



One Seattle Plan Community Meeting Series Feedback Report



February 2023



Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

WHAT WE DID:

In-Person Community Meetings

Between November 2022 and January 2023, the Office of Planning & Community Development (OPCD) engaged community members around the One Seattle Comprehensive Plan Update through a series of five in-person community meetings. The meetings took place in neighborhoods across Seattle.

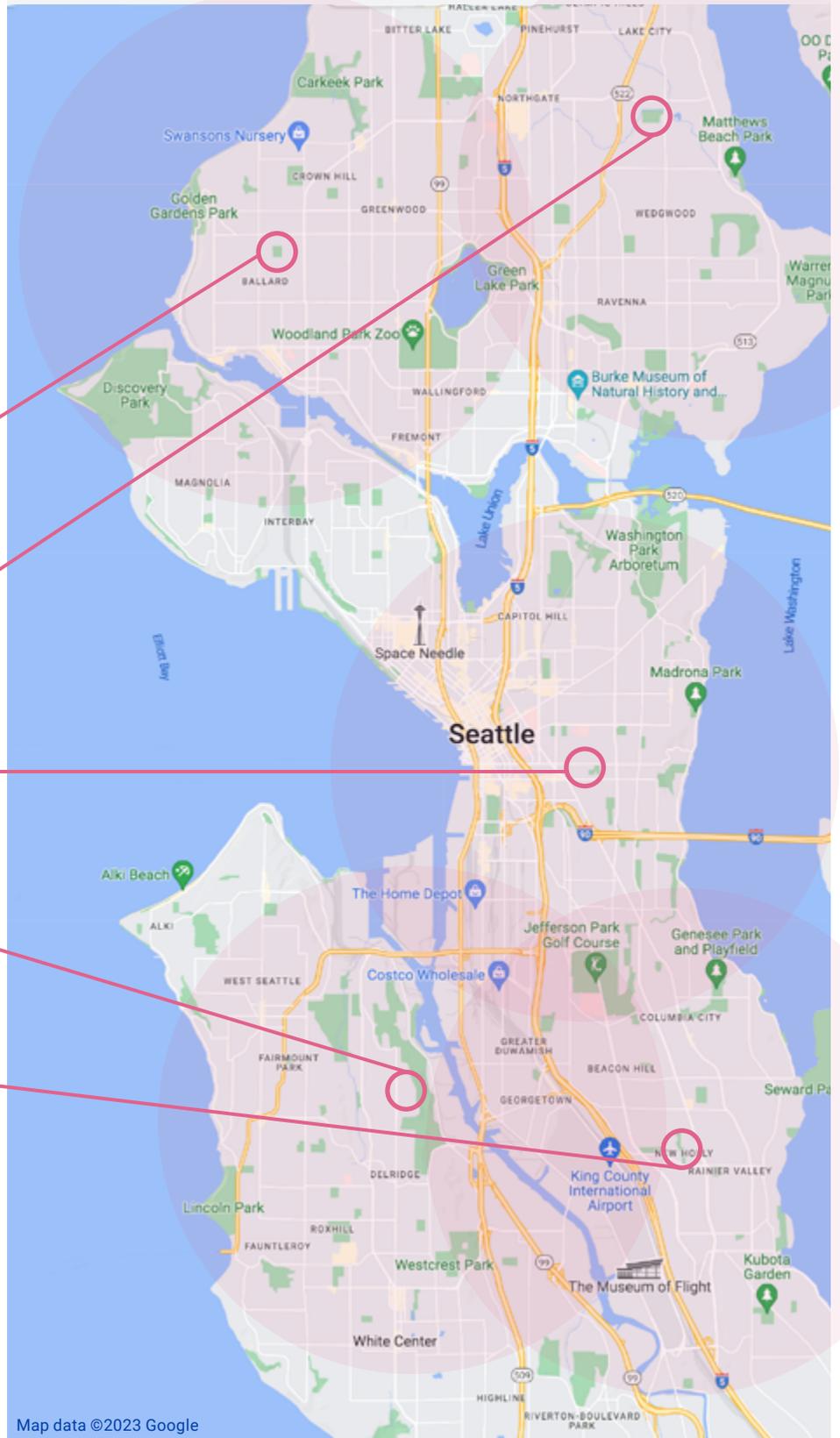
Monday, November 14, 2022 **New Holly Gathering Hall**
Thursday, December 1, 2022 **Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute**
Thursday, December 8, 2022 **South Seattle College, Brockey Center**
Monday, December 12, 2022 **Loyal Heights Community Center**
Tuesday, January 10, 2023 **Meadowbrook Community Center**
Monday, January 30, 2023: **Virtual Citywide Meeting**



Digital invitation to attend the Community Meeting at Langston Center.

Locations of community meetings

- Loyal Heights Community Center
- Meadowbrook Community Center
- Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute
- South Seattle College, Brockey Center
- New Holly Gathering Hall



Format of Community Meetings

Each of the in-person meetings took place from 6–8 pm, and followed the same structure:



6:00–6:30 pm

Open House-Style: Poster Presentation, Meet & Greet

OPCD policy staff greeted community members as they stood in front of posters providing information about key Plan elements. Meeting participants were encouraged to discuss questions about each element of the Plan with OPCD and related City staff (OSE, SPR, & SDOT), and to use sticky notes to provide written responses to question prompts on each element's poster.

6:30–8:00 pm

Community Conversation

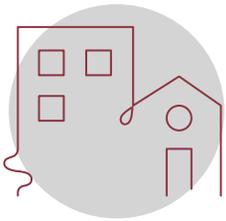
Attendees divided themselves into small groups of 8–14 people per group. Each group was paired with a staff Facilitator and staff Notetaker. Each group then engaged in two, 40-minute Community Conversations that were focused on two topics:

1. Access to Housing Options, and
2. Creating Complete Communities.

The staff Facilitators led the groups through the questions in a 'listening circle' style, with one participant speaking as the others listened before taking their turn to speak. The staff Notetaker took notes on a large notepad in front of the entire group so that the notes could be referenced, making corrections as needed to accurately record what was said.

WHAT WE ASKED:

Two Topics of Conversation



TOPIC 1: Access to Housing Options

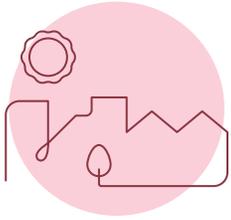
Cities need to have an adequate supply and diversity of housing to thrive. When there are few housing options in a growing city, homes become more expensive for everyone. Affordability remains a serious challenge for many of our neighbors. People also need a variety of housing over the course of their lives as circumstances change. A young person living alone has different housing needs than families with children. A retired couple may want to downsize in retirement. *The One Seattle Comprehensive Plan is our opportunity to improve access to housing across our city.*

Question 1: Thinking about your neighborhood, what kinds of new housing are needed near where you live? As you think about this question, you may want to consider:

- What types of housing did you need when you first moved to this area?
- What types of housing might you want later in your life?
- What do other people you know need?

Question 2: Where would you like to see more housing? As you think about this question, you may want to consider:

- Where is the best place in your neighborhood and across the city to add new homes?
- Would it make sense to locate new homes near specific amenities like transit, shops, or parks?



TOPIC 2: Creating Complete Communities

Seattle is a city of neighborhoods and communities that call them home. During the pandemic, so many of us learned to appreciate the value of meeting our daily needs within an easy walk of where we live. The One Seattle Plan is an opportunity to make that possible for more people. Also, future investments in our neighborhoods can make them more complete, resilient, healthy, and environmentally sustainable.

Question 1: What do you love most about your neighborhood?

Things to consider:

- What amenities, goods, or services do you enjoy within a 10-minute walk of where you live?
- What cultural experiences and businesses in your neighborhood are most important to you?

Question 2: What's missing from your neighborhood?

Things to consider:

- What other businesses, services, or amenities would you like to see that don't exist today?
- Are there essential daily needs that you can't find within a 10-minute walk of your home?



WHAT WE HEARD

Over the course of the five in-person and one online Community Meetings, *OPCD fielded over 3,823 public feedback comments*. During the in-person meetings, these comments were recorded as notes during the Community Conversations. Comments were also submitted by meeting participants using Post-Its to respond to questions posed on the topical Comprehensive Plan poster boards displayed in the meeting spaces.



Comments responding to the Community Conversation prompts were also submitted online via the Engagement Hub.

English and translated versions of the meeting posters were available to participants at the in-person meetings. These meeting materials, the full comment dataset, a complete image inventory of comments received, and recording of the online Community Meeting are all available on the Engagement Hub.

HOUSING:

WHAT KINDS of New Housing are Needed Where you Live?

Across all the meetings, the most frequent responses to this question generally revolved around the need for more *affordable housing*, as well as a *greater variety of housing options*. Responses also pointed to a strong desire for new development to *increase housing density*, specifically in the form of:

- Duplexes
- Stacked condos
- Quadplexes
- Apartments
- Townhomes (and variances from townhomes)
- Rowhouses
- Courtyard apartments

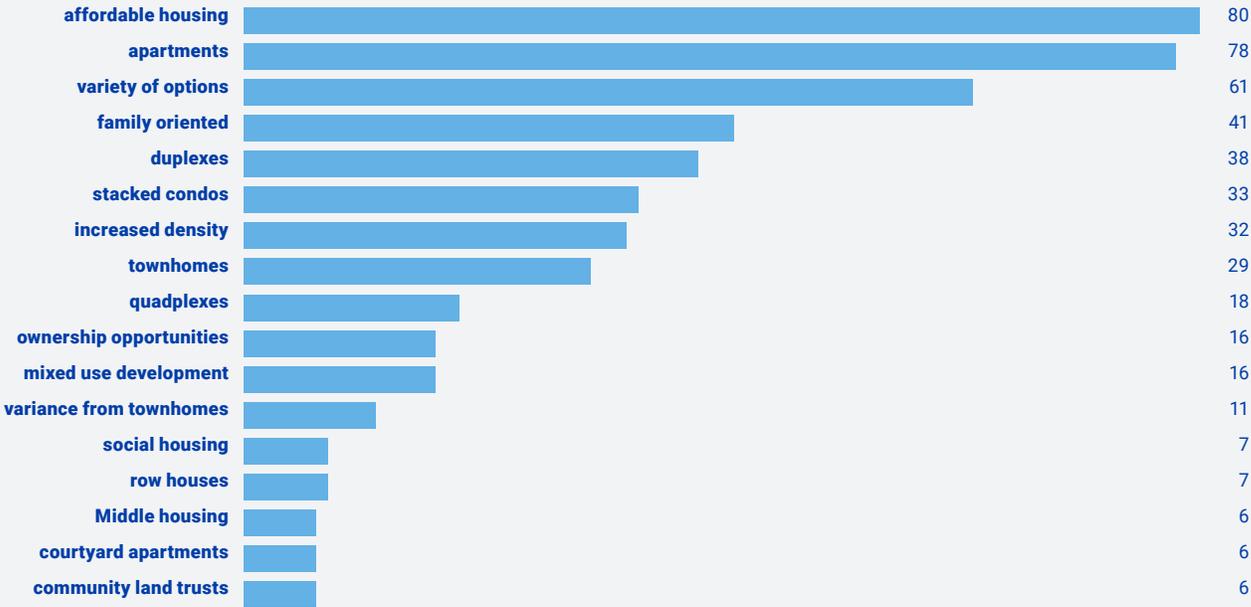


Many comments also called for the creation of more **family-oriented units**, referring to housing with enough space for families (2–4-bedroom units), affordable to families, and in designs and neighborhoods suitable to families with children as well as multigenerational families.

The desire for more dense and varied housing options was often seen in conjunction with the desire for more accessible **ownership opportunities**. In addition to increasing density, other popular suggested strategies for achieving more affordable housing included the creation of **social housing** and **community land trusts**. These strategies were often paired with comments pointing to the need for expanded anti-displacement and anti-gentrification strategies that should be paired with new housing development. Housing affordability was also linked to a desire for housing in the form of **mixed-used development**, as well as desire for community access to affordable commercial space ownership.



When asked, “Thinking about your neighborhood, what types of new housing are needed near where you live?” participants responded with these forms the most.



HOUSING:

WHERE Should New Housing Be Located?



“Historically marginalized communities should not bear all of the expanded development and associated burden”

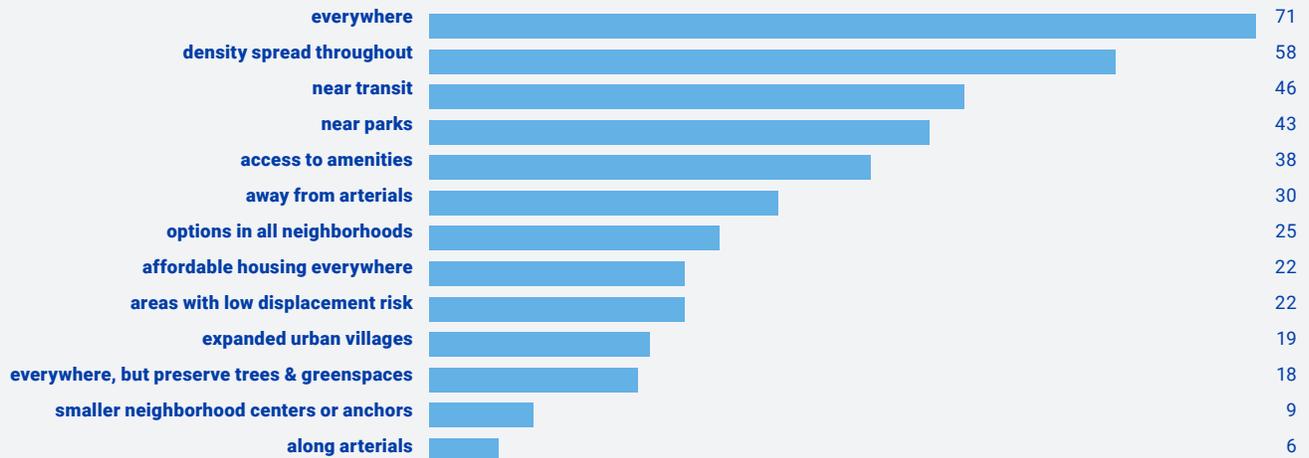
Meeting participant at South Seattle College (12/8/22)

Community feedback regarding the desired location new housing reflected that belief that *new housing should be constructed “everywhere” and “in all neighborhoods”*, including those currently zoned neighborhood residential and multifamily residential. Further, many of these comments specified that density should be spread throughout the city. Participants frequently alluded to Seattle’s history of redlining, racial covenants, and other policies—including exclusionary zoning—as practices that have directly contributed to unequal distribution of wealth, homeownership, and access to amenities across Seattle’s neighborhoods. Comments also pointed to the ongoing displacement of BIPOC and low-income communities as a motivating factor in the desire to see more dense development in all of Seattle’s neighborhoods—including those with majority White populations and excellent existing access to transit, parks, and other amenities.

Many comments specifically called for new housing to be built in low-displacement risk areas and were supported by those reiterating the desire for housing options in all neighborhoods by having a diverse housing stock within neighborhoods, and “affordable housing everywhere”.

Within comments calling for a broad expansion of housing options across Seattle, many participants also expressed that while housing should be expanded everywhere, the City should simultaneously seek to preserve tree canopy and greenspaces.

When asked, “Where would you like to see more housing?” participants responded with these areas the most.



“Neighborhood anchors: why not create more alongside the existing ones? They’re what make this city feel special + unique.”

Meeting participant at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center (12/1/22)

Comments in this discussion also pointed for a strong desire for this new housing to be located near transit, parks, and other amenities.

Many comments suggested that new housing should be created through the expansion of existing Urban Villages and in smaller neighborhood centers or anchors. Many of these comments also suggested that proximity to parks, schools, transit, and community centers could be factors that the City should prioritize when siting the location of new anchors.

There was a tension in comments calling for housing to be located away from arterials and along arterials. Some participants that wanted to see housing built away from arterials cited the negative impacts—noise, pollution, unsafe biking and walking conditions—of housing located directly on busy arterial streets. Those in favor of housing along arterials cited the benefits of living close to transit corridors, which often align with arterials. Additionally, many comments also pointed to a desire to see more dense housing options near arterials, but not directly on them.

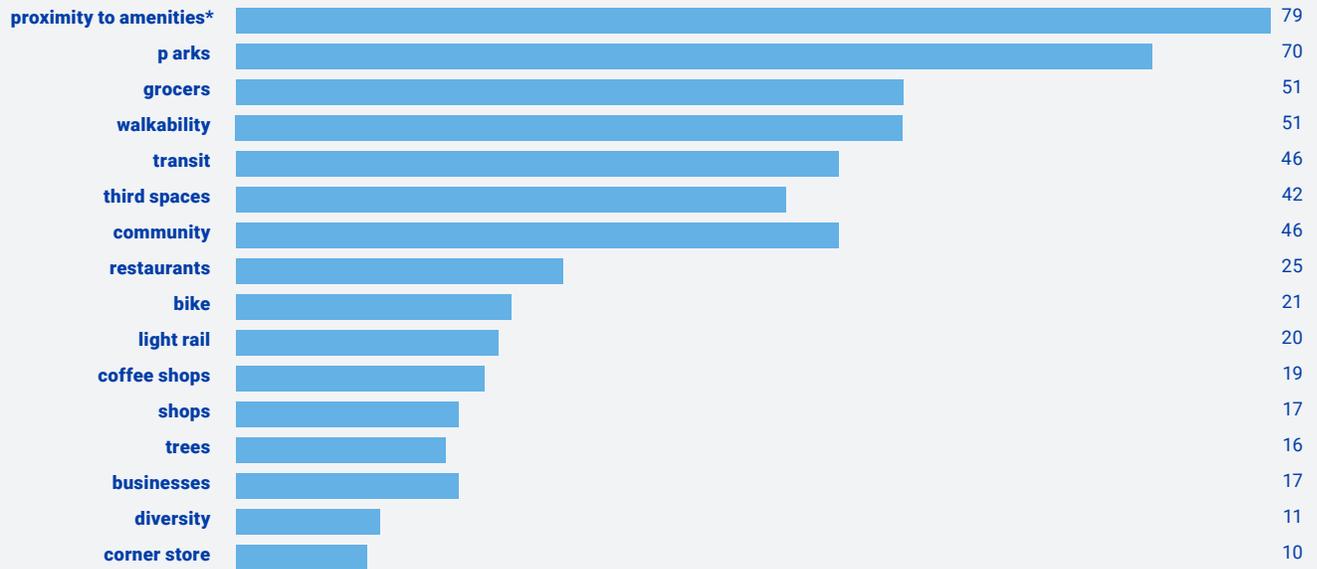


COMPLETE COMMUNITIES: **WHAT DO YOU LOVE About Your Neighborhood?**

The policies in the Comprehensive Plan Update will shape how the City invests in communities in the future. We wanted to hear what community members value, and what they feel is missing in their existing neighborhoods in order to understand what aspects and qualities should be protected and expanded in our collective vision for the future.

Across all meetings and neighborhoods, the most frequently identified, highly valued neighborhood characteristic was its proximity to amenities. In these comments, participants described the importance of living within a short walk, bike, or public transit ride to parks, as well as grocers, transit, trees, businesses, and shops (notably, “coffeeshops” were often identified specifically, as were breweries and bars).

When asked, “What do you love most about your neighborhood?” participants responded with these the most.



*(shops, parks, transit)

“[I love that my neighborhood has] third spaces that foster community”

Participant at Meadowbrook Community Center (1/10/23)

Participants identified the proximity to these and other neighborhood amenities as being critically important, with many comments linking this proximity to the walkability of their neighborhoods, for which they also expressed appreciation. Further, many of the discussions around access to amenities pointed to the importance of participants currently living in a 10- to 15-minute walkshed of daily needs, including transit. This sentiment also was echoed in the Housing portions of the Community Conversations: many comments called for future housing to be developed in places that align where people live and work with physical proximity to the businesses and public spaces that they will need to utilize in their everyday lives.

Many participants also pointed to the importance of “third spaces” and in their neighborhoods. A third space is a place that is neither one’s home nor one’s workplace and provides a space for relaxation or recreation. This category includes things like coffeeshops and restaurants, but also frequently pointed to places that can be utilized without cost to an individual—places like parks, community centers, and playstreets. Comments about a desire for third spaces were also frequently included identified third places that actively cultivate a sense of community. Community centers and arts & cultural centers were the most frequently cited example of this important neighborhood feature.

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES: What is MISSING From Your Neighborhood?

Responses to this prompt most frequently described types of “spaces” that are missing from their neighborhood. The kinds of spaces identified ranged from everything from third spaces (like artist and makers spaces) to green spaces (dog parks, public parks, open spaces, natural spaces) to cultural and art spaces.

Additionally, these comments frequently described the absence of community spaces, with participants describing missing:

- Community centers
- Community gathering spaces
- Community recreation centers
- Community cultural centers
- Community emergency response centers
- Community climate resilience centers
- Community health centers

A lack of “Diverse housing options” was also frequently identified in this discussion, underscoring the frequency of this comments across multiple discussion questions. Many of these comments also linked this lack of diverse and affordable housing options to a lack of proximity to affordable goods and services like grocers, food, and childcare.

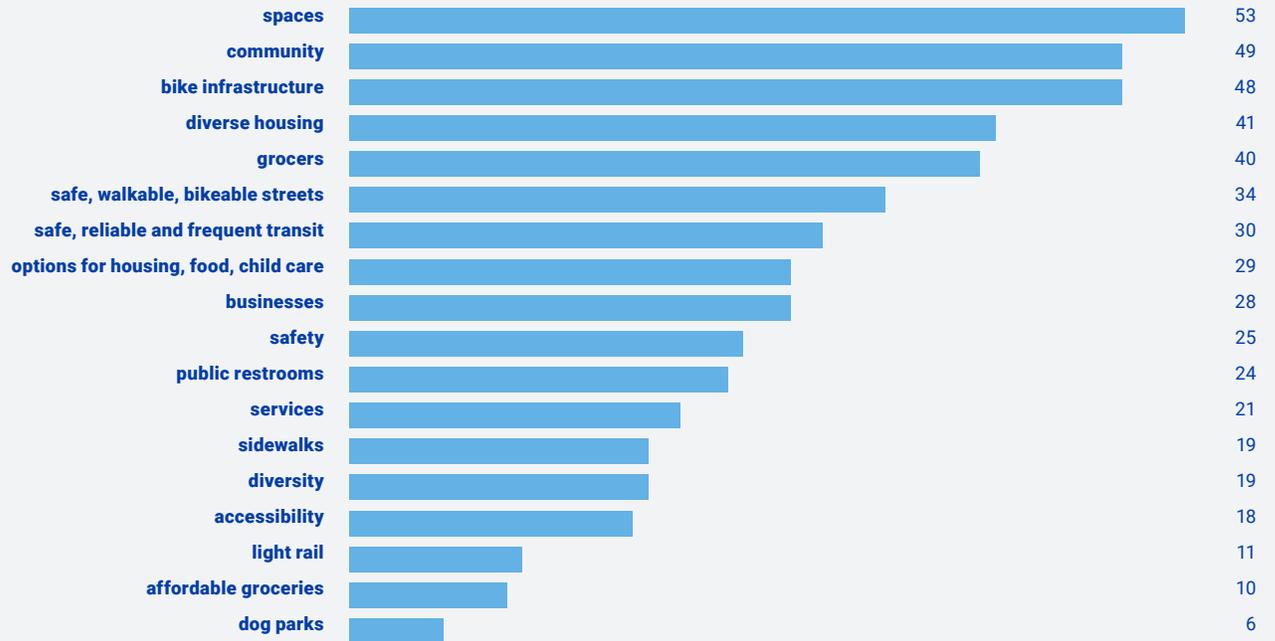
“[We need]
more friendly/
welcoming social
spaces and public
places”

Participants at New Holly
Gathering Hall (11/14/22)

“[We need]
public spaces
not centered on
spending money
and income”

Participant at Langston Hughes
Performing Arts Institute
(12/1/22)

When asked, “What is missing from your neighborhood?” participants responded with these the most.



Another top response category pointed to missing transportation infrastructure: comments frequently referenced neighborhoods lacking bike infrastructure and safe, walkable, bikeable streets, and sidewalks, transit, light rail, safe, reliable and frequent transit service.

Many comments describing missing transportation infrastructure also pointed to a lack of accessibility in transportation generally, but this description also pertained to a lack of accessible housing options, City-provided resources and services, and accessible design in parks and open space, housing and commercial spaces.

Finally, many comments pointed to the need for more safety investments in participants’ communities, particularly noting the need for increased safety on public streets, parks, and on public transit.

“[We need more] safety for women, especially on transit”

Participant at New Holly Gathering Space (11/14/22)

Topical Comments on Meeting Posters

Meeting participants were also encouraged to leave comments on topical posters that were on display at the in-person meetings. Comments left on the Growth Strategy, Anti Displacement Strategy, and Housing boards were incorporated into the analysis of the Housing and Complete Communities discussions, above. These additional comments will be used to shape the policy updates contained in their corresponding elements.

Highlights from comments left on additional Comprehensive Plan elements include:

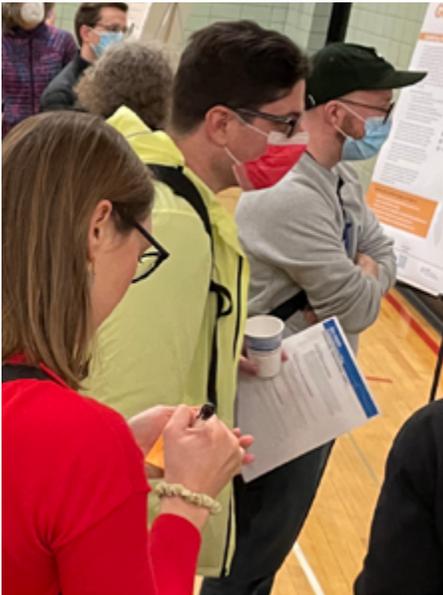
Transportation

- Increase safe, high-quality, connected bike infrastructure
- Expand the frequency, safety, and locations of bus service, especially East-West routes
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled by car in order to increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians, decrease pollution, and decrease the amount of space used to support parking, rather than housing
- Improve accessibility of non-motorized transportation options by investing in high quality sidewalks, playstreets, and other places for people, rather than cars
- Increase density to improve walkability of neighborhoods; people should be able to get from where they live to their daily needs, including work, without the use of a motor vehicle
- Invest in better lighting to improve the experience of those walking, biking, and taking the bus. Better street lighting is also important in improving the safety of those using non-motorized transportation.
- High quality, accessible sidewalks are essential for everyone, no matter how one chooses to get around



**“Denser housing
creates shorter
commutes, less
need for cars”**

Comment from Meadowbrook
Community Center (1/10/23)



Parks & Open Space

Make existing parks more welcoming to community by providing bike lockers, lighting improvements, additional stairway access, welcoming seating and covered areas.

- Invest in accessible public restrooms
- Increase density of housing options near parks to increase access
- Improve the experience of getting to a park from a neighborhood by adding or improving: high quality protected bike lanes connecting to parks, well-maintained sidewalks along and connecting to parks, connectivity of trails to open spaces and parks
- Plant more trees and maintain tree canopy in parks
- Offer more culturally appropriate activities and recreation opportunities in parks



Climate

- Preserve existing tree canopy; invest in maintaining and expanding Seattle's tree canopy
- Focus on incorporating sustainable building methods and designs into future development
- Provide neighborhood climate resilience centers and emergency facilities in Seattle's most at-risk communities
- Invest in high density development as a proven alternative to the damaging effects of sprawl

“Abundant housing near parks creates opportunities for people of all classes to live near them!”

Comment from Meadowbrook Community Center (1/10/23)

“Expand and connect grade school skill centers with building trades apprenticeship programs, giving youth the knowledge & skills to build their green futures and careers”

Comment from New Holly Gathering Space (11/14/22)



Economic Development

- Provide supports for small businesses, especially affordable commercial spaces
- Invest in vocational training programs and apprenticeship-to-career-track employment opportunities for BIPOC communities
- Identify and address challenges to small businesses facing displacement

130th/145th Station Area (Meadowbrook meeting)

- Consider rezoning nearby golf course to allow alternative uses (accessible public open space, housing)
- Increase housing density near light rail station
- Increase accessibility of station area for nearby community through increasing safe biking and walking infrastructure, providing enhanced bus access and local shuttles well as designated drop-off zones for cars
- Preserve greenspace & tree canopy
- Locate new housing away from I-5 (noise and air pollution do not mix well with housing)

“Identify barriers to businesses locating & staying. Fix the barriers where possible”

Comment from Meadowbrook Community Center (1/10/23)

