



## Meeting Minutes

### Downtown Strategy Stakeholder Work Group

City Hall  
601 4th Avenue E  
Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Amy Buckler  
360.570.5847

---

Thursday, July 21, 2016

5:30 PM

Eastside Fire Station, 100 Eastside  
Street NE, Olympia

---

#### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present:** 9 - Committee member Clydia Cuykendall, Committee member Janae Huber, Committee member Meg Martin, Alternate Kim Murillo, Committee member Connie Phegley, Committee member Karen Reagan, Committee member Annette Roth, Committee member Bob Wubben and Committee member Missy Watts

**Excused:** 10 - Alternate Tessa Andrascik, Committee member Janice Arnold, Committee member Jessicarae Nunez, Alternate Ruben Nunez, Committee member Karen Parkhurst, Committee member Dave Platt, Committee member Mike Reid, Alternate Carole Richmond, Committee member Terry Wilson and Alternate Vita Zvirzdys-Farler

#### OTHERS PRESENT

City Staff:

Community Planning and Development Senior Planner Amy Buckler, Economic Development Director Renée Sunde, Downtown Liaison Mark Rentfrow

MAKERS Consultant Group:

Kendra Dahlen, John Owen, Greg Easton, Peter Steinbrueck

#### 1. WELCOME

Ms. Dahlen welcomed group members and the public at 5:35 p.m.

#### 2. MEETING OBJECTIVES

- Review results of the Business & Development forum, and downtown market and feasibility analysis
- Review proposed framework for downtown housing strategy
- Review proposed framework for downtown business (retail) strategy

#### 3. AGENDA ITEMS

[16-0855](#) Explanation & Attachments

Ms. Buckler reviewed the results of the Business & Development forum held on April 28, 2016. The purpose of this forum was to bring together realtors, developers, business professionals and representatives from professional organizations and agencies to identify and clarify opportunities, obstacles and next steps.

Opportunities:

- Waterfront setting
- Multi-modal transportation planning
- Parking Strategy Update
- Improve culture of partnerships
- Redevelopment and housing
- Repurposing of existing buildings
- Increased activity, improved design
- Green tech industry cluster

Obstacles:

- Low profit margins for development
- Fees and permitting not competitive with other cities
- Lack of pedestrian and auto traffic volumes
- Business costs associated with vandalism
- Fear of displacement
- Lack of branding and signage from I-5

Next Steps:

- Scope Code updates
- Analyze fee structure
- Scope potential development incentives
- SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act)
- Respond with steps outlined in the Retail Strategy

Mr. Owen, Mr. Easton and Mr. Steinbrueck reviewed the proposed framework for the downtown housing strategy. A housing strategy that sets the stage for a range of housing types for a range of incomes is an important part of Olympia's Downtown Strategy. The team outlined the components that make up the proposed housing strategy framework: demographic and economic information, preliminary goals, targets and tools for providing housing affordable to people within various income ranges within our community.

Discussion:

- Compile data about homelessness and housing impacts to downtown to address facts versus false perceptions so that we can have a better community discussion and address it

- Is there a growth projection for homeless
- What about relationship to neighborhoods affordable housing - need to think City wide
- Consider Tumwater and Lacey in housing
- Look at sustainable cities program
- Non-profits are an important part of downtown
- What is the relationship of the downtown housing strategy with countywide social service efforts
- Remove acronyms and use plain terms people can relate to
- Simplify numbers
- Use actual dollar amounts/numbers rather than percentages
- Use visuals and graphics

Mr. Easton and Ms. Buckler reviewed the proposed framework for the downtown business and retail strategy. Several elements of the Downtown Strategy and related City efforts to aim to improve the downtown shopping and entertainment experience, as well as business and job opportunities. The list includes: the housing strategy, upcoming parking strategy update, design and streetscape standards, clean and safe actions, business retention and recruitment efforts, and more. Following the presentation, the group provided feedback and ideas.

Discussion:

- Concerned about national retail businesses, want to keep downtown local
- National retailers are less attracted to the type of parking or economics downtown offers
- Local new restaurant Kizuki Ramen and Izakaya is regional and pays employees a relatively high wage
- Want to see data regarding impacts of national chains on local businesses
- Fear of future market changes (like Seattle) - want safeguards in place
- Look at regulatory answers to foster locally owned small businesses
- City does consider downtown a prime place for local businesses
- Show overlap of retail strategy with housing strategy - impact of larger entities
- Small downtowns can integrate national chains without losing character - can be an attractor to people who otherwise would not come to downtown
- Loss of employees can be a problem

Ms. Buckler reported that to accommodate our updated workshop schedule, we are cancelling the September 21, 2016 meeting, and adding a new meeting in its place on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 from 6:30 to 8:30 at Olympia City Hall.

**The report was received.**

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

