

City of Seattle
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION

Use this application to propose an amendment to the goals, 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 (sent electronically to: compplan@seattle.gov) 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)*

Applicant:

Date:

Email:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Contact person (if not the applicant):

Email:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone:

Name of general area, location, or site that would be affected by this proposed amendment (attach additional sheets if necessary):

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: _____

REQUIRED QUESTIONNAIRE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application

Please answer the following questions. Attach any additional sheets, supporting maps or graphics. If you use separate sheets to provide your answers, then answer each question 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.), maps, goals and/or policies you propose to amend.

a. If the amendment is to an existing Comprehensive Plan goal or policy, and you have specific language you would like to be considered, please show proposed amendments in "line in/line out" format with text to be added indicated by underlining, and text to be deleted indicated with ~~strikeouts~~.

b. If you anticipate that the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment would also require a change to the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC), please indicate the SMC section(s) that would need to be changed. If you have specific language you would like to be considered, please show proposed edits to the SMC in "line in/line out" format as described above.

c. If the amendment is to the Future Land Use Map, please provide a map that clearly outlines the area(s) proposed to be changed. List the address(es) for each property, the current land use category as shown on the Future Land Use Map and the proposed new land use category for each property in the area to be changed. Identify your relationship to the owner(s) of the property. Describe how the change is consistent with Policy LU1.5, which states "Require Future Land Use Map amendments only when needed to achieve a significant change to the intended function of a large area."

2. For amendments to goals and policies only: Describe how the issue is currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. Why is a change needed?

3. Describe why the proposed change meets each of the criteria established in [Resolution 31807](#) which sets criteria for Council to consider an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

4. What other options are there for meeting the goal or objectives of the amendment? Why is a Comprehensive Plan amendment needed to meet the goals or objectives?

5. What do you anticipate will be the impacts of the proposed amendment, including impacts to the geographic area affected? Why will the proposed amendment result in a net benefit to the community? Please include any data, research, or analysis that supports the proposed amendments.

6. How does the proposed amendment support the existing goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan? If the proposal would change existing goals and policies or add new goals and policies to the Comprehensive Plan, describe how the proposed amendment is consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70A>), the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 (<http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/>), and the King County Countywide Planning Policies (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/regional-planning/CPPs.aspx>).

7. Is there public support for this proposed amendment? If the amendment would change the Future Land Use Map or a Neighborhood Plan, please list any meetings that you have held or other communication you have had with the community about the amendment. If the amendment would have a citywide impact, please list any organizations that you have discussed the amendment with. *Notes: You may attach letters of support for the amendment or other documentation. The City will provide public notice and opportunity for public comment, and environmental review for all applications.*

8. Has the proposed amendment been considered before by the Council? If so, when was it considered and what was the outcome? If the amendment has been previously rejected, please explain either:

- How the proposal has changed since it was last rejected, or
- Changed circumstances since the proposal was last considered that support reconsideration of the proposal.

Submit the application electronically via email at compplan@seattle.gov

Questions?

Eric.McConaghy@seattle.gov

(206) 615-1071

REQUIRED QUESTIONNAIRE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application

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.*

In the Transportation section of the Citywide Planning element, establish as a new Transportation Policy applying to all urban centers and urban villages, the following: “Discourage pedestrian grade separations, whether by skybridge, aerial tram, or tunnel, to maintain an active pedestrian environment at street level.”

Explanation. The amendment would protect and enhance the pedestrian environment at street level by discouraging skybridges, aerial trams, and tunnels in all urban centers and urban villages.

2. *For amendments to goals and policies only: Describe how the issue is currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. Why is a change needed?*

The Seattle Municipal Code [SMC 15.64] contains strong language discouraging skybridges throughout Seattle and requiring the City Council to reject skybridge petitions “unless it finds that the skybridge is in the public interest and no reasonable alternative to the skybridge exists.” However, the Seattle Municipal Code does not have similar language regarding pedestrian tunnels or aerial trams.

Oher than language specifically referring to Downtown and Eastlake, the Comprehensive Plan contains no guidance regarding skybridges, aerial trams, or tunnels. Given these various omissions by both the Municipal Code and the Comprehensive Plan, it is important for the Comprehensive Plan to be updated to apply to all urban centers and urban villages the same policy that has for many years applied only to downtown: “Discourage pedestrian grade separations, whether by skybridge, aerial tram, or tunnel, to maintain an active pedestrian environment at street level.”

3. *Describe why the proposed change meets the criteria adopted in Resolution 31807 which sets criteria for Council to consider an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.*

This amendment fully meets all of the criteria of Res. 31807. It is consistent with the Growth Management Act, with state and local law, and with countywide and multicounty policies; it cannot be addressed through regulations, budgets, programs, or neighborhood planning; it meets the four elements of practicality; and it is likely to make a material difference in a future City regulatory or funding decision.

For the Comprehensive Plan’s many goals and policies to have meaning when they state a priority for maintaining an active pedestrian environment, the proposed transportation policy applies to all urban centers and urban villages the language on pedestrian skybridges, aerial trams, and tunnels that now applies just to downtown. The Comprehensive Plan’s current failure to address skybridges, aerial trams, and

tunnels in urban centers and urban villages is a serious omission and there is no reasonable alternative to correcting it other than by adopting the proposed amendment.

4. *What other options are there for meeting the goal or objectives of the amendment? Why is a Comprehensive Plan amendment needed to meet the goals or objectives?*

The Seattle Municipal Code has not proven adequate to the task of protecting the public interest in City decisions about skybridges, aerial trams, or tunnels. Despite the very strong language against skybridges, the City Council has repeatedly approved new ones and renewed the permits for existing ones. Clear guidance in the Comp Plan is needed in order to restore some balance and reality to the permit process, which otherwise lacks guidance from the Comprehensive Plan.

Adopting this policy amendment into the Comp Plan provides unique and irreplaceable stability to the City and to the public because the Washington State Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) provides for each local Comprehensive Plan unique protections that are present in no other City legislation. The Comp Plan by state law can be amended only once a year, and then only under legally enforceable process requirements.

5. *What do you anticipate will be the impacts of the proposed amendment, including impacts to the geographic area affected? Why will the proposed change result in a net benefit to the community? Please include any data, research, or analysis that supports the proposed amendments.*

If adopted, the new policy will benefit the pedestrian and bicycle environment at street level by making it less likely in urban centers that skybridges, aerial tramways, and tunnels will be constructed across the street right of way. Scarce public and private resources will go into improving pedestrian and bicycle conditions for all, not just for those few with access to the skybridges, aerial tramways, and tunnels. The result will serve equity as well as the general pedestrian and bicycle experience. The Comprehensive Plan's many references to promoting pedestrian and bicycle convenience and safety will thus be given greater meaning, rather than appearing to be empty rhetoric.

The absence of a policy discouraging skybridges, aerial trams, and tunnels in the urban centers and villages other than downtown probably represents an oversight rather than deliberate policy, as that exact same language applying to the downtown urban center was adopted without controversy. Such restrictions are even less likely to provoke any controversy if applied to all urban centers and urban villages.

6. How does the proposed amendment support the existing goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan? If the proposal would change existing goals and policies or add new goals and policies to the Comprehensive Plan, describe how the proposed amendment is consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act (<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=36.70A>), the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 (<http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/>), and the King County

Countywide Planning Policies

(<http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/regional-planning/CPPs.aspx>).

The proposed policy amendment gives meaning to the Comprehensive Plan as a document that provides for pedestrian and bicyclist safety and convenience. The amendment is completely consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act, the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040, and the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

7. *Is there public support for this proposed amendment? If the amendment would change the Future Land Use Map or a Neighborhood Plan, please list any meetings that you have held with the community about the amendment. If the amendment would have a citywide impact, please list any organizations that you have discussed the amendment with. Notes: You may attach letters of support for the amendment. The City will provide public notice and opportunity for public comment, and environmental review for all applications.*

Both generally and as they apply to specific urban centers, the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan contain hundreds of affirmations of the priority of the street-level pedestrian and bicycle environment. This policy amendment would make the Comprehensive Plan's policies more consistent with its rhetoric. It would also bring to the Comprehensive Plan the weight of enlightened urban design principles, which strongly discourage skybridges, aerial trams, and tunnels across street rights of way when street-level pedestrian improvements are feasible. The amendment would thus place a higher priority than the Comprehensive Plan yet does on maintaining a vital street-level pedestrian and bicycle environment in all urban centers, not just downtown. It would also rescue the City's skybridge ordinance from the current cynicism with which is now applied.

8. Has the proposed amendment been considered before by the Council? If so, when was it considered and what was the outcome? If the amendment has been previously rejected, please explain either:

- How the proposal has changes since it was last rejected, or
- Changed circumstances since the proposal was last considered that support reconsideration of the proposal

While a similar amendment was submitted in the past, it never has been docketed for study in the Comp Plan amendment process; and public records requests have not found any evidence that it has received actual study by the City Councilmembers or by staff of the City Council or Executive branch.



5/15/19