



June 4, 2012

Richard Conlin
Planning, Land Use & Sustainability Committee Chair
Seattle City Council
PO Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

RE: Regulatory Reform/Code Amendments

Dear Councilmember Conlin:

On behalf of the Ballard Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our concerns regarding Council Bill 117430, the Regulatory Reform Proposal currently under consideration by the Council's Planning, Land Use and Sustainability Committee.

Our members, and many others in the community, are especially concerned with the proposed parking requirement changes. As you are no doubt aware, Ballard has been adversely impacted by the loss of many off-street parking lots, as well as increased demands for a limited and diminishing supply of on-street parking. Our business district is also a vibrant industrial employment center, making its parking needs different from retail and restaurant focused areas.

The Ballard Chamber is asking that more time and consideration be given before the Planning, Land Use and Sustainability Committee makes its decision. These changes are too complicated and important to be rushed through without adequate study and public input. While these amendments could provide an economic boost in the short-term, we are concerned about their long-term ramifications.

In the proposal under consideration, changes to parking requirements are being made on a citywide, "one-size fits all" basis. While many in the City laud the fact that Seattle is fortunate to have a number of unique and distinct neighborhood business districts, this aspect has been overlooked with regard to the proposed amendments. Not only have the community-specific characteristics been ignored, but so have its local residents and businesses. Because the Mayor's planning meetings were closed to the public, and no targeted outreach was conducted in the various urban villages, the needs and concerns of our vibrant neighborhoods have not been heard. Neighborhood-based planning, once an important part of the City's process, is no longer the norm.

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the **BALLARD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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While we understand that the intent of many of these parking changes is to encourage more transit and walking trips in Ballard, our transportation options continue to be limited, particularly to and from areas outside downtown and the University District. Transit alternatives are also very limited between areas within the greater Ballard area.

Please take these proposals off the fast track and facilitate further discussions with our individual neighborhood business districts, so that land use codes better reflect the circumstances and character of our communities and respect the needs and concerns of local residents and businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Beth Williamson Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Beth Williamson Miller
Executive Director

cc: Councilmember Tim Burgess
Councilmember Mike O'Brien
Councilmember Sally J. Clark
Diane Sugimura, DPD