DUWAMISH TRIBE

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5/1/2024

Seattle Office of Planning & Community Development
One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update Draft

Dear Rico Quirindongo, Patrice Carroll and Jim Holmes,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the One Seattle Plan to advance a vision for the future that aligns with the City's core values to make Seattle more equitable, livable, sustainable, and resilient for today's residents and generations to come. Seattle and its surrounding environs are an area that the Duwamish Tribe considers culturally significant. The Duwamish River and its ancestral People who continue to reside in the area today, are a marginalized, displaced indigenous Tribe whose current Longhouse sits in an industrialized and heavily polluted area of Seattle. Most of our Tribal Members were forced to leave our ancestral lands and live on reservations, except for a persistent, resilient faction. The Duwamish had known village sites along the Duwamish River, near downtown Seattle, Ballard, near University Village, and along the shores of Lake Washington.

We note that there are approximately 111 historical and ancestral Duwamish place names within the current City of Seattle map boundaries. About 29 place names are located in the manufacturing and industrial centers, 26 are located in parks and open spaces, 10 place names are located in regional centers, 4 in urban centers and the rest are in the other place types.

These sites are where the Duwamish fished, hunted, gathered camas roots, tule, cattails, berries, and other native plants to maintain our way of life. Near the turn of the 20th century, significant grading of the landscape by European settlers affected our waterways and drastically changed aquatic life and resources for the Duwamish. The Montlake Cut lowered the Big Lake (Lake Washington) significantly so that the Black River has all but dried up, decimating the salmon run, diminishing habitability for riparian life and destroying our birthplace. Straightening of the Duwamish River also destroyed integral places (bends and brackish ponds) for salmon to acclimate to salt water before heading out to sea. Small streams were buried further depleting places for salmon to spawn.

Native plants that once covered the areas are overgrown with invasive plant species such as ivy, holly, and blackberry bushes. These invasive species reduce diversity of food sources and attract nonnative birds and non-native pollinators to the area. Because of these changes the Duwamish are a marginalized Tribe today and it is now more important that the Duwamish continue its native traditions.

In the One Seattle Plan Draft, it states that "As the climate changes, Seattle residents are experiencing environmental, health, and economic effects." This is not the first time that these effects negatively impacted residents in the Seattle area. The Duwamish experienced and are still experiencing the effects of pollution and destruction of our usual and accustomed places that we managed. If the effects of

climate change are defined and explained in this manner, the Duwamish and its land already know too well "climate change".

In the mid-1970s the archeological site, Duwamish Number One Site designated 45- Kl-23, was discovered in the former Duwamish River Estuary located at həʔapus Village Park & Shoreline Habitat, formerly T107 Park. The artifacts are evidence that the Tribe existed archaeologically and thrived with the resources on hand along the estuary and the immediate vicinity. The site is directly across West Marginal Way SW, where a new Longhouse, owned and operated by the Duwamish Tribe was built and opened to the public in 2009.

The Duwamish Tribe strongly urges you to restore our ancestral lands. Our ancestral land was and can still be a benefit for all. In the introduction of the Climate and Environment section, the plan states,

> *"Seattle is a place of unparalleled natural beauty. Indigenous peoples, stewards of these lands and waters from time immemorial, continue to remind us of our connections to nature to sustain and inspire us. Newcomers are drawn by access to nature both within the city as well as to the mountains, rivers, and beaches beyond. Strong values of environmental protection and sustainability have shaped our Comprehensive Plan from the start."*

If you peeled back the beautiful face, you would see that post European contact, our waters are polluted, our fish runs are down, the Duwamish estuary that used to filter our waters are gone and that the flora and fauna are reduced to invasive species and/or are gone. Would you drink the waters directly drawn from the Duwamish River? Would you readily eat the fish caught near the mouth of the River in Elliott Bay? Would you eat the berries grown near deposited cement kiln dust near Delridge? If you drill down 5 feet in Gas Works Park (the site of one of our ancestral place names) and see the partially combusted petroleum toxins, would you visit the park with your family, friends and pets or kayak near its shores? The Tribe insists that it be returned to its respectful self and we would like to be part of that conversation.

Below are some observations that the Tribe believes would be helpful in guiding you to achieve the One Seattle Plan:

- The Tribe in general supports "The Housing and Affordability: Expanding Housing Opportunities Across the City".
- We suggest that housing should be available to all income levels of any abled person with adequate space to live with access to clean water, clean land, community and transportation, not just an opportunity. We suggest that housing reflect the Coast Salish design of our ancestors - for reference view the web pages for the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center and the Intellectual House on the University of Washington campus. The designs were not only functional and adapted to our climate conditions, but also aesthetically pleasing.

- Maintain adequate housing and spacing to maximize and maintain land and water resources for all.
- In general the Tribe supports the “Equity and Opportunity: Promote a More Equitable Seattle as We Grow”. As Seattle’s first peoples, we were also unfortunately the first peoples to be forced to leave and become Seattle’s first homeless people. We wholeheartedly agree with “...more types of housing in many areas of the city and includes strategies to produce homes that are accessible, affordable, and designed to meet the needs of Seattle’s diverse households. In doing so, we aim to redress the legacy of redlining and racially restrictive covenants that shape Seattle to this day.”
- The Duwamish Tribe in general supports “Community and Neighborhoods: Focus Growth and Investment in Complete Walkable Communities”. Our surrounding environs once held trails that we freely moved between to obtain resources and canoe between land and water. This free movement allowed us to be part of our own community and to visit and trade with others up River and around Lake Washington and Lake Union.
- With regard to “Climate and Sustainability: Meet the Challenges of Climate Change for a Resilient Future”, the Duwamish Tribe strongly agrees with achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 or sooner. We suggest that all vehicles on land and water be non-fossil fuel based. This includes but is not limited to automobiles, trucks, trains, boats, ships, motorcycles, water pleasure craft, construction and landscape equipment. We suggest that you start within the Duwamish Valley and Lake Union areas.
- The Duwamish Tribe would strongly request that our traditional natural resources be allowed to thrive abundantly in our ancestral lands including within the bounds of the City of Seattle. The Duwamish Tribe is highly concerned about the State and Regional Policy Framework section. The Washington Growth and Management Act clearly protects the farms and forests from sprawl outside urban areas like Seattle and its surrounding modern suburbs. This puts an undue burden on Seattle’s traditional indigenous populations and the Duwamish Tribe. Seattle’s and the Duwamish Tribe’s traditional hunting grounds and forests were within the City of Seattle current borders and a highly valued area for trade and commerce simultaneously. We urge you to work with other cities and local governments to maintain Seattle’s once natural beauty and resources and to allow forests and “farmland” to return. The idea of creating a “concrete jungle” in Seattle will not deter the effects of climate change and will certainly not maintain an illusion of permanence for the generations of tomorrow.
- The Duwamish Tribe would request that we be given notice of planning and implementation of parts or part of the plan. We would like an active engagement with the City of Seattle. Our first and foremost concern is protection of our sacred sites and place names. Please do not dismiss us. We are valued members of our Tribe, our culture, our community and society. We request recognition of our ancestral place names and inclusion. We need to respect our ancestors by protecting our cultural resources regardless of the proximity to Meander Lines. Do not deny us this right.

- In general the Duwamish Tribe agrees with the Land Use section and its discussion on urban design with regard to the natural environment. We caution that the City of Seattle be mindful of the rate of development and its impact on water quality, fresh and saltwater shorelines, and the riparian environment. The lower reach of the Duwamish River has seen increased pollution after European contact which continues to this day. In addition, the channelization of the River has been detrimental to flood impacts, not to mention the impact of the stripping and subsequent lack of native vegetation that once supported a healthy environment for abundant fish and wildlife. This landform change and others has exacerbated bluff erosion and landslides within the City limits as well as the disastrous floods as a result of King Tide within the Duwamish River Valley.
- The Tribe strongly recommends only native vegetation be used for any proposed landscaping to enhance habitat for fish and wildlife, and native avian life and native pollinators. The Tribe supports observing critical area tracts and stream buffers to preserve any remaining wetlands and stream buffers. Loss of wetland habitat is known to affect the viability of fish, water quality and increase the effects of seasonal urban flooding. We also support the active removal of noxious weeds and invasive plant species.
- The Tribe recommends that natural drainage system or street swales be implemented when reconstructing or redesigning public works like sewer or storm water – Sustainable Infrastructure - OPCD | seattle.gov
- The Tribe recommends that attention to waste, wastewater and stormwater treatment plants be given one of the highest priorities to avoid untreated, polluted waters into our waterways during power outages as a result of storm events or other natural disasters.
- The Tribe recommends that computer models be employed to evaluate hydrologic displacement both above and below ground during strong seismic shaking due to fault slippage, and displacement due to landslides, tsunamis (or seiches) and/or volcanic lahar flows.
- The Duwamish Tribe also recommends that all outdoor lighting be dark sky compliant.
- The Duwamish Tribe requests that Place Types and Other areas (from Figure 2 in the Plan) be given original Duwamish place names alongside their current modern English name in consultation with the Duwamish Tribe. This will also help preserve our culture and allow us to begin to heal from the effects of colonialism and displacement.
- The Tribe strongly recommends that all urban streams be daylighted and fish culverts increased in size for both fish and water conveyance starting with the Duwamish Valley, Longfellow Creek and Thornton Creek. We recommend that these streams be given room to meander to alleviate urban flooding. We also recommend that wetland and stream buffers be implemented or maintained as property becomes available.
- With regard to transportation, the Duwamish Tribe requests that a solution to tire pollution be addressed as this severely affects fish and aquatic wildlife during storm events as well as water

quality. We also request that everyone has the ability to access shoreline areas to access water transport, both public and private.

Finally we urge you to continue to include community members of all of Seattle's neighborhoods including those of us who have been historically disenfranchised to help you achieve your goal. The Duwamish Tribe recognizes the importance of local communities and celebrates their collective consciousness and their differences from our own. Welcoming all has been our motto and we do this with open arms. By embracing everyone, we foster respect for all and our environment. The Duwamish thrived in our ancestral lands for thousands of years. While the last 170 years have been difficult for our Tribe, if together we treat the land with respect and manage and maintain it, it will be here for all of our ancestors and descendants for thousands of years to come.

Thank you,

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