



## MEMORANDUM COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Date: 2/9/2024  
To: Planning & Economic Development Committee  
From: Kate Kaehny, Principal Planner  
Subject: **Informational Briefing on Planning Commission Direction Regarding Growth Scenario Options for Envision SeaTac 2044 Project to Explore**

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### **SUMMARY**

At their January 30 and February 6 meetings, the Planning Commission held two work sessions focused on confirming twenty-year growth scenario options for the City to explore as part of the Envision SeaTac 2044 Comprehensive Plan Update project. At the work sessions, the Commission reviewed and discussed a “Baseline Growth Scenario” (Option 1), that identified the most limited set of changes to growth policies the City could enact while complying with new state and regional requirements, and two additional growth scenarios developed to help achieve Envision SeaTac 2044 project goals (Option 2: “Advance Envision Project Goals” and Option 3: “Optimize Envision Project Goals.”)

At the conclusion of the work sessions, the Commission directed that both Option 2 and Option 3 should receive additional technical analysis and community input. The purpose of the PED Committee’s February 15 briefing is to provide an overview of the three growth scenarios and share the Planning Commission’s direction on moving Options 2 and 3 forward for further exploration. Planning Commission Chair, Alyne Hansen, will attend the briefing and be available for questions PED members may have about the Planning Commission discussions.

### **OVERVIEW**

Since August 2023, the Planning Commission has held regular work sessions in support of the Envision SeaTac 2044 Comprehensive Plan update project. The Commission conducts these work sessions in their dual role as both Planning Commissioners, with statutory duties to review the Comprehensive Plan, and as the main community advisory group for the Envision project.

### **PROJECT STATUS: ENVISION SEATAC 2044: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

- **Main Project Goals:** To update SeaTac’s Comprehensive Plan and reset its growth and development policies for the years 2024-2044. Key updates include incorporating new City priorities identified since the last major update in 2015, and complying with recent state and regional growth requirements. The Envision project closely coordinates with the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update and City Center/Airport District Subarea Plan projects, both also underway. Each of these three major planning efforts will identify changes to components of SeaTac’s Comprehensive Plan and are collectively referred to as the “Planning Our City Together” projects.
- **City Council Contract Authorization:** 4/11/2023
- **Tasks Completed to Date:**
  - Early Work
    - Policy and code audits and preliminary identification of potential amendments
    - Public Participation Plan completed

- Phase 1: Community Vision & Priorities for SeaTac's Future
  - Community engagement completed (City Vision poll findings to be published online in near future)
- **Tasks Underway**
  - Phase 2: Where & How Will SeaTac Grow: Urban Villages and Complete Communities
    - Technical work underway (data gathering, preliminary policy development)
    - Public engagement activities to date:
      - *Planning Commission/Community Advisory Group Meetings: 2*
      - *Online Activities:* Recordings of Planning Commission January 30 and February 6 work sessions to be packaged as informational “webinars” and will be posted on project website
      - *In-Person Activities:* Under development
    - Related Comprehensive Plan Elements under review:
      - Introduction & Framework Element
      - Land Use Element
      - \*\*\*New Urban Center Element
      - \*\*\*New Neighborhoods Element
      - Early policy work on Housing, Economic Vitality, Transportation and Parks and Recreation Elements will also be undertaken

## **KEY TOPICS FOR FEBRUARY 15 BRIEFING**

The following topics will be discussed at the upcoming briefing.

### **1) Why Envision SeaTac 2044 Project is Developing Growth Scenario Options**

A main goal of the Envision SeaTac 2044 major update to the Comprehensive Plan is to re-set the City's growth and development strategies for the years 2024-2044. To assist with this process, growth scenarios need to be developed so the City and public can explore options that can achieve the various goals of the Envision project. Part of the exploration of growth scenarios will include:

- Identifying potential locations where the City can accommodate anticipated growth, and specifically the new job and housing targets identified through the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and King County growth planning processes,
- Assessing the implications of recent state legislation that will allow “middle housing” types such as duplexes and townhouses ([HB1110](#)) in single-family areas, and other legislation ([HB1337](#)) that will increase the number of “accessory dwelling units,” sometimes called “mother-in law” units allowed on single-family lots,
- Analyzing traffic implications of new growth through the Travel Demand Model (TDM), recently created as part of the Transportation Master Plan update project that is currently underway,
- Evaluating potential impacts to other City infrastructure such as the park system and other public services,
- Understanding how different growth options strengthen the City's current Urban Village and Complete Community policies, and other Envision SeaTac 2044 project goals, and
- Opportunities for community input so SeaTac residents and businesses can participate in discussions on how the city should grow.

### **2) Description of Three Growth Scenario Options Reviewed by Planning Commission**

At their January and February work sessions, the Planning Commission undertook an in-depth review of the following three growth options.

- **Option 1: Baseline Growth Scenario**

- **Maintain Current SeaTac Growth Policies:** The Baseline Scenario maintains existing City policy direction as follows:
  - Focus most of the city’s future job and housing growth within the designated Urban Center, and the majority of that growth in “urban villages” adjacent to SeaTac’s three light rail stations. (The urban village boundaries and characteristics are identified in the City’s subarea plans for the [S 154<sup>th</sup>](#) and [Angle Lake](#) station areas, and within the vision report and current subarea plan update process for the [City Center](#).)
  - Make no changes to current “complete community” infrastructure and services policies that encourage walkable access to transit, parks, healthy foods, neighborhood services, and diverse, affordable housing citywide.
- **Implement State Housing Legislation and Regional Growth Requirements:** The only changes to growth assumptions included within the Baseline Scenario are those that ensure the City complies with new state and regional growth requirements. This includes:
  - Allowing new middle housing types (i.e., duplexes, townhouses, cottage housing, small apartments) in single-family zoned areas (between 2-4 units depending on location).
  - Allowing two ADUs per lot in single-family zoned areas.
  - Complying with regional growth targets and other requirements as identified in the [Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 2050](#) multi-county planning policies and [King County Countywide Policies \(CPPs\)](#).

- **Growth Scenario Option 2: Advance Envision SeaTac 2044 Goals *INCLUDING* Implementation of New State & Regional Growth Requirements**

- **Strengthen Urban Village Strategy:** Continue efforts to focus most new job and housing growth within the Urban Center and in “complete” urban villages near light rail stations (specifically within the three designated urban village/subareas).
- **Strengthen Complete Community Infrastructure/Services Outside of the Urban Center**
  - **Increase Access to Neighborhood Services & Diverse, Affordable Housing:** The main focus of Option 2 is to explore how to increase access to neighborhood services and diverse, affordable housing types (both are existing complete community infrastructure policy goals) by “maximizing” existing neighborhood service centers outside of the designated Urban Center.
  - **Maximize Existing Neighborhood Service Centers:** “Maximizing” existing neighborhood centers means identifying the locations of existing areas that currently have clusters of stores and diverse housing types, and exploring how they could provide more neighborhood services and housing choices than currently allowed. (“Existing” neighborhood service centers also mean locations where the current zoning or land use designations allow for this type of development, even if not yet constructed.)
- **Implement State Housing Legislation and Regional Growth Requirements:** This includes the same type of considerations as described in the Baseline Option above.

- **Growth Scenario Option 3: Optimize Advancement of Envision SeaTac 2044 Goals *INCLUDING* Implementation of New State & Regional Growth Requirements**

- **Option 2 Components (see above):** Option 3 includes all Option 2 components and the following other growth opportunities.

- **Additional Growth Opportunities to Explore:**
  - **Address gaps in Neighborhood Service Center Locations:** Identify areas not served by existing neighborhood service centers (outside of ½ mile walking distance per current complete community policy guidance) and explore potential for allowing new clusters of neighborhood-oriented services and diverse housing types that could contribute more neighborhood service and housing choices than currently available.
  - **Expand locations where 4 units of Middle Housing allowed:** Evaluate implications of expanding locations where state’s recent Middle Housing legislation (HB1110) allows 4 units of middle housing from ¼ mile from high-capacity transit to ½ mile. Exploring middle housing types within ½ mile of high-capacity transit stops (light rail stations and RapidRide stops) aligns with the City’s “transit community” goals codified by resolution in 2013. (See [Growing Transit Communities Compact](#) at this link or as described in the Comprehensive Plan’s [Land Use Element](#), page LU-10, in purple discussion box.)

### 3) Planning Commission Direction on Options for Further Analysis and Community Input

On February 6, after significant discussion and consideration, the Planning Commission confirmed that both growth scenario Option 2: Advance Envision Goals and Option 3: Optimize Envision Goals should be analyzed and presented to the public for input.

## NEXT STEPS

### GROWTH SCENARIO OPTIONS NEXT STEPS

- **Analyze Growth Scenario Options:** Project staff and consultants from the Envision and Transportation Master Plan Update (TMP) projects will analyze and refine growth scenario options before bringing findings to the public. This includes using the Travel Demand Model created by the TMP project team to assess potential impacts from the different growth options on the City’s transportation network.
- **Community Input on Growth Scenario Options:** Online and in-person activities will be developed to ensure robust, inclusive, and equitable opportunities for community learning and input on the growth options with the goal of understanding public support for a preferred growth option.

### ENVISION PROJECT ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

Phase	Envision SeaTac 2044 Community Conversation Topics	Timeline
1	<b>Community Vision and Priorities for SeaTac’s Future</b> - <i>Technical Work:</i> Introduction & Framework chapter	Fall 2023
2	<b>Where and How Will SeaTac Grow Over the Next 20 Years: Urban Villages and Complete Communities</b> - <i>Technical Work:</i> , Growth scenario analysis, Land Use Element, new Urban Center chapter, new Neighborhoods chapter	Fall 2023/ Winter 2024
3	<b>Housing, Human Services and Economic Development to Support SeaTac’s Future</b> - <i>Technical Work:</i> Housing & Human Services Element, Economic Vitality Element	Winter/ Spring 2024
4	<b>SeaTac’s Future Transportation and Parks &amp; Recreation Systems</b> - <i>Technical Work:</i> Transportation Element, Transportation Master Plan, Parks, Recreation & Open Space Element	Spring 2024

Phase	Envision SeaTac 2044 Community Conversation Topics	Timeline
5	<b>Resilient Natural and Built Environments for SeaTac's Future</b> - <i>Technical Work:</i> Environment Element, Utilities Element, Capital Facilities Element	Spring/ Summer 2024
6	<b>Draft &amp; Final SeaTac 2044 Plan Review &amp; Adoption</b> - Update must be adopted by December 31, 2024	Summer/ Fall 2024

#### **PED COMMITTEE DIRECTION**

This is an informational briefing. No action requested.

#### **PACKET MATERIALS**

Packet materials include the following:

- This memo
- Presentation slides for February 15 briefing
- Links to Planning Commission Growth Scenario Work Session presentations  
*(Please note that these presentations were recorded and will be published as “webinars” on the [Envision SeaTac 2044 website](#) as a public education and engagement tool.)*
  - [PC Growth Scenario Work Session 1 Presentation](#) (1/30/2024)
  - [PC Growth Scenario Work Session 2 Presentation](#) (2/6/2024)