

City of Seattle
2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION

Applicant: Chris Leman

Date: 5/15/16

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Name of general area, location, or site that would be affected by this proposed change in text (attach additional sheets if necessary) **Seattle as a whole**

If the application is approved for further consideration by the City Council, the applicant may be required to submit a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist.

Acceptance of this application does not guarantee final approval.

Applicant Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Leman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Date: 5/16/16

REQUIRED QUESTIONNAIRE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application

Please answer the following questions in text and attach them to the application. Supporting maps or graphics may be included. Please answer all questions separately and reference the question number in your answer. The Council will consider an application incomplete unless all the questions are answered. When proposing an amendment, you must show that a change to the Comprehensive Plan is required.

1. Provide a detailed description of the proposed amendment and a clear statement of what the proposed amendment is intended to accomplish. Include the name(s) of the Comprehensive Plan Element(s) (Land Use, Transportation, etc.) you propose to amend.

This amendment would include the following:

(a) Contrary to Res. 31577, the Comprehensive Plan's definition of "Marginalized People" will be as follows: "Marginalized People are defined to include: some but not all of people or their communities in the following categories: persons of color; immigrants and refugees; gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender individuals; those experiencing poverty; people living with disabilities; and other people who are discriminated against or who have been unjustly disadvantaged by the action or inaction of local, state, or federal government."

(b) Contrary to Res. 31577, the definition of Equitable Development will be as follows: "Public and private investments, programs and policies in all City programs to meet the needs of marginalized people."

2. Describe how the issue is currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. If the issue is not adequately addressed, describe the need for it.

It was unfortunate that Res. 31577 was adopted by the City Council just two weeks after it was introduced, just four working days after it was approved by committee; and without any real staff analysis or even discussion among the City Councilmembers about the alternatives. As a result, Res. 31577 is poorly crafted and does not address race and social equity concerns with the care that they merit. Through the 2016 Comprehensive Plan amendment process, the Res. 31577 language deserves the discussion it has not received, with the discipline of comparing it with alternative language such as proposed here. Following are the reasons why the current proposal is superior to language in Res. 31577:

(a) The definition of "Marginalized People" offered by Res. 31577 would distort the meaning and impact of the Comprehensive Plan. Not necessarily

all of the people in any of the listed categories are marginalized, as clarified by the definition proposed here. The proposed definition also makes clear that some people not on the list are also marginalized. And the reference in Res. 31577 to “and communities” [of color] introduces an inaccuracy and imbalance, because other marginalized people also have communities. The problem is corrected in the currently proposed amendment by introducing the word “communities” before the list, not solely in reference to people of color.

(b) The Res. 31577 definition of Equitable Development restricts its impact to “public and private investments, programs, and policies in neighborhoods.” The definition should not direct its impact only to neighborhoods, but should apply to all public and private investments, programs, and policies. Neighborhoods should not bear the only impacts of Equitable Development policies.

3. Describe why the proposed change meets the criteria adopted in Resolution 31402 for considering an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. (The criteria are listed at the end of this application form.) Is a Comprehensive Plan amendment the best means for meeting the identified public need? What other options are there for meeting the identified public need?

The present amendment is needed because its alternative, the Res. 31577 language, introduces definitions that are highly problematic to a balanced and effective Comprehensive Plan. Because Res. 31577 would include these faulty definitions, there is no alternative but to propose better ones.

4. What do you anticipate will be the impacts caused by the change in text, including the geographic area affected and the issues presented? Why will the proposed change result in a net benefit to the community?

The definitions proposed here will enable a more substantive and balanced Comprehensive Plan than would the definitions proposed in Res. 31577. The result would be a benefit to public discussion as well as to improved impact of the Comprehensive Plan.

5. How would the proposed change comply with the community vision statements, goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan? Please include any data, research, or reasoning that supports the proposed amendments.

The proposed amendment would preserve balance in the Comprehensive Plan, while adding concerns about race and social equity in a way that enhances rather than diminishes the Plan’s overall impact. It would also ensure that neighborhoods are not singled out for impacts that should be more broadly shared.

6. Is there public support for this proposed text amendments (i.e. have you conducted community meetings, etc.)?

Yes, there is broad public support for the more balanced language proposed here. It was unfortunate that Res. 31577 was adopted by the City Council just two weeks after it was introduced; just four working days after it was approved by committee; and without in any way addressing concerns such as are embodied in the current proposal. As required by Res. 31117, the Comprehensive Plan annual amendment process will ensure the in-depth analysis and public discussion, and improved language that will result, that unfortunately were missing from the City Council's rushed introduction and passage of Res. 31577.