

Sub-Area A Questions for City Council – Possible Talking Points

The questions asked in the Northeast Olympia sub-area planning initiation letter are listed below linked to relevant background information to assist the Land Use and Environment Committee's discussion of how to respond to the letter

1. What the Council sees as the purpose and benefit of sub-area planning.

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan describes the key goal of sub-area planning as creating a collaboration between the community and City to help shape how neighborhoods grow and develop (GP5). Through wide participation in the process, the collaborative effort is intended to bring to light the sub-area's strategic planning priorities, its assets, and challenges (PP5.1 & PP5.2). Through the process, community members develop a better understanding of City planning activities and plans. Ultimately, the sub-area planning process is intended to guide the community to establish its own priorities and strategies for addressing them (GL23, PL23.1 & PL23.2).

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (CNA) also links sub-area planning to the Comprehensive Plan's implementation strategy, also called the Action Plan.

Summary: As outlined in the adopted Comprehensive Plan, sub-area planning is intended as a collaboration between the City and community members to identify local planning priorities and strategies for addressing them.

2. How the City's planning and budget processes will be different with sub-area planning.

As described in the City's MOU with the CNA, sub-area planning is part of the Action Plan to the Comprehensive Plan.

Envisioned in this sub-area planning collaboration will be the involvement of City staff from across departments throughout sub-area planning activities, thus engaging in a multi-directional dialog in the City's planning processes. This will help identify opportunities and constraints in addressing community priorities throughout planning and budget allocation processes (Comprehensive Plan PP5.1).

Examples of successful sub-area plans developed in other cities show that the process of identifying strategies to address neighborhood priorities involves bringing in partners from across the community to achieve goals holistically. Where the City is identified as a partner on a particular strategy, the strategy will be addressed in existing City processes with existing resources whenever possible. If additional resources would be needed, the City Council could consider how the strategy fits with other needs for City resources.

Summary: *Through active collaboration between City staff, the sub-area, and other partners, sub-area planning should provide strategies for integrating community priorities early and throughout City planning and budgeting processes where appropriate.*

3. What the Council expects to see addressed in a sub-area plan.

As described in the Comprehensive Plan, sub-area planning is expected to use wide public participation of residents, landowners, businesses, and other interested parties to identify community priorities and strategies for implementing the Comprehensive Plan at the sub-area level. This means addressing areas such as community health, neighborhood centers and places of assembly, streets and paths, cultural resources, forestry, utilities, open space and parks (PP5.2, PL23.1, and PL23.2).

As seen in other examples of sub-area plans, successful neighborhood plans identify partners to join in the community effort to achieve the goals outlined in the plan.

Summary: *The sub-area plan should outline how the sub-area plan implements the Comprehensive Plan at the sub-area level, identifying sub-area planning priorities and strategies for addressing them.*

4. What role the Council and City staff will play in sub-area planning.

Existing City budget resources include 0.25 FTE for a sub-area planning liaison role to assist and support the development of the plan and its public outreach activities. The liaison will work to bring in staff from throughout City departments to provide expertise and information in developing strategies. She will also keep City Council and the Land Use and Environment Committee informed of the progress of sub-area planning through regular status updates.

The Olympia Planning Commission will be involved in the process by reviewing the draft plan for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

Upon final submission of the sub-area plan, the City Council will review the plan for acceptance. Assuming the plan is accepted, City Council would direct staff to work on implementation strategies where the City is a partner and the work can be accomplished within existing resources. City Council may also choose to direct staff to include individual strategies where the City is identified as a partner into its planning and budget processes.

Summary: *City staff will be active participants in the collaborative development the sub-area plan. City Council will accept the plan if it determines to do so and may provide staff direction on plan implementation.*

5. What resources the City can commit to providing our sub-area planning process including support for implementation of our plan.

Committed resources include the annual 0.25 FTE position and other staff time as described under Question 4. The City Council could also choose to direct that project communications and outreach funding be provided within existing resources.

As described under Question 2, resources for implementation of the plan currently fall under existing planning and budgeting processes, such as the Action Plan. If the City Council accepts the plan, it may provide more direction to staff for implementation at that time, and/or include its own strategies for the plan's inclusion in planning processes as appropriate.

Summary: *Current resources are included in the base budget. Further resources would require direction from City Council following consideration of budgetary constraints.*

6. What key measures the City plans to use to evaluate the effectiveness of sub-area planning.

Because sub-area planning is called for in the Comprehensive Plan, staff suggests that the Comprehensive Plan be used as a point of reference for evaluating the effectiveness of the sub-area plan. The Olympia Planning

Commission will evaluate the sub-area plan for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

Using the Comprehensive Plan as a guide, questions to further evaluate the plan's effectiveness could include:

- *Does the plan establish priorities for the sub-area?*
- *Does the plan create strategies that address these priorities?*
- *Has the development and implementation of the sub-area plan included wide public participation?*
- *Has the development and implementation process been a collaboration between neighborhoods and City representatives?*
- *Do community members who live, work, and own property in the sub-area have an increased understanding of land-use decision-making processes and how plans and regulations affect them?*

Summary: The adopted Comprehensive Plan can guide the determination of the effectiveness of sub-area planning.

7. How the Council and City staff would like the A-Team to keep them informed.

The A-Team can participate with staff in regular reports to City Council and/or the Land Use and Environment Committee.