

MEMORANDUM

To: Councilmember Rob Johnson, Chair
Councilmembers Mike O'Brien and Lisa Herbold, Members
Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee

From: Lish Whitson and Eric McConaghy

Date: July 14, 2016

Subject: Resolution 31682 regarding Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals for consideration in 2017

On July 19, the Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee will hold a public hearing on recommendations from the public and City departments to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan. Each year, the Council reviews requests for amendments based on criteria contained in [Resolution 31402](#). Proposals meeting the criteria are forwarded to the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and the Seattle Planning Commission (SPC) for further review and recommendations. This memo (1)) sets out the criteria Council uses to determine whether proposed amendments should be selected for consideration and (2) provides an initial discussion and review of the applications that have been received in light of the criteria. [Resolution 31682](#) reflects recommendations from the SPC, OPCD and our analysis of the criteria in Resolution 31402.

Background

With a few limited exceptions, the City Council may amend the Comprehensive Plan once a year. [Resolution 31117](#) provides the framework for the annual process for reviewing the Comprehensive Plan. Resolution 31402 sets out the criteria for including proposed amendments in an annual review cycle.

Generally, the process occurs in four steps. First, in the spring the Council issues a call for amendment proposals. Anyone can submit a proposal. In the summer, the Council reviews amendment applications and establishes by resolution a docket of the amendments the Council will consider. This is often referred to as the "docket setting" resolution. That fall, OPCD reviews the amendments and conducts environmental analysis, making a recommendation to the Council regarding which amendments should be made. Finally, that winter, the Council receives recommendations from the SPC, considers the merits of proposed amendments, and acts on a bill amending the Comprehensive Plan.

Selection Criteria for Annual Comprehensive Plan Docketing

The Council applies a variety of criteria in deciding whether to include a proposed amendment in the docket setting resolution. A decision to include a proposed amendment in the resolution does not constitute Council approval of a proposed amendment. Rather, a decision to include a proposed amendment means that the Council has determined that the subject matter is

appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan and consideration of the proposed amendment can be practically accomplished during the amendment cycle. Criteria applied by the Council included in Resolution 31402 are as follows:

- I. The amendment is appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan because:
 - A. It is consistent with the role of the Comprehensive Plan under the State Growth Management Act;
 - B. It is consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies and the multi-county policies contained in the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 strategy;
 - C. Its intent cannot be accomplished by a change in regulations alone;
 - D. It is not better addressed as a budgetary or programmatic decision; and
 - E. It is not better addressed through another process, such as neighborhood planning.
- II. The amendment is legal under state and local law.
- III. It is practical to consider the amendment because:
 - A. The timing of the amendment is appropriate and Council will have sufficient information to make an informed decision;
 - B. City staff will be able to develop within the time available the text for the Comprehensive Plan and, if necessary, amendments to the Municipal Code, and to conduct sufficient analysis and public review;
 - C. The amendment is consistent with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan and well-established Comprehensive Plan policy, or the Mayor or Council wishes to consider changing the vision or established policy; and
 - D. The amendment has not been recently rejected by the City Council.
- IV. If the amendment would change a neighborhood plan, it either is the result of a neighborhood review process or can be reviewed by such a process prior to final Council consideration of the amendment.
- V. The amendment is likely to make a material difference in a future City regulatory or funding decision.

Docket-Setting Schedule

The Council received fourteen proposals for amendments by May 15. Those amendments can be found in [Clerk File 319807](#). The SPC and OPCD sent comments and recommendations on the proposed amendments to the Council on July 11 and June 22, respectively. These are attached to this memorandum. On July 11, Resolution 31682 was introduced. It recommends that four of the proposals move forward for consideration in 2017, consistent with OPCD, SPC and Central Staff recommendations. Another three amendments are proposed to be considered in conjunction with other ongoing planning work. On July 19, PLUZ will hold a public hearing and will receive a briefing on the proposed amendments.

Staff Recommendations

The table in Attachment A summarizes the proposed amendments and the recommendations of the SPC, OPCD, and Central Staff. For 11 proposals, there are unanimous recommendations to include the proposal in the docket. For three proposals, there is a difference of opinion. There are unanimous recommendations to reject seven proposals.

Amendments recommended to move forward

Amendments 5, 6 and 7 are unanimously recommended to be included in the docket for consideration in 2017. These amendments are generally consistent with the criteria laid out in Resolution 31402. They may require additional neighborhood review prior to final Council consideration of the amendments, but such review is either underway or could be accomplished in the coming months.

Amendment 1 would amend the Future Land Use Map and the North Rainier Neighborhood Plan to facilitate a rezone from single-family to multifamily at S Holgate Street and 20th Avenue S. SPC notes that proposed changes to the Future Land Use Map in Seattle 2035 would mean that the map change is not required. However, OPCD states that the neighborhood plan amendments would still be required. Central Staff recommends that the neighborhood plan amendments be put on the docket for further analysis.

Amendments recommended to be considered in the context of ongoing work

In 2015, the Council docketed a set of potential amendments to the Future Land Use map along 35th Avenue NE in the Wedgwood neighborhood. The Executive continues to work with these neighborhoods, and should consider proposed amendment 2 from Congregation Beth Shalom in the context of this work.

As part of the recommendations on Seattle 2035, the major update to the Comprehensive Plan currently under consideration by Council, that Mayor has indicated that the City will convene a Task Force on Industrial Lands. That task force is likely to recommend amendments to the Comprehensive Plan related to industrial lands policies. Section 2 of Resolution 31652 contains some information about that work. The resolution requests that amendments 3 and 4, which could facilitate conversion of industrially zoned land in the Ballard Interbay Manufacturing/Industrial Center, be considered in light of whatever recommendations the task force develops.

Amendments not recommended to move forward

Seven amendments (amendments 8 through 14) are recommended to not move forward. Each of these amendments would amend goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan and is better addressed by providing comments to the Council on the Mayor's Recommended Plan for Seattle 2035. Many of these amendments have also been previously rejected by the Council as not appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan. Other amendments propose to amend sections or maps that would no longer be part of the Comprehensive Plan if Seattle 2035 were adopted.

Other amendments previously docketed

In addition to the amendments proposed by members of the public in 2016, some proposals from previous years are still being developed and may return to the Council in 2017.

Primary among these are amendments related to the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA). The Council adopted a work program related to HALA in 2015 through [Resolution 31612](#). Amendments to the Future Land Use Map related to HALA and the Mandatory Housing Affordability program are anticipated to be forwarded to the Council in 2017.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Summary of Recommendations on Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Attachment B – Planning Commission’s Comments and Recommendations for Docket Resolution

Attachment C – Comprehensive Plan Docketing Resolution: OPCD Recommendation

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Central Staff Executive Director
Dan Eder, Central Staff Deputy Director

Attachment A – Summary of Recommendations on Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

	Amendment Proposal	Applicant	Recommendation		
			Planning Commission	OPCD	Central Staff
1	20 th Avenue S/ S Holgate Street	Joji Minatogawa	Map change not required	Docket neighborhood plan amendment only	Docket neighborhood plan amendment only
2	Congregation Beth Shalom	Congregation Beth Shalom	Include in Wedgwood/NE 35 th Study or HALA	Include in Wedgwood/NE 35 th Study	Include in Wedgwood/NE 35 th Study
3	844 NW 48 th Street	The Fiorito Family	Docket	Docket	Include in Task Force on Industrial Lands
4	W Bertona Street	Jessica Clawson	Docket	Has been previously rejected	Include in Task Force on Industrial Lands
5	Seattle Chinatown/ International District Policies	Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development	Docket	Docket	Docket
6	1208 Eastlake Avenue E	Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc.	Docket	Docket	Docket
7	125 S Columbian Way	IS Property Investments, LLC	Docket	Docket	Docket
8	Open and Participatory Government	Chris Leman	Has been previously rejected	Has been previously rejected	Has been previously rejected
9	Race and Social Equity	Chris Leman	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035

	Amendment Proposal	Applicant	Recommendation		
			Planning Commission	OPCD	Central Staff
10	Neighborhood Planning	Chris Leman	Best addressed through budget	Has been previously rejected, best addressed through budget	Has been previously rejected, best addressed through budget
11	Heavy Vehicles	Chris Leman	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035
12	Urban Trails Map	Eastlake Community Council	Has been previously rejected, map no longer part of Comp Plan	Has been previously rejected, map no longer part of Comp Plan	Has been previously rejected, map no longer part of Comp Plan
13	Pedestrian grade separations	Chris Leman	Has been previously rejected	Has been previously rejected	Has been previously rejected
14	Growth Monitoring	Chris Leman	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035	Applicant should comment on Seattle 2035



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

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July 11, 2016

Honorable Councilmember Rob Johnson, Chair
Planning, Land Use, and Zoning Committee
via e-mail

RE: 2016/2017 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Dear Councilmember Johnson,

The Seattle Planning Commission is pleased to provide our comments and recommendations on which proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments should be placed on the docket for further analysis. We outlined areas we suggest be considered as the review process moves forward. Our recommendations are based on our responsibility as stewards of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan and through the application of Council adopted criteria, Guidelines for Amendment Selection, included in Resolution 31402.

The Planning Commission recommends moving forward the following five amendment proposals for further analysis:

3. 844 NW 48th Street

The applicant is requesting to amend the Ballard-Interbay Northend Manufacturing Industrial Center Boundary to remove one block and amend the Future Land Use Map from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use.

The Commission recommends this map change for the docket. Although the proposal may be better addressed through the Mayor's Task Force on Industrial Lands and associated policies to be developed by that Task Force and considered by Council, the scope of this task force is unclear at this time.

4. 1616 W Bertona St

The applicant is requesting to amend the Ballard-Interbay Northend Manufacturing Industrial Center Boundary to remove one block and amend the Future Land Use Map from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use.

The Commission recommends this map change for the docket. Although the proposal may be better addressed through the Mayor's Task Force on Industrial Lands and associated policies to be developed by that Task Force and considered by Council, the scope of this task force is unclear at this time.

5. Seattle Chinatown/ International District Policies

The applicant is requesting to amend the Chinatown/International District Neighborhood Plan's cultural and economic vitality policies.

The Commission recommends this change to the neighborhood plan for the docket. The amendment is appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan and meets the docketing criteria. The proposal warrants further study and there is no other process underway to address it.

6. 1208 Eastlake Ave E

The applicant is requesting to amend the Eastlake Residential Urban Village and the South Lake Union Urban Center Boundaries and the Future Land Use Map from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use.

The Commission recommends this map change for the docket. Although the proposal may be better addressed through the Mayor's Task Force on Industrial Lands and associated policies to be developed by that Task Force and considered by Council, the scope of this task force is unclear at this time.

7. 1625 S Columbian Way

The applicant is requesting to amend the Future Land Use Map from Single Family to Commercial/Mixed-Use or Multifamily.

The Commission recommends this map change for the docket. The proposal meets criteria and warrants further study. Because it is located outside of an Urban Village it will not be addressed with the Mandatory Housing Affordability Implementation program.

The Planning Commission recommends the following amendment proposals do not move forward for further analysis:

1. S Holgate St and 20th Ave S

The applicant is requesting amendments to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and the North Rainier neighborhood Plan to allow rezones of single-family areas to multifamily areas.

The Commission does not recommend this map and neighborhood plan change for the docket citing criteria A5. This proposal would be better addressed through the public process associated with City Council's review and consideration of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan - Seattle 2035. The Plan proposes a single future land use map category for all parcels within an Urban Village/Center, thus removing the need to change the land use category.

2. 6800 35th Ave NE

The applicant is requesting to amend the Future Land Use Map from Single Family and Multifamily to Commercial/Mixed Use in the Wedgwood neighborhood.

The Commission does not recommend this map change for the docket citing criteria A5. The proposal would be better addressed through the Mandatory Housing Affordability Implementation program and SDCI's Wedgwood planning process.

8. Open and Participatory Government

The applicant is requesting to add an Open and Participatory Government Element to the Comprehensive Plan.

The Commission does not recommend this proposal for the docket citing criteria C4. This proposal has been considered and rejected for docketing several times.

9. Race and Social Equity Terminology

The applicant is proposing to amend the definitions of "Marginalized People" and "Equitable Development."

The Commission does not recommend these amendments for the docket citing criteria A5. The proposal would better be addressed through the public process associated with City Council's review and consideration of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan – Seattle 2035.

10. Neighborhood Planning Funding

The applicant is proposing to amend the Neighborhood Planning Element related to funding of neighborhood-initiated planning efforts.

The Commission recommends not docketing this amendment citing criteria C4. This proposal has been considered and rejected in the past. Furthermore, it would be better addressed as a budgetary decision.

11. Heavy Vehicles

The applicant is proposing to amend the Transportation Element related to impacts to roads and bridges from heavy vehicles.

The Commission does not recommend this proposal for docketing citing criteria A5. The proposal would better be addressed through the public process associated with the City Council's review and consideration of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan – Seattle 2035. Heavy vehicles are addressed in the Transportation Element of that Plan.

12. Urban Trails Map

The applicant is proposing to amend the Seattle Urban Trails System Map to recreate the historic bicycle and pedestrian path system around Eastlake.

The Commission does not recommend this proposal for docketing citing criteria A5 and A4. The proposal would better be addressed through the public process associated with the City Council's review and consideration of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan – Seattle 2035. The Urban Trails map is not included in the Mayor's Recommended Plan – Seattle 2035. Furthermore, this amendment was rejected by Council in 2012.

13. Pedestrian Grade Separations

The applicant is proposing to amend the Transportation Element to discourage pedestrian grade separations in all urban centers not just the downtown.

The Commission does not recommend this proposal for docketing because it does not meet criteria C4. The applicant has submitted this proposal several times and it has been consistently rejected by the City Council.

14. Growth Monitoring

The applicant is proposing to amend the Comprehensive Plan related to monitoring and responding to growth in urban centers and villages.

The Commission does not recommend this proposal for docketing because it does not meet criteria A5. The proposal would better be addressed through the public process associated with City Council's review and consideration of the Mayor's Recommended Comprehensive Plan – Seattle 2035. That Recommended Plan does address monitoring of development activity in the Growth Strategy.

We appreciate the opportunity to review amendments for docket setting and provide our recommendations. If you have any further questions please call either myself or Valerie Kinast, Seattle Planning Commission Interim Executive Director at (206) 233-7911.

Sincerely,



Grace Kim, Chair
Seattle Planning Commission

cc:

Mayor Ed Murray

Seattle City Councilmembers

Robert Feldstein, Steve Lee; Office of Policy and Innovation

Sam Assefa, Susan McLain, Tom Hauger, Kristian Kofoed; Office of Planning and Community
Development

Ketil Freeman, Lish Whitson, Eric McConaghy; Council Central Staff

ATTACHMENT A

City of Seattle Criteria for Comprehensive Plan Amendment Selection (from Resolution 31402)

- A. The amendment is appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan because:
1. It is consistent with the role of the Comprehensive Plan under the State Growth Management Act;
 2. It is consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies and the multi-county policies contained in the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 strategy;
 3. Its intent cannot be accomplished by a change in regulations alone;
 4. It is not better addressed as a budgetary or programmatic decision; and;
 5. It is not better addressed through another process, such as neighborhood planning.
- B. The amendment is legal under state and local law.
- C. It is practical to consider the amendment because:
1. The timing of the amendment is appropriate and Council will have sufficient information to make an informed decision;
 2. City staff will be able to develop within the time available the text for the Comprehensive Plan and, if necessary, amendments to the Municipal Code, and to conduct sufficient analysis and public review;
 3. The amendment is consistent with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan and well-established Comprehensive Plan policy, or the Mayor or Council wishes to consider changing the vision or established policy; and
 4. The amendment has not been recently rejected by the City Council.
- D. If the amendment would change a neighborhood plan, it either is the result of a neighborhood review process or can be reviewed by such a process prior to final Council consideration of the amendment.
- E. The amendment is likely to make a material difference in a future City regulatory or funding decision.



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Office of Planning and Community Development

Samuel Assefa, Director

June 20, 2016

TO: Councilmember Rob Johnson, Chair, PLUZ Committee

FROM: Samuel Assefa, Director

SUBJECT: Council Docketing Resolution for Comprehensive Plan Annual Amendments 2016–2017: OPCD Recommendations

Docketing generally indicates Council's direction to OPCD and the Planning Commission to further analyze the proposals. OPCD and the Planning Commission then make recommendations to Council by the fall of that year to inform Council's vote to amend the Comp Plan generally in the first quarter of the following year.

OPCD staff have applied Council's docketing criteria from Resolution 31402 to the other amendments proposed for this cycle. OPCD also considered Council's resources needed for review of Seattle 2035. Based on these factors, OPCD recommends docketing the following proposed amendments.

Recommended for Docketing

1) Future Land Use Map (FLUM), 844 NW 48th Street

The proposal is to remove this property from the Ballard-Interbay Manufacturing Center (BINMIC) and change the Future Land Use Map designations from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use.

2) Future Land Use Map, 1208 Eastlake Ave E

FLUM designations are proposed to be changed from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use and the boundaries of the Eastlake Residential Urban Village and South Lake Union Urban Center to shift the subject property into the Urban Center.

3) Future Land Use Map, 125 S. Columbian Way



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Change FLUM designation from Single Family to Commercial/Mixed-Use or to Multifamily.

4) Future Land Use Map, 20th Ave. S/Holgate

The proposal is to change FLUM designation for an area inside the North Rainier urban village from single-family to commercial/mixed-use and to amend the North Rainier Neighborhood Plan policies to allow multifamily uses in this area. The FLUM amendment would not be necessary under the Mayor's Recommended Seattle 2035, which will show all areas inside the urban village the same on the FLUM. However, we recommend that the text change to the neighborhood plan be included on the docket.

5) Chinatown/International District

Amend Chinatown/International District Neighborhood Plan to add policies for a "cultural eco-district" as a framework for more specific neighborhood planning.

6) Industrial Land policies

OPCD recommends that Council docket a placeholder for potential industrial land policy amendments. The Mayor's Office is beginning further analysis and consultation with stakeholders to identify appropriate policies related to industrial land. Part of the impetus for reviewing the City's industrial land policies comes from the memorandum of understanding (MOU) related to the basketball arena. That MOU directed the City to conduct two studies: 1) a planning effort "to strengthen the long-term viability of the MIC" and 2) a re-evaluation of the stadium district to "better orient the (Stadium) District to the needs and experience of stadium patrons."

The City conducted two studies in 2013 related to these directives from the MOU, with the understanding that the two topics are related and should be considered together. Therefore, if the executive recommends amendments related to industrial land, it will also forward amendments related to the stadium district.

7) Urban Village Expansions

The Future Land Use Map in the Mayor's Recommended Seattle 2035 Plan shows potential expansion areas for urban villages that have very good transit service. As part of the upcoming outreach for the executive's work on the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda, City staff will consult with the communities in these areas and make recommendations about new boundaries for some or all of these urban villages. If recommendations are available in time, we may recommend including those expanded boundaries as part of the 2017 Comp Plan amendments.

Not recommended for Docketing

OPCD recommends the following Future Land Use Map proposals not be docketed.

1) 1616 W. Bertona St.

The proposal is to remove one block from the Ballard-Interbay Manufacturing Industrial Center (BINMIC) and change the map designation on that property from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use. City Council docketing criteria suggest that the Council will not consider amendment proposals that they have recently rejected. In 2012, the Planning Commission and the Executive recommended against placing a similar proposal on the docket. It did not receive further consideration in that amendment cycle.

2) 6800 35th Ave NE

The proposal would change the FLUM designation from Single Family and Multifamily to Commercial/Mixed Use. City Council docketing criteria suggest that proposed comprehensive plan amendments should be considered through the most appropriate process. In this case, the Department of Construction and Inspections is working with the Wedgwood neighborhood on a package of possible land use amendments along 35th Ave. NE in the vicinity of this proposal. This proposal would be better addressed through that work.

3) Create a new Open and Participatory Government Element to the Plan

This proposal has been previously considered and rejected in multiple amendment cycles.

4) Modify the definitions of "equitable development" and "marginalized populations" adopted in Resolution 31577

The definitions adopted in the resolution have been assumed in the Seattle 2035 recommendation that Council is now reviewing. Rather than make this proposal part of the 2017 annual amendments, the applicant could make the proposal as part of this year's deliberations on Seattle 2035.

5) New policy saying the City would fund neighborhood organizations to carry out neighborhood planning processes, as was done in the 1990's

This proposal was previously considered and rejected. It also is a matter that would be better addressed through a budget process, rather than as a Comprehensive Plan policy.

6) Discourage grade-separated pedestrian walkways across rights-of-way.

This proposal has been previously considered and rejected.

- 7) Monitor growth in urban centers and villages and take action in instances where the growth rate is different from what is anticipated in the Comprehensive Plan

City Council considered a similar proposal in 2014 and decided to defer to the Seattle 2035. Recommended policies GS 1.4 through 1.8 address this issue. Public testimony and Council deliberation on those policies in 2016 provide an opportunity to consider appropriate approaches to growth monitoring.

- 8) Minimize damage from heavy vehicles on the City's roads and bridges.

Council adopted language related to this in 2012 in response to a similar suggestion from the applicant. Such language is not included in the recommendations for Seattle 2035 because it is impractical for the City to restrict buses and garbage trucks from using streets in the city.

- 9) Amend the Urban Trails map to identify a particular trail in the Eastlake neighborhood

City Council rejected a similar proposal in 2012. The recommendations for Seattle 2035 no longer include an urban trails map in the Comprehensive Plan. It would be replaced by a map of the recommended bicycle network and a map showing priority investment areas for pedestrian improvements.