



## City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Rick Mohler and Jamie Stroble, Co-Chairs  
Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, December 09, 2021

Approved Meeting Minutes

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<b>Commissioners Present:</b>	Mark Braseth, McCaela Daffern, Roque Deherrera, David Goldberg, Matt Hutchins, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Rick Mohler, Dhyana Quintanar, Jamie Stroble
<b>Commissioners Absent:</b>	Patience Malaba, Radhika Nair, Alanna Peterson, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Kelabe Tewelde
<b>Commission Staff:</b>	Vanessa Murdock, Executive Director; John Hoey, Senior Policy Analyst; Olivia Baker, Planning Analyst
<b>Guests:</b>	Michael Hubner, Brennon Staley, Patrice Carroll, and Aja Hazelhoff, Office of Planning and Community Development

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

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Referenced Documents discussed at the meeting can be viewed here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/planningcommission/when-we-meet/minutes-and-agendas>

#### Chair's Report & Minutes Approval

Co-Chair Rick Mohler called the meeting to order at 3:07 pm. Co-Chair Mohler made the following land acknowledgement:

'On behalf of the Seattle Planning Commission, we'd like to actively recognize that we are on Indigenous land, the traditional and current territories of the Coast Salish people who have lived on and stewarded these lands since the beginning of time and continue to do so today. We offer land acknowledgement because Native land was taken by force and colonized to form the United States as we know it today. Through this process, which is ongoing through systematic oppression, Native identity, history, and land ownership has been ignored by colonizers and attempted to be erased. Land Acknowledgement is the first step in opposing the systematic oppression and historic erasure of Native people and Native Land ownership.'

Co-Chair Mohler asked fellow Commissioners to review the Color Brave Space norms. He reminded the Commissioners that they have collectively agreed to abide by these norms.

**ACTION: Commissioner McCaela Daffern moved to approve the November 18, 2021, meeting minutes. Co-Chair Jamie Stroble seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed.**

### **Announcements**

Vanessa Murdock, Seattle Planning Commission Executive Director, provided a brief review of the format for the online meeting and noted that due to the online format, public comment must be submitted in writing at least eight hours before the start of the Commission meeting.

### **Commission Business**

Olivia Baker, Seattle Planning Commission Staff, provided an overview of the 2022 Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) budget as related to the Comprehensive Plan Major Update. The recently adopted budget includes a total of \$650,000 for preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Update Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a total of \$275,000 for community engagement. The Equitable Development Initiative was allocated a total of \$19 million in annual funds and three new full-time employees (FTEs). The Duwamish Valley Program was allocated a total of \$2.68 million and one new FTE in 2022. OPCD also received funds in the budget for a new Indigenous Planner position.

Ms. Baker stated that the budget included Statements of Legislative Intent (SLIs) for Regional Growth Centers Planning, Community Investment Trusts, and Coordinating Community Investments. The first SLI requires that OPCD report back to the City Council with a work program and budget for the required updates to the plans for Seattle's six regional growth centers by June of 2022. Vision 2050 requires those updates are completed by 2025. The second SLI requests that OPCD report on potential opportunities for the city to support Community Investment Trusts. Community investment trusts are relatively low-dollar and low-risk investment opportunities for community members on community projects. Finally, the City Council requested that the Office of Economic Development (OED), the Office of Housing (OH), and OPCD form an inter-departmental team to coordinate on the distribution of funds that support anti-displacement efforts such as the Equitable Development Initiative or the new Small Business Ownership Fund.

Ms. Baker highlighted two other items of interest in the 2022 budget including allocations for the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and Department of Construction & Inspections (SDCI). DON was allocated an additional \$800,000 and one FTE to support outreach and planning in the Chinatown/International District neighborhood. The funds for DON are intended to pay for a consultant to assist in the neighborhood planning process. The funds for SDCI include an additional \$145,000 for consultant support on a rental market study, which may help the City to better understand displacement pressures in the rental market. The SDCI budget also includes \$1.5 million and 1.5 FTEs to help implement the new economic displacement relocation assistance ordinance passed this fall. The additional staff and funding will help with enforcement and tenant support.

### **Discussion: Seattle Planning Commission 2022 Overview**

Ms. Murdock provided a preview of the Planning Commission's issue specific work planned for 2022. A significant work plan item will be related to the Major Update of the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission sent a letter with recommended overarching themes for the Major Update in August 2021. That letter included three central themes to guide the update effort: racial equity, resilience, and a sustainable quality of life for all. The Commission also emphasized that meaningful, effective, and adequately resourced community engagement is essential in shaping both the process and the

resulting content of this Major Update. The Commission has identified the following specific issues to develop more detailed recommendations in advance of the Comprehensive Plan work:

- Growth Strategy
- Anti-Displacement
- Housing Diversity
- Transportation/Repurposing the Right-of-Way

A draft Growth Strategy issue paper has been developed and discussed by both the Land Use & Transportation and Housing & Neighborhoods committees. The draft Anti-Displacement issue paper has been discussed by the Housing & Neighborhoods Committee. The Commission will confirm the content of the Growth Strategy and Anti-Displacement issue papers in early January 2022 and finalize these papers by the end of February.

Ms. Murdock reviewed the other anticipated project review and standing items on the Commission's 2022 work plan. These include:

- Industrial and Maritime Strategy Draft EIS (DEIS)
- Sound Transit West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions DEIS and Station Area Planning
- Seattle Transportation Plan
- Equitable Development Monitoring Program
- Annual Comprehensive Plan amendments – 2021/22 and 2022/23 cycles
- Regular updates from Office and Department leadership

She then listed the following independent work anticipated for the Commission in 2022:

- Build relationships with other Boards and Commissions, especially those related to the Equitable Development Initiative and Green New Deal
- Resume regular meetings with City Councilmembers and members of the new Mayor's administration
- Fill open seat(s)
- Elect Planning Commission leadership
- Monitor upcoming work of select Offices and Departments
- Continued Racial Equity awareness learning sessions
- Second mini retreat
- Meet in person

#### Commission Discussion

- Commissioners discussed potential substitute names for "issue papers" including "briefs."
- Commissioners noted that the Comprehensive Plan will have a wide variety of elements beyond those that have been identified for further recommendations. Commissioners asked if there are opportunities to comment on those. Ms. Murdock stated that the planned issue briefs are by no means the last time the Planning Commission will provide input to the Major Update. The Commission will review other elements in addition to those we have identified thus far. She noted

that the Commission wrote several letters during the last Comprehensive Plan update process. In the past City departments have come to the Commission for review of individual Comprehensive Plan elements.

- Commissioners inquired about future opportunities for centering equity as a Commission. Ms. Murdock stated that the continued racial equity awareness learning sessions included in her 2022 work plan overview is intended to cover centering equity.

#### **Update: Comprehensive Plan Major Update 2022 Workplan**

Michael Hubner, Brennon Staley, Patrice Carroll, and Aja Hazelhoff, Office of Planning and Community Development.

**DISCLOSURE: Co-Chair Rick Mohler disclosed that he is working with OPCD staff to organize a studio for students at the University of Washington related to the Comprehensive Plan Major Update.**

Mr. Hubner provided an overview of the process of updating the City's Comprehensive Plan. He stated that this effort is intended to create a 20-year plan to guide how the city grows and makes investments for a more equitable and resilient future. The Major Update will be informed by the City's values and shaped by broad and deep community engagement. The Plan will include a growth strategy for housing and jobs and policies in fourteen elements. The Major Update is due to be completed in 2024. Mr. Hubner described the following topics that will be covered in detail during the OPCD team's presentation:

- 2022 budget highlights
- Growth strategy update and EIS
- Policy updates –scope and interdepartmental collaboration
- Community engagement
- Schedule and milestones
- Opportunities for Planning Commission engagement

The Comprehensive Plan budget was recently adopted by the City Council, with increases in total budget allocated for both the EIS and community engagement. The EIS budget was increased from \$425,000 to \$750,000. The community engagement budget was increased from \$150,000 to \$275,000. Mr. Hubner stated that this budget increase will be especially helpful to enhance the scope of work. The budget includes \$100,000 dedicated to historic resources work, as well as a new staff position that is currently unfunded. The 2022 budget also includes \$150,000 for Regional Centers subarea planning.

Mr. Staley provided an overview of the Growth Strategy work to be included in the Major Update. He stated that the City will be planning for at least 112,000 housing units and 169,500 jobs by 2044. This represents a slight slowing from recent growth rates but the City will still experience substantial growth over the next twenty-five years. The existing Urban Village Strategy focuses growth and investment within Urban Centers and Villages. The Major Update will explore new ideas, including new centers or villages, "15-minute" neighborhoods, and more options for housing across the city.

Additional considerations in determining the updated Growth Strategy include a Racial Equity Analysis, Vision 2050, and Countywide Planning Policies, OPCD's recent housing needs and supply analysis, the Industrial and Maritime Strategy, anticipated growth around new light rail stations, and coordination with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) on the new Seattle Transportation Plan.

OPCD hopes to contract with a consultant team to complete the Comprehensive Plan Major Update EIS in January. An EIS must identify alternative approaches for meeting the overall project goals. Alternatives should establish a broad range of options to support analysis of various growth scenarios. The EIS is currently proposed to include a "no action" scenario and between three and five action alternatives. Alternatives will likely be organized around broad themes that distribute growth in different ways.

Mr. Staley stated that a 2022 budget proviso requires OPCD to study alternatives that include:

- "Providing additional housing capacity and housing type diversity in neighborhood residential areas"
- "Addressing exclusionary zoning"
- "Supporting the development of 15-minute neighborhoods, including a mix of residential and non-residential land uses and densities that support equitable multi-modal local access to everyday needs in locations across the city, both inside and outside of urban villages"
- "Using other strategies to minimize displacement of low-income residents and communities of color"
- Consideration of "other actions to increase residential building capacity, such as those listed in RCW 36.70A.600"

Ms. Carroll provided an overview of the various elements to be included in the Comprehensive Plan. These include the following:

- Land Use\*
- Transportation\*
- Housing\*
- Capital Facilities\*
- Utilities\*
- Economic Development\*
- Environment
- Parks and Open Space\*
- Arts and Culture
- Community Well-being
- Community Involvement
- Shorelines\*
- Container Port\*

Note: those elements followed by a \* are required by the Washington State Growth Management Act.

Ms. Carroll stated that an inter-departmental/inter-agency team comprised of staff from twenty City departments and seven external agencies will work with other departments to gain their input and expertise on a variety of subjects. OPCD and SDOT will work on both the Comprehensive Plan and the Seattle Transportation Plan. The inter-departmental/inter-agency team will not do detailed policy work but will identify major policy areas, share information, and keep the process moving.

Examples of potential policy focus areas for the Major Update include the following:

- Equity-focused policies
  - Displacement, access to opportunity, reducing disparities
- Policies that support the growth strategy, that could include:
  - Anti-displacement strategies
  - Transit-oriented development policies
  - Policies that support “15-minute neighborhoods”
  - And others
- Climate change, resiliency, environmental justice
  - Reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) and vehicles miles traveled (VMT)
  - Address natural hazards caused/ aggravated by climate change
  - Impacts of sea level rise
  - Environmental justice

Ms. Hazelhoff provided an overview of planned community engagement activities for the Major Update. Equitable engagement partners include Community Liaisons (through the Department of Neighborhoods), contracted community-based organizations and small businesses, the City’s Transportation Equity Workgroup, and Equitable Development Initiative. She described the following key citywide engagement tools:

- Comprehensive Plan website
- Virtual communication
  - Social media
  - Newsletter
  - Surveys & polling
- Internal and external partners
  - Boards and commissions
  - Inter-disciplinary team
  - Neighborhood and citywide community and issue-based groups
- Interactive engagement platform

The project team provided an overview of the timeline for the Major Update. Phase 1 is anticipated to kick off in January with asking the community to identify a vision and issues to be considered during the

process. Phase 2 will include an introduction of the Growth Strategy alternatives and a range of options. The project team will have more ideas that the public can react to at that point. Phase 3 is anticipated for 2023 and will include introducing the draft plan and completing environmental review. The final Plan is anticipated to be completed at the end of 2023 or early 2024. The Plan will be sent to the City Council for adoption. Efforts will be made at that time to identify ways to help communities to stay engaged during implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Commission Discussion

- Commissioners asked the project team if they are planning to utilize any creative engagement methods. Ms. Hazelhoff stated that they are asking businesses and community-based organizations to co-create ideas. Small businesses can utilize third places for conversations in plain language. She stated that unfortunately we are still in a pandemic and are required to conduct virtual community engagement. The benefit of this approach is that it lowers the bar to entry for everyone and the project team can meet the public where they are. Technology will play a larger role in community engagement than it has in the past.
- Commissioners requested clarification regarding the planning target of 112,000 housing units identified by Mr. Staley, asking if that figure is from King County or from the recent housing needs study conducted by Berk Consulting. Commissioners expressed concern that this target could be too low, resulting in less housing than needed. Mr. Staley stated that the City has been given a regional requirement to plan for at least 112,000 housing units. Analysis conducted by Berk Consulting concluded that this target could result in Seattle being a much more exclusive city. OPCD will begin with planning for at least 112,000 but the eventual goal may be different. The scope of work for the Growth Strategy includes a sensitivity analysis for planning around a higher number.
- Commissioners inquired about when the Comprehensive Plan can be challenged. Mr. Staley stated the Plan can only be challenged after publication of the final draft in 2023.
- Commissioners asked for more information on the support to be provided to community-based organizations for their participation. Mr. Hubner stated that City departments are talking about consistent compensation. Information about compensation for participating community-based organizations and partners in the recent request for proposals (RFP) is based on the Department of Neighborhoods' support for its Community Liaisons. Mr. Hubner stated that this effort is under-resourced. OPCD is working to provide orientation and training to community-based organizations, including developing outreach materials, visual materials, survey questions, and survey instruments. These will all be resources that the community-based organizations can choose to use. OPCD will be working more intensively on engagement as the project moves forward. Ms. Hazelhoff stated that the most intensive effort will be focused on making engagement meaningful.
- Commissioners endorsed OPCD's emphasis on equitable engagement and offered support to conduct this work in a meaningful way.
- Commissioners stated that the Comprehensive Plan timeline is very long and suggested creating clear opportunities for communities to impact the process.
- Commissioners noted that House Bill 1099 will likely be reintroduced during the state legislative session in 2022. OPCD should plan on including the provisions of this important climate legislation in the Comprehensive Plan even if it does not pass.
- Commissioners asked if the City could accept private donations for outreach efforts related to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hubner stated that he did not know the answer but would find out. Ms. Carroll stated that this is challenging because the City does not have a 501(c)(3) tax status but could

partner with a non-profit fiscal sponsor. Mr. Hubner stated that there might be some interest in leveraging resources for this effort.

Mr. Hubner thanked the Commissioners for their thoughts and suggestions on the Comprehensive Plan budget discussed earlier in the meeting. He stated that he will work with Planning Commission staff to determine how the Commission's issue papers can be most helpful in shaping the Comprehensive Plan.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 pm.**