

February 29, 2024

TO:

- Olympia School Superintendent Patrick Murphy
- Elected School Board Members: Hilary Seidel, Scott Clifthorne, Maria Flores, Jess Tourtellotte-Palumbo, Darcy Huffman
- Appointed Student Representatives: Meredith Morgan, Dani Farney, Aphrodite Torres, Christine Zhang

I was saddened to watch via Zoom the testimony on February 26 about potential closure of Madison Elementary School. It appears that the district superintendent and some school board members are hardened in their resolve to close the school without seriously pursuing other options ... and without considering detrimental ramifications to the district and the city.

My husband and I have lived in the Olympia School District most of our lives. He lived close enough to walk and bike to the old Washington elementary/junior high school (Esther Knox Building). I also attended the old Washington Junior High School. We both graduated from OHS, as did my husband's four children and four of our grandchildren.

I know what it feels like to have to move to another school. My family moved into the OSD when I was 13, and I felt like an "outsider" – students had already formed their friend groups based on their elementary schools and neighborhoods. This year I'm a weekly reading buddy with three Madison students in the 4th grade. I fear for them and all Madison students if they are moved to other schools – it would be immense stress, added to the disruptions they experienced during the pandemic!

What the OSD stands to lose by closing Madison Elementary School:

- Our most urban school -- an important touchstone in its neighborhood and close to our downtown, Avanti High School, city hall, library, fire station, churches, the developing Armory Creative Campus, and other central community services.
- Community support for the district and for Madison students/families/staff:
 - ✓ I've volunteered at Madison Elementary since 1993, beginning at the "old Madison" on Central Street. Many others are also long-time volunteers.
 - ✓ The First United Methodist Church across the street "adopted" Madison and members donate time, talents and financial support to the school, its students and families.
 - ✓ Neighborhood residents support the school through food drives, holiday activities, watching out for students walking and biking in the neighborhood.
- Reputation of the school district and its decision-making
- Depressed property tax values ... less \$ for schools

How can you convince anyone that closing Madison is a sound decision?

Sincerely,

Vicki L. Zarrell vzarrell@hotmail.com
1804 Marigold St NW, Olympia WA 98502

From: Gerald Y <geyeazell@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2024 11:02 AM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan
Subject: Input for Comp Plan Updates

Increase housing density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that supports minimal development in the unincorporated rural area of the county.

Gerald Yeazell
Sent from my iPhone

From: Ronda Larson Kramer <rlarsonkramer@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 6:57 PM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan
Subject: Thurston 2045 input re. housing

To David Ginther, Senior Planner:

Regarding the housing element of the comprehensive plan update, please increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county.

And please don't support attempts by the county to pretend they are minimizing development in unincorporated rural areas by merely rezoning those same areas to urban and building multifamily housing there. Currently, the county appears headed in that direction and is indicating a desire to build over 200 multifamily apartments in the rural area via a misapplication of the 2022 UGA swap law .

Thanks.

Ronda Larson Kramer
Olympia

From: Judi Dedge <kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:49 AM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan
Subject: Re: PRESERVE RURAL LANDS

Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE THAN 5% of new housing in rural areas, and don't rezone rural areas to urban to claim you're accomplishing the goal. Most future housing growth should be in the denser urban areas.

Also, increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county, and don't support attempts by the county to rezone rural areas to urban to pretend that's not development of unincorporated rural areas.

Thank you.

On Fri, Apr 26, 2024 at 11:44 AM Judi Dedge <kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com> wrote:

| Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE

From: [Shaun Dinubilo](#)
To: [Olympia2045](#)
Subject: RE: Olympia 2045 - May Update
Date: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 9:43:51 AM

Hello Joyce,

I would recommend that the City develop up a cultural resource management plan (CRMP) as part of this effort. The city has numerous known cultural resources and an incredibly high potential for encountering unrecorded cultural resources. It is expected that the city will keep growing, which in turn, will create more adverse effects to cultural resources. A good example of a city with a CRMP is Redmon, WA. I think the best way for the city to grow in relations to cultural resources is to hire an archaeologist and craft a CRMP.



Shaun Dinubilo
Archaeologist
FAA Certified (Section 107) sUAS Remote Pilot
Cultural Resource Department
Squaxin Island Tribe
200 S.E. Billy Frank Jr. Way
Shelton, WA 98584
Phone: 360-432-3998
Email: sdinubilo@squaxin.us
Email is my preferred method of communication.

As per 43 CFR 7.18[a][1]) of the Archaeological Resource Protection Act, Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and RCW 42.56.300 of the Washington State Public Records Act- Archaeological Sites, all information concerning the location, character, and ownership of any cultural resource is exempt from public disclosure.

From: Olympia2045 <Olympia2045@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2024 1:51 PM
To: Olympia2045 <Olympia2045@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Olympia 2045 - May Update

Some people who received this message don't often get email from olympia2045@ci.olympia.wa.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

You are receiving this email as a Party of Record for the City of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan Update (Olympia 2045). If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this email and ask to be removed from the list.

Olympia 2045: May 2024 Update

Our comprehensive plan update is underway. The City is updating the plan using a phased, chapter by chapter approach. Several chapters are currently in review, with the remaining chapters kicking off soon. Please use the links below to follow the process and get involved in the chapters you're interested in – each chapter has a webpage with more detail and timeline.

Please see the attached for updates and upcoming meetings.

Thank you!

Olympia 2045 is your opportunity to shape the City of Olympia's long-term vision and goals. Through this process we will update the City's Comprehensive Plan and address new or updated state requirements. The Olympia 2045 update will also consider population projections and resulting employment and housing needs, as our community is expected to grow by approximately 20,000 additional residents within 20 years. Comments will be accepted throughout the process and can be sent to olympia2045@ci.olympia.wa.us.

Access the latest Olympia 2045 information at engage.olympiawa.gov/olympia2045, or find background information and the existing City Comprehensive Plan at olympiawa.gov/compplan.

-

Joyce Phillips, AICP, Principal Planner (she/her)
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967
360.570.3722 | olympiawa.gov

Note: Emails are public records and are eligible for release.

From: [Capital Mall Triangle Plan](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: Leave rural areas Rural!
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:32:08 PM

From: Lisa Bailey <squitahead@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2024 6:55 PM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan <triangle@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Leave rural areas Rural!

Please please:

Increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county, and don't support attempts by the county to rezone rural areas to urban to pretend that's not development of unincorporated rural areas.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

From: [Capital Mall Triangle Plan](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: PRESERVE RURAL LANDS
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:31:18 PM

From: Judi Dedge <kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2024 11:49 AM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan <triangle@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Re: PRESERVE RURAL LANDS

Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE THAN 5% of new housing in rural areas, and don't rezone rural areas to urban to claim you're accomplishing the goal. Most future housing growth should be in the denser urban areas.

Also, increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county, and don't support attempts by the county to rezone rural areas to urban to pretend that's not development of unincorporated rural areas.

Thank you.

On Fri, Apr 26, 2024 at 11:44 AM Judi Dedge <kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com> wrote:

| Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE

From: [Capital Mall Triangle Plan](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: Keep rural lands rural
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:31:02 PM

From: Eowyn Smith <e.s.nestlings@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 23, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan <triangle@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Keep rural lands rural

Hello, I am hoping that you will put your energy into helping to keep our rural lands, farms, & forests rural. And that you can help ensure that increased density is focused in already urban areas of our city. This will help protect our farms, forests and rivers and all the beings who rely on them for their livelihood.

Thank you for your efforts!
Best regards,
Eowyn Smith

From: [Capital Mall Triangle Plan](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: Housing Density Concerns
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:30:46 PM

From: Elsie Sabel <elsie.luna.sabel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 24, 2024 8:04 PM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan <triangle@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: Housing Density Concerns

Hello, my name is Elsie, I'm an 18 year old who lives in the suburbs just outside of Olympia's city limits. I recently learned that the TRPC adopted urban planning projections that assumed around 14% housing growth in rural areas. I urge you to do everything you can to reduce that number.

I've been following local climate legislation since we passed the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan in 2020, when I was 14 years old. Since then, I've been more than disappointed with how much our county is dragging its feet. With 2023 being the hottest year on record and unprecedented marine heat waves, now is not the time to take it slow with our climate policy. We need drastic action and that needs to happen at every level of government, including at the city and county level.

As someone living in a relatively rural place, higher urban density has always seemed like a no-brainer to me. When I was younger, I couldn't go anywhere without my parents driving me, which left me with little self-determination. I used to dream of living next to my friends and being able to walk to the movie theater with them. Kids in urban areas will have that chance. I also loved running around in the woods as a kid. Unfortunately, with more low-density housing, the new generation might not get that opportunity, as trees will be replaced with cookie-cutter houses and lawns that contribute a fraction of the biodiversity and carbon sequestration that a stand of trees offers.

So please, for the health of our planet and the mental health of your youngest constituents, Follow the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, and the Sustainable Thurston plan and allow no more than 5% of new housing in rural areas of our beautiful city and county.

Thank you for hearing me out,
-Elsie

From: [Capital Mall Triangle Plan](#)
To: [Joyce Phillips](#)
Subject: FW: in support of climate action and sustainable housing density
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:30:28 PM

David Ginther (he/him), Senior Planner
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967
360.753.8335 | olympiawa.gov

Note: Emails are public records and are eligible for release.

From: Rebecca Canright <rebeccagroovypeace@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 25, 2024 7:38 AM
To: Capital Mall Triangle Plan <triangle@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: in support of climate action and sustainable housing density

Greetings!

I am a young person who cares about taking meaningful climate action. Thanks for all that you do! I know that together, we can create a more ecologically responsible and healthy community.

I am writing to express support for keeping density plans consistent with the Sustainable Thurston and Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan density goals. I think that planners should plan for minimal new housing in the unincorporated rural area, using the Sustainable Thurston goal of no more than 5% of new housing in rural areas, and that most future housing growth should be in denser, walkable urban areas. To accommodate this, city planners should allow for more housing in the cities, including affordable housing, and creating walkable neighborhoods with transit access.

We can benefit both city residents and the environment, by limiting urban sprawl.

Other benefits of improving density in our communities include:

- Preserving water, trees, wildlife, and fish (biodiversity)
- Preserving agricultural lands
- Increasing building energy efficiency, with cost savings to residents
- Reducing transportation costs
- Bolstering carbon sequestration by providing more space available for diversely forested areas.

County staff are currently working on an alternative housing projection that is more in line with the Sustainable Thurston density goal.

This is excellent news. Together, we can practice smart, environmentally sustainable

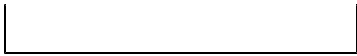
urban growth.

Thank you for your time!!

Take good care, Rebecca

--

Frigate birds fly for months over the ocean and can engage in both regular sleep and use half their brain at a time to sleep during soaring or gliding flight.



Compassion for all creatures great and small.

David Ginther

From: Jessie Simmons <GA@omb.org>
Sent: Friday, March 28, 2025 12:55 PM
To: David Ginther
Cc: Stuart Drebeck; Angela White
Subject: Letter with Suggested Edits to Land Use Goals and Policies for Olympia's Comprehensive Plan
Attachments: Letter on Changes to Land Use Chapter of Olympia Comp Plan.pdf

David,

Attached is a letter with some suggested edits to the Goals and Policies document for the City's Land Use Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan. Please reach out if you have any questions about any of it. Thank you, and we look forward to further engagement on the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Jessie W Simmons

Government Affairs Director

P: 360.754.0912 ext. 102

C: 360.525.4142



83% of Thurston County residents cannot afford the median priced home.

81% of Mason County residents cannot afford the median priced home.

85% of Lewis County residents cannot afford the median priced home.

80% of Grays Harbor County residents cannot afford the median priced home.

78% of Pacific County residents cannot afford the median priced home.

Find more information at the [Washington Center for Housing Studies](#).

March 28, 2025

City of Olympia
David Ginther – Senior Planner
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98507-1967

Re: Comments on Land Use Chapter Goals and Policies (Comprehensive Plan Update)

Olympia Master Builders (OMB) is a membership-driven organization representing five hundred members across five counties. Our membership includes general contractors, remodelers, and various other professionals closely tied to the building industry. As such, we have been actively engaged in stakeholder conversations surrounding the comprehensive plan.

The City of Olympia has recently announced that they are seeking comments on the draft goals and policies of the Land Use chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The following are some suggestions and input that Olympia Master Builders and our members have gathered:

- The values statement in the existing document should be updated to reflect ongoing planning practices to include acknowledgement that “downtown” is not the only focus of urban center development, but that there are three potential “community centers” planned for future density and development. Also, that there is a need for a “strategic mix” of urban green space and mixed-use development (i.e., “middle housing”).
- Points within the introduction should also be updated to acknowledge the need to encourage a variety of housing types close to services and facilities that can support such development.
- The “Future Land Use Map” should be updated to reflect current “missing middle” legislation as directed by the State Legislature.
- Under the “Housing” section, the city should conduct an analysis to determine whether the stated goals, such as “encouraging housing for all economic segments of the population” are being pursued in an adequate and proper manner.
- The City should also ensure that they stick to goals that are achievable and within their purview and eliminate potential conflicts with rules that may preempt city authority. For example, the sentence, “The primary residential use of energy is for space-heating. Thus, strengthening building code requirements for energy efficiency is an effective way to reduce energy consumption. When

combined with appropriate insulation levels, solar energy can meet half the heating needs of a home in Olympia.” Suggests that the city may add to directives from the State Building Code Council. This is not within the jurisdictional authority of the City and could add to already burdensome state code requirements making housing less affordable and inclusive. If this is just an acknowledgement statement, that would be acceptable, and no change would be needed.

- All other sections should be updated to reflect changes directed by “missing middle” legislation.

There were several specific policy suggestions that our members had thoughts on as well (see redlined suggestions below):

- **PL2.1***Pursue partnerships to promote energy efficient construction and lighting, low-energy designs, and weatherization in both new and existing buildings. Encourage **universal, and built-in**, material subsidies **with special consideration for** low-income community members.*
- **PL12.2***Establish maximum building heights that are proportional to streets, retain scenic views and result in compatibility with adjoining development. **“Compatibility/compatible” should be defined.***
- **L14.3**Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers. **Does this align with missing middle legislation?**
- **PL14.4**In low-density Neighborhoods, allow medium-density Neighborhood Centers that include civic and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Neighborhood centers emerge from a neighborhood public process. **This contradicts the previous statement in L14.3.**
- **PL16.13**Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing. **The city should consider limiting change of use requirements to increase housing inventory and meet goals set by the state legislature more efficiently.**

In conclusion, Olympia Master Builders would like to say thank you to the city for the opportunity to provide input on this important piece of the city’s planning tools for the future. We welcome any questions or feedback that you might provide in return.

For more information, please contact Jessie Simmons, Government Affairs Director, at ga@omb.org or (360) 754-0912 ext. 102.

Thank you,



Jessie Simmons
Government Affairs Director
Olympia Master Builders
(360)525-4142

Serving Thurston, Lewis, Grays Harbor, Pacific and Mason Counties

From: SCNA <info@southcapitolneighborhood.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 8, 2025 4:10 PM
To: Dani Madrone; Robert Vanderpool; Jim Cooper
Cc: Susan McLaughlin; Tim Smith; David Ginther; jphillips@ci.olympia.wa.us; south-capitol-neighborhood-board@googlegroups.com
Subject: South Capitol Neighborhood Comments for Land Use Committee
Attachments: [SCNA Letter to Land Use and Environment Committee.05.08.2025.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from info@southcapitolneighborhood.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please find attached a letter to the Olympia Land Use and Environment Committee from the South Capitol Neighborhood Association containing comments regarding proposed changes to the Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

best regards,

John Saunders
President, South Capitol Neighborhood Association
m: 360 259-.0288



SOUTH CAPITOL Neighborhood Association

1

May 8, 2025

Dani Madrone, City Councilmember
Jim Cooper, City Councilmember
Robert Vanderpool, City Councilmember
Land Use & Environment Committee
City of Olympia

RE: Proposal to allow “small scale neighborhood business” and eliminating residential zoning

Dear Members of the City of Olympia Land Use & Environment Committee:

The South Capitol Neighborhood Association Board is sending this letter in regard to the Land Use & Environment Committee’s proposed “small scale neighborhood business” discussed at your April 24, 2025 meeting.

The intent - allowing small scale commercial businesses in any location in any neighborhood - is, in many ways, laudable. As we read the proposal and listened to the committee’s deliberations, it attempts to enable renters and homeowners to start up businesses with much lower overhead and to enable pedestrian/cycling residents greater access to commercial uses without having to work their way through the main transportation corridors. Think neighborhood acupuncture, salons, bread bakers, therapeutic massage. We agree that’s a good thing.

Enabling such uses connects to the City of Olympia's equity and walkability goals. We appreciate the committee’s enthusiasm for *the goal* of the policy change. However, we do have some very real concerns about how such a shift will play out *in reality*.

The South Capitol Neighborhood Association has direct experience with how the city of Olympia has failed to manage the takeover of homes for corporate offices. Before the city takes on one more option to convert housing into businesses, it must overhaul the city’s system for enforcing basic code violations and address key gaps in the current comp plan update process.

Key concerns:

1. Implementation will have many problems as we have seen with "home-based businesses" (lobbying firms) in our neighborhood. These include inappropriate designs to vacant homes that become dedicated to businesses generating traffic, undermining walkability goals and residents' access to parking. Home businesses also leave properties vacant for many months of the year. In our neighborhood, there appear to be over one dozen residential properties in a two-block area that are no longer used as residences. Not a single lobbyist in the South Capitol Neighborhood has a home occupation permit for conducting business out of these homes. This shows how ineffectual the city is in enforcing the current zoning standards.
2. If the small neighborhood business option takes effect, many parts of Olympia would be as compromised as our neighborhood. It will convert housing units for people to business space.
3. The proposed policy may well help support development of low overhead start-up businesses for renters and customers in walking/riding distance. What will prevent high-end investors from locating boutique businesses near high-end homes or anchor locations like the state capitol is for lobbying firms?
4. Even if the policy and zoning code has words to prevent these problems, the city land use compliance process is underfunded and too permissive to prevent these problems.
5. Allowing small scale businesses in every neighborhood and eliminating the residential zoning designations is a major change. This is a far reaching change in the city residential zoning policy and code, *one that was not anticipated in the city's original scope of the Comp Plan update*. That is a major process foul, especially for many of the residents who have spent hours following the update process, attending meetings and participating on sounding boards.
6. This shift to eliminating residential zoning also means it is not mentioned in the scope of the draft environmental impact statement (EIS). Due to the substantial change the policy can have, it needs thorough review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) to evaluate things like:
 - Will the policy change really create more opportunity for starter businesses to locate in lower overhead locations? Where has that been demonstrated?
 - Will clients/customers for these new businesses only be pedestrians/cyclists?

What percent?

- How will the new businesses accommodate traffic/parking and impacts to pedestrians/cyclists?
- Will small-scale commercial uses increase costs for renters and hence be one more reason people are priced out of the local rental market?
- Will drive-throughs be allowed so cupcakes, coffee and bread can be picked-up?
- The downtown commercial district and neighborhood centers have several successful small scale businesses. How will this proposal impact the vitality of those businesses?

These and other potential impacts need to be evaluated.

Since *this change was not anticipated in the scope of work on the Comp Plan or the EIS*, the city will need to re-scope the EIS, which will delay the overall Comp Plan update. During the LU&E meeting, staff suggested they may be able to find a way to accommodate it somehow in the nearly ready to release draft EIS. We recommend you not attempt to do that as it opens up the entire Comp Plan for legal challenge. A recent Washington State Supreme Court decision affirmed that an EIS on new land use policies must examine impacts at the buildout stage of the policy. The city is already struggling to do that with the current level of policy changes. We insist that the city re-scope the EIS and start over so this policy change is fully evaluated.

In closing, we urge the City of Olympia to take more time to consider the impacts of these proposed changes, to properly complete the EIS, and to develop ways to prevent the loss of residential units to small-scale business use in a concentrated area.

Sincerely,

 *John Samuels, President*
South Capitol Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

cc: Susan McLaughlin, Community Planning & Economic Development Director
Tim Smith, Community Planning & Economic Development Deputy Director
Joyce Phillips, Planning Manager
David Ginther, Senior Planner