

Olympia Planning Commission

March 17, 2025

Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967 Olympia
WA 98507-1967

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to OMC 18.05 – Villages and Centers

Dear Councilmembers:

The Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) held a public hearing on February 24 and March 3, 2025, regarding amendments to OMC 18.05. Subsequent deliberations were held on March 17, 2025.

The OPC voted unanimously, with one absence and two vacancies, to recommend the amendments to OMC 18.05 with revisions. The OPC recommendation includes the following suggestions for consideration by the City Council when reviewing the amendment application:

1. Table 5.02 revised commercial be between 500 square feet and 1,300 square feet per acre; “none” replaces Min/Max retail floor space and min/max combined office & services floor space.
2. Minimum grocery store size of 12,000 sq. ft.
3. Remove max stories in table 5.04 (only max height limit)

Additionally, consider the following:

- Revisit table 5.05 densities during code changes in response to Olympia 2045 Comprehensive planning effort to bring into alignment with changes to Urban Village.
- Revisit definitions of planned developments to ensure alignment with transportation priorities.
- Explore or identify a way to prioritize or incentivize commercial development that serves the village intent – i.e. a grocery store is an essential service of a livable/walkable village.

During deliberations, commissioners expressed support for providing zoning flexibility. This would allow for responsiveness to changing community needs and better support getting housing and commercial space built. However, the commission felt the definition of an Urban Village should include a higher than requested minimum amount of commercial square footage per Urban Village size (point 1 above).

We believe that this level of residential and commercial space better supports the mix that leads to a complete neighborhood. The grocery store should sell a wide range of goods that can support a person's regular shopping needs. While we did not find an easy definition for a "full service" grocery store, we suggest our revision of the grocery store requirement to include a minimum size (point 2 above).

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg R. Quetin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Greg Quetin, Chair
Olympia Planning Commission