

10-19-09

Dear NPAC Members,

As you know, the City Council is in the budget season and CM Sally Clark has asked for NPAC's advice on funding neighborhood planning in 2010. Tomorrow the Council will receive a follow up briefing from on the 2010 budget request to fund continued work on the 3 SE Link Light Rail neighborhood plans underway and 3 additional "transportation" related plans. Late last week I learned that DPD made recommendations to target the following three areas next year:

1. Henderson/ Rainier Light Rail Station area
2. Columbia City
3. University District

Aside from any discussion on whether NPAC would support this recommendation is the question of **adequacy of funding to accomplish any three plans and the scope of those plans**. The other looming question is funding to continue NPAC. The current budget does **not** include any funding for a professional facilitator for NPAC beyond December 09. There is no other direct staff support for NPAC as an advisory committee.

While our draft agenda for tomorrow did not include this discussion, we've recently been asked by Council for our opinion so I offer this as a rough guide to addressing this subject tomorrow. My goal is to achieve consensus on the following items if possible or at least some guidance for the Council.

Status of NPAC

1. Should NPAC as it is currently constituted continue or can we accomplish enough by December to sunset?
2. If NPAC continues as is, could we manage our business without any staff support? That includes maintaining committee documentation and communications? (We may get some support for web postings I am assuming) but not the extensive note taking and other support from Triangle staff. If not, what level of support would be required?
3. What other method or model for citizen oversight could replace NPAC in 2010 assuming that 3 additional station area plans/neighborhood plans will be accomplished primarily by DPD and DON staff? For example, should neighborhood –based Stakeholder Groups be formed for each area as a condition of funding the next three plans? What kind of financial support would be needed for the Stakeholder Groups? Could this be added to DON's District Coordinator's budget?

Budget for Neighborhood Plans- Consultants?

One of the direct questions asked of NPAC was to recommend whether or not to use private consultants to prepare future plan updates versus having city planners accomplish the work. The three SE Seattle plans underway were done using the staff model (although staff had a budget for securing professional

consultants to work with them). See web site for output from that process:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Neighborhood_Planning/NeighborhoodPlanUpdates/MLKatHollyStreet/default.asp

1. Should the council budget sufficient funds to allow neighborhood groups to hire outside consultants to do some or all of their plan updates? (The Plan Update committee has made a draft recommendation in favor of this but we will not debate that until November meeting).
2. Should the council budget additional funds for community outreach for the next three plans? What more should be done (funded?) than was accomplished for the initial 3 plans? Consider also the outreach effects of the Status Report process which was funded separately.
3. Should the POL process be replicated and funded for the next three plans?

Limiting Planning Areas & Funding Amounts

The proposed budget limits planning to transportation and land use elements within the 1/4 mile radius around station areas unless other private sources of funds are found to expand the scope.

1. Should NPAC recommend this station area only planning concept? (Advantages are reduced cost, sharper focus on accommodating growth and identification of transportation linkages. – Disadvantages are loss of attention to edge conditions, transitions, addressing other non-transportation infrastructure needs, social issues etc.) If that's all we can afford, should we recommend station area planning over doing nothing?
2. Should we recommend that other funded projects be postponed to provide more resources for the next three plan updates or to fund Stakeholder Groups? For example the 2010 Planning Budget calls for \$175,000 to be spent on an EIS for South Lake Union. Can this be postponed? Can this planning be tied to and funded as part of any EIS for the Viaduct/Mercer/Lowering Aurora project?

Accountability Mechanisms in the Plan Update Process & Budget Impacts

The original neighborhood planning process included the creation of a Planning Committee for each urban village and a continuing Stakeholder Group to lobby for and monitor plan implementation. The plans also included the Adoption and Approval Matrix – a prioritized list of actions and projects (of varying degrees of specificity) to be accomplished in order to accommodate the planned housing and jobs targets. This model appears to have fallen out of favor.

1. Should the Council fund the next three (and future) plan updates to create more details and implementation targets even if this takes longer to accomplish? (Consider that some of the projects may already be included in city strategic plans e.g., Pedestrian Master Plan.)
2. Should the next three plans have a budget line item for validation that is separate from ongoing outreach and stakeholder consultation? Why?

Thank you for giving this a little bit of thought before tomorrow's meeting .Sorry for the last minute nature of this request. Let's do the best we can without hijacking the entire agenda. There is some concurrence between these budget questions and our planned discussion about validation so I hope we can multi-task tomorrow. We will first agree (or not) to include this on the agenda. If we don't include this, I will move to have a special NPAC meeting on this topic soon so we can offer timely advice to Council as requested.

PS apologies to Co-Chair Leighton for lack of time to consult her tonight before sending this long message. Don't blame her!

Irene Wall – Co-Chair

BACKGROUND INFO

Budget released by City Council in 2008 for initial 3 neighborhood plans:

Table 2: 2008 Resources: Neighborhood Plan Updates for Station Ordinance Number: 122799

Dept	FTE	Staff	Consultant	Total
DPD	2.00	\$224,000	\$200,000	\$424,000
DON	.50	\$44,975	\$0	\$44,975
SDOT	1.00	\$120,000	\$55,000	\$175,000
DP	1.00	\$95,000	\$0	\$95,000
OH	.50	\$70,000	\$0	\$70,000
Total	5.0	\$553,975	\$255,000	\$808,975

Excerpt from Mayor's 2010 Budget posted on website.

Planning: Planning Services

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Planning Services Program is to advocate for policies, plans and regulations that steward and advance Seattle's Comprehensive Plan and growth management strategy; that protect and enliven Seattle's established and emerging neighborhoods; that support job creation and housing choices; that promote design excellence in Seattle's public realm; and that advance green buildings, neighborhoods, and infrastructure towards healthier communities, energy independence, and climate protection.

Program Summary

Reduce General Fund budget authority by \$125,000 and abrogate 1.0 FTE Land Use Planner III to help balance the General Fund budget. Remaining Planning Services staff will be allocated across projects to ensure that the City's priorities are addressed. Reduce General Fund budget authority by \$119,000 through reductions in the use of consultants, printing, training, and travel.

Reduce General Fund budget authority by \$60,000 and reduce fee-supported budget authority by \$52,000 to reflect reductions in consulting and other support for center city design and planning.

Reduce General Fund budget authority by \$50,000 to reflect reductions in consultant support for the Shoreline Master Program.

The 2010 Proposed Budget continues the City's commitment to working with communities to revise Neighborhood Plans to reflect the changes and opportunities presented by major transportation investments, including Light Rail. In 2010, the City will follow through on the three neighborhood plan updates that are underway in Southeast Seattle in station areas along the Sound Transit Light Rail alignment. This budget also proposes resources for the City to work with neighbors to update three additional Neighborhood Plans. The focus of this effort will be on the parts of the three neighborhoods that are within a quarter mile radius of Light Rail stations and on transportation and land use elements of the Neighborhood Plans. With contributions from community organizations, non-profits, or the private sector, the City would expand the scope of the project to include a larger radius and more plan elements.

To implement this neighborhood planning work:

- Transfer \$128,000 in budget authority and 1.0 FTE vacant Manager 2 position from the Human Resources program to the Planning Services program, and reclassify the position as a Strategic Advisor 2. This position will provide key leadership for the City's follow through on the three plan updates begun in 2009 and will be funded by the General Fund;

- Reassign 0.65 FTE of the 1.0 FTE Land Use Planner III position working on the status report process, which was completed in 2009, to support neighborhood planning. The other 0.35 FTE will be allocated to support 2011 Comprehensive Plan updates;

- Add \$30,000 in General Fund resources for consultant services related to design and plan alternatives for Neighborhood Plan updates;

- Transfer \$92,500 in General Fund resources for consulting to the Department of Neighborhoods, reflecting the actual administration of contracts for translation and outreach.

Reallocate a total of 0.75 FTE within the Planning Services program to support updates to Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. Major updates are required once every seven years by Washington state's Growth Management Act, with the next update required to be completed in 2011. The 2011 update will also add new elements related to parks and recreation and container port facilities.

Planning and Development

Transfer in \$124,000 and 1.0 FTE Manager 2 from the Applicant Services program to the Planning Services program, and reclassify the position as a Strategic Advisor 2 to coordinate Citywide design and planning for the Seattle waterfront. The Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement will have material impacts and present significant opportunities for the downtown and neighboring communities. The position will provide Citywide urban design leadership for this major set of construction projects, and will be funded by resources from the Seattle Department of Transportation capital budget.

Reduce \$30,000 in General Fund resources and \$330,000 in other resources for a total reduction of \$360,000 in consultant funding available to the Green Building Team. The Green Building Team supports sustainable building practices and energy conservation in public and private development projects. The team will continue to focus on the highest priority projects.

Add \$175,000 in one-time General Fund budget authority to help support the costs of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will evaluate alternative zoning and development scenarios for South Lake Union. Draft development alternatives have been identified that will support new jobs, open spaces, and housing served by retail and personal services in a transit friendly environment. This funding represents just over half of the projected costs of the EIS. The remainder is anticipated to be funded by private contributions.

Citywide adjustments to labor and other operating costs due to inflation, health care, furloughs, and similar technical changes increase the budget by \$26,000 for a net reduction from the 2010 Endorsed Budget to the 2010 Proposed Budget of approximately \$376,000.

Expenditures/FTE	Actuals 2008	Adopted 2009	Endorsed 2010	Proposed 2010
Planning Services	5,367,949	4,892,854	5,067,514	4,691,209
Full-time Equivalents Total*	35.05	31.55	31.55	32.55

** FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Personnel Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.*