

Ch. 2: Land Use Element

Growth Management

GOAL 2.1

Focus growth to achieve a balanced mix and arrangement of land uses that support economic vitality, community health and equity, and transit access.

Urban Center Land Uses

Policy 2.1A: Implement the City Center and station area plans to focus the majority of SeaTac’s commercial and residential growth and redevelopment into three distinct complete communities within SeaTac’s designated Urban Center.

Policy 2.1A-1: Review and potentially amend the City Center Plan in the near future.

Policy 2.1B: Direct moderate and high density residential development to the Urban Center, especially within the City Center and station areas.

The Urban Center accommodates residents and employees in a mix of uses and structures. Moderate and high density residential uses are appropriate within the Urban Center, where residents can walk or ride transit to work, and take advantage of the employment and activities within the center.

Policy 2.1C: Promote development that reduces block sizes in the Urban Center, particularly in the City Center and the station areas, and provides a network of connected local streets to facilitate pedestrian circulation and transit accessibility.

The physical layout of the Urban Center, including its street and sidewalk network, block size, and configuration, is perhaps the most crucial determinant of its pedestrian and transit accessibility. A dense network of connected streets provides pedestrians with direct, safe, and interesting routes between destinations. Development should add new streets to reduce the average block size in station areas from the current 11.4 acres to three to six acres.

Policy 2.1D: Focus retail development within the City Center and station areas.

Most of the commercial development on International Boulevard consists of non-retail businesses such as hotels, restaurants, park ‘n fly lots, offices, and a few auto-oriented retail establishments (e.g., used car sales). The Airport generates a large and relatively untapped market for retail activity in the City of SeaTac. More than 35 million passengers traveled through the Airport terminal in 2013, and the annual volume is projected to increase to 45 million passengers per year by 2024. This market could be tapped, especially if travelers could conveniently access shopping areas outside the Airport.

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to Urban Center &/or City Center Plan

Recommended Implementation Strategies

LAND USE POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME-FRAME
GROWTH MANAGEMENT			
GOAL 2.1: FOCUS GROWTH TO ACHIEVE A BALANCED MIX AND ARRANGEMENT OF LAND USES.			
URBAN CENTER LAND USES			
<p>Policy 2.1A Implement the subarea plans to focus the majority of SeaTac’s commercial and residential growth and redevelopment into three distinct complete communities within designated Urban Center.</p>	<p>Implement the subarea plans’ action plans. Prioritize projects, track progress, and reevaluate prioritization over time.</p>	<p>Planning Commission Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Work with the Port of Seattle to attract a mixture of uses supportive of and benefited by high capacity transit.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Prioritize infrastructure investments that would serve growth in the Urban Center.</p>	<p>City Council Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Policy 2.1A-1 Review and potentially amend the City Center Plan in the near future.</p>	<p>Complete review in 2019</p>	<p>Staff, Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Policy 2.1B Direct moderate and high density residential development to the Urban Center, esp. within the City Center and station areas.</p>	<p>Incentivize multi-family residential projects in the Urban Center through measures such as density bonuses, multifamily tax credits, and infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>Planning Commission City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Streamline the development review process for proposed high density residential development in the Urban Center.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Evaluate and implement options for promoting mixed-use residential development in the Urban Center.</p>	<p>Planning Commission City Council Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to Urban Center &/or City Center Plan

LAND USE POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME-FRAME
<p>Policy 2.1C Promote development that reduces block sizes in the Urban Center, particularly subarea plan areas, and provides a network of connected local streets to facilitate pedestrian circulation and transit accessibility.</p>	<p>Identify desirable linkages and secure access through purchase or easements.</p>	<p>Staff Planning Commission City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
<p>Policy 2.1D Focus retail development within the City Center and station areas.</p>	<p>Encourage retail to remain or locate in existing buildings in the City Center and station areas through strategies such as business incubator programs, business support and development (e.g., community lending, Community Development Corporations, small business assistance), and storefront and streetscape improvements.</p>	<p>Staff Planning Commission City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Evaluate and implement options for promoting retail development in the station areas.</p>	<p>Planning Commission City Council Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Streamline development review for projects including retail in the City Center and station areas.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>

Ch. 7: Community Design Element

Goal 7.2: Provide a well-designed, pedestrian-friendly, and community-oriented environment in the Urban Center.

Policy 7.2A: Implement the City Center and Station Area Plans to encourage the development of distinctive focal points (i.e., high activity neighborhood and commercial centers) within the Urban Center.

Transit Communities

Policy 7.2D: Partner with developers to catalyze high-quality, transit-oriented developments in the station areas.

Station areas will evolve over many years into village-like places. The City should take the lead on establishing the character and level of quality during the initial phase(s) of development. Public amenities should be provided, such as comfortable walking, bicycling, and resting environments, small parks and plazas, pedestrian-scaled lighting, weather protection, and bicycle storage.

Policy 7.2E: Require clear and reasonable connections (e.g., station platforms and pedestrian paths) between new development and the light rail stations.

Pedestrian Environment

For an urban center to be lively and appealing, it must offer safe, convenient and attractive places for people who move around on foot. If an urban center is oriented only to vehicles, it will be lifeless, intimidating, and even hazardous.

Streets constitute the traditional, time-tested public realm for pedestrians. Other elements, such as overpasses and through-block walkways can supplement the basic network of street-related sidewalks, but the sidewalk network should be the principal element, and the one to which the most design attention is given. Human scale details are important for piquing pedestrians' interest and increasing their level of comfort.

Policy 7.2F: Incorporate sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented street furnishings along streets within the Urban Center.

Policy 7.2G: Establish a variety of public spaces throughout the Urban Center.

Policy 7.2H: Encourage connections between the Urban Center and nearby neighborhoods.

The Urban Center needs to be linked to the neighborhoods surrounding it. While such linkages can be enhanced by transit, the principal means should be through sidewalks, walkways, and other ground-level corridors, particularly creating east-west connections to the adjacent neighborhoods. While most have been developed as a part of the public streets and open space network, new development should be required to add linkages to this network, and there may be some instances in which pathways could be cut through private property via access easements.

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to the Urban Center &/or City Center

Policy 7.2I: Provide safe methods such as signalized crossings, textured crosswalks, and pedestrian islands within the planted median for people to cross major streets at regular and convenient intervals.

Policy 7.2J: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections through large blocks.

Urban Center development must allow for internal pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The City will need to negotiate with private developers to create through corridors for convenient pedestrian and bicycle access between destinations. These connections should be primarily outside the buildings, while others could be interior.

Quality of Building Design

Policy 7.2K: Maintain the City Center's and Station Area Plans' development standards for building design and orientation to ensure that buildings are designed to accommodate a comfortable and pleasant human experience on the street and are visually please above.

Policy 7.2L: Encourage developments to include design features that unify SeaTac's Urban Center character balanced with individual, creative architectural designs.

Policy 7.2M: Provide a variety of public amenities throughout the Urban Center.

Civic Facilities

Policy 7.2O: Create public spaces within the Urban Center.

Policy 7.2P: Encourage the development of buildings and structures in the Urban Center which provide civic functions.

Policy 7.2Q: Include art with public improvements.

Policy 7.2R: Incorporate Bow Lake and Angle Lake as major elements in the image of SeaTac's Urban Center and City Center.

The Urban Center contains two lakes: Bow Lake and Angle Lake. The City should continue providing public gathering and performance space at Angle Lake Park. Bow Lake is, at present, inaccessible and virtually unseen. It is predominantly privately owned with hotels on the west and south sides and a large mobile home park on the east side. It is an amenity that could be combined with a public park or plaza to make it a focal point of the City Center. Special expertise will be needed to allow access to bow Lake while still permitting it to perform its natural functions as part of a designated sensitive area.

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to the Urban Center &/or City Center

Recommended Implementation Strategies

PROPOSED POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
7.2 PROVIDE A PEOPLE-ORIENTED URBAN CENTER			
TRANSIT COMMUNITIES			
<p>Policy 7.2A: Implement the City Center and Station Area Plans to encourage the development of distinctive focal points (i.e., high activity neighborhood and commercial centers) within the Urban Center.</p>	<p>Implement all public actions identified in City Center and Station Area Plans</p>	<p>Staff, Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Require new developments to implement the City Center and Station Area Plans.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Where possible, fund or partially fund public gathering space projects.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Explore the possibility of a joint public/private 'flagship' project.</p>	<p>City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Amend the Zoning Code to include minimum density standards for the HCT districts.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
<p>Policy 7.2D: Partner with developers to catalyze high-quality, transit-oriented developments in the station areas.</p>	<p>Update Zoning Code to reflect the City Center and Station Area Plans' recommended types of uses and the size and design of buildings that are in close proximity to major transit stations.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Where possible, fund public amenities (e.g., trails, small parks and plazas, pedestrian-scale lighting, weather protection, etc.) to catalyze development.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council, Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><i>Other 7.2D – not in main policy section: Encourage the Coordinated Development of Station Areas</i></p>	<p>Develop a plan conceptual for each station area, suggesting the form and type of development, with target years for the completion of major components</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
<p>Policy 7.2E: Require clear and reasonable connections (e.g., station platforms and pedestrian paths) between new development and the light rail stations.</p>	<p>Require new development to integrate with and provide comfortable, usable connections to light rail stations.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council,</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>
	<p>Continue to work with Metro and Sound Transit to ensure that the needs of transit riders are met along the streetscape.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Working with Sound Transit and Metro, ensure that all major transit areas are visible, accessible by sidewalks, well-lit, attractive, and offer cover from the elements.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to the Urban Center &/or City Center

PROPOSED POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT			
<p>Policy 7.2F: Incorporate sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented street furnishings along streets within the Urban Center.</p>	Place station area plan recommended sidewalk construction improvements, and pedestrian features in the Capital Improvements Program.	Staff, City Council	Short-Term
	Develop and apply design standards to new development to achieve high-quality street furnishings and amenities.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council,	Ongoing
<p>Policy 7.2G: Establish a variety of public spaces throughout the Urban Center.</p>	Seek public-private partnerships and/or fund the construction of public spaces (e.g., pocket parks, small gathering spaces; see Policy 7.2O for major public spaces)	Staff, City Council	Short-Term
<p>Policy 7.2H: Encourage connections between the Urban Center and nearby neighborhoods.</p>	Provide City Center and station area plans recommended pedestrian connections between the Urban Center and adjacent neighborhoods through zoning standards and the Capital Facilities Program. Obtain access easements as feasible.	City Council, Planning Commission	Short-Term
<p>Policy 7.2I: Provide safe methods such as signalized crossings, textured crosswalks, and pedestrian islands within the planted median for people to cross major streets at regular and convenient intervals.</p>	See Transportation Element for intersections, mid-block crossing, and pedestrian refuge improvement strategies.	---	---
<p>Policy 7.2J: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections through large blocks.</p>	Require or incentivize pedestrian and bicycle connections through large blocks.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council,	Short-Term
QUALITY OF BUILDING DESIGN			
<p>Policy 7.2K: Maintain the City Center’s and Station Area Plans’ development standards for building design and orientation to ensure that buildings are designed to accommodate a comfortable and pleasant human experience on the street and are visually please above.</p>	Apply and/or enforce design standards to achieve people-oriented architectural and site design (see features listed under Policy 7.2J)	Planning Commission, City Council	Short-Term

Key Comprehensive Plan Policies Related to the Urban Center &/or City Center

PROPOSED POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
Policy 7.2L: Encourage developments to include design features that unify SeaTac’s Urban Center character balanced with individual, creative architectural designs.	Determine and require a selection of physical characteristics to be incorporated into development projects, for example, seasonal plantings, public spaces, canopies and other weather protecting devices, roof forms, ground level articulation of building facades, terraced building forms, or combinations of these elements.	City Council, Planning Commission, Staff	Short-Term
Policy 7.2M: Provide a variety of public amenities throughout the Urban Center.	Update zoning provisions for the Urban Center to include a list of desirable public amenities, some mandatory and others encouraged with incentives (in the form of additional development)	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Short-Term
Policy 7.2N: Encourage flexibility in Zoning Code...			
CIVIC FACILITIES			
Policy 7.2O: Create public spaces within the Urban Center.	Evaluate options for acquiring and developing a public space, including private sector partnerships.	Staff	Ongoing
	Organize a design competition to ensure quality and innovation in the final design.	Staff	Short-Term
	Establish a civic park or square identified in a subarea plan through the Capital Facilities Program.	City Council, Staff	Short-Term
Policy 7.2P: Encourage the development of buildings and structures in the Urban Center which provide civic functions.	Establish one or more civic structures within the Urban Center.	City Council	Medium-Term
	Encourage public-private projects to provide civic functions.	Staff	Ongoing
Policy 7.2Q: Include art with public improvements.	Include artists on design teams for public projects.	City Council, Staff	Ongoing
	Update the Zoning Code to include incentives for the provision of public art in private developments.	Planning Commission, City Council	Short-Term
	Establish a threshold above which public improvements will be required to include public art.	City Council, Staff	Short-Term
Policy 7.2R: Incorporate Bow Lake and Angle Lake as major elements in the image of SeaTac’s Urban Center and City Center.	Continue programming activities at Angle Lake and explore ways to make Bow Lake an accessible and appealing focal point for the community.	Staff, Planning Commission	Ongoing