

July 26, 2016

Rob Johnson, Planning, Land Use and Zoning (PLUZ) Committee Chair  
Mike O'Brien, PLUZ Committee Vice-Chair  
Liza Herbold, PLUZ Committee Member  
Lorena Gonzalez, PLUZ Committee Alternate

Re: Beacon Hill Community Input into 2025 Seattle Comprehensive Plan

Dear Seattle City Council Planning, Land Use and Zoning Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Members,

We are writing from the North Beacon Hill Council (NBHC) to follow up on our November letter to the Office of Planning and Community Development stating that we were unable to comment on the Mayor's 2035 Comprehensive Plan until we engage the community to hear their voices, get their input and provide it to you for your full consideration prior to your determination on the Beacon Hill section of the Plan.

The NBHC mission is to "advocate for a welcoming, diverse and healthy Beacon Hill neighborhood". Thanks to the Department of Neighborhoods, we were able to obtain a Matching Fund Race & Social Justice Survey Inclusion Grant that allowed us to: 1) translate our survey to five other languages (Chinese, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese), 2) print multi-languages surveys, 3) mail it to 12,562 households, 4) print and post 100 posters, 5) hold 8 events including 6 non-English speaking events and 6) implement a multiple language survey online. Similarly, we extend our thanks to the Office of Planning and Community Development for their review and feedback of the survey questions prior to implementation.

Although the 2035 Comprehensive Plan Update focused on North Beacon Hill only, the Survey was mailed to all Beacon Hill households because changes in North Beacon Hill impact the North, but also Middle and South Beacon Hill. Specifically, as stated in the survey, "No matter where you live, all Beacon Hill residents are affected because everyone shops, works, plays, walks/bikes/drives/rides the bus and/or the light rail through North Beacon Hill." There is only one main road, Beacon Avenue that connects the entire neighborhood.

Residents identify themselves as living in Beacon Hill despite governmental designations of a North, Middle and South Beacon Hill areas of the neighborhood. When residents were asked "Should NBHC cover issues affecting all of Beacon Hill?" the response was a resounding "Yes" from Middle Beacon Hill residents (76%) and South Beacon Hill residents (80%). The Survey Steering Committee members also included North, Middle and South Beacon Hill organizations: 1) Beacon Hill Merchants Association, 2) El Centro de la Raza, 3) Friends of Lewis Park, 4)

International Drop-In Center, 5) Jefferson Community Center, and 6) North Beacon Hill Council with the International Examiner newspaper as a media partner.

We tabulated 1,117 valid records (those submitted on time with demographic data) of the 1,137 responses (9% survey response rate). Note that 14% of the responses were completed in non-English language surveys. As much as we are delighted with our response rate, we realize we need to do more innovative community engagement to reach our 78.3% people of color residents who include 44.4% residents born outside the United States.

Here are relevant survey results for your discussion and full consideration:

A. Expansion of the Beacon Hill Residential Urban Village (Urban Village)

Although 70% of respondents responded they were not "...familiar with the proposal to expand the Beacon Hill Urban Village", survey responses were as follows:

- 55% of respondents Agreed/Strongly Agreed with expanding the Urban Village to reflect an average 10-minute walking distance to the light rail station. 24% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed; the remaining 21% had no opinion.
- In a separate question, only 24% of respondents Agreed/Strongly agreed with NOT expanding the urban village at all.
- Of note, 56% of respondents Agreed/Strongly Agreed with exploring the establishment of an urban village near the VA Hospital; 28% had no opinion, and 15% Strongly Disagreed.

The respondents included 47% housing assistance eligible (spending 30% and over of their household income on housing). 74% are homeowners and 24% are renters. 23% moved to Beacon Hill in the past five years.

B. Mandatory Affordable Housing Program (MAH)

- Support zoning changes to single family areas in the Beacon Hill Urban Village to put the Mandatory Affordable Housing (MAH) program in place: 51% Agreed/Strongly Agreed, 19% No Opinion, and 29% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed.

Unfortunately, we did not ask respondents if they were familiar with the MAH proposal. When we look at this information in relation to questions from the survey section on the 2011 Beacon Hill Neighborhood Plan elements in the Comprehensive Plan, we see a stronger stated need for affordable housing in and out of the Urban Village. Specifically:

- Encourage affordable family-sized homes: 80% Agreed/Strongly Agreed.
- Encourage a balance of affordable rental and home ownership: 77% Agreed/Strongly Agreed.
- Encourage affordable housing development close to the light rail station: 70% Agreed/Strongly Agreed.

The survey respondents also rated the following elements for inclusion in any planning for Beacon Hill:

1. Safety plan for all road users including pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and others: 84% Important/Very Important
2. Security and other measures to increase safety at Beacon Hill: 83% Agreed/Strongly Agreed
3. Social and human services for residents: 80% Important/Very Important
4. Public health impact of noise and airplane emissions: 69% Important/Very Important
5. Pocket parks throughout Beacon Hill: 69% Important/Very Important.
6. Multicultural gathering venue and cultural programming: 68% Agreed/Strongly Agreed.
7. Sign that incorporate art, culture and history: 59% Agreed/Strongly Agreed.

On July 12, we shared the survey results with at our NBHC meeting with thirty residents in attendance. They strongly requested the following:

1. The City conducts an effective and innovative information campaign on the Urban Village and MHA given our population in a cross-cultural and linguistically appropriate manner. In short, mailing out to residents in English will not be enough. Engaging church and ethnic community leaders and other strategies will be needed to reach various affinity circles.
2. The Seattle City Council conducts a hearing for Beacon Hill residents to give community input.
3. The City provides written notice to property owners who will be affected by the Urban Village expansion.
4. Hold off on expanding the Urban Village until we better understand the overall impacts, including displacement, on Beacon Hill.

Given that time is of the essence, at the end of the day, we ask that:

1. Beacon Hill's Equitable Development Displacement and Opportunity Index be re-assessed for the entire neighborhood, not just North Beacon Hill because 47% of our households are housing assistance eligible, and we have 78.3% people of color with 44.4% born outside the United States, not 64% people of color as indicated for North Beacon Hill.

Reference: Seattle 2035 Growth & Equity Summary and Full Report

- [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/p2273984.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2273984.pdf)
  - [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/p2273983.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2273983.pdf)
2. Strongly consider the retention and/or re-housing of newcomer residents to ensure continuing familial, economic and ethnic community stabilization and development.
  3. Customize for our neighborhood effective Equitable Development strategies and tactics that are preventive and responsive to Displacement and Opportunity Gaps for Beacon Hill.

4. Engage us continuously in this process in innovative and cross-culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.

Our community volunteers have spent countless hours to engage our Beacon Hill residents who stepped up to raise their voices. We ask that you fully consider the information and our requests in your deliberations regarding 2035 Comprehensive Plan, HALA and MHA as your decisions, particularly zoning decisions, will greatly impact our neighborhood.

This letter and the survey results will also be shared with Mayor Ed Murray, Deputy Mayor Hyeok Kim, the Office of Planning and Community Development Director Sam Assefa, Office of Economic Development Director Brian K. Surratt and Department of Neighborhoods Director Kathy Nyland. We are available to answer any questions at your convenience.

Thank you from the Beacon Hill Merchants Association (<http://www.beaconhillmerchants.com>), El Centro de la Raza (<http://www.elcentrodelaraza.org>), Friends of Lewis Park (<http://www.lewispark.org>), International Drop-In Center (<http://www.idicseniorcenter.org>), Jefferson Community Center (<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/jeffercc.htm>), and the North Beacon Hill Council (<http://www.northbeaconhillcouncil.org>).

Sincerely,

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Attachments:

1. Beacon Hill Multilingual Survey
2. Beacon Hill Survey Results

CC:

Mayor Ed Murray  
Deputy Mayor Hyeok Kim  
Seattle Council President Bruce Harrell  
Seattle City Council Members  
DON Director Kathy Nyland  
DON Project Manager Allyn Ruth  
Office of Planning and Community Development Director Sam Assefa  
Office of Economic Development Director Brian K. Surratt  
NBHC Board Members  
Beacon Hill Merchants Association  
El Centro de la Raza  
Friends of Lewis Park  
International Drop-In Center  
International Examiner  
Jefferson Community Center  
Lee Family Association