



# City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

## Office of Planning and Community Development

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June 21, 2016

TO: City Council Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee

FROM: Tom Hauger and Patrice Carroll, OPCD

SUBJECT: Responses to questions about Seattle 2035

At the June 7 meeting of the PLUZ Committee, councilmembers raised a number of questions that we were unable to fully answer because of limited time. We appreciate being invited back to the June 21 PLUZ meeting and offer the following comments as responses to questions that came up at the earlier meeting.

*It appears that the new community engagement policies only apply to Growth Strategy because they are located in that element. Why not have a separate element on community engagement?*

The intention for the recommended policies is to broadly guide all city decisionmaking related to growth management, which is the central purpose of the Comprehensive Plan. In the Mayor's Recommended Plan, the policies are given prominence by being the very first policy section in the document. We can work with Central Staff to develop other options for how these policies are presented, such as a community engagement element that also includes policies about neighborhood planning.

*How are the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) growth projections (50,000 units in 10 years) and Comp Plan projection (70,000 units in 20 years) are consistent?*

The estimate of 70,000 net new housing units in the next 20 years comes from the King County Countywide Planning Policies, which assigns growth to each jurisdiction in the county. It represents the **minimum** level of growth the City must plan for. Through the HALA process, the City has established a more aggressive goal of 50,000 housing units in the next 10 years. If the City were to add 50,000 units in each 10-year period, that would total 100,000 units over the next 20 years, more than 40% above the 70,000 the City is required to plan for. Planning for and accepting this amount of growth would not be inconsistent with GMA requirements since there is no cap on the amount of growth the City can plan for. The Comp Plan EIS identified impacts and mitigations associated with growth of 100,000 housing units over the next 20 years. In addition, the City already has zoning in place that could accommodate more than twice that amount of housing.



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*With neighborhood-specific targets, we know how to make sure infrastructure in those places was adequate, but by switching to growth rates how will we know what infrastructure is needed?*

The Plan has specific growth estimates for each of the 6 urban centers. For the urban villages, the Plan assigns a growth rate to each village based on the village category, whether it is well-served by transit, and whether it has been determined to have a high risk of displacement and low risk access to opportunity. The growth rate indicates how much growth each village is expected to take over the next 20 years above its 2015 total. The Plan's Appendix provides those 2015 housing unit totals. **To provide the same level of information as in the current Plan, the City could add to the appendix a table that shows the number of units associated with the growth rate for each village.** The EIS for the Plan can be used to help identify potential impacts of that higher level of growth and can be used to estimate infrastructure demand.

*Why are growth estimates for South Lake Union and the University District lower than those adopted in 2015? Why did the number of jobs in the manufacturing/industrial centers double?*

The numbers adopted in 2015 were based on continuing the growth distribution pattern that occurred between 1994 and 2014. They did not reflect the analysis that was completed later for the EIS or any intentional policy choice to alter that pattern. The Mayor's Recommended Plan deliberately refocuses some growth to urban villages that are well-served by transit in order to take advantage of the transit investments. That resulted in some growth being reallocated from those two urban centers to some of the urban villages. PSRC completed an industrial lands study in 2015 that included long-term employment forecasts for industrial areas. Those forecasts estimate 3,300 additional industrial jobs in the Interbay/Ship Canal area between 2012 and 2040 and over 15,000 additional industrial jobs in the Duwamish/Tukwila area. While the time period and geographic areas for these growth estimates do not exactly match the Comp Plan's planning horizon or the MIC boundaries the estimates in the Mayor's Plan generally reflect those forecasts.

*We need more info about how these growth targets were estimated.*

Growth estimates, which are expressed in absolute numbers, for urban centers are based on the policy that collectively these centers are expected to absorb a significant portion of the city's total growth. Estimates for individual centers are based on:

- the role each center is expected to play in regional and city growth
- past growth trends
- the large amount of development capacity that current zoning provides in most of these locations
- the presence of major institutions

Growth estimates for urban villages are expressed as a growth above the current total level of development and are based on:

- Continuation of current policy to direct the majority of non-center growth to villages
- Assumption that hub urban villages will, on average, contain more development than residential urban villages

- Generalized growth trends seen over the past 20 years for each category of village (as shown in the Growth Strategy Appendix Figure A-1)
- Desire to locate more growth near very good transit service
- The intention to limit development pressure in villages that have both a high risk of displacement and low access to opportunity.

The growth estimates represent policy choices about desirable and achievable levels of growth related to the circumstances of the villages. These growth rates are not forecasts because growth forecasts for geographic areas as small as urban villages are not considered reliable.

*Please clarify the growth estimates for urban villages that do not have enough capacity to accommodate the assigned growth rates (e.g., Ballard, East Lake, Fremont, Green Lake).*

Yes, these urban villages do not have sufficient capacity to take all the growth implied by the growth rates assigned to their village type. In keeping with past practice, we assume that growth in these places would not exceed 80% of their estimated capacity.

*Building a compact pedestrian-oriented community around a future light rail station at 130<sup>th</sup> St. will take significant time, effort and work with the local community. What is the process for identifying and implementing characteristics necessary to create a successful urban village at this location?*

The public process for how to plan the 130<sup>th</sup> St. village should be a collaborative effort led by OPCD, with broad public participation from all segments of the community, and active involvement from other key City departments (DON, SDOT, Parks, OH, OED, SPU). A successful outcome would be agreement on an urban village boundary; a zoning scheme that provides enough capacity to accommodate at least 1,500 additional housing units and commercial services for the nearby area; and implementation plans for an appropriate level of City services (sidewalks, drainage improvements, affordable housing, business support, etc.)

*How does the Plan propose to align growth with public investment?*

Part of the mission of the newly established Office of Planning and Community Development is to help develop a method for prioritizing the City's capital investments. This will require coordination with the Budget Office as well as with all of the City's capital departments. In setting the priorities, factors will include the amount of growth that has occurred or is expected, the existing need for facilities, and equity.

*How do recommendations in the Mayor's Plan compare to the Council resolution that called for monitoring the Plan?*

Resolution 31536 in 2014 called on the executive to further develop a program to monitor urban village growth as part of the Plan update. Growth Strategy policy 1.4 directs the City to monitor development activity and to track changes in housing units, population and jobs in urban centers and urban villages and to evaluate whether development is consistent with the Plan. Policy GS1.5 directs the City to use the growth information and other information to make decisions for further planning or for making investments. Policy GS1.6 directs the City to monitor factors that will help identify areas with high potential for displacement of marginalized populations and small businesses. The Plan's Introduction identifies other factors that could be monitored – access to frequent transit, presence of sidewalks, and access to open space.

Many of the indicators cited in the current Plan's policy UV44 could not be monitored at the urban village level because data is not collected at a scale that would allow that. The indicators cited in the Introduction to the Mayor's Plan generally can be reported by urban village. The proposed amendment to UV 44 added an annual reporting requirement and community consultation to the monitoring process. The Mayor's Plan responds to that by saying "the City will report regularly on these indicators to help the public and elected officials judge the effectiveness of the Plan." See Attachment 1 for a more detailed comparison.

*Some areas with high risk of displacement still want growth (e.g., Westwood Highland Park). How can that happen?*

The growth estimates in Figure 2 and 3 reflect the City's aspirations. Overall the city is expected to grow by just over 20%. As described in the Plan, all urban villages are expected to grow faster than that. Some villages that have seen relatively slow growth in the past are expected to grow more rapidly in the future. For instance, the Westwood/Highland Park Urban Village grew by less than 17% in the past 20 years, but the Plan calls for it to grow by 30% over the next 20 years. In order to minimize displacement in areas of high risk, the Plan uses this somewhat slower growth rate to signal that more City intervention is needed in these areas, such as development of affordable housing, technical assistance for businesses, or other programs to enable current residents to prosper and remain in the community.

*Why aren't walksheds around stations in MICs not shown?*

The walksheds focus on transit service in urban villages, where the Plan is directing residential and commercial growth. Residential and commercial uses are the ones that people are most likely to access by transit on a daily basis. The walksheds that are displayed on the Future Land Use Map are intended to show areas beyond current village boundaries that are within a 10-minute walk, as possible areas where more opportunities for housing or commercial uses would put more people in easy reach of transit. The current boundaries of the Duwamish M/IC fully contain the 10-minute walkshed, and current policy strongly discourages housing and commercial uses in these areas.

*What is the goal behind "painting" the villages?*

Painting the villages refers to the proposal to designate all villages in the same category with a single color on the Future Land Use Map. For instance, all residential urban villages are shown as light blue. The goal is to indicate that the City's expectations for future development in urban villages are different than expectations for areas outside villages where the map shows designations for particular land use types (commercial, multifamily, single-family). The change provides very broad policy guidance that the urban villages are expected to have range of urban uses and to move away from the current map, which seems to imply a specific zoning pattern inside each urban village.

Every urban village is expected to be a mixed-use area. This does not mean that every parcel in an urban village will have mixed-use zoning – the FLUM is not a zoning map – but it does mean that these places are not the same as non-village locations. Individual zoning decisions will continue to be controlled by criteria that currently exist in the Land Use Code. A newly recommended policy also indicates the relative scales and densities of development that are expected in the different categories of villages.

*What do the dotted lines around some of the urban villages on the Future Land Use Map mean? Is the proposal to adopt a FLUM with dotted lines?*

The Mayor's recommendation is to use the FLUM to communicate the intention of building on the existing transit investments and to let the public know which areas the City is considering for potential urban village boundary expansions. The reason to consider boundary expansions is to include more land that has easy access to transit within the villages. The dotted lines are deliberately wavy to indicate that no precise boundary decision has been made. Decisions about the expansions would follow discussions in the communities about potential zoning changes in the expansion areas that would allow for more new development to be served by transit. It is intended that final recommendations about the expansions would be formulated through a public process that engages the nearby community. These recommendations could come as early as the 2017 annual amendments to the Comp Plan. Once a final decision about new boundaries has been reached, those boundaries would replace the dashed lines in the recommendation.

*Do the proposed policy changes strengthen protections outside UVs?*

One new policy explicitly states that the transition in height and scale between urban village development and other areas should occur inside the village. In other words, the inside edges of an urban village will have smaller structures than the center of the village, helping to taper development intensity toward areas outside the villages. The Plan could include additional policy guidance about limiting the scale of development outside villages.

*Please clarify the relationship between policies in Growth Strategy and Neighborhood Plans for urban center villages.*

The current plan designates urban center villages in three of the urban centers – Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill and University District. These places are important and distinct portions of urban centers, and they are useful areas for identifying local areas to plan for. However, there is no need for or advantage in having the separate category of urban village to describe these places, and the term 'urban center village' has proven confusing.

*How has the City incorporated the Equity Analysis into Seattle 2035?*

The Equity Analysis includes:

- Compiling indices of displacement risk and access to opportunity
- Categorizing locations in the city by their degree of displacement risk and access to opportunity
- Detailed review of current Comp Plan policies through an equity lens

Seattle 2035 incorporates the Equity Analysis in the following ways:

- Adjusting growth expectations for areas with high risk of displacement and low access to opportunity
- Incorporating about 130 policies that address equity, including calling for equity assessments of future City zoning actions; providing more housing options in places that have more access to opportunities; distributing public investments to address current

- inequities; consider disproportionate impacts of climate change on communities of color; and provide training opportunities for marginalized populations.
- Providing a companion Equitable Development Implementation Plan that provides short-term projects as well as an approach to longer-term systemic changes for addressing equity across City decisions. The short-term projects were identified through City work with communities in updating their neighborhood plans. As with other implementation actions, these place-based strategies are not identified in the Comprehensive Plan, which is a policy document that identifies principles and broad approaches.

Attachment 1 – Analysis of Proposed Amendment about Monitoring

<b>Previous Policy UV44</b>	<b>Mayor’s Plan</b>
Report on growth every three years (UV44)	Report regularly
Progress implementing Neighborhood Plans	No. DON used to maintain an “action matrix” to chart progress on all plans, but staff resources were insufficient to continue updates. OPCD assesses progress implementing neighborhood plans as part of its area and community development planning.
Housing units by UV	Yes (see p. 15)
Jobs by UV	Yes (see p. 15)
Housing costs, housing types by UV	No. Data not available by UV. Citywide housing data is collected and analyzed for major updates
Low income or very low income housing units	Yes. Income and rent-restricted housing units (see p. 15)
Crime rates by UV	No. Data not available by UV. SPD tracks crime data.
Transportation systems and use	No. Data not available by UV. SDOT collects data about mode share, traffic volumes, bicycle volumes and on-street parking availability.
Business types	No. FAS collects data on business licenses
Public Facilities, Services	No. Citywide data about public facilities is collected and analyzed for major updates and included in the Capital Facilities Appendix
Open Space	No. Citywide data about SPR parks, facilities and services is collected and analyzed for major updates and included in the Capital Facilities Appendix. SPR also collects and analyzes this data every six year to update their Park Development Plan.
Data on typical areas outside urban villages for comparison	OPCD’s growth report includes data about housing units and jobs in areas outside urban villages.
	Other indicators to be monitored regularly (see p. 15): Age Race HH Composition Access to frequent transit Presence of sidewalks Number of HH with access to open space
<b>Proposed Amendments to Previous Policy UV44</b>	
Provide annual briefing to Council each July	Growth Strategy policy 1.4 directs the City to monitor development activity and to track changes in housing units, population and jobs in urban centers and urban villages and to evaluate

	whether development is consistent with the Plan.
Provide results directly to Neighborhood Plan Stewards.	Reports will be available on OPCD websites. Notification of availability will occur through OPCD listserv and social media.
Work with community members to identify appropriate responses to growth report	Policy GS1.5 directs the City to use the growth information and other information to make decisions for further planning or for making investments. Policy GS1.6 directs the City to monitor factors that will help identify areas with high potential for displacement of marginalized populations and small businesses
<b>Proposed Amendment to add New Policy</b>	
When growth exceeds targets, City will redirect growth to areas that have not reached targets.	Policy GS1.5 directs the City to use the growth information and other information to make decisions for further planning or for making investments.