



June 9, 2025

Re:

WaFd Bank – Proposed Olympia Branch
406 Water Street SW
Olympia, WA 98501

Tax Lot (Parcel): 78507400400 & 78507400100

Response to Comment #11 – Compatibility with Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Program (OMC 18.20.230.3)

The proposed WaFd Bank branch is consistent with the goals and policies of Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Master Program. Located within the Urban Waterfront – Housing (UW-H) zoning district and designated for future Residential Mixed Use and High Density Neighborhoods, the project has been designed to align with both the long-term vision for this area.

Comprehensive Plan Compatibility:

The Comprehensive Plan envisions the Urban Waterfront area as a walkable, vibrant district that accommodates housing, employment, and active ground-floor uses. The proposed single-story WaFd Bank branch reinforces these goals by:

- Replacing an outdated, low-activity use with an architecturally updated and actively programmed building fronting 4th Avenue and Water Street, a designated high-visibility corner.
- Enhancing pedestrian-oriented design through a prominent corner entry, sidewalk improvements, street trees, and weather protection canopies.
- Providing a needed community-serving financial service within walking distance of downtown housing, employment centers, and transit, thereby supporting mixed-use functionality in the neighborhood.

The project supports the **Residential Mixed Use** and **High-Density Neighborhood** land use designations by contributing to the area’s long-term vitality and diversity of services. While the building is a single-story commercial use, it does not preclude future intensification of adjacent properties, and it aligns with the broader mixed-use pattern by enhancing street-level activity and walkability.

Urban Waterfront Housing Zone Compatibility:

As defined in the zoning code, the UW-H designation prioritizes urban form, pedestrian focus, and residential-supportive uses. The WaFd proposal is consistent with this designation through:

- High-quality exterior materials, consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines.
- Vehicular access and drive-through facilities located at the rear, preserving a pedestrian-friendly front facade.
- Enhanced site landscaping and integration with the public realm through benches, planter areas, and new street trees.

Shoreline Master Program Compatibility:

Though not directly on the shoreline, the site lies within an area guided by the Shoreline Master Program's principles for ecological protection, public access, and urban compatibility. The project complies by:

- Avoiding adverse shoreline impacts, with stormwater routed to city systems per geotechnical recommendations.
- Improving the visual quality of the shoreline district through updated architecture, streetscape enhancements, and site cleanup.
- Supporting public use and access through sidewalk improvements and pedestrian-focused site design.

In conclusion, the project is appropriately scaled, functionally compatible, and designed to enhance the character of this key downtown location. It advances the Comprehensive Plan's goals for compact urban development, pedestrian-oriented design, and integration of service uses within high-density neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



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