



## City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

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

### SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, July 14, 2022  
Approved Meeting Minutes

---

**Commissioners Present:** Mark Braseth, McCaela Daffern, Roque Deherrera, David Goldberg, Matt Hutchins, Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson, Rick Mohler, Austin Moreman, Alanna Peterson, Dhyana Quintanar, Julio Sanchez, Lauren Squires, Jamie Stroble

**Commissioners Absent:** Patience Malaba, Radhika Nair

**Commission Staff:** 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.*

---

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 3:04 pm. Co-Chair Mohler offered the following land acknowledgement:

*'On behalf of the Seattle Planning Commission, we'd like to acknowledge that the city of Seattle is on stolen Coast Salish land, specifically the ancestral land of the Duwamish, Suquamish, and Muckleshoot Tribes. We strive to remedy this injustice through our beliefs and actions in helping to steward our land and communities in Seattle.'*

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 David Goldberg moved to approve the June 23, 2022, meeting minutes. Commissioner Roque Deherrera seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed. Co-Chair Rick Mohler abstained.**

#### Announcements

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, noted that this meeting is one of the Planning Commission's first hybrid meeting where some Commissioners are participating remotely via the MS

Teams platform while other Commissioners and staff are participating in person in the Boards and Commissions Room at Seattle City Hall. He noted that public comment could be submitted in writing at least eight hours before the start of the Commission meeting or provided in person by any members of the public attending the meeting at City Hall.

**Public Comment: 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments docketing recommendations**

Olivia Baker, Seattle Planning Commission staff, read the following public comments, which were received by e-mail.

*I would like to express my disagreement with the OPCD recommendation to halt Comprehensive Plan amendments until 2025. Based on the initial release of information for potential EIS scoping for the Comprehensive Plan update, it is clear that the City is not yet going far enough with scope analysis in terms of the zoning reforms necessary to address housing affordability and the lack of supply by enabling denser forms of missing middle housing to be built across city nor in terms of removing restrictions on locating essential businesses in single family/ neighborhood residential zones.*

*Councilmember Morales's proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment to facilitate locating essential neighborhood businesses within residential zones is a necessary move to push our city toward reduced auto dependence and toward the 2050 goal of a net-zero carbon city. Our city needs to address our transportation-based carbon emissions on multiple fronts, one being by moving everyday needs and services closer to where people live.*

*Similar to the City's successful frequent transit effort, the city needs to set a goal of providing access to most of our residents everyday needs and services within a 15 minute walk or roll of their homes, in order to reduce our automobile dependence and our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.*

*Councilmember Morales's proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment initiates this effort and should be implemented as soon as possible to push the Comprehensive Plan update in the direction it must go: reshaping Seattle neighborhoods into pedestrian-focused communities that provide everyday needs and services within a 15 minute walk or roll from residents' homes.*

*thanks*

*dylan glosecki, AIA*

*VIA-PE, architect + urban designer*

*AIA seattle Urban Design Forum, co-chair*

---

*I am writing to strongly recommend that the amendment package co-created by Councilmember Morales and community organizations and voices be accepted. In order to build community, ALL neighborhoods need essential services such as groceries and childcare as well as cultural anchors within walking distance of a home that they can afford. Access to these services in a neighborhood creates community, lowers crime, increases mental and physical health, and increases buy in from all citizens that the city belongs to them - not just those with higher incomes who can afford a home right now.*

Thank you!

Tanya Moore, Co-Director of Be:Seattle Organizing, Renter living in District 5

---

*Climate change isn't pausing while the Comprehensive Plan work takes place, and at the same time, it's critically important that the Comp Plan address climate-friendly growth in Seattle. We believe that the Seattle Within Reach amendments are strongly in the same spirit as the Planning Commission's excellent 2018 Neighborhoods for All report, and if we are to have a Comp Plan that reflects the climate justice and equity values centered in Neighborhoods for All, we need to make every possible incremental move forward -- to advance the conversation in all possible ways.*

*The Morales package reinforces the concept of thriving neighborhoods with affordability at all levels, and the services that such neighborhoods provide. Simply put, if all neighborhoods allow the everyday services that people need, people will be able to walk and bike to those services, with a concomitant reduction in climate pollution. Seattle residents shouldn't have to wait for this change. We hope the Commission will push hard for these amendments, because they will make a difference right away, and also help set the stage for a Comp Plan that includes walkable, thriving, neighborhoods throughout the city. Thank you.*

*Again, thanks for all the good work at the Planning Commission,  
Alice Lockhart, 350 Seattle*

---

*Share The Cities Action Fund supports Councilmember Morales's proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, and we want these to be implemented as soon as possible to push the Comprehensive Plan update in the direction it must go, in alignment with the Seattle Planning Commission Neighborhoods for All report, that Seattle neighborhoods should be welcoming to non-drivers and provide everyday needs and services within a 20-minute walk or roll from every residents' home.*

*Please fight for more funding in the budget for OPCD so that we can start the EIS process ASAP. We need a Seattle Within Reach and we can't wait to get this work started.*

Laura Loe

Share The Cities Action Fund

### **Action: 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments docketing recommendations**

John Hoey, Seattle Planning Commission staff, reviewed the Commission's final draft docketing recommendations for the proposed 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan amendments. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan can only be amended once per year. The Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan happens every 8 years. Procedures and criteria established in City Council Resolution 31807 are used for consideration of proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the annual "docket." The

proposed amendments are reviewed independently by the Planning Commission, the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), and City Council Central Staff. These entities determine whether the proposed amendments should be recommended for further analysis based on whether they meet all the docketing criteria, not on the merits of the amendments.

Mr. Hoey stated that the City Council received five amendment forms for the 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan amendment process, including one proposed Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendment and four proposed text amendments. The proposed amendments and final draft recommendations are as follows:

#1: Essential Daily Needs

- Not recommended for docketing, citing criterion B (5).
- This amendment is better addressed through another process, specifically the Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan.

#2: Equitable Urban Forest Canopy

- Not recommended for docketing, citing criterion B (5).
- This amendment is better addressed through another process, specifically tree protection regulations and the Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan.

#3: 4822 S Holly St.

- Not recommended for docketing, citing criterion G.
- A FLUM amendment is not necessary when it would affect an area less than a full block in size and adjacent land is the same or compatible. This parcel is less than a full block in a Neighborhood Residential area. All adjacent parcels are designated on the FLUM as Multi-Family Residential.

#4: Urban Freight Delivery

- Not recommended for docketing, citing criterion B (5).
- This amendment is better addressed through another process, specifically the Seattle Transportation Plan.

#5: Interbay and East Magnolia

- Not recommended for docketing, citing criterion B (5).
- This amendment is better addressed through another process, specifically the Industrial and Maritime Strategy and West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions station area planning.

Mr. Hoey highlighted a revision to the Commission's recommendation for proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment #1: Essential Daily Needs, as follows:

"The applicant is proposing to amend the Land Use Element to allow for uses that serve residents' everyday needs within a quarter mile of their homes. Although there is strong support among Planning Commissioners for the intent of this amendment, per the criteria for docketing proposed amendments

for further study, Commissioners believe this proposal would be better addressed through another process (criterion B5), specifically the Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan currently underway. The Planning Commission have included a recommendation to study the benefits and impacts of essential daily needs policies in our forthcoming scoping comment letter on the Comprehensive Plan Major Update Environmental Impact Statement.”

Mr. Hoey stated that the Commission’s 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan amendments docketing recommendations will be considered, along with recommendations from OPCD and City Council Central Staff, at a City Council Land Use Committee briefing and public hearing on July 27.

**ACTION: Commissioner David Goldberg moved to approve the 2022-2023 Comprehensive Plan amendments docketing recommendations letter. Co-Chair Jamie Stroble seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed. Commissioner David Goldberg abstained. Commissioner Rose Lew Tsai-Le Whitson stated that she approved of the Commission’s recommendations letter to avoid holding up the process but would have preferred to support a recommendation to move proposed amendment #1: Essential Daily Needs forward to the docket for further analysis.**

#### **Public Comment: Seattle Transportation Plan EIS Scoping Comment Letter**

Megan Kruse offered the following public comment in person.

*Good afternoon, I appreciate the Commission’s excellent letter encouraging City planners to expand the scope of the STP EIS and to focus on areas where the city can have real influence. One of these areas is urban freight policy. Density means more people, and people generate freight whether it’s delivered to a neighborhood business or, increasingly the case, to their front door. As we plan for growth, urban freight will increase exponentially to support denser, more walkable neighborhoods throughout the city. It is not just an urban center issue. Urban freight impacts climate change, safety, equity, and jobs; all of which are stated priorities in the STP and Seattle One Comp Plan update, yet urban freight is not addressed in either scoping document. Here’s why urban freight needs to be an integral part of both the STP and One Seattle 20-year planning roadmaps.*

#### Climate change and safety

*Nationally, the EPA estimates the transportation sector is the biggest single generator of GHG emissions at 27%. This pie chart link shows over 80% of transportation GHG emissions come from trucks. Urban freight was growing at double digits before the pandemic. Locally, a 2018 UW study commissioned by the City predicted that without any increase in population, urban truck deliveries would double by 2023. Due to the explosion of online deliveries during COVID 19 we’ve likely passed that timeline.*

*More recently, another UW study shows trucks in the city center circling up to 18 extra minutes searching for places to unload. As they cruise city blocks, they release more emissions and increase interactions with pedestrians and cyclists. This puts pedestrians and cyclists at heightened risk. This 2019 study states freight-involved injury and fatality rates are rising faster than those from overall road traffic--and these accidents are increasingly occurring on local roads and arterials. The authors call on policymakers to use this information to understand the changing patterns of freight-related safety issues and ensure space is allocated for urban freight.*

*Lack of planning for urban freight is taking a measurable toll on Seattle's environment. The 2021 national Urban Mobility Report produced by Texas A&M Transportation Institute ranks Seattle 15th in annual truck delays and dollar costs from congestion. It ranks the city 11th in excess CO<sub>2</sub> from truck congestion.*

### Equity

*A recent study offers detailed evidence that urban freight emissions disproportionately impact BIPOC communities. A consortium of US academic and NOAA government researchers found Seattle is among 52 US cities where low income and BIPOC neighborhoods are exposed to 28% more nitrogen dioxide pollution from freight traffic. Some of this is the result of historic action but some is the result of current inaction with respect to managing urban freight. These impacts can be mitigated by infrastructure policy changes, but only if Seattle starts counting urban freight as a mode share.*

### Jobs

*Seattle is an historic port city and link in the national and international supply chain. Our businesses and consumers rely on freight deliveries every day. According to UW researchers, retail and wholesale freight movement in Seattle accounts for over USD 50 billion in economic activity and employs more than 62,000 people. For an activity so vital to our survival, it needs to be considered in our growth plan.*

### Bottom Line

*As stewards of the Comprehensive Plan, the Seattle Planning Commission is in the best position to recommend this occur. I respectfully ask commissioners to please:*

- 1) Request the STP and Comp Plan updates elevate the study of the movement of goods along with the movement of people.*
- 2) Encourage adding trucks and TNCs as mode shares to the Transportation element of the Comp Plan.*

*We must track and understand commercial vehicle volumes to create policies and designs that accommodate them. This will help manage their impacts, and support sustainable, equitable growth. SPC can provide leadership on this issue, simply by naming it in their recommendation letter today. I urge you to make this amendment.*

*Thank you.*

### **Action: Seattle Transportation Plan EIS Scoping Comment Letter**

<b>DISCLOSURES/RECUSALS: Commissioner Lauren Squires disclosed that her employer, Nelson Nygard, is working on the Seattle Transportation Plan. She recused herself from the discussion.</b>
--

Mr. Hoey provided an overview of the Commission's final draft Seattle Transportation Plan EIS scoping comment letter. He stated that the Commission must take action on the letter at this meeting to meet the Seattle Department of Transportation's July 16 STP EIS scoping comment period deadline. He reviewed the content of the final draft letter according to the following outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Developing Appropriate Scenarios for Evaluation
- III. Centering Equity in the STP

- IV. Elements to be Evaluated
- IV. Future-Oriented Analysis

#### Commission Discussion

- Commissioners proposed one edit to the text of the letter as follows: “Rather than base the scenarios on electrification of private vehicles, the Planning Commission recommends developing two replacement alternatives based on the scale and nature of future “mode shift” and associated vehicle miles traveled estimates per scenario.”

**ACTION: Co-Chair Jamie Stroble moved to approve the Seattle Transportation Plan EIS scoping comment letter with the suggested revision. Commissioner David Goldberg seconded the motion. The motion to approve the letter passed.**

#### **Discussion: Draft Comprehensive Plan Major Update EIS scoping comment letter recommendations**

Olivia Baker, Seattle Planning Commission staff, provided an overview of the Commission’s draft Comprehensive Plan Major Update EIS scoping comment letter recommendations. She stated that the draft letter was based on a briefing on the EIS alternatives by OPCD and initial Commission discussion at the June 23 meeting. The goal is to approve a final draft of the EIS scoping comment letter at the July 28 full Commission meeting. Ms. Baker reviewed the five draft EIS alternatives and introduced the following staff draft recommendations:

#### Criteria for shaping the alternatives

- I. Quantify displacement risks & evaluate how anti-displacement strategies could perform under each alternative
- II. Analyze alternatives that base growth on existing infrastructure for equitable access and distribution to avoid exacerbating historical patterns
- III. Balance housing growth with commercial & services growth
- IV. Assign a range of housing growth targets that prepare for a variety of growth scenarios
- V. Expand the Broad and Combined alternatives to study higher density in more areas
- VI. Include equitable access in the selection criteria for new urban villages and small nodes
- VII. Clarify and define concepts such as “amenities” and “transit corridor”

#### Environmental Analysis Considerations

- I. Assess the impact of each alternative on public health outcomes
  - a. How will alternative impact racial inequities in risk factors such as exposure to pollution and excessive heat or access to open space?
- II. Analyze climate change impacts and considerations for each alternative
  - a. Risk of new growth in areas at risk of frequent flooding in future
  - b. Impacts of new growth patterns on resiliency of neighborhoods
  - c. Impacts of alternatives on City’s climate goals

### Communication Plan & Methods

- I. Clearly explain the role of the EIS vs. the role of the final plan
- II. Use people-centered framework to present alternatives & impacts
- III. Use visuals to clarify form of changes to built environment
- IV. Address common fears about growth and displacement up front
- IV. Describe tradeoffs between the alternatives and what that might look like on the ground for communities.

### 130th and 145th Street Station Areas

- I. The commission is pleased to see these station areas included in the EIS process for the Comprehensive Plan. We hope their inclusion will allow the areas to be designated as urban villages or nodes more quickly as it is important to study how they will fit into the overall growth strategy.

### Commission Discussion

- Commissioners commented on the criteria on displacement risk related to the statement of OPCD's intention to place additional growth in areas of low displacement risk instead of high displacement risk. Commissioners asked whether it would be helpful to specify other ways of achieving anti-displacement in areas of high risk. If we only focus growth in areas of low displacement risk, then we are potentially not investing in communities at high displacement risk. Perhaps there is a way to straddle that line and ensure we are being thoughtful about this.
- Commissioners stated that areas of low displacement risk are typically Neighborhood Residential zones. Those areas are at low risk because they have been zoned that way. High displacement risk areas include urban villages where the City has made investments and continues to make investments.
- Commissioners noted that the urban villages, especially in South Seattle, have received the burden of growth. Future growth needs to be spread out to areas with low displacement risk that have not experienced as much growth.
- Commissioners stated that the Neighborhoods For All report highlighted the following chicken and egg observation: if we continue to put housing density in proximity to transit, this does not encourage us to expand transit to other neighborhoods. Ideally, we would bring transit to all neighborhoods. We should elaborate in this document more than we have in the past.
- Commissioners suggested this could be addressed by citing our published issue brief on anti-displacement. There is more to this issue than just addressing growth to low-risk areas.
- Commissioners noted that the growth strategy includes a lot of policies that should be enhanced to protect vulnerable communities. Growth should be focused elsewhere rather than in highly impacted urban villages so that low-risk areas are receiving growth-related investments while other areas impacted by displacement receive community investments. With that approach, all areas are growing stronger, more inclusive, and more resilient.
- Commissioners suggested adding a sentence in the displacement risk/policy section recognizing that development investment and community services investment are not always the same.
- Commissioners suggested avoiding using the term "low displacement risk" as there are no low displacement risk areas. Ms. Baker clarified that wording came from the OPCD story map.



Commissioners suggested passing on that recommendation to OPCD, changing the term to “lower displacement risk.”

- Commissioners noted that the draft letter currently includes no reference to affordable housing and only one reference to low-income housing in ensuring Seattle aims to study ways to meet and exceed growth targets. An underlying assumption that will ensure a more affordable Seattle is to plan for housing choices at all income bands. That is one of the best ways to plan for displacement.
- Commissioners asked if housing choices at different average median income (AMI) levels are included in each of the growth scenarios. Ms. Baker stated that is something that could be requested in the scoping comment letter. Commissioners suggested that information could go in the section on growth targets (Section 1, part 4, bullet b).
- Commissioners stated that the scoping comment letter should cite Councilmember Morales’s proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment related to essential daily needs to ensure the intent of her proposal is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan EIS.
- Commissioners expressed interest in learning more about the kinds of buildings that are projected to be built (building type and income/affordability levels) in each alternative.
- Commissioners suggested that the Corridors alternative should be studied using the entire frequent transit map as opposed to only along arterials. Incorporating the frequent transit map into the Corridors alternative would cover most of the city.
- Commissioners suggested that the graphics OPCD has presented could be much better. The examples used by OPCD are building types that the City should not be considering. The examples of duplexes shown are raised one story off the ground and have garages facing the street. OPCD needs to be very careful of what building forms and examples they include. Portland does not even allow this building type, with the raised first floor to provide parking.
- Commissioners questioned whether some of the draft alternatives are sufficient for the growth projected. OPCD will have to demonstrate they have created sufficient capacity to accommodate the affordable housing need and appropriate housing types.
- Commissioners proposed the following revision to Section 1, 4b: “In addition to studying a broader range of projected growth, the EIS should consider whether each alternative not only provides enough new units of housing, but also adequate housing choices based on projected needs for growing populations such as the elderly, multigenerational households, low-income households, or first-time homeowners. The housing choices should include a higher number of homeownership opportunities than the current growth strategy. The housing choices should also explore the types of buildings produced and the range of affordability needs met under each alternative.”
- Commissioners suggested the following alternative revision: “In addition to studying a broader range of projected growth, the EIS should consider whether each alternative not only provides enough new units of housing, but also adequate housing choices based on projected needs for growing populations such as the elderly, multigenerational households, or first-time homeowners as well as the needs of low-income households. The housing choices should include a higher number of homeownership opportunities than the current growth strategy. The housing choices should also explore the types of buildings produced and the range of affordability needs met under each alternative.”
- Commissioners stated that the relationship between land use planning and affordable homeownership financing could dramatically expand opportunities for community land trusts and

limited equity co-ops because these often operate at a missing middle scale. We could ask OPCD to evaluate the potential of different strategies to create more opportunities for affordable housing and more homeownership options.

- Commissioners stated that the draft equity and climate change metrics (Objective 6) reference reducing exposure to air and noise pollution. This should also include people working in high exposure areas. Commissioners suggested that OPCD study impacts to those living and working in high exposure areas.

Ms. Baker asked Commissioners to submit any other comments or edits to this letter by July 21 so they can be included in the next draft to be reviewed at the July 28 meeting.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 pm.**