

Olympia Planning Commission

June 20, 2016

Olympia City Council
City Hall
Olympia, WA

Subject: Recommended Approval of Olympia's Draft Action Plan

Dear Council Members:

We are pleased to recommend approval of the City of Olympia's Draft "Action Plan" to implement the 2014-2034 Comprehensive Plan. This Action Plan will be updated annually to include new priorities, targets and actions. The idea for an Action Plan emerged from concerns that elements of the City's first Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (1994-2014) had not been adequately assessed for success, failure, and "lessons learned" before embarking on development of the Plan Update. Fortunately, the Planning Commission was able to answer questions about the effectiveness of the former plan and to proceed to completion of the updated plan, but this process probably took longer than would have been necessary had a systematic assessment of the former plan been in place.

The Draft Action Plan is designed to address this concern by creating a system or framework that links *actions to outcomes* in a logical sequence carried out over an annual cycle to ensure achievement of the Comprehensive Plan's 20-year vision. Known as "outcome-based" or "results-based" management, this system originated in the federal government and non-profit sector to measure success in areas that cannot easily be measured in monetary terms. This system is intended to help responsible parties report on how well goals are being met and money is being spent, when the return is not primarily monetary, but qualitative, such as social, health and environmental goals.

Key steps typically include:

1. **Vision:** What are we going to achieve? (found in Comprehensive Plan)
2. **Plan:** How are we going to do it? Who is going to do it? When? With what resources?
3. **Action:** What are we going to do in the next year or two?
4. **Review:** Did we accomplish what we set out to? Why or why not? How can we do better next time?

Olympia's Draft Action Plan

Olympia's Draft Action Plan focuses on five key areas (in no particular order):

1. Community Safety and Health
2. Downtown
3. Economy
4. Environment
5. Neighborhoods

Each area contains a summary of the vision and goals from the Comprehensive Plan, Action Items and Community Indicators. This distillation can also serve as a "dashboard" of information that can be easily communicated to the public.

As can be seen in this list, the five key areas also represent a balanced range of social, environmental, and economic objectives, which themselves form the pillars of a "sustainable" approach to community development.

Olympia's Draft Action Plan not only positions the City to achieve the Comprehensive Plan's vision, but fundamental City goals: Sustainability, Accountability, Transparency, and Civic Engagement.

Community Partnership

Achieving the Comprehensive Plan's vision and outcomes will require action by many different actors over time. A new approach to developing the annual Action Plan will be its dependence on a *community partnership* of City departments, County agencies, the non-profit and private sectors, and citizens to collect and report data. This will ensure that the City will not be solely responsible for collecting the range of required data; instead, this responsibility will be shared across the partnership. This interdependence will also promote community involvement and buy-in, which will help ensure the Action Plan's viability and overall quality.

Another way to engage the public would be to celebrate the release of the annual Action Plan and allow the public to share in the success that it will have helped to achieve.

Summary

We recommend that the Council approve this Draft Action Plan, so that the City has all the tools it needs to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Many people were involved in the development of this Draft Action Plan over the past 18 months, which greatly improved its quality and ensures its responsiveness to public

concerns. We wish to thank everyone involved for their time and efforts, as well as to thank the Community Planning and Development staff for producing a first-rate product that is sure to pay dividends in the future. We thank the staff for their willingness to allow this product to evolve into its present form, and for their hard work and leadership. This is a product that reflects the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, that will be highly visible, and of which we can all be proud.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carole Richmond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Carole Richmond, Chair
Olympia Planning Commission

