

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION

Use this application to propose a change in the policies, future land use map, appendices, or other components of the adopted City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan. **Applications are due to the Seattle City Council no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 15th for consideration in the next annual review cycle.** Any proposals received after May 15th will be considered in the review process for the following year.

(Please Print or Type)

Date: May 15, 2016

Applicant: Eastlake Community Council

E-mail: info@eastlakeseattle.org

Street Address: 117 E. Louisa St. #1

City: Seattle *State:* WA *Zip:* 98102-3278

Phone: (206) 322-5463

Contact person (if not the applicant): Chris Leman

Street Address: 2370 Yale Avenue East

City: Seattle *State:* WA *Zip:* 98102-3310

Email: same

Name of general area, location, or site that would be affected by this proposed change (attach additional sheets if necessary): A popular pedestrian and bicycle commuting and recreation area that is between the Capitol Hill, North Broadway, Eastlake, and South Lake Union neighborhoods, and on the corridor between downtown and the University District.

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:



Date: May 15, 2016

REQUIRED QUESTIONNAIRE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application

Please answer the following questions in text and attach them to the application with supporting maps or graphics. 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.*

On the Seattle Urban Trails System map (Transportation Figure 1 in section 3.6 of the Comprehensive Plan), mark as “planned” the following: (1) a sidewalk on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. connecting the E. Howe Street Stairs and the E. Blaine Street stairs; (2) an east-west corridor of steps and pathways under I-5 along the E. Blaine St. axis between Lakeview Blvd. and Franklin Avenue East; and (3) a multiuse ADA-accessible pedestrian and bicycle route that, from the intersection of Eastlake Avenue and E. Aloha Street would go north on WSDOT right of way beneath and beside I-5, through the I-5 Colonnade Open Space (a City park), then use City streets and sidewalks further north on Harvard Avenue East and then 10th Avenue East to E. Roanoke St., and then split into two routes: east on Roanoke St. to link up with the SR-520 bike-ped facility, Interlaken Park, the Arboretum, and the Montlake Bridge; and north to the University Bridge on both sides of I-5 (Harvard Avenue East and Boylston Avenue East).

Explanation. Routes shown would form links that were destroyed by I-5, and thus would reestablish some of the bicycle and pedestrian path system created at the turn of the century by City Engineer and Seattle Mayor (1912-1914) George F. Cotterill along with members of the Queen City Good Roads Club. The links would join Colonnade and Interlaken parks and provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to the University District and the SR-520 area (including the recently opened pathway across Lake Washington, and the planned pathway that will be on the yet to be reconstructed Portage Bay viaduct).

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

The Comp Plan’s Urban Trails map (Transportation Figure 1 in section 3.6 of the Comprehensive Plan), which the City Council updated a few years ago in the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process by adding the planned “Lake to Bay” route, currently does not reflect the multiuse pedestrian and bicycle route outlined above nor does it call for a sidewalk where one is missing on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. between the Blaine and Howe St. stairs.

The Seattle Urban Trails System map currently shows as “planned” a walking route just north and just south of one block of sidewalk that is missing on the east side of Lakeview Blvd., but it does not show a planned sidewalk on that block where one is missing. The map does show with two large dots oriented east-west that pedestrian and bicycle passage under I-5 still needs improvement. The Park Department did in 2005 build a staircase east-west under I-5 on the Howe St. axis to connect up to SDOT’s Howe St. steps that go up Capitol Hill; however, yet to be built is a parallel combination of steps and pathways on the Blaine St. axis.

Listing a planned sidewalk connecting the Blaine and Howe St. stairs on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. on the Seattle Urban Trails System map is wholly appropriate and badly needed. Known nationwide for their views and recreational value, Seattle’s staircases are widely used not only for

recreation but also for commuting. Two of the longest and most heavily used staircases, on the E. Blaine St. and E. Howe St. rights-of-way, are one block apart. These staircases connect Capitol Hill and the North Broadway neighborhoods with the Eastlake and South Lake Union neighborhoods. These stairs are heavily used, for commuting between some of Seattle's densest residential areas and some of its major employment centers, and south along Lakeview Blvd. they connect to WSDOT's Lakeview/Melrose pathway south to downtown. They are also heavily used for recreational walking, connecting such amenities as Volunteer Park, Streissguth Gardens, the St. Marks Greenbelt, Colonnade Park, and Lake Union. Because the two staircases are just one block apart, they are also used as an exercise loop by many people who go up one staircase and down the other.

Unfortunately, at the foot of the Blaine and Howe St. staircases along the east (uphill) side of Lakeview Blvd, there is no sidewalk connecting them. Instead, the steep and eroding hillside forces pedestrians who wish to walk between them (or who wish to walk between the walkways on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. that continue north and south of this block) to go into the street amidst fast-moving traffic, some if from the I-5 off-ramp. Alternatively, pedestrians must make two crossings of this same dangerous traffic in order to reach the sidewalk on the west side of Lakeview Blvd. The current proposal is to specify on the Seattle Urban Trails System Map that a one-block sidewalk is planned on the east side of Lakeview Blvd.

3. *Describe why the proposed change meets the criteria adopted in Resolution 30662 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 Colonnade planning and design study (to be finalized in June 2016) that was conducted with interagency and public involvement by the Eastlake Community Council with support from the Neighborhood Matching Fund, has identified major opportunities for (1) a set of steps and pathways east-west under I-5 on the E. Blaine St., to connect with the Blaine St. stairs that go up Capitol Hill; and (2) a north-south pedestrian and bicycle multiuse pathway through the park and, just south of it, through additional WSDOT right of way to emerge at the intersection of Eastlake Avenue and E. Aloha St. The study also identifies the need for the north-south pathway's connection to pedestrian and bicycle connections to its further north and south. The current proposed amendment to the Urban Trails System Map would recognize the important of these east-west and north-south routes both within and beyond the I-5 Colonnade Open Space.

Adding to the Urban Trails System Map a planned one-block walkway on the east side of Lakeview Blvd. between the Blaine and Howe Street staircases is also particularly appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan because doing so does not attempt to specify to SDOT how it is to engineer such a walkway. Two distinct possibilities that SDOT has studied include cutting into the slope to install a retaining wall, or narrowing the traffic lanes and extending the curb further from the hillside to make room for the walkway on the existing paved surface. These are operational decisions; it is important only for the Comp Plan's Urban Trails System Map to recognize this one-block walkway as something that is needed and planned.

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

The pedestrian and bicycle routes proposed here to be included on the Comp Plan's Urban Trails System map is near the geographic and population center of Seattle and is close to downtown, South Lake Union, Capitol Hill, Eastlake, and the University District. They would provide

unmatched opportunities for recreationists and commuters to bicycle and walk, with great views of Lake Union, the Space Needle, and the Cascade and Olympic Mountains. These pedestrian and bicycle routes would also better link the areas of Capitol Hill, North Broadway, Montlake, the SR-520 area, Eastlake, and Lake Union, and as well as downtown and the University District. They will make it easier for people to commute on foot between some of the City's largest residential and employment centers. They will enhance this area's already developing reputation as a good place to visit from other parts of Seattle, and from outside of Seattle. The new pedestrian and bicycle routes will also solve dangerous bicycle and pedestrian situations, especially the many pedestrians who risk their lives going between the Blaine and Howe St. stairs by either walking along the east side of Lakeview Blvd. where there is no sidewalk, or crossing Lakeview Blvd. in the path of cars emerging from the I-5 off-ramp, in an effort to reach the sidewalk on the other side of Lakeview.

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 7.5 acre I-5 Colonnade Open Space is ranked by the CityLab web site as among the world's nine "cool parks under freeway overpasses." The City of Seattle operates it on WSDOT right-of-way between Newton and Garfield streets that was formerly fenced off and marked "no trespassing." However, north-south and east-west there are still important pedestrian and bicycle routes needed that this amendment to the Comp Plan Urban Trails System Map would recognize.

A few years ago the City Council improved the Urban Trails System map with addition of the Lake to Bay route. Now the City Council needs to update the map as proposed in the present amendment. Doing so will greatly enhance the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies of promoting safe and convenient pedestrian connections, as well as access to recreation and to jobs.

6. *Is there public support for this proposed text amendments (i.e. have you conducted community meetings, etc.)? Note: The City will provide a public participation process, public notice, and environmental review for all applications.*

The Colonnade planning and design that will be completed in June 2016 has, through an on-line survey and public meetings, uncovered significant public support for the pedestrian and bicycle connections proposed here for addition to the Urban Trails System Map. The large and increasing number of users of the Blaine and Howe St. staircases also "vote with their feet" by walking between these staircases along Lakeview Blvd. (often dangerous in the traffic lanes, just yards away from the I-5 off-ramp). It is clear they will acclaim and use the proposed walkway when it is built. Over the years, pedestrian and bicycle improvements in and near the I-5 Colonnade Open Space have been supported by the Eastlake Community Council, Eastlake Neighborhood Plan Stewardship Committee, Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board, and Feet First. A 166-signature petition states that a north-south pedestrian and bicycle route through Colonnade and south to the intersection of Eastlake Avenue and E. Aloha St. "will connect our beautiful new park, and all of north Seattle, to downtown and South Lake Union, and will be greatly used by bicyclists, walkers, and joggers."

[SEE MAP ON NEXT PAGE]