

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods
Outside City-wide retreat
Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center
August 9, 2017

As Seattle grows and more people move here
It feels denser. Things are changing. There's pressure and fear.
How will we live so on top of each other?
My Seattle way of life this will certainly smother.

We need "infrastructure as we grow". This is known as concurrency
We hear this so often, by some in panic. It feels like such an emergency.
Some will say this is an incredible pace
And cry out that old treasures are being displaced

So today we gather to talk and plan
For a future that is already at hand
The need is here, the time is now
The question before us is....how?

Years ago, Seattle Commons didn't pass
What is our space we'll design that will last?
Chicago has Millennium and New York has Central Park.
What is, or what will be, Seattle's hallmark?

To achieve our goals, we must be bold
And put aside our ways of old
Dream big and stop with the "we can't"
Make "Yes! Why not?" our common chant

A zipline through the trees, or a grass field to play ball?
Whatever the vision, it must be for all.
Parks have many uses and even more users.
We need to find win-wins so there are no losers.

What's good for the white collar must also be true
For those who wear the collar of blue
And would it be such a travesty
If we were to require trees next to industry?

What if we write some new code, go crazy and designate park zones?
Or carve out more places for our friends who chew bones?
If we create places open and new
People will program it so we don't have to

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If we are fair in our word and our deed
We will work to address each neighborhood's needs
Our process should be fair and about equity
And we should be consistent and provide clarity

Let's look at our maps and find open land,
Design for all-time, small and grand,
And make sure that no matter sun, rain or snow
Our spaces are places folks want to go

We must talk with folks familiar and new
So more can see themselves in what we do
It is our job to engage and listen to voices
And keep them in mind as we design choices

If we are to achieve lasting success
We must build our spaces so all have access
By bus or by foot, by bike or by car
Open space, planned well, mustn't ever be too far