

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS AND THE CITY OF OLYMPIA

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into this 29th day of November, 2021 between and among the Council of Neighborhood Associations (“CNA”) and the City of Olympia (“City”), collectively known as the “Parties.” This supersedes and replaces the existing MOU, approved by the City on December 11, 2018.

Olympia Municipal Code (“OMC”) 18.86.040 et seq. established the Recognized Neighborhood program and the rights and responsibilities of the Parties. This code provides that neighborhoods will actively participate in City decision-making processes and this MOU clarifies how the Parties will collaborate on city-wide issues through dialogue and discussion. Therefore, the Parties agree to collaborate and exchange views on the following subjects:

I. Official Recognition of the Council of Neighborhood Associations

The CNA is recognized as an entity that can provide assistance to the City and the individual recognized neighborhood associations (RNA) established under OMC Chapter 18.86.

II. Update the City code and MOU for the Council of Neighborhood Associations

The Parties agree to review OMC Chapter 18.86 and this MOU periodically to determine if the CNA and MOU are achieving the objective of improved public involvement in City affairs. The reviews would include the degree of success in involving neighborhood associations in all areas of the city. The Parties agree to undertake actions to remove impediments to forming a neighborhood association, to assist in the formation of alliances of neighborhood associations and to review existing neighborhood association boundaries.

III. CNA Involvement in City Decision Making and Processes

The Parties agree to pursue an open dialogue concerning citywide issues, and to foster a spirit of openness and mutual trust. The goals of this dialogue are to facilitate an exchange of views, to increase public awareness, information and consultation, and to respond actively to public concerns. Where appropriate, the City and CNA agree to use the International Association for Public Participation IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation as a model for developing public outreach and involvement. The Parties agree to accomplish these goals through the following processes and activities:

A. Neighborhood Issues Forums. CNA agrees to periodically provide, through CNA meetings, forums for the discussion of regional, citywide and neighborhood issues.

1. The City agrees to provide space on a reasonable basis within a City-owned building or other appropriate facility for such forums.

2. This will help residents stay informed and will provide feedback to the City about issues and impacts from a neighborhood perspective.
3. Such forums will be structured to ensure broad participation of neighborhoods and interested parties affected by the issue.
4. Forums will be conducted early in the process before any significant final decisions are made and allow for broad dissemination of proposals and consideration of alternatives to the proposed action.
5. The forums may cover subjects such as:
 - making City programs more neighborhood-centric,
 - incorporating the interests of neighborhoods in land use decisions, and
 - emergency preparedness.
6. The CNA and the City agree that a work plan detailing Neighborhood Issues and a schedule shall be developed jointly with the City Manager on an annual basis.

B. Review of City Services and Neighborhood Services

1. Upon request of the City, CNA will provide input to the City concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's delivery of services and make proposals and recommendations for City expenditures that reflect the needs of the neighborhoods and neighborhood priorities.
2. Upon the request of the CNA, the City will provide information to the CNA about the factors affecting its delivery of services.
3. The Parties agree to pursue open dialogue and a collaborative process concerning the provision of services and programs affecting neighborhoods. The goals of this dialogue and process are to facilitate an exchange of views, to increase public awareness, to provide information and consultation, and to respond actively to public concerns.

IV. CNA Involvement in City Decisions Related to Land Use Planning and Resource Allocations

- A. Planning, land use and permitting decisions of the City have a major impact on residents and neighborhoods. The goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan both reflect and seek to preserve the interests of Olympia's neighborhoods. Land use decisions that focus on pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, sidewalk and trail system improvements that connect neighborhoods and enhance walkability also help create community. The Parties agree to collaborate in pursuing these policies.

- B. Maintenance of neighborhoods is also an important factor in maintaining the quality of life for residents and the desirability of the City as a place to work and live. The Parties agree to foster such neighborhood improvements by prioritizing health and safety issues. This includes reducing risks to public health and safety, promoting emergency preparedness, inventorying and expanding health-promoting neighborhood assets such as sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.
- C. Maintenance of neighborhoods also includes enforcing ordinances affecting neighborhoods' quality of life, which include, but are not limited to, enforcing home occupation, parking, zoning, and code enforcement ordinances.

V. New Development

The Parties agree to establish the following mechanisms to consult with the affected residents and neighborhoods periodically throughout the development and implementation of a land use project.

- A. The CNA collaborates with the City regarding new development proposals in neighborhoods, and shall convene its membership as necessary to consider development proposals within or affecting recognized neighborhoods. Development proposals can include infill housing projects which propose the introduction of placement of multi-family housing unit-types in existing single-family housing neighborhoods, as either new construction or remodeling of an existing structure.
- B. The CNA agrees to co-host a Neighborhood Development Forum with the City when requested by a development interest and to report the results of such meetings to the City. A Neighborhood Development Forum process shall include an opportunity for an applicant for development approval to present a project description and plans to the CNA membership. Such meetings shall be open to the public and shall provide an opportunity for public comment and applicant response. These meetings are intended to be collaborative dialogues between the prospective applicant and the neighborhoods. The CNA and the City shall cooperate on providing notice of such meetings to achieve the broadest possible awareness and participation in the forums.
- C. The City agrees to notify potential applicants, such as those who submit for pre-application review by the Site Plan Review Committee, of the existence of the Neighborhood Development Forum process and public meeting requirements, and to encourage them to make use of the Forum process.

VI. Neighborhood/Subarea Plans

Neighborhoods and neighborhood issues are an important part of the Olympia Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations affecting neighborhoods; the CNA is uniquely qualified to provide assistance in their implementation.

- A. CNA will provide input to the City concerning goals and objectives related to growth in neighborhoods and ensuring that new infill development will fit comfortably within existing neighborhoods. As part of subarea planning, the City and CNA may work with residents to design neighborhood “frameworks” that are consistent with the City comprehensive plan, and may identify land use types and design styles that fit with existing neighborhoods. A neighborhood framework could be shared with permit applicants to guide new development proposals in that neighborhood. It could also identify locations for future community “third place” developments and neighborhood enhancements (e.g., community gardens, connector pathways, etc.)
- B. The Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations regarding sub-area planning. These recommendations envision sub-area plans being developed for the entire City. The City encourages the CNA to play an active role in helping to shape how this recommended aspect of the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. Evaluation of subarea planning efforts and outcomes to date will be conducted jointly with the City, representatives from the City-Council chartered subareas, and the CNA. A likely outcome for this process will be the need to update the OMC 18.86.040 to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

VII. Administrative Support for Registered Neighborhood Associations

Focusing Resources on Policy Making

Recognized neighborhood associations and CNA need assistance in the area of administrative support. To allow more resources to be dedicated to policy review and consultation, the Parties agree to the following activities:

- Develop and implement templates for the establishment and operation of neighborhood associations, such as developing agendas, bylaws, and meeting minutes
- Collaborate on the development of a common web site template format for neighborhoods.
- Develop an on-line repository of administrative resources for access and use by both RNAs and unaffiliated residents that includes an administrative procedures handbook, land use guides, leadership training opportunities and materials, and other benefits such as the Neighborhood Matching Grant program.
- CNA can work with neighborhood associations to the City’s neighborhood matching grant program for projects that achieve the other purposes contained in this MOU.

VIII. Communication with the City and the City Council

A. CNA and City Leadership

The MOU is intended to improve communication between neighborhoods and the City. The Parties agree to the following common protocols and methods:

1. The Chair of CNA will serve as the CNA Liaison to the City Manager.
2. The City Council will appoint a Councilmember as liaison to the CNA.
3. The City Manager and the CNA agree to jointly prepare and submit to the City Council an annual report.

B. Points of Contact

The City Manager or his designee shall serve as the primary contact for the City for purposes of administration of this agreement. The Chair of the CNA shall serve as primary contact for the CNA for the purpose of administration of this agreement.

IX. Other Terms and Conditions

- A. Amendment: This MOU may be amended from time to time with the approval of both Parties.
- B. Duration: This MOU shall remain in effect for one year at which time it will be reviewed and updated.
- C. Limited Effect of this MOU: This document is an expression of the intent of the Parties on how they will work toward supporting neighborhood associations. This document is not a legally binding agreement, and it does not in any manner amend any of the City's regulations or create additional requirements for development within the City of Olympia.
- D. This document in no way inhibits the ability of an individual RNA to pursue open dialogue and a collaborative process concerning issues the RNA may have with the City.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Memorandum of Understanding as of the date and year written above.

Council of Neighborhood Associations

CITY OF OLYMPIA

Larry Dzieza
By: Larry Dzieza, Chair, CNA

Steven J. Burney
By: Steven J. Burney, City Manager

Melisa Allen
By: Melissa Allen, Vice Chair, CNA

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Mark Barber
Mark Barber, City Attorney