



City of Seattle

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

July 15, 2019

Seattle City Council
600 4th Ave
2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Members of the Seattle City Council:

As the City of Seattle embarks upon consideration of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, I urge you to consider the importance of protecting industrial lands and the diverse family-wage jobs that are supported by them. With a growing population and increasing housing demand in Seattle, there is ever-increasing market pressure to convert industrial lands to other land uses, such as multi-family residential, commercial developments, and additional high-tech job centers. As Mayor, I am committed to fostering an inclusive and resilient local economy, which requires readily available industrial lands. Like many of you, I am deeply concerned about any proposals that will lead to the decrease of land available for maritime, manufacturing, and industrial use.

Industrial lands are a backbone to support family wage jobs and necessary to build an inclusive economy for Seattle. Without question, housing and commercial developments are necessary and have greatly improved many areas of our city, meeting the needs of a growing city, creating vibrant neighborhoods and supporting thousands of new jobs. Land zoned for industrial use, however, supports many good and diverse family-wage jobs. Seattle's most recent study on industrial lands found 106,000 current industrial jobs in Seattle, representing 18% of total employment in the city. Over 67% of Seattle's industrial jobs require only a high school diploma or no formal education credential. In maritime industry clusters like fishing or water transportation, average earnings per worker are over \$100,000 a year.

The City Council's process for soliciting and considering amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to review and potentially amend the City's land use designations and policies to ensure Seattle remains a vibrant and healthy community in the years ahead. While there will be several important issues that will require our thoughtful deliberation as the process advances, I want to reiterate the importance of ensuring that our land use policies continue to support our dynamic maritime, manufacturing, and industrial sectors.

Cities that neglect their industrial base close the door to the important economic opportunities that lead to increased levels of innovation, higher wages, and economic growth throughout the local economy.¹ To build the city of the future, we need to take every opportunity to support local entrepreneurship and

¹ *U.S. Cluster Mapping* (<http://clustermapping.us>), *Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School*.

an inclusive economy. We need the conditions in place to attract investments from across the world and to ensure economic opportunities are inclusive and available to all. We need to ensure Seattle is home to a broad, vibrant local maritime, manufacturing, and industrial sectors that will provide a more diverse base of living-wage jobs, a more fertile landscape for entrepreneurs, and enormous opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of production and distribution.

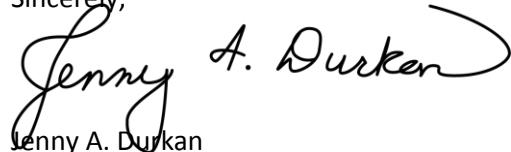
Moreover, our maritime, manufacturing, and industrial activities contribute to the city's identity; they are part of what makes Seattle – "Seattle." The Coast Salish people have lived in this region for at least 5,000 years fishing in waters that to this day provide both jobs and food for the people of Seattle. I'm proud that our success as a city is deeply tied to the industries that prosper here. From fishing, ship building, lumber mills, airplane manufacturing to the small- and medium-scale manufacturers of machine parts, apparel, and recreational goods sold around the world, the industrial activities supported by the city's industrial lands have long benefitted Seattle by supporting family-wage jobs and promoting economic diversity. And today, some of our most innovative manufacturers are combining information technology, artistic design, and sustainable manufacturing practices to drive us forward.

It has been over 10 years since the City last enacted a significant update to our industrial lands planning framework. Given the amount of growth and change that has occurred in Seattle during the last decade, any changes to industrial lands in the City need to be the result of a comprehensive, citywide process. Industrial lands should not be carved up, diminished, or weakened by one-off plans.

In order to better plan for the future of Seattle's industrial lands, we will be convening a range of stakeholders to undertake a deliberative process that will review a range of issues that are important to supporting our vibrant maritime, manufacturing, and industrial sectors. We welcome your involvement. That process will include substantial involvement from both industrial and non-industrial stakeholders, particularly in those communities most likely to be impacted. We will review recent economic trends and forecasts, transportation and mobility changes, and any advances in industrial development that may inform our decisions. Only then can we be confident that any updates to our industrial policies are giving Seattle's industrial sectors the best opportunity to succeed.

While we are engaging in this process, I am aware that as part of the annual consideration of potential amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, there are several proposals related to the City's industrial lands. Until we can fully engage stakeholders in a truly holistic plan, I hope you will join me in opposing attempts to remove or modify the treatment of industrial lands in the City's Comprehensive Plan while the City's comprehensive and deliberative process is ongoing. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny A. Durkan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenny A. Durkan
Mayor of Seattle