HOUSING DEVELOPMENT consortium

Black Home Initiative NETWORK

May 6, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

Black Home Initiative (https://www.blackhomeinitiative.org/) is a regional effort that seeks to target the racial inequities at the core of the housing ecosystem in an effort to increase the number of BIPOC households who successfully secure homeownership. Our initial emphasis is on Black households; within five years, the goal is to make the opportunity to own a home, and the potential benefits of that asset, available to 1,500 new low- and moderate-income Black homeowners. As this work is carried out, the initiative will concurrently focus on the essential work of clearly defining, and transforming, the systems that have impeded access to homeownership for Black households in the greater Seattle region. The ultimate impact we aspire to is the reduction of inequity and an increase in intergenerational household wealth.

With these aspirations in mind, we have developed a list of suggestions for your consideration as you revise your One Seattle Plan draft and delineate what will be examined in the final environmental impact study. We want to thank you for the careful and diligent work you have done to produce the current One Seattle Plan draft. Much of the language in the document aligns with our values, but we ask that you go bolder in your plan to ensure that our shared vision of an equitable Seattle can be realized. Our suggestions are an invitation to further dialogue, and we look forward to connecting with you as this process of vision setting continues.

Sincerely,
Black Home Initiative (BHI) Network

Housing Development Consortium
of Seattle-King County
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Black Home Initiative (BHI) Comp Plan Draft & DEIS Comments

1. Density bonuses, development regulation flexibility, land incentives, and technical assistance should be studied in the FEIS and included in the final comp plan to support:
    a. affordable homeownership and rental production
    b. affordable family-sized 3+ bedroom middle housing homeownership and rental units
    c. affordable homeownership and rental units within a stacked flat building typology
    d. permanently affordable homeownership opportunities through community land trusts and limited equity cooperatives
    e. community-based organizations to create, or partner in the creation of, community-led and community-owned affordable homes and third space developments
    f. legacy homeowners in redeveloping their property to create affordable housing units for themselves, their families, and current and past legacy residents
    g. non-legacy homeowners in redeveloping their property to create permanently affordable housing units with preference to current and past legacy residents
    h. legacy homeowners who would like to develop corner stores
2. Displacement pressures are reduced when there is an abundance of affordable housing options throughout the city. To achieve this goal, would like to see the following studied in the FEIS and included in the final comp plan:
    a. all neighborhood centers that were in the DEIS
    b. neighborhood centers defined as inclusive of a ¼ mile radius
    c. midrise and mixed-use housing within a 5-minute walk of frequent transit
    d. midrise housing up to 85' in transit corridors and urban centers
    e. highrise housing of 12-18 stories in regional centers
3. Eliminate parking mandates citywide.
4. At minimum, align Seattle's middle housing standards with the Department of Commerce model ordinance to ensure middle housing can be feasibly built throughout the city.
5. We support the anti-displacement intention of the triplex development standards you are proposing for high displacement risk areas. However, we are concerned about the unintended consequences of this restriction. We request that you provide more information about the potential impacts of the triplex standard as written and engage in conversations with current and past residents of high displacement risk areas to inform any zoning language. We would also recommend that you study a triplex standard that exempts projects that will have owner-occupied units, affordable units, or units developed by a community-based organization, or in partnership with a community-based organization. As stated in item #1 above, we believe that the city should be incentivizing the development of owner-occupied, affordable, and community-led-&-owned units through density bonuses, development regulation flexibility, land incentives, and technical assistance. Such assistance is particularly pertinent in areas at high risk of displacement where development should reflect the will of current and past residents of these areas.
6. Study in the FEIS, and include in the final comp plan, a city land banking and land disposition process to support community-based development orgs to create, or partner in the creation of, community-led and community-owned affordable home and third space developments.
7. In the FEIS, please disaggregate projections about the number of housing units per AMI group from the city-level to a neighborhood or district-level scale for comparative analysis.
8. OPCD visited community groups to inform their comprehensive plan draft and we would like to see OPCD revisit these community groups to present the FEIS and zoning changes and request their feedback.