



**City of Seattle**  
Mayor Edward B. Murray

July 25, 2017

Honorable Bruce Harrell, President  
Seattle City Council  
City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98199

Dear Council President Harrell:

I am pleased to transmit the attached legislation to increase development capacity and implement the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) requirements in the Uptown neighborhood. This legislation is a key piece of the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA), a multi-pronged comprehensive approach to address the housing affordability crisis in Seattle. It is estimated that the proposed MHA requirements for Uptown will produce 600 new affordable housing units over 20 years.

The foundational steps for MHA were taken when the Council adopted the MHA-Commercial framework (*Ord No. 124895*), the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing resolution (*Res. 31612*), and the MHA-Residential framework (*Ord No. 125108*). The critical next step is to pass zoning changes that provide additional development capacity necessary to trigger the MHA requirements. MHA requires that commercial and multifamily developers address housing affordability by providing affordable homes or by making a payment-in-lieu to support development of affordable housing throughout the city. When fully implemented MHA is projected to create an estimated 6,000 of the City's 20,000 affordable housing unit goal over the next 10 years.

Implementation of MHA in Uptown is an important next step toward a city-wide affordable housing program. This legislation is the result of a multi-year planning and community engagement process, building on the Uptown Urban Design Framework developed in partnership with the community in 2013. It acknowledges and enhances the community assets that Uptown residents and visitors cherish, including more affordable housing and residential opportunities close to downtown, space for arts and creative endeavors, and a strong and seamless connection between Uptown and Seattle Center.

MHA represents an unprecedented and historic opportunity for the City to harness Seattle's growth to increase the supply of both affordable and market-rate housing. I ask the Council to act swiftly in passing the Uptown zoning proposal to implement MHA, in order to support equitable growth by providing more housing choices for lower-income individuals and families.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sam Assefa, Director of the Office of Planning and Community Development, at (206) 386-1183.

Sincerely,

Edward B. Murray  
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Honorable Members of the Seattle City Council