



Seattle City Council

Central Staff - Memorandum

Date: May 11, 2016
To: Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee
From: Eric McConaghy and Lish Whitson, Council Central Staff
Subject: Overview and Schedule for Council Review of Mayor’s Recommended Update to Seattle’s *Comprehensive Plan, Seattle 2035*.

I. Overview

The Mayor’s recommended update to the Comprehensive Plan, Seattle 2035, proposes goals and policies for managing growth in Seattle over the next 20 years--to 2035. The proposed growth management strategy is built on growth estimates of 70,000 new housing units and 115,000 new jobs in Seattle by 2035.

In general, the Mayor’s Recommended Plan increases the emphasis on race and social equity, plans for future growth integrated with transit service, and promotes the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda.

Over the next several months, the Council will be reviewing the Mayor’s Recommended Plan. This effort will include opportunities for Councilmembers to engage during briefings at most standing committees and at public hearings.

<i>date</i>	<i>Council Committee</i>	<i>topics</i>
May 17, 9:30am	PLUZ Committee	Overview, key ideas, top policy changes from draft
June 7, 9:30am	PLUZ Committee	Growth Strategy, Land Use Element and the Future Land Use Map
June 21, 2:00pm	Sustainability and Transportation Committee	Transportation Element
July 6, 9:30am	Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods and Finance Committee	Housing and Neighborhood Planning Elements
July 12, 9:30am	Civil Rights, Utilities, Economic Development & Arts Committee	Capital Facilities, Economic Development, and Arts and Culture Elements
July 12, 2:00pm	Energy and Environment Committee	Environmental implications and Utilities Element
July 13, 2:00pm	Human Services + Public Health Committee	Community Well-Being Element
July 20, 2:00pm	Education Equity + Governance Committee	Schools & Growth
July 21, 9:30am	Parks, Seattle Center, Libraries and Waterfront Committee	Parks & Open Space Element

The series of discussions will begin on May 17, 2016 during the Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee meeting with a presentation from Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) staff on the Mayor's Recommended Plan, highlighting the key ideas and top policy changes from the current Plan. In advance, you may refer to OPCD's description of the [changes in the Mayor's Recommended Plan from the current Plan](#).

In August, Council will begin discussing potential amendments to the Mayor's Plan in the PLUZ committee.

II. Background

Seattle first adopted the Comprehensive Plan in 1994, consistent with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA, RCW 36.70A, was adopted in 1990 in response to concerns about unplanned development in rural areas.

The GMA requires most cities and counties to prepare 20-year plans to accommodate growth in urban areas, and requires counties to draw "urban growth boundaries," outside of which development is limited. Further, it requires that the growth-related actions and development regulations of a jurisdiction be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan.

Consistency is also required between a local jurisdiction's comprehensive plan and regional plans, such as the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 and King County's Countywide Planning Policies. These regional planning documents provide growth estimates for local jurisdictions, and a regional framework for focusing growth in "regional growth centers," also known as "urban centers."

The GMA lays out requirements for Comprehensive Plans, including mandatory elements and a Future Land Use Map. In addition to these requirements, Comprehensive Plans may address other issues, at the discretion of each jurisdiction, such as neighborhood planning or arts and culture. Finally, the GMA requires early and continuous public involvement in all planning and land use decisions.

Under the GMA, Seattle may generally amend the Comprehensive Plan only once a year. The City has developed an annual docketing process ([Resolutions 31117](#) and [31402](#)) to elicit recommendations for amendments and to vet those proposals. The annual process for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 is running in parallel to the major update of the Comprehensive Plan. Council action on amendments arising from the 2015-2016 annual amendment process will happen in coordination with the review and adoption of the major update, Seattle 2035.

III. Council direction

In addition to allowing amendments annually, the GMA requires periodic review of the plan and the City's growth forecasts. Seattle adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1994 and most recently completed a major review of the Comprehensive Plan in 2004. In 2011, The State of Washington extended the City's deadline to complete its Comprehensive Plan review (major update) from 2012 to 2015.

In [Resolution 31370](#) (May 2012), Council, with the Mayor concurring, laid out Seattle’s approach to meeting the GMA deadline for the periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan. In [Resolution 31451](#) (May 2013), Council and the Mayor revised the approach.

In 2015, Seattle satisfied the periodic review requirement by adopting amendments including new citywide growth estimates (70,000 new housing units and 115,000 new jobs) and updated technical information related to land use, transportation, housing, and capital facilities. In addition, the Council revised housing policies and made changes to neighborhood plans related to annual amendments proposed by members of the public and City departments.

In May 2015, Council resolved, with the Mayor concurring, in [Resolution 31577](#) that Seattle’s core value of “social equity” should be reframed “race and social equity” and emphasized its importance as one of the foundations of the Comprehensive Plan. The resolution called for the update process to include an analysis of how the growth scenarios under consideration could have different impacts on marginalized people. Also, the resolution called for the identification of “quantifiable city-wide community indicators of equitable growth” to be measured over time and reported annually.

IV. Related Documents

- The [Final Growth and Equity Analysis](#) analyzes and reports on the impacts of growth on displacement and access to opportunity (see Resolution 31577 above).

The [Equitable Development Implementation Plan](#) is the Executive’s response to *Statement of Legislative Intent 32-2-A-1* (page 807 at this [link](#)). It provides strategies to implement the Comprehensive Plan in order to achieve a more just and inclusive City. Staff from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Office of Planning and OPCD briefed the PLUZ Committee regarding equity in Seattle 2035 and the Equitable Development Implementation Plan on [May 3, 2016](#). The second part of the SLI response, a financial plan, is due June 1, 2016 to PLUZ.

- The [Community Engagement Final Report](#) describes the Executive’s efforts to engage the community about Seattle 2035. OPCD briefed PLUZ on [April 19, 2016](#) regarding their outreach for Seattle 2035.
- Policy Crosswalk: Compares the current Comprehensive Plan to the Mayor’s Recommended Plan. Appendix to the [OPCD Director’s Report on the Mayor’s Recommended Comprehensive Plan](#) (Director’s Report).
- Other relevant documents: See page 3 of the [Director’s Report](#) for list of documents important to the development and explanation of the Mayor’s Plan, such as the Urban Village Study and the Final Environmental Impact Statement.