



To: City of Olympia Mayor and City Council
Cc: Olympia Planning Commission

June 23, 2025

Honorable Mayor Payne and City of Olympia Councilmembers,

As part of the Olympia 2045 update of the Comprehensive Plan, the City Council has provided the Social Justice and Equity Commission with an opportunity to weigh in on the draft chapters to offer equity-related recommendations. This letter is intended to share with you the Commission's conversation regarding the Land Use and Urban Design chapter, on which the Commission received a briefing at our May 19, 2025, meeting.

The Commission discussed the Land Use and Urban Design chapter with Community Planning and Economic Development staff and had the opportunity to ask questions related to how equity is addressed in the chapter and how it was considered during its development. The Commission's discussion centered around the following topics:

- Examples of marginalized groups used in different areas of the report. Commissioners suggested staff reevaluate wording to be clearer on which groups are listed in the examples.
- Updated annexation section and potential impacts to community members and City resources if an Urban Growth Area is annexed. Commissioners are glad to see that the amendments add equity into the list of issues to take into account when annexation proposals are evaluated.
- Middle housing, high density areas, residential infill, and potential impacts on infrastructure. The Commissioners were pleased to see that throughout the chapter, amendments were made to be more inclusive and equitable in regard to housing. The changes to the chapter envision residential infill that provides diverse housing types that accommodate varying income levels, household sizes, and lifestyles.
- Commissioners support the amendments that address accessibility. For example, to be more inclusive the term "walkable" was either replaced or supplemented with the term "accessible" or phrases such as "walking, rolling, biking, or transit".

Lastly, Commissioners appreciated the detailed overview of the chapter and how previous SJEC feedback was reflected in chapter updates. We appreciate the opportunity to review goals and policies within the Land Use and Urban Design chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, provide feedback on the updated process, and learn how this work promotes equitable growth and development in our community while protecting our natural environment.

Best Regards,

Robin Rosen-Evans, Chair
Social Justice & Equity Commission
RR:mm