

September 1, 2017

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee  
**From:** Eric McConaghy and Lish Whitson, Council Central Staff  
**Subject:** 2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

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On September 8, the Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee will discuss and potentially vote on amendments to Council Bill (CB) [119027](#). The bill would amend the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate changes docketed for consideration through Resolution [31682](#) in 2016.

This memorandum provides a brief summary of the Council Bill and summarizes and sets out potential amendments to the Council Bill for consideration by the PLUZ Committee

Amendments included with this memo may be modified or abandoned based on Committee discussion, further public comment and ongoing review. At the September 8, PLUZ Committee meeting, the Committee may vote on the proposed amendments and the underlying bill. Because of public notice requirements, the earliest the Full Council can vote on this bill is September 25.

### BACKGROUND

Resolution 31682 identified six potential amendments to the Comprehensive Plan for consideration in 2017. The amendments would:

1. Amend the North Rainier neighborhood plan and Future Land Use Map (FLUM)<sup>1</sup> to support multifamily development at S Holgate Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue S
2. Amend the FLUM to move property from the Eastlake Residential Urban Village into the South Lake Union Urban Center (note: this amendment has been withdrawn by the applicant)
3. Amend the FLUM to support multifamily development at S Columbian Way and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue S
4. Update the Neighborhood Plan for the Chinatown/International District
5. Amend the plan to support the long-term viability of Manufacturing/Industrial centers, included with this potential amendment is the consideration of two FLUM amendments
6. Add a policy related to air quality and land use

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<sup>1</sup> The FLUM is a generalized depiction of the City's desired future land use distribution and forms part of the policy basis for the Official Land Use Map, otherwise known as the zoning map.

The Executive has recommended adopting amendments 4 and 6. Work on amendment 5 is ongoing, and recommendations are expected later this year for consideration in 2018. The Planning Commission, in reviewing the Executive's recommendation, has also recommended adopting amendment 3.

### **POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL BILL**

Councilmembers and staff have identified three amendments for consideration by the committee:

**Amendment A** is a technical amendment, which corrects the name of the Parks and Open Space Plan. The Comprehensive Plan currently uses an outdated term to refer to that plan.

**Amendment B**, proposed by Councilmember Johnson after consultation with the Chinatown/International District (C/ID) community, would amend Goal 1 to recognize the history and importance of the C/ID. This proposed amendment expands on existing language to recognize the immigrants who have called the C/ID home and see the C/ID as the center of their community, particularly Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. The proposed amendment also recognizes the history of Native American and African-Americans in the C/ID.

**Amendment C**, proposed by Councilmember Harrell, would amend the FLUM to change the designation of the 2.6 acre block bounded by S Columbian Way, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue S and S Snoqualmie Street from Single Family Residential to Multi-Family Residential. This change is intended to facilitate the rezone of the property from single family to a multifamily zone and redevelopment of the site, which is currently occupied by a church and surface parking. The Executive recommended against this amendment for two reasons:

1. FLUM amendments are only appropriate for "significant changes" to "large areas" (policy LU 1.5). Because the proposed change is (1) to a 2.6 acre parcel and (2) from single-family to multifamily designation. OPCD's interpretation is that this proposal does not meet these criteria.
2. Designations of multifamily districts are most appropriate in areas that "either are predominantly occupied by multifamily development or are within urban centers or urban villages" (policy LU 8.1). The area under consideration is not occupied by multifamily development and is not within an urban center or urban village.

The Executive also stated that the City can consider a rezone of the site without a FLUM amendment.

The Planning Commission argues for the amendment for two reasons:

1. The site is larger than most single-family parcels in the city. It therefore should be considered a large area.
2. The change could allow an increase in density on the site from 17 single-family houses to 60 or 90 townhomes, which they consider a significant change.

There are three policy issues here that Councilmembers must decide. These choices will guide future review of Comprehensive Plan amendments:

*1. What does the Council consider to be a “large area”?*

The proposed map change would change the FLUM designation for a single parcel that covers a 2.6 acre city block. This is an average size for Seattle’s blocks. It is a large parcel compared to other single-family parcels. But it is a small area for the Future Land Use Map. By approving this amendment, the Council will be indicating that sites of at least 2.6 acres or one city block are considered “large areas” and merit a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

*2. What is a “significant change” in land use category on the FLUM?*

The FLUM contains eleven categories of uses:

- Urban Center
- Hub Urban Village
- Residential Urban Village
- Manufacturing/Industrial Center
- Single Family Residential Areas
- Multi-Family Residential Areas
- Commercial/Mixed-Use Areas
- Industrial Areas
- Major Institutions
- Cemetery
- City-Owned Open Space

For some changes, for example from Single Family to City-Owned Open Space, or from Commercial/Mixed-Use to Major Institution, the City has not required a FLUM amendment. The City’s zoning must be generally consistent with the FLUM. Changing the FLUM indicates an intent to change the zoning to be consistent with that change. That is more important when the change is significant. By approving this amendment, the Council will be indicating that future changes from Single Family to Multi-Family are significant changes.

3. *What is the relative weight the Council wants to place on different Multi-Family policies?*

There are two policies that most directly relate to this map amendment.

**Policy LU 8.1** states:

Designate as multifamily residential areas those places that either are predominantly occupied by multifamily development or are within urban centers or urban villages.

Because the area of the proposed map change is neither occupied by multifamily development nor within an urban center or village, this policy would indicate that a Multi-Family designation is not appropriate. However, there is another policy that may indicate that the Multi-Family designation, notwithstanding policy LU 8.1, is appropriate.

**Policy LU 8.10** says:

Designate lowrise multifamily zones in places where low-scale buildings can provide a gradual transition between single-family zones and more intensive multifamily or commercial areas.

The area proposed for a FLUM change is located between the Veterans Administration Seattle Campus and a single-family area. The proposed FLUM change could help provide a transition between the more intensive hospital use and the single-family zones south of the site.

How the Council chooses to weigh and balance these two policies will provide guidance to other applicants in the future.

**Attachments:**

1. Amendment A: Amendment to correct the name of the Parks and Open Space Plan
2. Amendment B: Amendment to the Chinatown/International District Neighborhood Plan
3. Amendment C: Amendment to the Future Land Use Map for Columbian Way

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Central Staff Director  
Ketil Freeman, Supervising Analyst

**Attachment 1:**  
**Amendment to correct the name of the Parks and Open Space Plan**

**Amendment 1: Amendment to the Parks and Open Space Element to correct the name of the Parks and Open Space Plan**

Amendment: Amend Parks and Open Space Policy P1.2, in the Parks and Open Space Element of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan, to replace "Park Development Plan" with "Parks and Open Space Plan" to correspond to the current name of the City's 6-year plan for parks and open space.

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**P 1.2** Provide a variety of parks and open space to serve the city's growing population consistent with the priorities and level-of-service standards identified in the City's Parks and Open Space Plan (~~(Park Development Plan)~~).

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**Amendment 2: Amendment to Chinatown/International District Neighborhood Plan Goal 1 to reflect the neighborhood's history and diversity**

This amendment would expand Goal 1 of the Chinatown/International District neighborhood plan to recognize the neighborhood's history and current role as a center of many immigrant communities in particular the Chinese, Filipino, Japanese and Vietnamese communities, and its role in the history of Seattle's Native American and African-American communities.

Double underlines indicate language proposed to be added through this amendment. ~~Double strikeouts~~ indicate language that would be removed from the Council Bill. Single underlines and ~~strikeouts~~ indicate amendments to the Neighborhood Plan included in CB 119027.

**Chinatown/International District**

**CULTURAL & ECONOMIC VITALITY GOAL**

**ID-G1** Support the ~~((F))~~ thriving businesses, organizations, and cultural institutions of the Chinatown/International District and recognize the neighborhood's rich and vital history as home to and center of many of the city's immigrant communities including the Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, and Vietnamese communities and as a historic center of the Native American and African-American communities in the city.

**CULTURAL & ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES**

**ID-P1** Work with the Chinatown/International District community to strategically coordinate plans, programs and projects to better support thriving businesses, organizations, and cultural institutions in Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon areas.

**ID-~~((P1))~~ P2** Support marketing activities that promote neighborhood businesses, events, and cultural opportunities.

**ID-~~((P2))~~ P3** Work with the Chinatown/International District community to develop business improvement strategies to encourage greater customer patronage of individual businesses.

**ID-~~((P3))~~ P4** Encourage new business development and location within the neighborhood.

**ID-~~((P4))~~ P5** Emphasize nighttime activity to tap into a new market for businesses.

**ID-~~((P5))~~ P6** ~~((Support development of a))~~ Enable greater access for the neighborhood's residents and employees to the neighborhood's multipurpose community recreation center, library ~~((with space for community programs and associations))~~ and other public amenities.

**ID-((P6)) P7** Improve utility infrastructure, when appropriate, to support community needs.

**ID-P8** Work with the Chinatown/International District to develop anti-displacement strategies to maintain, or, if possible, increase availability of affordable commercial space in Chinatown, Japantown, and Little Saigon areas.

**ID-P9** Work with the Little Saigon community on strategies to strengthen its culturally-based neighborhood identity.

## **HOUSING DIVERSITY & AFFORDABILITY GOAL**

**ID-G2** A neighborhood with diverse and affordable housing.

## **HOUSING DIVERSITY & AFFORDABILITY POLICIES**

**ID-((P7)) P10** Seek to diversify housing stock to include more moderate-income and family housing.

**ID-((P8)) P11** Seek additional affordable housing strategies to preserve existing low-income units and households.

**ID-((P9)) P12** Explore resources and strategies for upgrading existing substandard and vacant buildings.

## **SAFE & DYNAMIC PUBLIC SPACES GOAL**

**ID-G3** Create safe and dynamic public spaces.

## **SAFE & DYNAMIC PUBLIC SPACES POLICIES**

**ID-((P10)) P13** Support specific programming to deliberately activate the parks, especially Kobe Park.

**ID-((P11)) P14** Look for ways to incorporate design elements for crime prevention throughout the neighborhood, especially in parks, parking facilities, and alleyways.

**ID-((P12)) P15** Increase pedestrian safety by adding additional stop signs and crosswalk striping, where appropriate.

**ID-((P13)) P16** Build on partnerships that can work together to provide additional pedestrian amenities such as pedestrian street lighting, street trees, street furniture, and informational kiosks that enhance the pedestrian environment.

**ID-((P14)) P17** Target Jackson Street, Dearborn Street, and Fifth Avenue for pedestrian improvements.

**ACCESSIBILITY GOAL**

**ID-G4** An accessible neighborhood, with access within and to the neighborhood, for all transportation modes, while encouraging less dependence on cars and greater use of transit, bikes, and walking.

**ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES**

**ID-((P15)) P18** Seek to reduce auto congestion at key intersections.

**ID-((P16)) P19** Work with Metro and Sound Transit to find ways to maximize service to residents, customers, and employees in the neighborhood.

**ID-((P17)) P20** Improve bicycle route markings and related bicycle facilities, including bicycle racks within the neighborhood.

**ID-((P18)) P21** Increase short-term parking opportunities within the neighborhood.

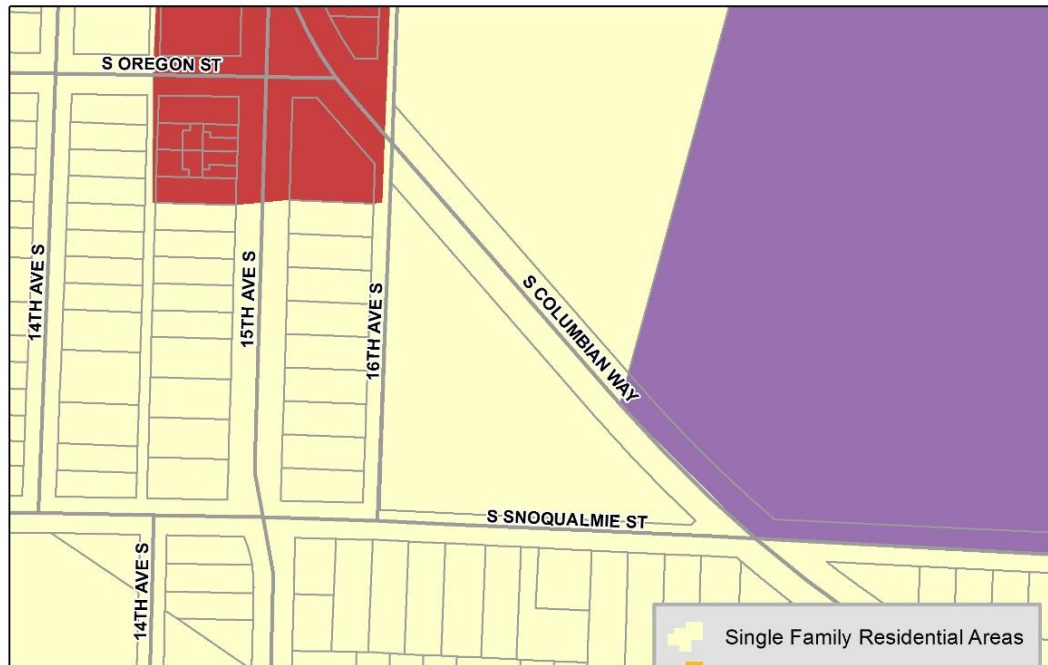
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**Amendment 3: Amendment to the Future Land Use Map to change the block bounded by S Columbian Way, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue S and S Snoqualmie St from Single Family to Multi-Family**

Amend the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to change the land use designation for the property addressed as 1625 S. Columbian Way from Single Family Residential to Multi-Family Residential.

Current Future Land Use Map (FLUM)



FLUM, with proposed amendment

