GROW GRACEFULLY Vision for Seattle

Allied Arts fundamentally believes growth should be for the benefit of all and should make Seattle a place that we love in the future even more than we do today. Now, as Seattle experiences a huge boom in wealth and development, is exactly the time to focus our attention and energy on how to harness those forces to truly **grow gracefully.** *We have a commitment to linking Seattle's neighborhoods together.*

<u>**Values**</u>: Allied Arts views the following qualities as those which are vital to the preservation of Seattle's livability as a city, and as a home:

- affordability
- community
- diversity
- human scale
- local businesses
- physical character
- preservation of history
- public and open spaces
- sustainability
- urban fabric

There does not have to be a trade-off between good design, positive urban form, livability and affordability. These qualities can all be maintained without compromising any of them to meet the goals and needs of our City.

<u>**Purpose**</u>: The current dialogue within the City of Seattle addressing growth has become entrenched, combative, and unproductive. This must change!

For over 60 years, Allied Arts' role has been to act as a catalyst for leading the civic conversation about vital urban issues. Allied Arts' mission is to preserve and promote great urban spaces, historic preservation, urban livability, and the arts.

ALLIED ARTS

Allied Arts has a history of standing up to protect and preserve those elements of Seattle we feel are essential to the soul and DNA of this City:

Pike Place Market - When the city was planning to demolish Pike Place Market, Allied Arts stepped in with numerous other community leaders to work to preserve the Market and its importance to the soul of our city and to help it thrive moving forward.

Pioneer Square - When Pioneer Square was at risk of being demolished, Allied Arts and supporters paved the way to landmark the District, forever preserving its historic and iconic piece of Seattle's DNA.

Central Waterfront - When WSDOT planned to replace the SR 99 viaduct with an even bigger viaduct separating our city from our waterfront, Allied Arts worked with multiple partners to create a vision for Seattle's next great civic space, *A Waterfront for All*.

The individual elements which come together to form the soul of a city, those features and characteristics which are iconic and fundamental to a city's identity, must be cherished, preserved and championed. Allied Arts endeavors to do just that and understands not everyone may define Seattle in the same way. What one person may see as representative of Seattle's DNA may not be what another person sees. However, we firmly believe there is an inherent value in having great public spaces, supporting local businesses, preserving authentic main streets, ensuring a vibrant arts community, protecting iconic character buildings, always working towards great urban design and facilitating people working together as a community.

Today, Seattle finds itself at a crossroads regarding growth. Much of the dialogue is currently characterized as two opposing camps warring over a false choice between those who say that all growth is good and those who say that any growth is bad. Allied Arts rejects both of these premises. The question is not "if" we grow, but "how" we grow.

The crisis of affordability - This period of growth has brought with it a crisis of affordability. Enhancing and maintaining Seattle's livability must include a variety of housing options which are effective in addressing affordability in times of rapid

growth and well into the future. These concepts are not mutually exclusive and should not be treated as such. We must focus our energy on solving these and other challenges associated with the current level of growth or face deeper issues in the future: how to recapture the livability we once had. We cannot allow the livability of our city, which must prioritize affordability, to be a casualty of current and future growth; if that happens, we all lose.

Change should benefit all - These challenges cannot be met without sparking a dialogue among those who are currently shaping the direction of our city's growth including civic leaders, residents and developers. Residents want and have the right to be authentically involved in the evolution of their neighborhoods. It is up to our civic leaders to define our civic goals moving forward and developers, concerned with minimizing risk, need continuity and stability to stay engaged in the healthy growth of our city.

A growing city must aspire to a brighter future as it incorporates the needs and challenges of the present while still preserving the best of the past. Change can be constructive and/or destructive. Each individual development project within a city should be viewed as a chance to improve the fabric of that city. The soul of a city absolutely does not have to be lost to change and growth. Rather, growth represents an opportunity to enhance, as well as preserve what we all love about our city. However, the risk to a city and its residents is that change accompanying growth may also result in projects which erode what is held so dear about a city and the neighborhoods, streets and buildings that are part of it. This is why a constructive, meaningful dialogue between a city, its residents, and those who bring change is necessary.

Planning change with the communities - Seattle has planned our neighborhoods, implemented a design review program, produced urban design frameworks, and developed the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA). Even though there have been review periods, comment periods, and public meetings, too many residents feel left out of the process. Their voices are recorded, but often shelved alongside unfunded neighborhood plans and unfulfilled promises of neighborhood outreach, or they are considered off topic at

Design review meetings. Residents are then left with no other venue to discuss their concerns, as their public comments are merely collected and catalogued in an appendix somewhere.

The inability for people to be meaningfully heard breeds fear and antipathy toward change, which in turn, most often causes residents to work against growth rather than working toward a common vision for all. When residents love their city, they contribute to a healthy civic life, engage in solving problems and help make their city even better. But if change occurs in ways which alienate residents, they lose their passion to contribute their time, energy, and tax dollars to their communities; and everyone loses.

Vision - We believe growth should reinforce the fundamental DNA of Seattle. Growth should make Seattle a better community for all – a sustainable, resilient city we can love even more tomorrow than we do today. To do this, we must find a way to have a civic discussion about each and every element of growth that is informative and productive for everyone. This will require a meaningful dialogue, compromise, and developing a vision. To build trust, the discussion must be open and ongoing. Only with trust between all parties can we build a community that will thrive for generations to come. For growth to be truly positive we must prioritize building a great city for everyone over rushing to achieve objectives that merely result in short term gains for a few.

To begin that dialogue, we offer five basic goals so that growth enhances all neighborhoods:

- GOAL A**: AFFORDABILITY**: Improve Housing Affordability
- GOAL B: **BUSINESS**: Preserve and Support Local Businesses
- GOAL C: **CHARACTER**: Preserve iconic Character Structures/Districts
- GOAL D**: DESIGN**: Improve Design, Quality and Livability
- GOAL E**: EXCEPTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE:** Ensure Transit, Open/Green Spaces, Schools, etc. that support a growing community

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1. GOAL **A: AFFORDABILITY: Improve Housing Affordability**
  1.1.   Objective**: Preserve existing affordable housing**
  1.2.   Objective**: Provide Housing choices for all incomes**
      ➢ Re-define "affordable" with tiers to address many income levels.
  1.3.   Objective**: Support development of a variety of housing types**
      ➢ Smaller units, DADU's, ADU's, shared-facility housing (aka micro-housing), artist live/work housing and re-establish true family housing; pair density with housing, encourage owner occupied housing, discourage unoccupied homes

2. GOAL **B: BUSINESS: Preserve and Support Small and Local Businesses**
  2.1.   Objective**: Preserve existing buildings which allow a diversity of businesses**
      ➢ Especially small and local businesses
  2.2.   Objective**: Preserve and support small and local businesses**
      ➢ Make them more competitive with formula retail
  2.3.   Objective: **New buildings have flexibility to accommodate small and local businesses**
      ➢ Build retail space for flexibility to allow partitioning in multiple ways

3. GOAL **C: CHARACTER: Preserve Character Structures and Districts**
      ➢ Character structures are meaningful for their history, architecture, use and/or scale. A building can be meaningful to a place without being "architecturally significant."
      ➢ *We need a term that lacks the baggage of "character"*
  3.1.   Objective: **Preserve the intimate scale of Seattle's "Main street" neighborhood business districts**.
      ➢ Add density to urban villages in tall buildings, but preserve at least a block of our "intimate, hometown main streets"
  3.2.   Objective**: Preserve character buildings**
  3.3.   Objective**: Expand existing historic districts**
  3.4.   Objective**: Create more character districts**
  3.5.   Objective: **Increase the economic viability of Seattle's main streets, character buildings/districts and historic buildings/districts**
      ➢ Enhance the economic viability of these beloved buildings

4. GOAL **D: DESIGN. Improve Design, Quality and Livability**

4.1.   Objective**: Improve planning for future growth**
- Fund a more collaborative neighborhood planning update effort as a guide to developers and city planners
- Support relationships between developers and neighborhoods as part of design review

4.2.   Objective**: Increase Community Involvement**
- Include community input early enough in the process to be incorporated into developers' initial planning and designs for projects

4.3.   Objective: **Ensure each new development is compatible with and enhances the neighborhood**
- New development strengthens and reinforces the n'hood; the positives of each new development far outweigh the negatives

4.4.   Objective: **Public infrastructure has great design and enhances the community**
- Especially vital for Sound Transit, which has pressure to build cheap and fast *precisely* in the heart of our n'hoods.

4.5.   Objective: **New technologies are implemented in ways which enhance our communities.**
- Manage new technologies (e.g. autonomous vehicles, drones, new retail models) to make Seattle more livable. Learn from America's 20th century mistake of rebuilding our cities to serve the new technology of the automobile at the expense of livability.

5. GOAL **E: EXCEPTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Transit, Parks, Schools, etc. to support a growing community**

> ➢ Increase livability infrastructure to <u>surpass – not merely catch up with -</u> population growth.
> ➢ Focus growth where amenities exist.
> ➢ Limit growth from areas that lack amenities / require car ownership and driving.

5.1. Objective: **maximize number of residents and businesses having practical access to green transportation, especially frequent transit**

> ➢ Increase density in single family areas only near frequent transit and open spaces.

5.2. Objective: **All residents of dense areas live within a x-minute walk from a park / public open space**

5.3. Objective **Increase transit supply**

5.4. Objective **Increase park /open space**

5.5. Objective **Increase school buildings and infrastructure**