

Seattle

2035

YOUR CITY, YOUR FUTURE



Community Engagement Progress Report

April 2015



Community Engagement Progress Report 2013 - 2014 Snapshot

Seattle is growing and changing. Seattle 2035 is a citywide conversation to refresh our vision for what we want Seattle to be, and create a 20-year guide for Seattle's future.

Over the past year, we've been working hard to learn more about what you want Seattle to be in 20 years. This document provides just a snapshot of what we heard from you!

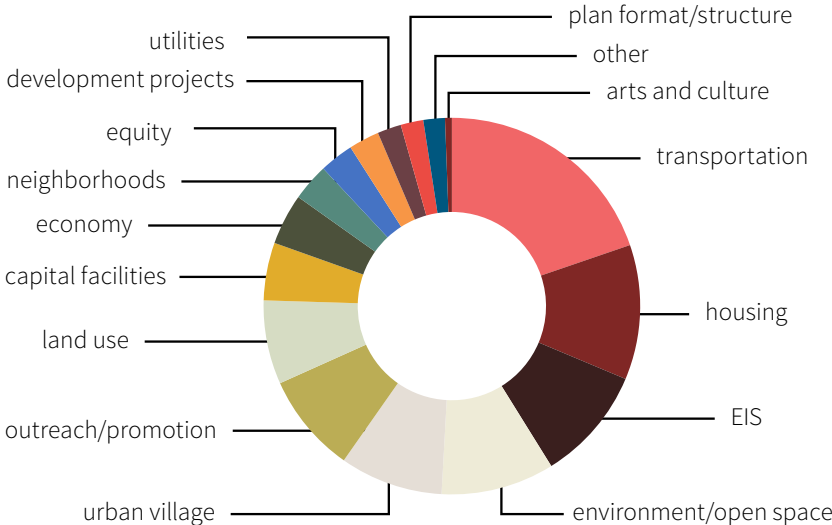
What we heard

The feedback we've collected to date supports concentrating Seattle's growth in walkable, mixed-use, transit-rich places – areas we call urban villages. We also heard suggestions to adjust this approach to address current challenges in Seattle.

"We need to make sure families and individuals of all incomes can afford to live in all of Seattle's neighborhoods."

"Pay more attention to sustainability."

What people are talking about...



What we did

Our goal was to build awareness of the Seattle 2035 effort, identify issues that people are concerned about, highlight key decisions that need to be made, and collect feedback on the different patterns of growth to be studied. We achieved this through:

In-Person Events

- Over 1,700 people met with us in-person
- Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons facilitated 9 meetings in historically under-represented communities
- We hosted 15 public meetings and provided information at an additional 21 public events
- We gave 31 presentations to public stakeholders
- We provided 13 briefings to the Seattle Planning Commission
- We gathered over 750 comments

Online

- Over 1,600 people joined our email list
- Our website was viewed 6,104 times
- More than 1,000 people read the Seattle 2035 blog
- Over 140 online comments were submitted

Social Media

- 523 people liked us on Facebook
- We gained 198 new followers on Twitter

Who we talked to

We reached out to a variety of community organizations, interest groups, elected officials, and the general public. A few of the organizations who worked closely with us include:



“Love urban village concept – we need to stick with this concept and encourage supporting the infrastructure they need.”

“Preserve the existing affordable housing stock.”

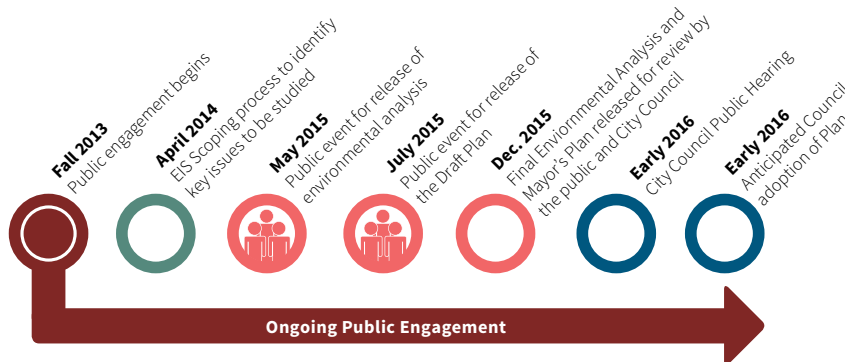
“Best way to deal with congestion is to enhance transportation options.”

“Workforce education, development and training is super important, especially for young people of color, immigrants, folks coming from low income backgrounds.”

What's next?

We look forward to continuing the conversation in 2015! We will be out and about around the city in 2015, and will also be holding some larger events to talk about Seattle's future. Keep an eye out for us!

Seattle 2035 timeline



Get involved:

- **Visit our website**
 2035@seattle.gov
- **Attend an event**
- **Follow us on social media**
 SEA2035
 @Seattle2035
- **Have other ideas for how you'd like to be involved? Email us at**
 2035@seattle.gov

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A - List of Public Engagement Events

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B - Comments Log

https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2262001.pdf

C - Summary of EIS Scoping Comments and Changes Made

https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2262000.pdf

D - Notes from POEL Meetings

https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2261999.pdf

E - Futurewise Outreach Report

https://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2261998.pdf



Background

Seattle is growing. Part of being prepared for that growth means updating the city's Comprehensive Plan (referred to as the Plan). The process by which we are updating the Plan is called Seattle 2035 - a citywide conversation about change, focusing on where we are now and where we want to go over the next 20 years.

Every citizen of Seattle is a stakeholder in this process, and therefore public engagement is an important component to our success. The public engagement goals for Seattle 2035 are (per May 2012 Council Resolution 31370):

- Provide objective information to assist the public in understanding issues and solutions.
- Provide opportunities for the public to contribute ideas and provide feedback through all phases of the project.
- Improve the involvement of traditionally under-represented audiences.

KEY AUDIENCES

In order to achieve our public engagement goals, we identified specific audiences that we needed to reach. These include people who are already engaged in the process and specific target audiences that will help reach broader groups of people that may be more impacted by the Plan. These audiences are further described in the section below.

Engaged Audiences

These are people and organizations who traditionally follow and get involved in city planning projects. They include community organizations and interest groups, non-profit organizations and advocates, planning and allied professions, motivated individuals, Boards and Commissions, city/county staff, elected officials, and other public agencies. Within the engaged audiences, the Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) sought out “connectors” – organizations that help us engage their members through sharing content and calendars, cross promotion, and joint events.

Targeted Audiences

These are audiences that we don't typically see at our public meetings or hear from through our normal process. However, they are especially important for long-range planning. Extra effort was required to connect with and host events to attract these audiences. Targeted audiences include:

- Make the process accessible and engaging to interested participants by using a variety of media, plain English, and easy-to-understand materials.
- Make the process racially and culturally inclusive.



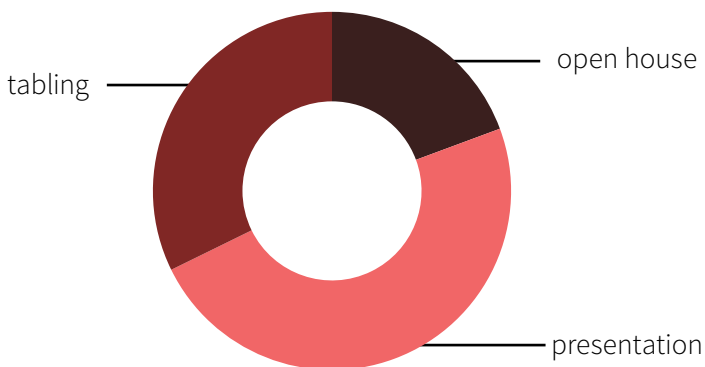
- **Millennial Generation.** Millennials include individuals born between approximately 1980 and 2000. Today, 25-34 year olds are Seattle's largest population age group. Millennials represent an important target audience since as they will be coming of age and assuming leadership over the lifespan of the Plan.
- **Traditionally Under-Represented Populations.** Traditionally under-represented audiences are also important because diversity in the City of Seattle will significantly increase over the next 20 years. These include low-income, minority, and limited-English proficient populations (such as immigrant and refugee communities).
- **Parents of Young and School-Aged Children.** Parents of young and school-aged children are another key audience, as they are heavily vested in seeing a bright future for the next generation.

What We Did

Public engagement goals during this initial phase of outreach were to build awareness of the project, identify issues, highlight policy choices, and get feedback on alternative patterns of growth to be studied. While traditional “in-person” methods (meeting, open house, presentation, etc.) played a major role in public outreach and engagement, the use of technology to share information, promote meetings and events, and get feedback increased. Below is a summary of the activities and tools we used to help reach these goals.

In-Person Strategies

- We hosted open house format meetings at City Hall and other community locations, including nine community meetings with Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) in traditionally under-represented communities.
- We partnered with other organizations to produce lectures and panel discussions to highlight issues and invite discussion. Whenever possible an open house was held at the venue prior to the event, where people could talk with city staff. The Seattle Channel filmed events so video was available online for those unable to attend.
- We staffed information tables at community and other public events where people gathered to learn about and discuss issues related to the Plan, such as housing, transportation, growth, etc.
- We placed a display with general information and engaging graphics at six high traffic community locations such as libraries and recreation centers.
- We enlisted the Department of Neighborhood’s (DON) POEL program to engage historically under-represented communities. Meetings were held in communities to introduce the project and identify issues these communities would like to be addressed in the Plan (a list of the communities included in [Appendix D](#)).



Online Strategies

- We created an online home for Seattle 2035 with a distinct look and brand. The site contains all the essential information about the project, including reports, event calendar, presentations, comment tool, and links to Seattle Channel films.
- We posted and blogged about various issues, and invited online dialogue.
- We promoted Seattle 2035 meetings and events through Seattle 2035’s website and social media, as well as other city department’s websites.
- We encouraged other organizations and departments including (Seattle 2035 Connectors) to repost, retweet, and promote Seattle 2035 events.

Website/Listserv	2035.seattle.gov
E-mail	2035@seattle.gov
Facebook	www.facebook.com/SEA2035
Twitter	#SEA2035
Seattle Channel	www.seattlechannel.org

Inclusive Outreach and Engagement

- We worked with the DON POELs to conduct Seattle 2035 outreach and engagement. Small meetings were held in six cultural communities: Oromo, Amharic, Cambodian, Filipino, Latino, and African American.

Futurewise Outreach on Seattle 2035

The city was fortunate to have other organizations gather additional feedback for Seattle 2035. Futurewise, El Centro de la Raza, OneAmerica, and Interim CDA designed and implemented several interactive outreach activities focused on Seattle 2035. City staff provided information and outreach materials used at other events that the team could draw from. The activities, which took place throughout the summer and fall of 2014, included:

- El Cinco de Mayo SpeakOut
- DragonFest SpeakOut
- 12th Avenue “Walkshop”
- Madison “Walkshop”
- Othello Park International Music and Arts Festival SpeakOut



- East African Leaders Workshops
- Latino Community Survey Hispanic Seafair
- Comadres Workshop
- Muckleshoot’s “To Gather” Event
- Fiestas Patrias Workshop
- Latino Legal Clinics Workshops
- Seniors Program and Parent-Child Home Program

These events provided additional opportunities for non-traditional and under-represented communities to provide input on a range of Plan issues: housing, transportation, and quality of life in Seattle.

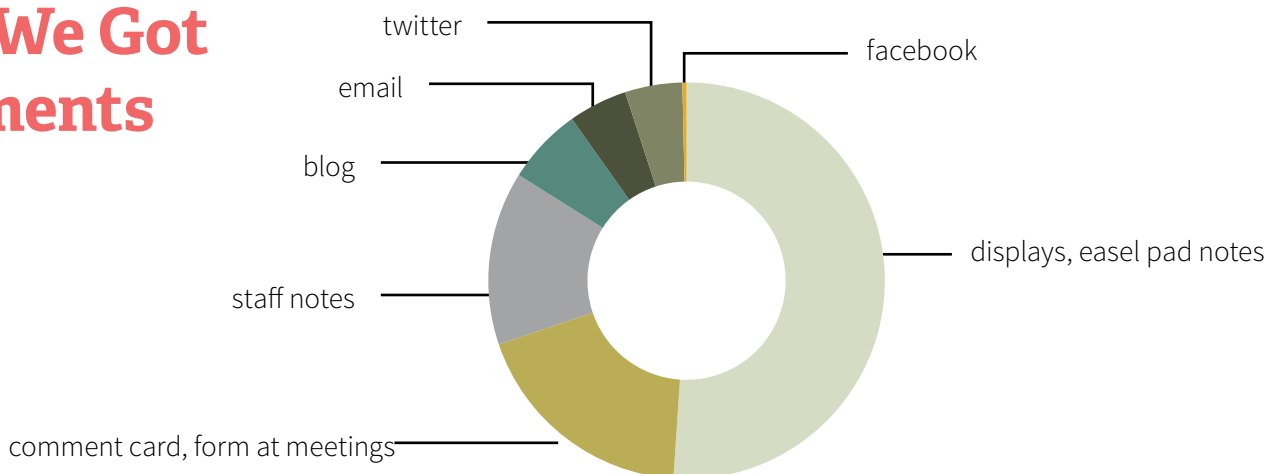


Public Comments Collected

- We built the project website with multiple public feedback tools: dedicated email address, online comment tool, instant polls, and links to Facebook and Twitter. In 2014, we received 142 comments through various digital channels: 43 via email, 3 via Facebook, 41 via Twitter, and 55 via the online comment tool.
- We provided comments forms at public events and meetings. Over 166 comment cards or forms were filled out and returned at live events.
- We designed meeting displays to be interactive and solicit feedback. People were encouraged to write on, put dots on, and place sticky notes on boards. Approximately 332 comments were gathered from displays and easel pads at events.
- We presented at numerous meetings and recorded approximately 267 comments from meeting notes.
- We provided an opportunity for formal comments at the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Meeting. People also gave testimony at the EIS Public Hearing.
- Comments were logged and coded available on our website (see [Appendix B](#)).



How We Got Comments



What We Heard

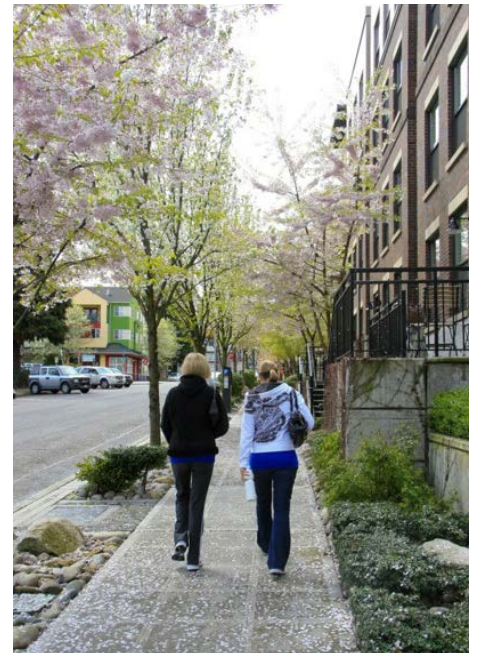
The feedback heard thus far supports concentrating Seattle’s growth in walkable, mixed-use, transit-rich places – areas we call urban villages. However, we also heard suggestions to adjust or modify this strategy to address current challenges in Seattle. People expressed the need for better transit and more affordable housing. We also heard that people want to see city investments occur in a manner that allows all citizens to benefit and doesn’t displace current residents. Below is a summary of key themes of public feedback, organized by topic, and examples of feedback are quoted throughout this document (see [Appendix B](#) for complete comment log).

Urban Village Strategy

- **Continue to support development of urban villages.** Concentrate services and transportation, not just housing and jobs, in existing urban centers and villages. Increased investment in public facilities and amenities to make these places vibrant is needed. Urban villages

should grow in quality, not just quantity. More attention should be given to design, community character, and building height. More transit service and affordable housing is also important for making urban villages successful. More investments are needed to support growth of urban villages.

- **Provide more options for growth in single-family areas.** These could include encouraging more accessory dwelling units (attached or detached), backyard cottages, and corner stores. Places outside urban villages also need investment.
- **Monitor growth and make course corrections over time.** The city should evaluate if infrastructure and investments are keeping up with residential growth. Adjust investment strategies to address areas where services fall short. Not all urban villages are the same – recognize the differences. Minimize displacement of existing residents as growth occurs.



“Love urban village concept – we need to stick with this concept and encourage supporting the infrastructure they need.”

“Shouldn’t treat all urban villages equally. Areas that can have more growth should have more of the focus.”

“Growth in villages does not increase vibrancy because of displacing existing businesses.”

People frequently talked about...



Equity and Community Well-Being

- **Growth.** People are concerned about gentrification and displacement. They want places for all types of households, including accommodation for the homeless. They also want to see more housing around jobs, but new housing in places like downtown is too expensive for all but the most wealthy. People expressed interest in coordinating growth with increases in transit and other city services/investments. There are also concerns about public safety as density increases.
- **Education.** People would like the Plan to address opportunities for youth, including job training and internships, with a focus on opportunities for immigrant youth.
- **Cultural resources.** The Plan should address investments in historic and cultural resources that support and strengthen the rich cultural heritage of specific neighborhoods, especially the Central Area.
- **Active living and healthy communities.** The built environment affects public health. The increase in childhood obesity is partly due to children spending too much time indoors and inactive. The Plan should encourage



more activity by making neighborhoods safer, and more walkable and bikable. Better access to healthy food is also needed.

“Make downtown a place where everyone feels welcome to live, work, and play.”

“We need to make sure families and individuals of all incomes can afford to live in all of Seattle’s neighborhoods.”

Economic Development

- **Strong business districts.** Planning needs to focus on local business districts. Stronger business districts can be created with more transportation and parking options, increase in the diversity of jobs, and incubator space and other resources to attract and retain small, locally owned businesses. Expanding jobs in urban villages can provide people with options to live and work in the urban village, which could result in shorter commutes and reduced traffic congestion. In areas too small to support a business district, some limited commercial development might provide needed services. Consider new models for start-ups such as incubators, pop-up shops, and shared kitchens. There is also a desire for other kinds of jobs in business districts outside of downtown.
- **Access to job and business training.** While the expansion of the technology industry has drawn new businesses and workers to Seattle, current residents and businesses could use more help. Workforce and business training, loans, and access to capital will help current residents and businesses enjoy Seattle’s prosperity.
- **Retain and grow manufacturing/industry.** Seattle’s manufacturing and industrial centers are important to Seattle’s economy and deserve protection. Industrial jobs are important because they provide a living wage that can support a family. Freight mobility could be improved to help improve the manufacturing and industrial sectors.

“City should pave the way for businesses to get going in lots of neighborhoods, not just downtown.”

“Workforce education, development and training is super important, especially for young people of color, immigrants, folks coming from low income backgrounds.”

“Local jobs and businesses should have higher priority.”

“More jobs start in garages or basements than anywhere else. Be more flexible.”

Environment

- **More green spaces and trees throughout the city.** These provide places to relax and enjoy nature. The need to preserve trees during development is key. There are concerns about the loss of views to nature, green, water, and sky.
- **Address climate change.** Employ a diverse variety of strategies to address climate change and sea level rise. Anticipate more climate refugees. Encourage more renewable energy and energy conservation to be less reliant on coal.

“Preserve and protect, treasure and honor our remaining wild natural areas and their wildlife! Do not infringe or impose on them. Maintain.”

“Pay more attention to sustainability.”

Land Use

- **Respect history, existing communities, and culture.** Don't let generic growth make all neighborhoods look the same. There should be height transitions between dense urban villages and nearby single-family areas.
- **Use appropriate development regulations to promote good growth.** Require new development to provide open space and trees. Identify incentives that will encourage

developers to build in desired locations and with desired amenities. Allow building heights of 125 feet and higher only in urban centers.

“Urban density means density in services, infrastructure, and transportation as much as housing.”

“We need better systems with which to measure how we grow.”

Transportation

- **More options for getting around.** People want more frequent and faster transit, and safer bike and pedestrian routes.
- **Loss of parking.** Although more people are using transit, biking, and walking, many still rely on cars for some trips. Parking is becoming more difficult. New housing built without off-street parking impacts the amount of on-street parking available.
- **Take care of the existing infrastructure.** Road maintenance, sidewalks, crosswalks, and lighting are some examples of transportation infrastructure that needs improvement.
- **Better connections.** People want a system that connects more than downtown. Link villages, open spaces, and other destinations.

“As we develop urban villages, please require premier transit access and a network of neighborhood greenways. Walkable with open space over car oriented, please.”

“Best way to deal with congestion is to enhance transportation options.”

“Upzoning around transit seems the obvious choice for traffic and the environment (and build more transit).”

“Light rail will be a bigger benefit than people know – will change where people live.”

“What is your big idea for Seattle 2035 - Transit will be aligned with growth!”

Housing

- **Housing affordability.** Seattle needs more affordable housing choices. Most people feel that affordable housing is needed citywide. A few feel that housing affordability efforts should concentrate primarily in designated growth areas (i.e. urban centers/villages). The importance of transit in close proximity to rent/income-restricted housing is a common concern. Rise in homelessness is also a concern.
- **Housing diversity.** Seattle needs a greater diversity of housing types and sizes. Numerous examples are mentioned: cottage housing, triplexes/duplexes, microhousing,



stacked flats, and “east coast style” row housing. There are numerous references that the uniformity of housing options in Seattle’s single-family zones is a detriment to housing choices.

- **Family housing.** Seattle has a need for larger units to accommodate families in multi-family developments, both affordable and market rate. The lowrise zones were mentioned as an opportunity to develop family-friendly multi-family residential structures currently not seen in Seattle.

“AFFORDABLE HOUSING!”

“Too many young families moving to suburbs after having kids. We need to support affordable low and middle-class housing with great schools, parks, and safe streets.”

“Open up the 65% of Seattle land area devoted to SF to more housing types like row homes, cottages, etc.”

“Tax developers more for not including “affordable” housing to encourage rent rates that don’t exceed current rent averages.”

“Preserve the existing affordable housing stock.”



Arts and Culture

- **A vibrant arts community.** The plan should respect the history, diversity and culture of Seattle’s communities. Ideas included artist live/work housing, a balanced approach to historic preservation, and supporting existing cultural and entertainment districts.
- **Multicultural centers.** The Plan should continue the city’s effort to establish multicultural centers, particularly in south Seattle.

Utilities

- **Maintain and upgrade utilities.** The city must maintain and upgrade existing utilities to provide exceptional service and reliability, and fix existing deficiencies. One example is improving access to broadband throughout the city because it is a critical 21st-century utility. Increased use of green technologies such as bioswales, local renewable energy generation, and reuse of waste heat is another area for improvement.

Capital Facilities

- **Align investments with growth.** Additional investments for facilities such as schools and police stations, are needed to support growth. This may require new funding mechanisms to expand capital facilities.

“Satisfy the City’s ‘Parks Gap Analysis’ before or during growth.”

Parks & Open Space

- **Improve and expand the current park/open space system.** The need to improve and expand public open spaces is high in areas of growth, such as downtown. Consider ways to clearly connect growth with the need for additional open space resources. Suggestions include regular updating of the gap analysis and the creation of impact fees.
- **Improve connections to parks and open space.** Better pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections to and between parks will improve access to these resources.
- **Support park stewardship.** Programs such as the Green Seattle Partnership, tree canopy preservation, and carbon neutral practices will ensure parks are healthy and sustainable.



Plan Format & Structure

- **Make the Plan easier to read and understand.** The Plan should use less jargon and more plain English. The number of policies makes it hard to know which are really the most important and significant. Other features – graphics, photos and definitions – will help more people use the Plan.

“Use interactive materials, shareable content (e.g. YouTube), and friendlier language.”



Public Engagement

- **More outreach.** Many stressed the importance of outreach and encouraged greater effort to reach neighborhood organizations, renters, immigrants, youth, schools, under-represented communities, etc.

“How can you gather more input and ideas outside of the demographic in attendance (white, mid/upper class, tech-savvy, etc.).”

“Can district council members help facilitate discussions?”

Scoping for the Environmental Impact Statement

- **Equity.** Many encouraged the integration of equity considerations (displacement, affordable housing, living wage jobs) into the EIS process.
- **New or reclassified urban villages.** Some suggested this update would be a good time to consider designating new urban villages or changing the classification of an existing urban village.
- **Population and job projections.** Some felt the city should review the projections for population and job growth. Given the trend of the past decade, 120,000 new jobs may be overly ambitious.
- **High capacity transit.** Comments suggested that many want the Plan to consider an alternative that would include a larger network of high capacity transit hubs for rail and/or bus rapid transit.

All comments received at various meetings and events were documented and shared with city staff working on Seattle 2035. This feedback was and will be considered as work precedes. A detailed log of comments can be found on the Seattle 2035 website (2035.Seattle.gov).

Outreach to Historically Under-Represented Communities

Typical community engagement processes often miss certain communities. Meetings at City Hall designed for more general audiences can be intimidating to those not proficient in English, less educated, or uncomfortable in large citywide meetings. But as our city grows more ethnically and culturally diverse, hearing from historically under-represented communities becomes even more important. One of the city’s prime values is inclusive engagement. Seattle 2035 worked with POELs and Futurewise to engage these communities.

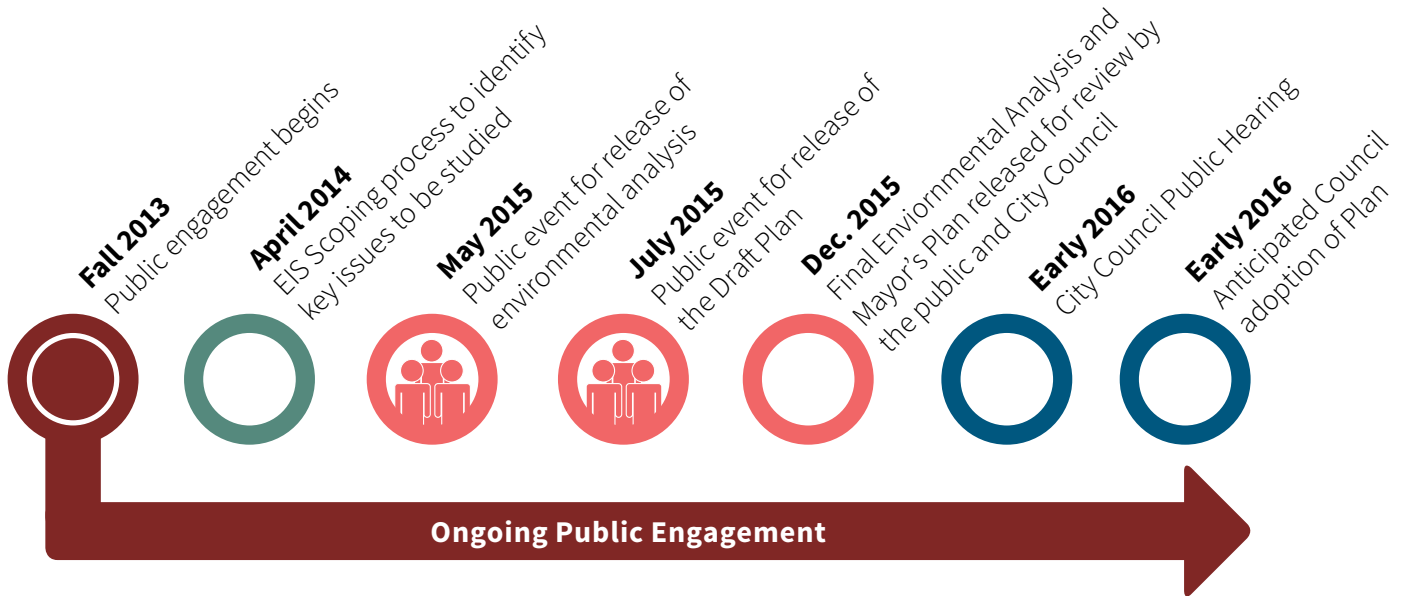
What we heard. Much feedback gathered by POELs mirrored the concerns of the broader community, so there is much common ground. However, issues of safety, affordability, and opportunity were more important to under-represented communities. A report from all the POEL meetings can be found [here](#) (provide link), and a report from Futurewise’s outreach activities can be found [here](#) (link).

Seattle residents who participated in Futurewise outreach activities overwhelmingly care about safety. People want to see lower crime rates and have fears that growth may bring additional crime and violence. Good schools and access to improved public transit are also very important. People would be more likely to use transit if a wide range of transit improvements are made. Housing affordability is a major issue and more community spaces could improve Seattle residents’ lives on several levels. Workforce development, youth recreation opportunities, and mental health assistance, could greatly improve the quality of life for East African immigrants. The Latino community is struggling with high housing costs and low incomes, and would benefit from more low-fare public transit options.



What's Next






Seattle 2035: Timeline



Seattle 2035 starts with you...

Seattle 2035 is a citywide conversation. The thoughts and ideas of 650,000 residents can have a dramatic effect on shaping our city's future. We need to hear from you to help shape our future together.

WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO HELP SHAPE OUR FUTURE

- **Attend an event**
- **Visit our website where you can sign up for our email list to get updates and hear about future events**
 2035@seattle.gov
- **Follow us on social media**
 SEA2035
 @Seattle2035
- **Tell us how you want to be involved!**
 2035@seattle.gov
- **Host your own meeting - we'll provide a toolkit!**
 Email us for more information

CONTACT

Tom Hauger, Manager Comprehensive Planning

(206) 684-8380
Tom.Hauger@seattle.gov

Patrice Carroll, Project Manager

(206) 684-8380
Patrice.Carroll@seattle.gov

Department of Planning and Development

700 5th Avenue Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle WA 98124-4019