



**Legislative Department
Seattle City Council
Memorandum**

Date: July 1, 2011

To: Sally Clark, Chair
Tim Burgess, Vice Chair
Sally Bagshaw, Member
Committee on the Built Environment (COBE)

From: Ketil Freeman, Council Central Staff

Subject: Comprehensive Plan – Applications Received and Review Process

Introduction

With a few limited exceptions, the Council may amend the Comprehensive Plan once a year. Council's review process will end next spring with a vote on a council bill amending the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan amendment process is set out in Resolution 31117. Generally, the process occurs in two steps. First, 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” or “threshold decision” resolution. Second, in the early spring of the following year, after Department of Planning and Development (DPD) review and environmental analysis, Council considers the merits of proposed amendments and acts on a bill amending the Comprehensive Plan.

- Step One: Docket Setting
 - Proposed amendments are submitted to Council by mid May;
 - Council forwards proposed amendments to DPD and the Planning Commission for comment;
 - DPD and the Planning Commission return comments by late June;
 - The Committee on the Built Environment (COBE) conducts a public hearing;
 - COBE votes on a recommendation to Full Council; and
 - Full Council votes on a resolution establishing the docket of amendments to be considered by late July.
- Step Two: Consideration of Merits
 - DPD reviews the amendments in the policy docket, conducts environmental review and makes a recommendation to Council by late November;
 - The Planning Commission reviews the proposed amendments and makes a recommendation to Council by mid February;
 - COBE considers DPD's and the Planning Commission's recommendations, conducts a public hearing, discusses the merits of the proposed amendments, and votes on a recommendation to Full Council; and
 - Full Council votes on a bill amending the Comprehensive Plan by the end of March.

This memorandum 1) sets out the criteria Council uses to determine whether a proposed amendment will be included in the docket setting resolution and 2) briefly summarizes applications the Council has received for the 2011-2012 amendment cycle. Proposed amendments are listed behind Tab 2 and the recommendations of DPD and the Planning Commission are attached to this memo.

Threshold Decision Criteria

The Council applies a variety of criteria in deciding whether to include a proposed amendment in the threshold decision 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 include the following.

1. The amendment is appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan:
 - a. The amendment is consistent with the role of the Comprehensive Plan under the State Growth Management Act;
 - b. The amendment is consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies;
 - c. The intent of the amendment cannot be accomplished by a change in regulations only;
 - d. The amendment is not better addressed as a budgetary or programmatic decision; or
 - e. The amendment is not better addressed through another process, such as neighborhood planning.
2. The amendment is legal - the amendment meets existing state and local laws.
3. It is practical to consider the amendment:
 - a. The timing of the amendment is appropriate and Council will have sufficient information necessary to make an informed decision.
 - b. Within the time available, City staff will be able to develop the text for the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and, if necessary, the Municipal Code, and conduct sufficient analysis and public review.
 - c. The proposed amendment is consistent with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan and well-established Comprehensive Plan policy, or the Mayor or Council is interested in significantly changing existing policy.
 - d. The amendment has not been recently rejected by the City Council.
4. There has been a neighborhood review process to develop any proposed change to a neighborhood plan, or a neighborhood review process can be conducted prior to final Council consideration of the amendment.

Applications for Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The Council has received 17 applications for Comprehensive Plan amendments. Those applications are summarized below.

| App. # | Applicant | Brief Description of Proposed Amendment Application |
|---------------|--|--|
| 1 | Department of Planning and Development (DPD) | DPD proposes new goals and policies for a state-required container port element. In 2009 the legislature amended the Growth Management Act to require jurisdictions with marine container ports that have operating revenue in excess of \$60 million-the cities of Tacoma and Seattle-to develop a container port element for their Comprehensive Plans. Among other things, container port elements are intended to address freight mobility and incompatible land uses caused by the conversion of industrial land. The Growth Management Act establishes a deadline of June 30, 2015 for adoption of the container port element. |
| 2 | Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) | SDOT proposes to add the Lake to Bay Loop to the Comprehensive Plan's urban trails system map. |
| 3 | Urban Forestry Commission | The Urban Forestry Commission proposes to amend several existing policies to be consistent with the Urban Forestry Management Plan and |

| App. # | Applicant | Brief Description of Proposed Amendment Application |
|--------|--|--|
| | | current city-wide approach to managing the urban canopy. |
| 4 | Councilmember Clark for the City Council | Consistent with Resolution 31291, Councilmember Clark proposes to amend the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to remove an area generally known as “South of Charles” from the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing / Industrial Center (MIC) and to change the FLUM designation of the area from Industrial to Downtown. |
| 5 | Councilmember O’Brien | <p>Councilmember O’Brien proposes to amend the Environmental Goal 7 as follows:</p> <p>“To control the impact of climate change globally and locally, reduce <u>per capita</u> emissions of (carbon dioxide and other) climate-changing greenhouse gases in Seattle by 30 percent from ((1990)) <u>2008</u> levels by ((2024)) <u>2020</u>, (and) by ((80)) <u>60</u> percent from ((1990)) <u>2008</u> levels by ((2050)) <u>2030</u>, and by 90 percent from 2008 levels by 2050.”</p> <p>Additionally, Councilmember O’Brien proposes to add, as either policies or goals, 2020 and 2030 reduction targets for emissions associated with transportation, buildings, and solid waste.</p> |
| 6 | Councilmember Licata | Councilmember Licata proposes to add policy language that would authorize long-term homeless encampments as a residential use. |
| 7 | Chris Leman | <p>Mr. Leman proposes the following new policy for the Transportation Element:</p> <p>“Minimize damage from vehicles that are heavier than would normally be allowed on Seattle's roads and bridges, especially those vehicles that are owned by the City, counties, Sound Transit, Seattle School District, or their contractors.”</p> |
| 8 | Chris Leman | Mr. Leman proposes that the Comprehensive Plan include an open and participatory government element or appendix. |
| 9 | Chris Leman | <p>Mr. Leman proposes the following new goal for the Transportation Element:</p> <p>“To help realize goals and policies in the Environmental Element to reduce emissions of climate-changing greenhouse gases, and realize transportation goals and policies in this Element, the annual per capita vehicle miles traveled within, to, or from Seattle will be reduced by at least eighteen percent by 2020, thirty percent by 2035, and fifty percent by 2050. As provided in the Environmental Element, the Climate Action Plan will establish specific vehicle miles traveled reduction goals by transportation mode or sector.”</p> |
| 10 | Chris Leman | Mr. Leman proposes to add a one-block walkway between the Blaine and Howe stairs to the urban trails system map. |
| 11 | Charles Redmond on Behalf of the City Neighborhood Council (CNC) | <p>The CNC proposes to add the following new policy to the urban Village Element:</p> <p>“Total city wide jobs and housing targets and neighborhood-level allocations shall be adopted or adjusted as a part of each annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment cycle.”</p> |
| 12 | Jessie Clawson for Ballard II, LLC | Ballard II proposes to amend the FLUM for an area east of 15 th Avenue West between NW 51 st Street and NW 48 th Street to remove the area from the Ballard North End MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the |

| App. # | Applicant | Brief Description of Proposed Amendment Application |
|---------------|----------------------------------|--|
| | | area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use. |
| 13 | Jessie Clawson for Port 106, LLC | Port 106 proposes to amend the FLUM for property addressed as 1600 W. Armory Way in Interbay to remove the area from the Ballard North End MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use. |
| 14 | Jessie Clawson for AnMarCo | AnMarCo proposes to amend the FLUM for property addressed as 2130 Harbor Avenue SW to remove the area from the Greater Duwamish MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use. |
| 15 | Lindsay Diallo for Amir Moazzami | Mr. Moazzami proposes to amend the FLUM for two parcels addressed as 1009 – 1011 NE 73 rd Street in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village to change the FLUM designation from single Family to Commercial / Mixed Use. |
| 16 | Councilmember Clark | Councilmember Clark proposes to amend the FLUM for an area in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village that is generally bounded by Interstate 5 to the west, Ravenna Boulevard to the south, the alley between 8th and 9th Avenues NE to the east, and NE 64th Street to the north to change its FLUM designation from Single-Family to Multifamily. |
| 17 | Councilmember Licata | Councilmember Licata proposes to amend various goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan to establish that, wherever feasible, when redevelopment occurs there should be no net loss of affordable housing. |

Attachments:

- Planning Commission Recommendation
- DPD Recommendation



City of Seattle

Seattle Planning Commission

Commissioners

Joshua Brower, Chair
Leslie Miller, Vice-Chair
Katie Bell
Catherine Benotto
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Colie Hough-Beck
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Staff

Barbara Wilson,
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Katie Sheehy,
Planning Analyst

Diana Canzoneri,
Demographer &
Senior Policy Analyst

June 24, 2011

Honorable Councilmember Sally J. Clark, Chair
Committee on the Built Environment
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

RE: Proposed 2011-2012 Comprehensive Plan Applications

Dear Councilmember Clark,

The Planning Commission is the steward of the *Seattle Comprehensive Plan*. The purpose of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) is to provide the vision for how Seattle will welcome the next decades' anticipated residents and jobs in a way that promotes both a vibrant economy and livable neighborhoods. The Comp Plan does this by directing most new growth to places designated as either urban centers or urban villages. Its policies describe how the City intends to direct employment and housing growth while providing necessary transportation and other infrastructure.

We are pleased to provide you with our comments and recommendations on the proposed amendments that should be placed on the docket for further analysis and have outlined areas we feel should be considered as the review process moves forward. Our recommendations are based on well-established criteria, *Guidelines for Amendment Selection*¹, that are also included in Resolution 30976 adopted by Council on May 14, 2007.

NEW CHALLENGES, NEW OPPORTUNITIES: UPDATING OUR PLAN

In addition to this annual amendment process, the City is engaged in a larger update of Seattle's Comp Plan as mandated by Washington state law.

This update provides an opportunity for Seattle to revisit and realign framework goals and policies to meet the new and significant challenges facing Seattle since the Comp Plan was originally adopted in 1994. The Commission has been working collaboratively with executive staff to begin identifying some of these big issues that should be addressed in the update process:

- How to use the arrival of 130,000 additional people and 115,000 new jobs to our city in the next 20 years as an opportunity to create more complete neighborhoods and to improve the safety and vitality.
- Seattle needs significant investments in our basic service infrastructure, civic institutions, and public realm. These investments must align with future growth.
- Seattle must prepare for climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- The City must prioritize providing housing affordable to a range of ages, incomes, and family sizes, staying attuned to changes in demographics and economic conditions.

In addition we believe that the Comp Plan can be made more accessible and transparent by doing the following:

- Clarify and map the linkages between the Comp Plan and other implementing plans and regulations.
- Resolve conflicts between existing goals and policies and revisit Comp Plan–level numeric goals.
- Streamline the document, eliminate redundancies, and move to a Web-based format.

As stewards of the Comp Plan, we understand the City may change and alter the overall approach to and structure of our Comp Plan in the current update. We have kept this in mind during the 2011/2012 amendment cycle docket setting, and our recommendations and comments below reflect our consideration of this update and potential effects.

REQUESTS TO CONVERT INDUSTRIAL LANDS

We are troubled by the fact that there are four separate proposals that would remove acres of land from Seattle’s manufacturing and industrial centers (MICs).

As far back as 2004, the Planning Commission raised concerns about the City’s ad hoc approach to granting zoning-change requests for industrial lands. We recommended the City develop a comprehensive industrial lands strategy that considers overall objectives for maintaining and attracting industrial jobs and the role and opportunities provided by the industrial sector within the regional context. Such an effort was needed to respond responsibly to requests for changing the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) or a MIC designation. We also saw zoning decisions made without the guidance of a coherent and rational citywide strategy that reflects an understanding of current market conditions; rezones, good data, or clear guidance. In 2006, the City undertook an extensive effort to assess the health, value, and needs of our industrial jobs sector and of the importance industrial zoned land plays in providing the space and appropriate development standards to foster this critical sector of our economy.

After extensive public and stakeholder outreach, thorough analysis including business, land use, and economic opportunities; as well as surveys and research of best practices of comparable cities; the City found that Seattle’s maritime and industrial sectors are thriving and vitally important to our economic stability as a region. Comprising only 12% of the city’s land, industrial businesses provide 33% of the City’s total retail sales tax revenue and 32% of the City’s total B&O tax revenue. Industrial businesses provide about 25% of all jobs in the city and the vast majority of living wage jobs for people without a college degree.

This analysis concluded that “*Land Conversion Pressures Threaten Industrial Operations*” and made it clear that continued, piecemeal conversion of industrial land to non-industrial uses threatens to destabilize the balance that exists in Seattle’s industrial areas between the cost of doing business, proximity to customers, and the synergy of business relationships.

If these four proposals move on to the docket for further analysis in this amendment cycle we remind decision makers once again of the value of industrial zoned areas and ask that you closely scrutinize *any* proposal that would result in conversion of industrial zoned land to another designation. We recommend you take into account a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the impact of significantly increased traffic volumes on freight and rail movement, the sites overall value as industrial land, and the impacts of conversion on the operations of nearby industrial businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

1. *A New State-Required Container Port Element*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: **Include in 2011 Docket**

As required by the State Growth Management Act, the new container port element is appropriate to consider in the 2011 amendment cycle. We look forward to working with Council and City staff to ensure that this new element helps define our path to a sustainable future. When this element was proposed in the last cycle we forwarded specific changes to DPD and Council in an effort to create more clarity in the policy direction. We ask council and executive staff review our submissions.

2. *Add Lake to Bay Loop to the Comp Plan's Urban Trails System map.*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: **Include in 2011 Docket**

One of the goals associated with the Urban Trails System is to 'link major parks and open spaces with Seattle neighborhoods.' We recognize the Lake to Bay Loop is a critical pedestrian and cycle route between Lake Union and Elliott Bay that creates essential connections to Lake Union Park, Seattle Center, the Olympic Sculpture Park, and Myrtle Edwards Park. The City recently updated the Bicycle Master Plan and the Pedestrian Master Plan which act as roadmaps for connecting trails and greenways. In the current update of the Comprehensive Plan it will be important to draw clear and transparent connections between these implementing plans and the framework policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Upon review, the value of the Urban Trails System is not entirely clear to the Commission and we recommend review in the update process.

3. *Urban Forestry Management Plan and Managing the Urban Canopy.*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: **Include in 2011 Docket**

The proposal appropriately seeks to provide clearer direction and consistency in City policies in managing the urban tree canopy. Implementing documents such as the Urban Forest Management Plan should work collaboratively and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

4. *Future Land Use Map (FLUM) to remove an area generally known as "South of Charles" from the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing / Industrial Center (MIC) and to change the FLUM designation of the area from Industrial to Downtown.*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: **Include in 2011 Docket**

As stated above, we are generally concerned that in this year's amendment cycle that four separate proposals consider many acres of industrial land for conversion to non-industrial land and have not adequately considered issues such as access to transit, the impact of significantly increased volumes of traffic on freight and rail movement, its overall value as industrial land, and the impacts of conversion on the operations of nearby industrial businesses.

5. *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: **Include in 2011 Docket**

Seeing similar goals in this proposed amendment and in #9 below, the Commission recommends consolidating the amendments and placing only one on the docket. We see this proposed amendment as the more comprehensive and data-driven approach to addressing our climate-change goals and recommend it go forward for analysis. In that phase, we recommend giving strong consideration to how the Comp Plan will be restructured and when and where it is appropriate to adopt specific numbers in to

our Comp Plan as opposed to placing them in implementing documents (in this case the Climate Action Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan) that are often better suited for detailing numeric goals.

6. *Long term, self managed Encampments*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Include in 2011 Docket

The current Comp Plan policies would not allow residential uses in some specific areas under consideration by the city and thus the merits of this proposal should be analyzed and examined in the 2011/2012 amendment cycle.

7. *A new policy in the Transportation Element related to extra heavy buses, trucks used by City agencies and contractors, solid waste vehicles and fire trucks.*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do Not Include in 2011 Docket

Very similar proposals have been forwarded and rejected by City Council in 2008, 2009, and 2010 amendment cycles; therefore, under the *Guidelines for Amendment Selection* 3.D. this proposed amendment does not meet the threshold criteria and should not be on the docket.

Furthermore, the Commission believes that Comp Plan policies T8 (*Establish a street system that can accommodate the weight of heavy vehicles and reduce the damage such vehicles can cause*) and T70 (*Pursue strategies to finance repair of road damage from heavy vehicles in a way that is equitable for Seattle's taxpayers*) provide appropriate guidance to address this matter. We reiterate our concurrence with the 2008 Recommended Comprehensive Plan amendments report that states:

"While preventive measures are generally prudent, the factors involved in fleet selection for transit, utilities and construction is complex. The proposed policy's objectives regarding the type and weight of transit buses and solid-waste haulers can best be achieved through budgetary or programmatic decisions by transit agencies, the Seattle Department of Transportation and Seattle Public Utilities, or by amendments to the Transportation Strategic Plan."

And finally, we note that the Right of Way Improvements Manual requires pavement design appropriate for corridors that "accommodate a high volume of heavy vehicles." We recognize that continuing the current approach would allow some continued road damage to roads that have not yet been upgraded to accommodate these vehicles, and that restricting use of these vehicles would impose significant costs to the service providers and/or reduction in services. In our view, this problem involves complex tradeoffs in costs, reliability, and quality of service. Therefore, the proposed amendment does not meet the threshold criteria because it would be better addressed through a budgetary or programmatic decision (1.D).

8. *Create a new element or appendix of the Comprehensive Plan entitled "Open and Participatory Government."*

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do Not Include in 2011 Docket

The Planning Commission is dedicated to the principles and practice of transparent, open and participatory government but the Comp Plan is not the appropriate document for this proposal. The proposed requirements outlined in the application are best dealt with through the various rules and regulations that deal more specifically with open government such as the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW Chapter 42.36 (Appearance of Fairness Doctrine), Seattle Municipal Code, and by the application of the Seattle Ethics Code or through budgetary and programmatic decision-making processes (1.D and 1.E). Additionally, the City Council is currently engaged in revising the City of Seattle's policies and practices concerning open and participatory government. Lastly, a similar proposal was rejected by Council in 2008, 2009, and 2010 and we do not see this proposal as significantly different (3.D).

9. Targets for reductions in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) on Seattle's road network

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do Not Include in 2011 Docket

Similar in intent, the Commission recommends that proposal #5, a more data-driven proposal, be substituted for this proposal and placed on the docket. A similar proposal to this was rejected last amendment cycle because the Council recognized that reducing greenhouse gases and becoming carbon neutral will require much more than simply identifying a numerical goal for reducing per capita vehicle miles traveled. It will require specific and targeted efforts in several key areas including building energy, waste, and transportation. Council also recognized that VMT reduction targets need to be specified by transportation mode or sector and that the metrics should then be adopted into implementing documents such as the Climate Action Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan.

10. Add A One-Block Walkway (Between The Blaine And Howe Stairs) to The Urban Trails System Map

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do not include in the docket.

We do not believe this proposal to be an appropriate addition to the Comprehensive Plan, and feel it is better addressed as a budgetary or programmatic decision (1.D). There appears to be a great opportunity to create a stronger connection and we encourage this block be explored through the Bike Master Plan and the Street Fund.

11. Annual Jobs and Housing Allocation Updates

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do Not Include in 2011 Docket

The proposed amendment does not meet the threshold criteria because it would be better addressed through a budgetary or programmatic decision (1.D).

12. Remove an area (Ballard II) from the Ballard North End MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use.

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Include in 2011 Docket

As stated above, we are generally concerned that in this year's amendment cycle that four separate proposals consider many acres of industrial land for conversion to non-industrial land and have not adequately considered issues such as access to transit issues, the impact of significantly increased volumes of traffic on freight and rail movement, its overall value as industrial land, and the impacts of conversion on the operations of nearby industrial businesses.

13. Remove an area (Port 106) from the Ballard North End MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use.

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Include in 2011 Docket

As stated above, we are generally concerned that in this year's amendment cycle that four separate proposals consider many acres of industrial land for conversion to non-industrial land and have not adequately considered issues such as access to transit issues, the impact of significantly increased volumes of traffic on freight and rail movement, its overall value as industrial land, and the impacts of conversion on the operations of nearby industrial businesses.

14. Remove an area (AnMarCo on Harbor Avenue) from the Duwamish MIC and to change the FLUM designation for the area from Industrial to Commercial / Mixed Use.

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Include in 2011 Docket

As stated above, we are generally concerned that in this year's amendment cycle that four separate proposals consider many acres of industrial land for conversion to non-industrial land and have not adequately considered issues such as access to transit issues, the impact of significantly increased volumes of traffic on freight and rail movement, its overall value as industrial land, and the impacts of conversion on the operations of nearby industrial businesses.

15. Amend the FLUM for two parcels Roosevelt Residential Urban Village from single family to Commercial Mixed Use

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Include in 2011 Docket

This proposal is appropriate for consideration and we recommend it move forward onto the docket.

16. No Net Loss of Affordable Housing

Commission Recommendation & Comments: Do Not Include in 2011 Docket

There are many components of this proposal that give us pause. First, we are concerned that the Washington State Supreme Court overturned a similar measure. Second, the term "where feasible" creates ambiguity and would be open to interpretation. Third, this proposal tacks on the concept of 'no net loss of affordable housing' to many other housing policies listed in the Comp Plan. A single policy statement addressing no net loss would provide much more clarity and avoid unnecessary duplication or potentially changing the meaning of other policies. Furthermore, we suggest it might be more appropriate to focus on a no net loss of income-restricted or subsidized housing. We recognize that anti-gentrification tools are hard to come by but we believe this policy may have unintended consequences that could discourage new housing production. And finally, the proposal seeks to make changes to a total of twenty current goals and policies. Major revisions and reorganization of the Comprehensive Plan will be best considered in the current seven year update of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan.

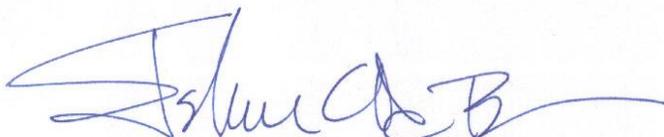
17. Amend the FLUM for an area in the Roosevelt Residential Urban Village from Single-Family to Multifamily.

Commission Recommendation & Comments: No Recommendation

The Commission did not receive this proposal in time to review it.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our recommendations regarding the Threshold Resolution. We look forward to providing you with assistance as the 2011 Comprehensive Plan amendment process moves forward. Please contact me or our Director, Barbara Wilson at (206) 684-0431 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Josh Brower, Chair
Seattle Planning Commission

cc: Mayor Mike McGinn, Daryl Smith, Ethan Raup, Julie McCoy, David Hiller, Rebecca Deehr; Mayor's Office
Seattle City Councilmembers
Rebecca Herzfeld, Ketil Freeman; Council Central Staff
Diane Sugimura, Marshall Foster, Tom Hauger; DPD
Peter Hahn, Tracy Krawczyk; SDOT
Rick Hooper; Office of Housing
Bernie Matsuno; Department of Neighborhoods

SEATTLE PLANNING COMMISSION RECORD OF DISCLOSURE & RECUSAL:

- Commissioner Josh Brower disclosed that his firm, Brower Law PS represents maritime and industrial businesses as well as developers of single and multifamily housing throughout the city.
- Commissioner Amalia Leighton disclosed that her firm, SvR Design works on various Seattle transportation projects and she represented the Planning Commission on the Emerald City Task Force.
- Commissioner Matt Roewe disclosed that his firm, Via Architecture, has done planning work in South Lake Union and Uptown that has helped define and advance The Lake to Bay Trail concept.

Guidelines for Amendment Selection

The City Council considers a variety of factors in determining whether a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment will be placed on the amendment docket for a given year. Among those factors are the following:

1. The amendment is appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan:
 - A. The amendment is consistent with the role of the Comprehensive Plan under the State Growth Management Act;
 - B. The amendment is consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies;
 - C. The intent of the amendment cannot be accomplished by a change in regulations only;
 - D. The amendment is not better addressed as a budgetary or programmatic decision; or
 - E. The amendment is not better address through another process, such as neighborhood planning.
2. The amendment is legal – the amendment meets existing state and local laws.
3. It is practical to consider the amendment:
 - A. The timing of the amendment is appropriate and Council will have sufficient information necessary to make an informed decision.
 - B. Within the time available City staff will be able to develop the text for the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and, if necessary, the Municipal Code, and conduct sufficient analysis and public review.
 - C. The proposed amendment is consistent with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan and well-established Comprehensive Plan policy, or the Mayor or Council is interested in significantly changing existing policy.
 - D. The amendment has not been recently rejected by the City Council.
4. There has been a neighborhood review process to develop any proposed change to a neighborhood plan, or a neighborhood review process can be conducted prior to final Council consideration of the amendment.



City of Seattle

Michael McGinn, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Diane M. Sugimura, Director

June 20, 2011

TO: Councilmember Sally Clark
Chair, Committee on the Built Environment

FROM: Diane Sugimura

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan – Annual Amendment – Docket Setting

My staff has reviewed the suggestions submitted to the City Council as possible amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan in this year's annual amendment cycle. We have comments for your consideration as the City Council reviews the submittals to determine which ones should receive further study.

Using the criteria the Council has adopted for identifying topics appropriate for the Comprehensive Plan, some of the submittals do not appear appropriate for inclusion in the Plan. These include:

#7 and 8 have both been reviewed and rejected by Council on more than one occasion, and therefore they do not comply with criterion 3.d. These should not be included in this year's docket.

10 would label as "planned" a one-block segment on the Urban Trails map. This scale of trail improvement is best addressed as a programmatic or budgetary decision and, consistent with criterion 1.e, is not appropriate for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan.

11 calls for the City to adjust citywide growth targets and neighborhood-level allocations of those targets on an annual basis. The citywide target is not decided solely by the City of Seattle. Under the Growth Management Act, citywide targets are made at the county level based on periodic population forecasts developed by the state Office of Financial Management. In King County the determination of targets for individual cities requires a decision by the Growth Management Planning Council, a body of elected officials representing all the jurisdictions in the county. In the 21 years since GMA was adopted, the Growth Management Planning Council has established targets only three times, the most recent in 2010. Annual adjustment of the citywide targets is beyond the City's authority. How the citywide target is distributed within the City is one of the issues DPD intends to address as part of the major Comp Plan review that we have just begun, and we strongly suggest that Council defer discussion of this issue to that process.

Finally, submittals 12, 13 and 14 would together remove approximately 30 acres of land from the City's designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers and would redesignate this land for mixed-use development. While the submittals appear to meet the threshold criteria for continued consideration, the combined effect of removing this much land from industrial designation should be considered with caution, given the value that industrial uses provide the City and the importance that current policies place on maintaining industrial land for industrial uses.

If you have questions about our recommendations on this phase of the annual amendments, please contact Tom Hauger at 684-8380.