

# AURORA LICTON URBAN VILLAGE

November 14, 2016

Board of Parks Commissioners  
City of Seattle  
100 Dexter Ave North  
Seattle, Washington 98109

SENT VIA EMAIL: [susan.golub@seattle.gov](mailto:susan.golub@seattle.gov)

SUBJECT: Draft Community Center Strategic Plan

Board of Parks Commissioners:

The Aurora Licton Urban Village (ALUV) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Community Center Strategic Plan. ALUV also wishes to extend its appreciation for the work that staff and the Board have devoted towards development of this very important strategic planning document.

As background, ALUV consists of residents, community groups and business owners who reside and/or work in and near the Aurora Licton Springs Residential Urban Village. Our goal is to actively coordinate with community members, organizations, the City of Seattle and others to successfully implement the vision of the City of Seattle's adopted 1999 Aurora Licton Neighborhood Plan.

ALUV's Mission Statement is,

**"Our Mission**

Build a pedestrian-safe, visually vibrant, economically sound, livable and welcoming urban village using sustainable-growth principles."

As the draft Community Center Strategic Plan correctly notes, there is no community center located within the Aurora-Licton Springs Residential Urban Village. For that matter, there is also no public library in the Aurora-Licton Springs Residential Urban Village, despite being home to approximately 6,500 residents. The Aurora-Licton Springs Residential Urban Village is a fast growing area, having already exceeded its 2005-2024 housing unit growth targets.

ALUV appreciates the draft Community Center Strategic Plan's recognition of the value of community centers and the role they play in providing opportunities for individuals to

**Aurora Licton Urban Village  
A Neighborhood Alliance**

recreate, learn and strengthen neighborhood relationships. Community Centers are instrumental in bringing a diverse population together and building essential social and community relationships.

In reviewing the draft Community Center Strategic Plan, ALUV wishes to offer the following comments.

1. The draft Community Center Strategic Plan's focus seems to be exclusively on providing an inventory of existing community centers and an assessment of physical expansions, renovations and/or programmatic changes that may occur at these *existing* community centers. A thorough analysis and need for new community centers seems absent.

As mentioned above, there is no community center or public library in the Aurora Licton Residential Urban Village. The absence of community meeting space in the Aurora Licton Urban Village has led to ALUV holding its meeting at a local brewpub. Efforts to use the Seattle City Light facility near North 100th Street facility for such meetings were denied.

If community centers are indeed areas that enable people to recreate, learn and strengthen neighborhood relationships, then a more detailed analysis of the need for new neighborhood community centers to address the increased growth and density proposed to be directed to urban villages under the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) is appropriate. Like parks and open space, capital facilities such as community centers should be viewed as an essential component of "Livability" under the HALA agenda.

Strategies that speak to planning and financing community centers in new locations should be included in the Community Center Strategic Plan.

2. Exhibit 15 "Community Center Distribution and Level of Service Gaps" on Page 45 depicts community centers and 1.5 mile service radii from those community centers. Among other items, Exhibit 15 also shows "Public Schools" and "Potential Village Expansion Area".
  - Exhibit 15 appears to appropriately show the current redevelopment of the former Wilson-Pacific school site as Cascadia Elementary School and Robert Eagle Staff Middle School. However a public school symbol is also shown in the northern middle portion of the Aurora Licton Residential Urban Village. There is no public school at this location. My understanding is that the Seattle Public School District did (or still does) own property at that general



location, but that property is now developed as the Oak Tree Village Shopping Center. This should be corrected.

- Exhibit 15 also shows a "Potential Village Expansion Area" for the Aurora Licton Residential Urban Village. Expansion was at one time contemplated for the Aurora Licton Residential Urban Village boundary, but such expansion was not proposed in the Mayor's recommended Comprehensive Plan. This also should be corrected.
  - The 1.5 mile radii used on Exhibit 15 is misleading in this respect. While such a radii might be a general standard, it does not reflect physical, psychological or topographical barriers for people to use those community centers. Individuals in the Aurora Licton Residential Urban Village may not, for example, travel to Northgate because of the perceived distance created by the physical presence of Interstate 5.
3. The individual community center inventory near the end of the draft Community Center Strategic Plan depicts five (5) minute drive radii from each community center.

What would be helpful is if these individual maps were combined into a single citywide map to see where five (5) minute drive radii gaps are. It is difficult to tell for certain, but it would appear as though much of the Aurora Licton Springs Residential Urban Village is not within a five (5) minute drive radii of any community center. Understanding these gaps throughout the City would be useful in identifying existing and future needs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment work on the Draft Community Center Strategic Plan. As you can tell from the comments above, the need for a community center in the Aurora Licton Springs Residential Urban Village should be evaluated more closely, as well in other areas of the City that may not have community centers.

Thank you also for your service on the Board of Parks Commissioners.

Sincerely,



David Osaki

Cc: Jan Brucker, President, Licton Springs Community Council