

MEMORANDUM

To: Councilmember Sally Bagshaw, Chair
Council President Bruce Harrell and Councilmember Tim Burgess
Human Services and Public Health Committee

From: Eric McConaghy and Lish Whitson

Date: July 7, 2016

Subject: Seattle 2035: Community Well-Being Element

On July 13, the Human Services and Public Health Committee will discuss the Community Well-Being Element of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan, also known as "[Seattle 2035](#)." The purpose of this memo is to provide an initial discussion and preliminary issue identification related to changes to an element of the Comprehensive Plan that are within the scope of the Committee's oversight.

Overview

The Community Well-Being Element provides goals and policies guiding Seattle's direct services and investments so that families and individuals "can meet their basic needs, share in our economic prosperity, and participate in building a safe, healthy, educated, just and caring community."

Washington State law governing comprehensive planning¹ does not require that Seattle include the Community Well-Being Element. However, since 1995, Seattle's Comprehensive Plan has included the Human Development Element, encompassing goals and policies regarding human services, public safety, education, cultural resources, and partnerships with other governments, the Seattle School District, non-profits, and community groups to provide these services (Ordinance 117906).

The proposed new element is substantially the Human Development Element of the current Comprehensive Plan, renamed and rewritten to make the language clearer. Key policy changes proposed for the element include:

- Added emphasis on local food production and access to healthy food
- Added emphasis on preventing violence
- Removal of policies regarding family planning and sexuality education
- Changes regarding homelessness programs and services

¹ Growth Management Act, [Revised Code of Washington 36.70A](#)

Discussion

Central Staff has identified the following as possible items for discussion based on a review of the Mayor's Recommended Plan, internal discussions, and testimony and letters provided to the Planning Land Use and Zoning Committee at a hearing on June 27.

1. Policies regarding family planning and sexuality education

The following policies dealing with family planning and sexuality education do not persist from the Human Development Element of the current Comprehensive Plan to the Community Well-Being Element of the Mayor's Recommended Plan:

- HDG8.1 Promote health and well-being of all women, children and families in Seattle by moving toward the elimination of unwanted pregnancy.
- HD27.1 Promote the availability of comprehensive family planning services for all Seattle residents, regardless of income, age or background.
- HD28.1 Encourage community support for family planning efforts such as making available age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education and increasing awareness of the community impact associated with unintended pregnancy.
- HD31.1 Encourage community support for family planning efforts such as making available age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education and increasing awareness of the community impact associated with unintended pregnancy.

Office of Planning and Community Development and Human Services Department staff recommend removing the above policies as too specific for the Comprehensive Plan. This is consistent with the general editorial approach taken by the Executive in preparing Seattle 2035.

The changes in policy language contrast with recent Council action. Last year, Council unanimously passed a resolution "affirming the Seattle's support for Planned Parenthood and recognizing its vital role in providing health care" ([Resolution 31624](#)). The resolution included pregnancy testing and counseling, comprehensive sexual education, birth control for men and women, emergency contraception and abortion services in the recitals of the many health care services provided by Planned Parenthood.

The proposed element does include Policy CW 3.3, directing collaboration with "Public Health—Seattle & King County, private hospitals, and community health clinics to maximize access to health care coverage for preventive care, behavioral health, and long-term care." This policy is consistent with Seattle's current practice and budgeting. Seattle's Adopted 2016 Budget allocated \$12.3 million for public health and Seattle continues to partner for health service through Seattle King County Public Health, as well as with other partners.

Council may wish to amend the Recommended Plan to clarify Seattle’s support for family planning and related services.

2. Policies regarding homelessness programs and services

The Recommended Plan drops a policy in the current Human Development Element that speaks to transitional encampments providing shelter for people experiencing homelessness. Council added the policy, along with other Comprehensive Plan amendments in 2012 ([Ordinance 123854](#)):

HD11.1 Guide the operation of safe and healthy transitional encampments to allow temporary shelter for those who are homeless.

The Recommended Plan adds or maintains the following policy language regarding homelessness services in the Community and Well-Being Element:

Adds

CW 2.8 Invest in services and programs that prevent homelessness, provide a pathway to permanent housing, and allow temporary shelter for those who are homeless.

CW 2.9 Place special emphasis on programs addressing those who are most vulnerable to homelessness.

Maintains, from current HD24.5

CW 3.5 Support access to preventive interventions at agencies that serve the homeless, mentally ill, and chemically dependent populations.

Related policies in the Mayor’s Recommended Housing Element deal with Seattle’s efforts to reduce homelessness:

H 5.1 Pursue public and private funding sources for housing preservation and production to provide housing opportunities for lower-wage workers, people with special needs, and those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

H 5.5 Collaborate with King County and other jurisdictions in efforts to prevent and end homelessness and focus those efforts on providing permanent housing and supportive services and on securing the resources to do so.

Central Staff recommends adoption of the proposed language as consistent with recommended best practices and supportive of the range of services that Seattle may provide to help people experiencing homelessness.

CC: Kirstan Arestad, Central Staff Executive Director
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