May 20, 2024

Dear Director Rico Quirindongo,

Thank you for meeting with the Chinatown-International District Visioning Group on April 30, 2024, and presenting the Draft – Seattle Comprehensive Plan.

Below are some concerns about the proposed Comprehensive Plan:

As an organization that serves the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities, we question the categorization of the CID as a Regional Center, rather than an Urban Center. The classification of the CID as an Urban Center is more fitting for the neighborhood. The CID is home to a high concentration of restaurants, small businesses, and non-profit organization that serve many low-income and immigrant residents. Unlike the downtown core, the CID is a residential neighborhood, with many residents who both work and live in the neighborhood. Development projects, like the International District Village Square project, combined affordable housing with services such as a medical clinic, senior and child care, community center, library, and store fronts that strengthen the community and reflect an Urban Center. The classification of the neighborhood as a Regional Center may harm the neighborhood's historical and cultural preservation, as well as displace current small businesses, services, and residents.

The lack of anti-displacement strategies in the Comprehensive Plan will threaten the vitality of the CID. The CID is unique in its history, cultural value, and its people. The neighborhood is home to many of Seattle's legacy businesses and incubates many first- and second-generation entrepreneurs. However, with increasing rent, existing CID businesses, non-profits, and residents may not be able to afford to stay in the neighborhood. As a small organization, APICAT has also been displaced from the CID. Adding anti-displacement strategies such as keeping businesses and cultural anchors in place, expanding tenant protections, investing in community ownership of land, and supporting homeowners to stay and thrive in place, would support the preservation of CID community.

Finally, the draft Comprehensive Plan does not meet the current and future demands for growth in Seattle. Both the CID and southeast Seattle bear the brunt of development, exacerbating the legacy of redlining. We ask the City for more equitable growth and development to take place throughout Seattle, by adding more Urban Centers and Neighborhood Centers in other areas to accommodate higher density development – such as small to mid-size apartment buildings.

We hope this feedback will support you and your department in planning for a Seattle where all communities can thrive.

Sincerely,

Elaine Ishihara

Executive Director

Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Advocating Together for Health

CC:

Seattle Council Member Tammy J. Morales

Seattle Council Member Tanya Woo

Seattle Council Member Sara Nelson

Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell

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Wren Wheeler, Trustee and Executive Associate, Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience

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