

Council Questions of Rico Quirindongo

Nominee for Director of the Office of Planning & Community Development (OPCD)

1. As Acting Director of the Office of Planning & Development (OPCD) since March 2021, what accomplishments are you most proud of and what has surprised you?

When I came into this position of leadership at OPCD, I was confronted by a circumstance where staff did not feel empowered to fully lean into the difficult challenges of the city that they saw in front of them. They did not feel the full reach of their voice, their strength, their vision, or their power. What I am most proud of since adopting the position of Acting Director is what we have been able to accomplish as a team. With my support and direction, we created a video series to document the great work of staff in the community, and by which we have begun to document and tell the stories of many of the incredible Equitable Development Initiative community-based organizations that we have the good fortune to call partners.

Supported by Council, we created a community engagement staff position focused on our Comprehensive Plan Major Update. We have expanded our reach into community, through our virtual engagement, our One Seattle Plan Update Engagement Hub, through our relationship with Community Liaisons and Community Based Organizations, community stakeholders, community leaders, volunteers, business owners, and families. We are doing planning and community development work by Leading With Equity, through earnest intent and engagement.

With our Industrial and Maritime Strategy, we are leading a discussion regarding support of workforce blue collar jobs and businesses, collaboration with Maritime community leadership, business, and landowners in our two Manufacturing Industrial Centers. We have been able to move a positive and important conversation for the city forward in a way that we have not been able to do in over 16 years.

We have been active supporters of downtown recovery and are partners on the Downtown Activation Plan. Our office is leading the conversation on office-to-residential conversion, as well as looking for rezone opportunities throughout our downtown core to promote development that can help energize the central business district as a place to work, live, and enjoy our beautiful city.

What has surprised me is the toll public service takes on the individual. OPCD is populated by forty-nine (and counting) incredible individuals of diverse backgrounds, whose wide-ranging talents make our work impactful and effective. I see a group of people who get out of bed every day inspired to execute on work to reverse the negative

impact of our terrible redlining past, to lean into the challenge of creating generational wealth opportunities for our BIPOC communities across the city, and who want to find meaningful solutions to provide accessible and affordable housing in the city for all. I have been surprised at how much of a toll the challenge of this work takes on staff, particularly our staff of color. It emboldens me to want to do more, and to do better.

2. What are your goals for the Office? What metrics will you use to measure success?
 - a. ***Collaborate with our fellow departments through our Capital Subcabinet and Equitable Communities Framework.*** *Through the work with offices and departments with whom we most closely partner: Office of Housing, Office of Economic Development (OED), and the Department of Neighborhoods (DON), we can model a policy development structure, community engagement, and a streamlined capacity-building and granting pipeline for initiatives where community input and need directly informs where and how we invest. This does not just extend to community investment and initiatives—there is a strong nexus to how we leverage infrastructure and capital dollars for public benefit, prioritizing individuals, families, and organizations providing public service that have traditionally been under-resourced. OPCD would like to work with our capital departments and Capital Budget Office through the Equitable Communities Framework working group we are developing and the larger Capital Subcabinet to develop mapping and tracking tools that will allow us to consistently prioritize and evaluate our investments through an equity lens.*
 - b. ***Create a path for Equitable Housing for all and Resilient and Sustainable neighborhoods.*** *Through our One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Major Update community engagement and work with the Mayor’s Office and SDCI, we will create a rubric that allows us to quantify where missing middle housing production gaps are across the city. We will look at where we can incentivize development of infill housing, townhome, and multifamily development and how we can remove barriers to building affordable housing. Working with OED and OSE and using the Social Determinants of Health as a framework for evaluation, we will begin to assess what resources are needed or are missing from communities across the city. We will develop a land-use strategy intended to ensure that all in the city have access to housing, are within walking distance of transit, parks, educational opportunities, and retail and grocery establishments that support households and families. Success will be measured by the investments made by both public institutions and the private sector in response to modified and updated zoning that we put in place.*

c. Furthering our City's Equitable Development goals and Support Generational Wealth Opportunities. *Six years ago, the Equitable Development Initiative (EDI) was created to respond to community leaders clearly identifying lack of access to sufficient financial resources to put toward built environment projects led by culturally diverse organizations. EDI is a program specifically designed to mitigate displacement pressures, especially for BIPOC organizations in communities of color. The program is successful and is achieving the goals that were laid out by the founders of this effort. Through EDI, we prioritize and ensure that organizations across the city achieve ownership of modern, permanent, quality spaces out of which they provide services that support community. The program as it currently exists, however, is not enough to offset the increase in cultural displacement pressures that families, particularly of color, experience as the organizations that serve them continue to be displaced from the city.*

3. What currently are the biggest challenges for the city's long term planning goals? What is guiding you in your work?

The biggest challenge that I see in our city's long term planning goals is twofold: (1) accommodating the continued growth of our city population and the deficit of sufficient housing stock to serve our communities and (2) creating generational wealth opportunities for our communities of color. I am guided by our Mayoral vision for One Seattle, the vision to create one city where all have a place, are valued, and can afford to live, work, and thrive. I am also inspired by Gregg Colburn and his book 'Homelessness is a Housing Problem' which provides a strong data driven rationale for how our underproduction of sufficient housing stock pushes lower income families out of the city limits and contributes to the growth of our homeless population.

4. As Seattle grows, a constant issue has been balancing the need to integrate urban transformation, development, and infill into established neighborhoods. How does Seattle need to shift to grasp the opportunities and offset the drawbacks of growth? How can we better balance our need to become a modern, accessible, livable city while preserving the unique characteristics and histories of our communities?

Seattle is a city of unique and wonderful neighborhoods and communities that call them home. Growth needn't conflict with neighborhood vitality. The issue of importance that we have to balance as a part of the implementation of our City's Comprehensive Plan is one of scale and response to existing context. We live in a city of 750,000 people that will likely increase to a million people in the coming decades. With our region's geographic constraints, and with the state and regional commitments for the city to do its part in accommodating growth, we must continually seek new ways for Seattle to welcome new residents and businesses. We will need to increase our housing stock in order to keep up with that job growth so that people that work in our city can also live here. Those homes will need to be accessible to people at all education and income levels to match the diversity of job availability that makes our city function.

Our neighborhoods will need to add density, but there are many tools at our disposal to accomplish this in a thoughtful and intentional way – part of an evolution of our current

built environment. Our Neighborhood Residential zones, in particular, will now have to add a wide range of missing middle housing types that can complement our current housing while providing more affordable homes for small and larger households, families, seniors who want to remain in community, and many others. This is a continuation of the transformation begun with the adoption of new ADU/DADU regulations several years ago. In accordance with State legislation which recently passed mandating greater density, and as we consider zoning changes for even more housing choice in our neighborhoods, we will design our standards to promote the types of housing we most need, while achieving important design outcomes, including opportunities to retain existing homes alongside infill development.

We already ensure through our land use and building code that development of ADUs and DADUs fits into the existing context of our neighborhoods. As we look at the potential for greater density at existing neighborhood business nodes and transit corridors and in neighborhoods across the city, we will also need to establish code parameters that ensure that new developments and adaptive reuse of existing buildings take their height, bulk, scale, and building character cues from their surrounding context.

5. What needs to occur for Seattle to adopt a 15-minute-city framework that encourages walking, biking, transit, and local amenities – either throughout the entire city or piloted in certain areas?

A key goal of the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update is to promote the elements of a “15-minute city” or what we prefer to call a city of complete, connected, and equitable neighborhoods. Our plan will address a three-part strategy.

First, we can provide more housing opportunities within an easy walk (or, in some cases, bike ride) of the kind of amenities that meet people's everyday needs. We can identify where those amenities are located, areas that already have characteristics of a “15-minute” neighborhood and focus new housing growth alongside our existing commercial nodes, parks, schools, and other community assets.

Second, we can make it easier to provide new businesses and other non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods where currently people must use a car to access everyday needs that are lacking in their immediate surroundings. Allowing “corner stores”, home-based businesses, and services such as childcare can be incorporated into how we plan for land use in our urban neighborhoods.

Third, a “15-minute” neighborhood cannot function without safe and convenient pedestrian infrastructure, bicycle facilities, safe streets, and a healthy environment for small businesses. We know that gaps and chronic disinvestment in many communities today are challenges in achieving our vision for the future. That is where key partnerships between OPCD and other departments, such as SDOT, OED, and Parks, are crucial as we implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Finally, all of this work must be accomplished in partnership with community, through robust engagement. Local communities best know their needs, challenges, and current assets to preserve and build on for the future.

6. Sustainability has been a core value of Seattle's Comprehensive Planning efforts since 1994. As we go forward, we will need to be more aggressive to proactively address climate change through adaption and mitigation, as well as prioritize resiliency measures to protect residents. What strategies will you prioritize so that Seattle will meet its climate change goals and prepare for climate change impacts?

OPCD is addressing climate change by working closely with key departments, especially OSE, SDOT, OEM.

Strategies to mitigate GHG emissions include 1) Encouraging future growth in locations near transit, 2) Expanding the locations where people can walk or bike to access daily needs, and 3) Ensuring land use is coordinated with transportation infrastructure and other community assets. We can also promote a more energy efficient building stock that can support a transition to low carbon energy.

Strategies to adapt to climate change include 1) protecting and enhancing tree canopy, environmentally critical areas, and other vulnerable locations and 2) identifying and mitigating the impacts on frontline communities that are at heightened risk of harm from climate change.

The One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update will include a more robust and integrated set of policies that address both mitigation and resilience in a new dedicated chapter (element) of the plan.

We are also working now to create a more equitable response to climate change. One key example is OPCD support for the Duwamish Valley Partnership to plan and implement adaptation strategies especially those to adapt to sea-level rise, flooding, extreme heat, and air pollution. Because much of the land in Seattle that will be affected by sea level rise this century is in the Duwamish Valley, the Duwamish Valley Program obtained a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant to establish a vision and strategy for equitable sea level rise adaptation —in partnership with the impacted communities — as part of a holistic strategy in support of creating a Duwamish Valley Resilience District. This work could serve as a model for other climate adaptation work throughout the city.

Other examples include promoting green infrastructure in capital projects and the funding the EDI program provides to community organizations for projects that support community capacity and resilience.

7. The Office of Planning and Community Development reports to the Mayor and submits workplans to the City Council. Should there be a policy difference, how do you see your role in reconciling differing policy preferences between the Mayor and the Council? What is your style in finding opportunity to bridge divides?

OPCD is an Office of the Mayor, but the relationship that we have with City Council is critical and vital, particularly thinking of the planning function that is a central mission of our office. We submit a high-level work plan to the Mayor's Office which becomes part of an overall work program every year for the Mayor's Office and the Cabinet. In addition, we create a more detailed workplan for each of our office divisions that we share with City Council in the first quarter of every year.

When there are, at times, policy preference differences between the Mayor and City Council, it is important for us to determine how we can proceed such that policy work is not impeded and we are all able to move forward with legislation that is often required. Sometimes that means legislation will come down from the Mayor's Office for Council consideration and amendment. Other times that may mean working with Councilmembers and Council staff to provide technical support for prospective legislation that will be put forth by Councilmembers directly and not from the Mayor's Office.

We collaborate with Councilmembers on program work and prospective legislation. We regularly put together 'roadshows' regarding specific bodies of work to bring to Councilmembers for input. In addition, any time a Councilmember comes to us with a suggested work program or legislative proposal, we want to learn more about the opportunity, and will set aside time to work with you and staff to explore the issue presented. Finally, with Statements of Legislative Intent, we will always make sure that our work is responsive to Councilmember interests and direction.

8. What is your overall philosophy towards management of your team? Specifically, describe your philosophy towards managing a team, developing and implementing a department budget, addressing internal personnel issues, and ensuring that work plans are followed.

Philosophy towards managing a team: *It is critically important to me that everyone on my team understands their role and responsibilities. Just as important is that staff feel trusted and valued—everyone's opinion matters and everyone is at the table for a reason. Each of my Management Team members owns a body of knowledge, a body of work, and a staff complement that support that work. I support everyone on my team to not only take ownership of the work in their division, but I also encourage collaboration, so that divisions support each other. With engagement of community and leading with equity as drivers of our work, communication and collaboration are critical to our success. Along those lines, we have developed Vision/Mission/Values documents, along with a Community Engagement Ethos to ensure that we are all operating from the same playbook and rowing in the same direction.*

At a tactical level, we have strengthened work planning practices to better manage staff needs and workflow. My staff are expected to be fully engaged in meetings: our meetings have clear agendas, timelines, and action items. We have a weekly Management Team meeting and regular staff meetings on all projects. My deputy director and I each are executive sponsor to upwards of 20 major projects to ensure that they all receive adequate oversight and attention. I have the good fortune of working with a staff team that bring incredible passion, enthusiasm, and energy to their work—I pride myself on providing them with the leadership, strategic direction, confidence, and support to continue to be successful.

Developing and implementing a department budget: *It is important for me to convene a transparent and collaborative process with both managers and staff.*

We begin discussing budget implications and strategies at the beginning of the new year. Once we start budget season in March/April, we share our CBO/MO/OPCD internal coordination calendar with both managers and staff. We ask all managers to coordinate with their staff to ensure that if there are upcoming project needs, we can vet them internally and after workshopping can put forth well-considered recommendations for Mayors Office consideration. We work closely and collaboratively with CBO to ensure they understand the purpose, intent, and depth of need for all budget modification requests.

Addressing internal personnel issues: *Nothing is more important to the inner functioning of an office than understanding and accepting the responsibility of managing office staff needs and issues. I have weekly meetings with both my deputy director and HR liaison to keep on top of all HR issues. I also meet with Division Managers one-on-one weekly to ensure their work is progressing and that staff needs are met. During these touch points, I have the opportunity to check in to see how they are doing and how their staff is doing—both productively and emotionally. Personal issues with staff increased during the pandemic, and I have spent a great deal of time supporting an inclusive and resilient office culture. Part of that focus involves one-on-one meetings with all staff twice a year to maintain connection, particularly people with whom I am not working directly on project work. I also work with my deputy director and management team to convene regular All-Staff meetings and all staff / team workshops to address mental wellbeing, equity issues, team communications, and anti-bias training.*

Ensuring that work plans are followed: *To be successful, everyone in the office must understand the resources available to them and the parameters that shape the work: the constraints, timelines, and dollar amounts. For this reason, we ensure that we start off every year with a review for staff of what is in our budget for the year and who is responsible for what bodies of work including any Statements of Legislative Intent. We also periodically check in on budget and commitments throughout the year. I develop a work program for the year with the Management Team that is reviewed internally with staff and then externally with the Mayor's Office and Council. This year, we are adding a*

new productivity tool, Asana, to build an internal, sharable database of our work program and to support project-level work planning that will improve our staff management and tracking. Beyond my regular cadence of meetings where I track project progress, we ensure that both roadblocks and opportunities are understood and communicated out regularly so that we can stay on top of the work and course correct when needed so that we can continue creating quality work product.

9. Please discuss how you will further incorporate the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative into the Office and into your leadership. How will you improve racial equity outcomes through your management of OPCD?

Leading with Equity Team: *The Leading with Equity (LWE) Team is a group internal to OPCD focused on imbuing RSJ and racial equity considerations into our work program and office culture. LWE has worked on the language that appears in our job hiring and advertising documents, developed an onboarding process that considers a broad set of experiences and backgrounds, and helped development of the Equitable Project Management Workbook.*

Change Team: *OPCD and SDCI operate a shared model of Change Team. This is the space where city-level RSJ and equity issues are discussed and advanced. I have periodic meetings with the Change Team co-leads to determine how I can best support their work. I also am able to learn of concerns that are happening beyond OPCD and at times have shared my ideas for how to better support staff with other directors.*

White and POC caucuses: *The caucus spaces are intended to be safe places for staff members to have authentic conversations about racial issues, personal development of racial equity skillsets, and times to connect authentically with peers. We have worked with the Office of the Ombud to ensure that the facilitation and expectations within the space are working well for staff.*

Trainings and Office Culture: *Both the management team and the entire OPCD staff have engaged in recurring training to increase understanding, deepen connection with peers, and increase accountability. The management team developed a charter through a facilitated process that was focused on collaboration with one another and accountability to staff. To advance the work, individuals on the management team had to embrace their differences that inform their experience and their projects. The Office of the Ombud led a number of popular trainings with tremendous staff participation focused on topics such as trauma-informed care and bystander intervention. These trainings centered cultural awareness and anti-racist behaviors. Staff also went through a series of trainings on exploring assumptions and being curious and open-minded when dealing with colleagues. All of these trainings were about trust building and creating a culture within the office where people are free to both call-out and call-in colleagues. As mentioned, the pandemic and the societal dialogue on race has created both an emotional strain and an insistence by staff that issues around racial bias be addressed. OPCD takes seriously that we must be responsive to those calls and make space for each*

member of our staff to be comfortable in how they show up to work.

10. Seattle continues to experience over a decade of rapid growth. However, this growth has contributed to the displacement of low-income communities and communities of color in Seattle. How will you approach managing growth and investment while protecting Seattle residents and businesses who are at risk of displacement to make sustained progress on equitable development? How will OPCD determine the geographic location and number of below-market rate residential rental units to inform the Comprehensive Plan development?

The One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update will be strongly informed by the successes and challenges the city has experienced over the past decade of rapid growth and continued displacement of low-income households and BIPOC communities. A primary goal will be to reduce market pressure by increasing the supply and diversity of housing options, especially lower-cost options for rental and ownership. Addressing housing scarcity is necessary, but not sufficient alone to enable Seattle to grow without displacing our most vulnerable residents and communities. Just as important, we will design our growth strategy to focus new residential development in low-displacement risk areas, while providing housing that is needed in high-risk areas to enable communities to remain in the city. An integrated anti-displacement strategy, informed by analysis and input from community and stakeholders, will accompany the Comp Plan update that we deliver to Council for consideration in 2024. Key tools we are exploring include inclusionary zoning to generate construction of housing for low-income residents (including MHA and other tools), targeted affordable housing investments, financial and zoning support for existing homeowners to build wealth and housing opportunities on their properties, and sustained funding for community-supportive investments in non-profit organizations, such as through EDI. The update will also explore new and expanded ways to help businesses and institutions stay in place through supports, grants, and technical assistance; policies to encourage smaller and more affordable commercial space; and flexible zoning for community-driven equitable development and anti-displacement projects.

OPCD, in collaboration with our EIS consultants, will use best available data to analyze the distribution, number, and affordability levels of rental units by neighborhood to inform the Comprehensive Plan update using data from CoStar, PSRC, Census, and OH. See below response to question 11 for more on displacement analysis and strategies.

11. Please outline any plans to ensure that the City's One Seattle comprehensive plan update will be adequately informed by analyses of the effectiveness of previously adopted displacement mitigation measures and risks of future physical, economic, and cultural displacement.

The Comp Plan EIS will include analysis of impacts on potential displacement under each of the growth strategy alternatives. This work will be informed by the Equitable

Development Monitoring Program which includes a dashboard of measures of displacement. We are also updating our composite displacement risk map for the city.

Development of anti-displacement strategies will be informed by economic analysis, input from communities most affected, and lessons learned from tools that have been successful in countering displacement, including OH investments and programs and community projects funded by EDI.

12. Public feedback is essential when creating our One Seattle comprehensive plan major update. How will you ensure all voices are heard, and everyone across our city is able to participate in a meaningful way? How do you give equal voice to those who have been historically marginalized with those who are adept at navigating city public involvement processes?

Community engagement is central to the mission and work of OPCD. Whether at a citywide or project-specific level, community input helps shape, guide, and implement OPCD projects and initiatives. Engagement makes us responsive to community needs, aligns us with community-driven practices, and ensures that our planning efforts are reflective of what communities need and want. Engagement can build relationships with communities that continue to grow and evolve even after a project is ‘complete’, ensuring that our office remains accountable and accessible to the communities we serve.

With the Comprehensive Plan Update engagement process underway, OPCD is demonstrating the effectiveness of how it designs and implements responsive, meaningful, and equitable community engagement. We have:

- Resourced partnerships with five community-based organizations (CBOs), each of which serves a BIPOC or other historically underrepresented community, to conduct deeper engagement in the communities they serve. The work of these CBOs reflects unique engagement strategies that are tailored to a diverse range of key underrepresented communities, toward a final deliverable that includes policy recommendations that OPCD will use to shape the draft Plan.*
- Worked with DON’s Community Liaisons to reach key communities including BIPOC, non-English speaking, immigrant, elderly, disabled, and unhoused populations. Like our CBO partners, our Community Liaison cohort co-created engagement strategies that met communities where they are, rather than asking them to come to the City.*
- Embraced the hybrid nature of engagement accelerated by the pandemic by creating a centralized online platform for all virtual Comprehensive Plan engagement. The Engagement Hub allows us to communicate about the Plan in plain-English, with a heavy focus on graphics. It is translated into all seven of Seattle’s Tier 1 languages. The platform is designed to make engaging around the Comprehensive Plan more accessible both in terms of where and when it is accessed—over 70% of users access the platform*

using a mobile phone—but also more equitable: 38% of Engagement Hub users self-identify as BIPOC—5% more than the current BIPOC population in Seattle itself.

City boards and commissions are also an important way to connect with community stakeholders. OPCD has met with almost 20 boards and commissions to brief them and to obtain their feedback and expert guidance on the Comprehensive Plan Update. Among these, we have continued to develop key relationships that have allowed us to deepen our engagement with key underrepresented communities. Of particular significance for the Comprehensive Plan engagement are Green New Deal Advisory Board, the Transportation Equity Workgroup, the Indigenous Seattle Advisory Council and Workgroup, and OPCD’s Equitable Development Initiative Advisory Board.

Finally, we are striving to be much more transparent about what we are hearing from community and how that feedback is shaping City policy. This includes regular report outs from each engagement phase and making unfiltered public input available on our engagement hub.

With our Comprehensive Plan engagement, we are building trust within communities that have been marginalized in the past as we craft and execute plans. We ask about and seek to respond to their needs, developing the relationships that will be essential to the effective implementation of this Plan Update.

13. Development is cyclical and we will most likely see a slowdown in the market or our economy, if we’re not already. Discuss your approach to planning and managing a Planning Department during an economic or real estate downturn.

Historically, Seattle has experienced ups and downs in the pace and amount of housing and commercial development. These cycles are inevitable and also unpredictable, as the last decade of sustained growth has shown. The work of OPCD is invaluable during the boom times, helping the city adjust to the pressures for new development while supporting communities that are at risk of displacement, but arguably more so during the slow times.

As an office we take a long-range view to planning for growth and supporting community. Troughs in the development cycle are often the best time to take on the long-range planning that prepares the city for future surges in the local economy. There is breathing room to take stock of what we learned from the last high-growth period, engage with community around a new vision, and put the tools (zoning, anti-displacement, capital improvement plans) in place. This can happen at the citywide and neighborhood scales.

Downturns are also periods of heightened vulnerability for low-income BIPOC communities, residents and businesses, who are often the ones who are most at risk of displacement. The work that we do through the EDI program is perhaps even more

important during these times, not only to support communities in the moment, but also to build the capacity and opportunity to benefit as a community when the inevitable return of growth and investment in our city returns.

We are, of course, very aware that the City budget is affected by development and economic cycles. As an office, we are well positioned to use our resources wisely in lean times, with flexibility to deploy our policy and community development staff to the projects and areas of focus that are prioritized to achieve the long-term value described above.

14. Please speak to any plans and strategies to incentivize the production of more housing – both market rate and affordable.

***Increasing housing production for all kinds of homes** (market-rate and income restricted; family-sized to micro housing; ownership and rental) is paramount to addressing the regional housing shortage and our affordability crisis. The most impactful way we can increase production is to increase zoning capacity in more areas, which we will do in a thoughtful way through Comprehensive Plan major update and station area and local planning with community.*

The One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update represents a major opportunity to increase the supply, diversity, and affordability of housing in Seattle. As part of this work, we will implement zoning changes to allow new types of housing in neighborhoods across Seattle, like triplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes and cottage clusters that offer alternatives to detached houses. We're also working to unlock more space for apartments and condos and microhousing, and to expand access near frequent transit and amenities, and we will create new walkable neighborhood centers.

While increasing the amount and variety of housing is critical for addressing housing scarcity, it's also insufficient for meeting the needs of low-income households and others not served by the market. OPCD is also working with partners to implement new strategies to create more income-restricted affordable housing. We will be discussing options for new requirements or incentives for affordable housing in newly rezoned areas, such as implementing Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) and new floor area bonuses for deeply affordable housing and equitable development projects.

***Housing Subcabinet – Tactical near-term changes.** We are working closely with the Mayor's Office and partner departments in the housing subcabinet on a broad range of actions to increase production. This will result in targeted near-term changes. In 2022, we sent down legislation with technical changes to increase townhouse production.*

We are working across three areas in the Mayor's Housing Subcabinet:

- 1 Quantifying our housing needs and setting measurable targets for meeting them*

- 2 *Collaborating across departments to remove barriers during permitting and construction*
- 3 *Identifying policy and regulatory changes needed to achieve our housing goals and targets*

The subcabinet is currently identifying various changes to make the development process faster and more predictable.

Separately, what policy options would you recommend to actuate more developers choosing to build affordable housing units on-site within new development (performance option) versus paying into the fund that supports future affordable housing development (payment option)?

Payment and performance both have value for the City's affordable housing objectives. The payment option lets the City produce more homes that are affordable because of leveraging non-City funds and allows us to fund types of units the market doesn't provide, like larger family-size homes and units for very low-income households with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income (AMI). Payment also allows small projects for which performance would not be feasible to contribute to our affordable housing resources.

Performance helps by producing income-restricted affordable homes in high-opportunity neighborhoods where the high cost of land makes it challenging to build subsidized housing. Performance also lets the private market create income-restricted homes concurrent with the nonprofit sector. We are exploring ways to support projects interested in providing affordable homes on-site through performance.

To increase performance we recommend periodically updating the relationship between MHA payment and performance requirements to ensure they reflect market conditions, which can help balance projects choosing each option. We are looking at creating modified MHA program requirements for small-scale developments that can make it easier for them to perform onsite. OPCD is working with the Mayor's office, Office of Housing and the subcabinet. Overall the program – which requires all new development to contribute to affordable housing – has been very impactful, bringing in \$75-\$110M per year.

15. How will OPCD incorporate urban forestry conservation and management into the One Seattle comprehensive plan?

The Comprehensive Plan Update represents an opportunity to study the impact that different approaches to growth could have on tree canopy over the next 20 years. This includes studying in an EIS potential new areas for growth and development in neighborhood centers, near transit corridors, and across neighborhood residential areas. In this work, we are committed to planning for needed housing growth in all

neighborhoods, while achieving a healthy citywide tree canopy and a more equitable distribution of the benefits that tree canopy brings to community.

The One Seattle Plan can incorporate additional goals and policies to support the work of multiple departments. For example, as OPCD develops potential new zoning code to allow more diverse housing in neighborhood residential areas, we are exploring how development standards can create opportunities and incentives for on-site open space that would allow retention of existing significant trees and/or planting of new trees. We coordinated our work with SDCI, who developed revised tree ordinance protections. The biggest opportunities for mitigation and enhancement of our tree canopy is on public land, and we are working closely with both SDOT and SP&R to make sure that the Plan provides direction on their investments in trees in the right-of-way and in our parks facilities.

Finally, our elevated emphasis on climate resilience in the One Seattle Plan, including a new climate element, centers the importance of tree canopy as mitigation for heat impacts, with a particular focus on the intersection of low canopy cover and BIPOC and other frontline communities.

16. Understanding our maritime industries are some of Seattle's oldest industries, how will you work to support our maritime and port sectors and help prepare our industrial sectors for the future through planning and community development?

In March 2023 we transmitted major legislation to Council that makes land use policy updates and holistic zoning changes to industrial zones. We expect Council to vote on the legislation by June. The changes respond to the consensus by a broad cross-section of stakeholders. We are proud that there will be action after years of stalemate about industrial lands. Changes will:

- Strengthen protections for maritime and logistics businesses in core industrial areas near infrastructure and ports, and clamp down on loophole development that has happened there;*
- Create new jobs-focused transit-oriented development in areas near our future light rail stations, that envisions a new innovative mix of light industry with technology and other uses.*
- Create healthier, greener, cleaner makers districts in industrial areas near urban villages and neighborhoods such as Georgetown, South Park and Ballard*

We are working closely with SDOT, Port of Seattle and the Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) to facilitate needed investments in freight infrastructure that can be woven into the Seattle Transportation Plan and its funding plan.

We are also working closely with OED and the Port of Seattle to strengthen equitable job training and access programs so good-paying jobs in maritime and industrial sectors are available to more women and persons of color than ever before.

17. Please briefly describe your vision for our city, your department as a whole, and for the staff who make your department run.

I believe we have a lot of work to do to make the City of Seattle more equitable. We need to ensure everyone has a voice, regardless of where they live in the city, regardless of what the level of income that they make, regardless of the color of their skin or the nature of their heritage. We need to ensure that anyone that works in the city of Seattle has the ability to earn a living wage. We need to ensure that for anyone that chooses to or wants to live in the city of Seattle, that they have access to an affordable place to live, whether they are renting or buying, and regardless of their level of income. We need to right the wrongs of our past, which are many, not the least of which is the terrible history of redlining, racial covenants and other racist land-use policies that were built into the regulatory framework for who was allowed to acquire property and own a home in our city. We must support our Tribal partners and our urban indigenous organizations to ensure that the First People of our city are able to be seen and be celebrated, and are able to live in comfort and pride, with the rich cultural traditions that are so grounded in the care of family, community, and place. We must create opportunities for our BIPOC families and business owners across the city to build generational wealth.

Through our programs at the Office of Planning and Community Development -- One Seattle Plan, Industrial Maritime Strategy, Equitable Development Initiative, station area planning and downtown subarea plan work, through our collaborations with our fellow City offices and departments, and through our partnerships with community and the Mayor's office -- we are invested in all of these visions and intended outcomes for all Seattle residents.

I am humbled by and grateful to the amazing, talented and diverse staff that make OPCD what it is; the incredible program work we are able to sustain, the heart, soul, and focus that our staff has in a true commitment for Leading with Equity and making certain that whatever policy work and community investments that we make as a department and as a City, that we do them in such a way that we are raising all boats, improving the places that people live work, and play, and that we are giving voice and power to those that have been traditionally unseen and under-supported. I want to ensure that my staff feel seen, feel celebrated, and feel empowered; to be who they are and who they want to be, to grow, to be challenged, and to be embraced.

I have never had any job more meaningful to me than this one as Acting Director of OPCD. I love Seattle and see that this is the most meaningful way for me to give back and to support the great vision that all of you have for this great city. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to answer your questions.

18. The Equitable Development Initiative is a community-born, anti-racist strategy to combat displacement. What are specific plans at OPCD to expand the scope of EDI to further combat historical redlining and in areas that benefited from racial conveniences?

We are doing a multitude of activities to expand the scope of the EDI program:

- *Building staff capacity by adding two FTEs this year to meet the critical needs of project management as the portfolio grows*
- *Co – Facilitating the Indigenous Seattle program and vision for indigenous communities regarding land use and the development arena in the Seattle proper*
- *Building the team’s legal aptitude regarding equitable contracting practices and partnership models including project sponsors, Community Development Associations and the City of Seattle*
- *Leading Land Use Policy Development centering EDI projects that are/have been directly impacted by redlining/racial covenants (High Risk of Displacement/Low Access to Opportunity) to support generational wealth building and access to resources that will support the development of Black owned properties (Equitable Zoning Pilot)*
- *Reimagining the EDI RFP Process with communities most impacted via surveying and engagement plan to evaluate the impacts of our investments within target geographic areas, marginalized populations, and their overall access to EDI funds (RFP Survey, and awaiting Division leadership for guidance)*
- *Continuing to build interdepartmental programmatic/funding alignment to support deeper/comprehensive project and neighborhood/place-based investments (OH/OED/OPCD SLI, Capital Sub Cabinet)*
- *Hiring a new Division Director/Manager this year who will co- create recommendations with the EDI Advisory Board, OPCD Director and City leadership*

19. OPCD aims to build economic vibrancy, climate resiliency, and meeting everyday needs within proximity of affordable home. As member of the C40 cities initiative, how will OPCD ensure that these investments are made in historically under-invested communities?

OPCD makes many of our project and investment decisions based on low access to opportunity and high risk of displacement mapping methodologies. We understand that these communities, which are often overlapping, have not received the same level of investment and planning. Our work is focused on making sure the distribution of our resources reflects this historical disinvestment and focuses on retaining the vibrancy and resiliency of our neighborhoods. OPCD remains committed to having our work be shaped by directing resources to under-invested communities and looking for opportunities within larger planning efforts.

Aside from the Equitable Development Initiative’s mission and the focus areas of the Community Planning program, OPCD has been working on refining how the Capital Subcabinet directs its work. Many departments rely on a version of the Race and Social Equity Index to inform decision-making around programming and investments—there

have been conversations convened by OPCD and CBO around how to use a shared methodology that would manifest through mapping that shows common areas of investment and open the potential for collaborative planning and capital investment. A current goal of the Subcabinet is to develop a shared understanding of where under-invested areas of the city lie and a workplan that focuses on synergistic opportunities to leverage planning and investment that centers these communities' needs.