Seattle Plan. In April 2026, Mayor Wilson announced her intention to pursue the next phase of zoning changes - Taller, Denser, Faster - that emphasizes the following guiding vision:

- Affordable, abundant housing. Address housing affordability challenges by significantly expanding housing supply. Add zoning capacity for all kinds of new housing in more places.
- Do not wait. Deliver zoning changes as soon as possible, including Implementing HB 1491(TOD bill) sooner than required.
- Thriving complete neighborhoods. Increase housing options near transit and community amenities (parks, schools, libraries, shops, etc.)
- Environmental justice. Add healthy and safe housing options on quiet streets off roads with heavy traffic.

He stated that a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) will study potential zoning changes in several areas, including:

- Growth centers
- Near parks and schools
- HB 1491 station areas
- Frequent transit corridors

Mr. Morales provided an overview of early stakeholder engagement (April-June 2026):

Q2 2026: Subject Area Convenings

Early engagement with stakeholders centered on thematic subject areas relevant to the Taller, Denser, Faster phase.

- Urbanist, Land Use, and Housing Stakeholder Convening – April 22
- Environment, Sustainability, and Trees Convening – June 4
- Anti-Displacement & Equity Convening – June 16

He provided the following information on anti-displacement measures being considered. OPCD will study all the impacts of zoning changes in the SEIS, including potential displacement impacts. Displacement can be addressed through:

- Zoning choices – e.g., keep zoning increases low, or not upzoning in areas of high displacement risk.
- Non-zoning mitigation measures – other investments and programs like the Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) or support for legacy homeowners.

Mr. Hubner stated that the SEIS will identify mitigation measures as potential anti-displacement tools. OPCD is proposing to incorporate a zoning approach into one of the alternatives in the SEIS.

Mr. Morales highlighted the following general themes from early stakeholder engagement:

- Support for wide range of housing types
- Increased density should be paired with strong anti-displacement protections
- Broad support for community-led land acquisition opportunities
- Tailored place-based zoning approaches
- Support for higher density in low displacement risk/high opportunity areas
- Growth through density should be paired with infrastructure improvements
- Tree canopy protection, urban heat island mitigation, healthy neighborhood standards
- City process improvements

Below are more detailed themes that emerged from stakeholder feedback:

Zoning Themes

- Equitable Distribution of Density: Focus zoning changes in areas with low displacement risk and high opportunity. Limit zoning changes in areas at high risk of displacement.
- Balanced package of changes to support community: Low density alone does not prevent displacement and may limit community led options for development. Provide anti-displacement protections with upzones in at-risk areas.

- Zoning for Community-Led Development: Zone for building types feasible to community-based developers and allow for flexibility in type, such as co-housing and family sized units; remove barriers for faith-based and cultural organizations.
- Affordability and Zoning: Performance based approach, incentives, and requirements for affordable housing tied to zoning capacity increases.
- Overlays Approach: Consider zoning overlays to achieve equitable development outcomes.
- City Process Reform: Permitting and departmental process improvements highlighted as a need, to help community organizations better navigate.
- Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA): If the City updates MHA requirements, seek to preserve overall funding levels for affordable housing and do not increase displacement pressure on high-risk neighborhoods.

Non-Zoning Themes

- Land Acquisition and Land Banking: Support a community led and controlled land acquisition process, paired with preservation funding and utilization of tools such as community land trusts, Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, etc.
- Legacy Homeowner Support and Stabilization: Legacy homeowners need greater access to repair assistance, funding, and tax relief to preserve and maintain their homes or add housing to their land.
- Multi-year Funding Commitments and Capital Needs to Address Gaps: Need a stable capital stack, and pre-development supports, operations support, and acquisition funding to realize equitable and affordable development projects.
- Tenant Protections and Tenant Rights: Support for right to return, community preference, relocation assistance, eviction prevention, rental assistance, and longer notice periods; expand Tenant Resource Line and provide access to legal / navigator services.
- Cultural/Commercial Stabilization and Support for Community Developers: Protect cultural organizations and community anchors from displacement. Provide technical assistance, funding, and pre-development support for small developers/non-profits.
- Environmental Justice and Health: Protect tree canopy, reduce pollution, health impacts. Communities at risk of displacement face environmental justice threats.
- Preserve and enhance Equitable Development Initiative: Explore scaling up, better integrating with other fund sources, enhance pre-development funding.

Mr. Morales shared a draft timeline for Phase 3. Engagement opportunities will continue this fall. The Draft SEIS will likely be published in the first or second quarter of 2027.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners commended the Mayor on this effort and asked how the Planning Commission can assist in helping with anti-displacement efforts. Mr. Hubner stated that the City Council will hopefully vote on the Centers and Corridors legislation in early 2027. Phase 3 starts with the SEIS process identifying a robust array of mitigation measures. Community input can inform that. This process will involve both a zoning approach and non-zoning approach. This is a great opportunity to have deeper conversations around these subjects.
- Commissioners recommended maintaining a broad lens on displacement, including both housing and commercial displacement.

- Commissioners noted that the City did an equity analysis, but it was difficult to understand the results of the analysis around commercial displacement in Chinatown/International District (CID). Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD conducted a displacement risk analysis for the One Seattle Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). They plan to continue that analysis in the SEIS and put additional thought into the mitigation measures. He noted that it may be useful for OPCD to conduct a broader analysis.
- Commissioners asked how OPCD responds to community members who say that density is good, but do not want it in their neighborhood. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD heard from neighborhood groups during the Comprehensive Plan update process. The value of developing a citywide plan is that it can involve a citywide approach, including bringing attention to those harms experienced by certain neighborhoods. OPCD has been very clear that all neighborhoods have a responsibility to accommodate growth. He stated that it was pleasantly surprising to hear how many conversations included “We cannot continue to keep doing what we have been doing.” This process led to better conversations at the neighborhood level.
- Commissioners stated that upzoning broadly is beneficial for family-sized housing and asked whether there are any plans in the works for incentivizing family sized housing. Mr. Morales stated that is certainly a topic OPCD is thinking about but does not have a specific strategy for at this point. OPCD is working to ensure that there are a variety of apartment sizes. Mr. Hubner mentioned that recent City Council discussions around family-sized housing near schools led to discussion of stacked flats in proximity to schools. HB 1491 includes requirements for adoption of family-sized units near transit stations. He stated that OPCD has been hearing a lot on this topic.
- Commissioners stated that developers often avoid family-sized units for financial reasons. Commissioners recommended that OPCD continue to work on incentives. Some have been working. For example, in high rises.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the map showing sixteen Neighborhood Centers. Nine were originally studied; where did the additional seven come from? Mr. Morales stated that these were considered for scoping in the EIS. The map that was shown is a draft. There will be additional opportunities for study, including some new centers and some others for expansion. Mr. Hubner stated that this initial map shows proximity to amenities, parks, schools, etc. OPCD will likely produce two alternatives – one that the Council requested; the second could add other options.
- Commissioners noted that the housing market is not only subject to local policy responses but also regional effects. There could be the potential for other jurisdictions not to adopt anti-displacement efforts. What options are there to harmonize the City’s approaches with others? Mr. Hubner stated that there have been a lot of requirements at the local and state level for anti-displacement planning. Seattle is in a better position with the role the State has played. Other cities have regional centers and are also required to adopt anti-displacement strategies. Commissioners asked if there is a specific role for the City. Mr. Hubner stated that OPCD is very active at the regional level with the Puget Sound Regional Council.
- Commissioners requested more information on what was discussed about cultural displacement at the June 16 stakeholder meeting. Mr. Morales stated that stakeholders from the CID and Central Area neighborhoods were present. Their feedback is captured in the stakeholder engagement summary. Mr. Hubner stated that EDI staff also share information on cultural displacement.

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of the various legal appeals challenges related to the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan.

SEPA appeal of Comprehensive Plan FEIS

Appellants: Friends of Ravenna Cowen Park (FORC), Jennifer Godfrey

Hearing Examiner: Dismissed by Hearing Examiner in 2025.

Superior Court: Appellants filed suit in Superior Court asking for a 'writ of review' which would invalidate Hearing Examiners dismissal. Superior Court ruled in the City's favor.

Court of Appeals: Appellants appealed to the Court of Appeals which ruled the Superior Court erred in its ruling. Case was referred back to Superior Court who will determine a remedy, which may include sending the appeal back to the Hearing Examiner to be considered on its merits.

Growth Management Act (GMA) appeal of Comprehensive Plan, FEIS, and zoning legislation

Appellants: Jennifer Godfrey, Donna Breske, Orca Nexus, Orca Conservancy, Orca Network, Captain Paul Watson Foundation, Puget Sound Harvesters Assoc., Ruby Holland, Keith Roraback, Jonathan Warren

Growth Management Hearings Board

- Hearing on July 23
- Decision by September 9

SEPA appeal of addendum to Industrial and Maritime Strategy FEIS for adoption of the Duwamish MIC Subarea Plan

Appellants: Washington State Major League Baseball Stadium Public Facilities District/Seattle Building & Construction Trades Council appealed the City's Addendum to the Industrial and Maritime Strategy FEIS.

Hearing Examiner:

- Hearing dates set for November 2026

Commission Discussion

- Ms. Murdock asked if the Industrial and Maritime Strategy appeal has any bearing on the Centers and Corridors legislation process. Mr. Hubner stated that this appeal only affects the Duwamish MIC subarea plan. The SEPA appeal of the Comprehensive Plan FEIS needs to be resolved for the City Council to consider the Centers and Corridors legislation. The GMA appeal was filed after the Comprehensive Plan was adopted. This appeal may result in additional environmental analysis or amendments to bring the City into compliance. The SEPA appeal is not expected to be resolved until late this year or early next year. The GMA appeal will be resolved by September 9.

Commission Business

Ms. Murdock stated that the Commission recently decided to focus an independent work project on housing density on quiet streets off of frequent transit corridors. It was recommended by Commissioners to use the City's Stay Healthy Streets as a model for how this can be done. She stated that it has come to her attention that the schedule Mr. Hubner discussed will delay the Taller, Denser, Faster phase of One Seattle Plan implementation until early 2028. She stated that the Commission will use its August 27 meeting as a working session on its independent work for this fall/winter. Staff will flesh out some options for consideration. Ms. Murdock stated that she will be scheduling meetings with City Council members in September to introduce the work of the Planning Commission.

Commission Discussion

- Commissioners stated that they have talked about what City Councilmembers are hearing from their constituents. The Commission will focus on shaping its work on what will be helpful to those Councilmembers.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm.