

The Land Use and Environment Committee (10/21/21) recommends revisions to the “alternative language” proposed by the Planning Commission (10/4/21) regarding the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The text below reflects the LUEC revisions of the OPC recommended language:

Values and Vision Chapter

Acknowledgement and Equity excerpts

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that Olympia resides within the traditional lands of the Steh-Chass **band of indigenous people of Budd Inlet (aka the Squaxin Island Tribe), who were removed from their land for the settlement that became Olympia.** The Tribe has offered these words for acknowledgement:

“The Squaxin Island Tribe’s habitation of what is now Olympia spans thousands of years. The ancestral families who lived and thrived here named it Steh-Chass, and occupied prosperous villages along the shores. Archeological findings of ancestral artifacts in the area suggest habitation by Squaxin ancestors since the retreat of the glaciers during the last Ice Age. Today, the Squaxin people continue stewardship of these ancestral lands, from the Deschutes watershed and what is now Budd Inlet. The Steh-Chass (Squaxin) continue to call themselves ‘People of the Water’ because of the bounty of the region’s waterways **and artesian waters**, which have sustained the people for millennia.”

The City of Olympia will continue to strengthen our government-to-government relationship with the Squaxin Island Tribe to support our shared environmental, economic, and community goals.

We acknowledge Olympia’s history of racially restrictive covenants, redlining, and displacement of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). We acknowledge that our historic population of Chinese Olympians, who built much of Olympia’s original infrastructure, were actively excluded through anti-Chinese sentiment and restrictive immigration laws, resulting in the loss of Olympia’s once thriving Chinatown and a dwindling Chinese population. These institutional and systemic barriers are still prevalent and have resulted in a lack of equitable access to resources and opportunities. We are dedicated to rebuilding trust through reconciliation and making ongoing efforts to remove these barriers.

EQUITY

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, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ability. 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, 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, 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.

~~with the Social Justice and Equity Commission to implement an equity framework during the next Comprehensive Plan update in 2025. All future amendments should be reviewed for consistency with the equity framework.~~

Land Use and Urban Design chapter

Neighborhood character excerpt

Neighborhood character is ~~an amalgam of various~~ made up of a variety of elements that give a neighborhood its distinct “identity.” Neighborhood characteristics are not stagnant and will change over time. Consideration of neighborhood character will vary by the unique features of a neighborhood and includes its physical attributes that contribute to its sense of place and identity. These elements may include, but are not limited to, a neighborhood’s land use, urban design, visual resources, and/or historic resources. This includes design elements of buildings (mass, scale, materials, setting, and setbacks), parks and open space, provision of City utilities, street grids and connections, and street trees.

Our community considers it essential that all neighborhoods become accessible, sustainable, and culturally inclusive.

- *Accessible: Includes ADA compliancy, multimodal mobility, and housing affordability.*
- *Sustainable: Promotes a healthy environment, a diverse and resilient local economy, and historic preservation, including, reuse, and adaptability of existing buildings.*
- *Culturally inclusive: Recognizes, supports and promotes diverse housing types, strong arts and historic preservation, and the various contributions of diverse Olympians, past and present.*

*Neighborhood character will be balanced with other plan goals and policies, such as increasing the variety of housing types and providing **pedestrian people-oriented streets places**, and implemented through the City’s development regulations.*