



MEMORANDUM

TO: Social Justice and Equity Commission
FROM: Joyce Phillips, Planning Manager
DATE: June 6, 2025
SUBJECT: Relevant considerations for the update to the Community Values and Vision Chapter

The Community Values and Vision Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan includes Olympia's Acknowledgement Statement, recognition of the Accord between the Squaxin Island Tribe and the City of Olympia, recognition of past harms and a commitment to do better, and a statement on equity. It also includes a community values statement for the Plan's chapter topics, as well as a vision statement for what our community can be like in the future based on those values.

The chapter topic values and vision statements are being considered as each chapter comes to this Commission. The Commission has seen all such statements over the past several months. However, staff would like to hear from the Commission about any changes in two parts of the chapter – the introductory text and the equity statement.

New proposed text is shown in red underlined text. Text proposed to be deleted is shown in ~~red strikethrough text~~.

The questions staff would like input on from the Commission are:

- Do these statements adequately cover our commitment to our community in regard to being a welcoming and equitable City?
- Are there suggestions for improving the proposed language to be more inclusive?

1. Welcoming/Opening to Chapter

During ~~2009-2014~~the Comprehensive Plan update process, the City and public engaged in a broad ~~update to review of~~ Olympia's Comprehensive Plan. The City held ~~over 30~~numerous public meetings and collected ~~over 2,000~~hundreds of comments from community members about what they value in Olympia and their vision for Olympia's future. These community values and visions are distilled below and reflected in the goals and policies throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

Additionally, the Squaxin Island Tribe and the City of Olympia have an Accord and have committed to long term actions, through understanding and mutual respect, to work cooperatively and collaboratively. The Tribe has offered these words of welcome:

"We welcome current and future generations of Olympians to our traditional lands. The land and waters of the Olympia area are special to the Squaxin people. As the first inhabitants, we call this area Bus-Chut-Wud (bəṣčətxʷəd) meaning land of the black bears and we call the local river and bay waters, Steh-Chass (stəčəs) after the original band of indigenous people who lived

here before American settlement. As Squaxin people we have always held deep values of gratitude, friendship, community and stewardship. And today we are so thankful for the friendship and partnership with the City of Olympia, for they, the leadership and members of the greater Olympia community, share these same values."

Collaboration with the Squaxin Island Tribe

Early in the planning process, the Squaxin Island Tribe indicated to the City which chapters are of most interest to the Tribe. This chapter represents specific priorities for the Tribe, and as such we sought their consultation and collaboration on its content, as envisioned in the Accord between both governmental entities. Any future amendments to this chapter should include continued collaboration with the Tribe.

2. Equity Statement

What Olympia values:

As evident through the City's Housing Needs Assessment, our community is becoming more diverse. This includes changes in racial demographics, an increase in the number of aging adults, and changes in average household size and income. Olympians value and respect the identities and lived experiences of our community members, including but not limited to, race, color, creed, national origin, immigration or refugee status, financial stability, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ability, or language. We believe that embracing equity enhances the livability and vibrancy of our beautiful city for all residents.

Our Vision for the Future:

We envision a future where Olympia has a diverse and inclusive community, a robust and resilient local economy, a healthy environment that sustains each of us, and a strong multicultural arts and heritage presence for all to enjoy.

To build a truly livable and vibrant city, we understand that we must provide equitable access to the necessities of life, including housing, mobility, food, services, education, clean air and water, and meaningful work. We must consider the diverse needs of our residents in planning the long-term growth and development of Olympia, considering both quantitative and qualitative data from our community to drive decision making. Giving everyone an opportunity to participate in the civic, economic, and cultural life of the city will lead to greater quality of life and sustainable local economy.

We recognize that equity is essential to all areas of the Comprehensive Plan and are committed to working to eliminate inequity in our community.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these questions. We look forward to receiving input from the Commission on this important chapter.