



**NISQUALLY INDIAN TRIBE**  
**Tribal Historic Preservation Office**

4820 She-Nah-Num Drive S.E.  
Olympia, Washington 98513  
360.456.5221 (main)  
877.768.8886 (toll free)  
[www.nisqually-nsn.gov](http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov)

---

October 31, 2023

To: Casey Schaufler, Associate Planner  
City of Olympia  
Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East,  
Olympia WA 98507

Re: **23-5866**

The Nisqually Indian Tribe's THPO has reviewed the notice of application and supplemental materials that you provided for the above-named project and has no specific comments or concerns at this time. Please keep us informed if there are any Inadvertent Discoveries of Archaeological Resources/Human Burials.

Although the Nisqually Indian Tribe doesn't have any specific concerns, we respect the traditional cultural knowledge of affected tribes and support their opinions on this matter as well.

Sincerely,

Brad Beach, THPO  
Nisqually Indian Tribe  
360-528-1084  
360-456-5221 ext 1277  
[beach.brad@nisqually-nsn.gov](mailto:beach.brad@nisqually-nsn.gov)

cc: Annette Bullchild, Director, Nisqually Indian Tribe

**From:** [Michelle Swanson](#)  
**To:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Cc:** [David Smith](#)  
**Subject:** RE: City of Olympia - Notice of Application 23-5866 for Requested Text Amendment  
**Date:** Friday, October 27, 2023 11:14:46 AM

---

Hi Casey,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Application 23-5866, a requested text amendment to allow drive-throughs on properties adjacent to Plum Street between Union and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues. My colleague, David Smith, PE, and I have discussed this, and we support this application going through as submitted for the following reasons:

- Any projects proposed will be subject to review under the current Engineering Design and Development Standards (EDDS), which stipulate access points, location, number, queueing and drive-through operations. The EDDS do not allow direct access onto an arterial such as Plum Street unless a traffic impact analysis determines that access from a lower street classification is not possible.
- The text amendment includes language minimizing crossings of pedestrian and cycling routes.
- It will not allow drive-throughs along lot frontage.
- It is proposed for a street designated as a “downtown entry point” in the Comprehensive Plan and City code, rather than a street that is designated to be pedestrian-oriented.
- It may make some multi-family residential development more feasible, and we recognize that increasing the supply of housing is a priority for the City.

Should any of these assumptions be incorrect, we would appreciate an opportunity to reconsider our support.

Best wishes,

**Michelle Swanson, AICP (she/her)**

Senior Planner  
City of Olympia | Public Works Transportation  
360.753.8575

---

**From:** Tressa Pagel <[tpagel@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:tpagel@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 23, 2023 2:30 PM  
**Cc:** Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Subject:** City of Olympia - Notice of Application 23-5866 for Requested Text Amendment

**File Number:** 23-5866

**Project:** Drive-Throughs in Mixed Use Developments Along Downtown Entry Corridors (via portions of Plum Street) Requested Code Amendment

**Applicant:** Thomas Architecture Studios

**Staff Contact:** Casey Schaffler, Associate Planner  
Community Planning and Development  
Phone: 360.753.8254  
Email: [cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Good afternoon –

The City of Olympia is reviewing an application for amendments to the Olympia Municipal Code (please see attached). Please submit any comments to me by **November 13, 2023**. I am happy to discuss the proposal with you if you have any questions, so please contact me if you would like more information. A public hearing before the Olympia Planning Commission will be held sometime in early 2024.

**Description of Proposal:** The City received an application from Thomas Architecture Studios proposing a text amendment to Chapter 18.06 of the Olympia Municipal Code. This application seeks to amend OMC Chapter 18.06 to allow drive-through businesses in mixed-use multifamily developments with ground floor commercial space. The requested change would apply to a geographic area that is limited to properties abutting Plum Street between Union Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. Application materials including a narrative describing the purpose of the amendments, proposed code language and other information are attached.

Thank you and kind regards,

Casey Schaufler (he/him)  
Associate Planner  
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967  
360.753.8254 | [cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)

**Note: Emails are public records, and are potentially eligible for release.**

**From:** [CityCouncil](#)  
**To:** [Mark Foutch](#)  
**Cc:** [Councilmembers](#); [Jay Burney](#); [Rich Hoey](#); [Debbie Sullivan](#); [Kellie Braseth](#); [Casey Schaufler](#); [Tim Smith](#); [Leonard Bauer](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 6, 2023 3:38:17 PM

---

Thank you for your comments. I will forward them on to all Councilmembers and appropriate staff.

Susan Grisham (*she/her*)  
Assistant to the City Manager  
Legislative Liaison  
City of Olympia | P.O. Box 1967 | Olympia WA 98507  
360-753-8244 | [sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us)

[Sign Up for a City Newsletter](#)

**Please note all correspondence is subject to public disclosure.**

---

**From:** Mark Foutch <mfoutch@juno.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:42 AM  
**To:** CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>  
**Cc:** hollygadbaw@comcast.net  
**Subject:** Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

It's interesting that in today's JOLT article, no one is quoted outlining the reasons the Council long ago prohibited drive throughs downtown. It's all about the supposed reasons why it would be desirable to change that regulation. I would hope the planning staff would have gone back to "fill in the blanks" while making their presentation to OPC. I remember the exception for banks; it was to increase customer security by reducing "out of car" exposure before/after banking.

I'm cc'ing Holly Gadbow with this. She was our council's land use planning maven. She could explain that long-ago council's "legislative intent."

Mark

**From:** [Mark Foutch](#)  
**To:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Cc:** [hollygadbow@comcast.net](mailto:hollygadbow@comcast.net); [karen@karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen@karenmessmer.com)  
**Subject:** RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:32:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [RE Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown.msg](#)

---

Thank you, Casey! All I can recall generally is that we (the council then) wanted downtown to be more residential \*and as part of that, pedestrian friendly, one more reason to avoid auto-oriented development. Our first Comp Plan post-GMA emphasized that, along with reducing urban sprawl and adopting design standards for downtown development. (For the past few years you've probably noticed the many projects downtown to promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk and crosswalk redesign. To me those are directly related to those pedestrian friendly goals. Holly Gadbow and Karen Messmer might be better contacts for more detailed information. I've cc'd them with this.

Many thanks again!

Mark

\*I can't remember an exact number but a good sized percentage of our anticipated growth was assigned in our plan to downtown. This led us to find ways to make that happen, thus the first few years of property tax postponement for both affordable and market rate residential development. (Speaking of which, the recently-vocal opponents of that incentive never seem to acknowledge that all those properties will be subject to taxation after their postponements run out, public revenue that would not have been collected had they never been built.

Please note: message attached

From: Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
To: "mfoutch@juno.com" <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>  
Subject: RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
Date: Thu, 7 Dec 2023 21:45:03 +0000

**From:** [karen karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen.karenmessmer.com)  
**To:** [Mark Foutch](mailto:Mark.Foutch); [Casey Schaufler](mailto:Casey.Schaufler)  
**Cc:** [hollygadshaw@comcast.net](mailto:hollygadshaw@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:58:09 PM

---

Mark, Casey, Holly,

Yes, discussions about downtown aimed to reduce conflicts between people who are walking and cars. Drive in or drive through businesses create safety problems. I will look into this further regarding past Comp Plan policies. The purpose of the existing regulations should be fully understood before making changes.

Karen Messmer

On 12/7/2023 2:30 PM, Mark Foutch wrote:

> Thank you, Casey! All I can recall generally is that we (the council  
> then) wanted downtown to be more residential \*and as part of that,  
> pedestrian friendly, one more reason to avoid auto-oriented  
> development. Our first Comp Plan post-GMA emphasized that, along with  
> reducing urban sprawl and adopting design standards for downtown  
> development. (For the past few years you've probably noticed the many  
> projects downtown to promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk and  
> crosswalk redesign. To me those are directly related to those  
> pedestrian friendly goals. Holly Gadshaw and Karen Messmer might be  
> better contacts for more detailed information. I've cc'd them with this.  
> Many thanks again!  
> Mark  
> \*I can't remember an exact number but a good sized percentage of our  
> anticipated growth was assigned in our plan to downtown. This led us  
> to find ways to make that happen, thus the first few years of property  
> tax postponement for both affordable and market rate residential  
> development. (Speaking of which, the recently-vocal opponents of that  
> incentive never seem to acknowledge that all those properties will be  
> subject to taxation after their postponements run out, public revenue  
> that would not have been collected had they never been built.  
>  
> Please note: message attached  
>  
> From: Casey Schaufler <[cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
> To: "mfoutch@juno.com" <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>  
> Subject: RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
> Date: Thu, 7 Dec 2023 21:45:03 +0000  
>

**From:** [karen karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen.karenmessmer.com)  
**To:** [Mark Foutch](#); [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Cc:** [hollygadbbaw@comcast.net](mailto:hollygadbbaw@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Friday, December 8, 2023 3:06:55 PM

---

I am away from home so I cannot research in my paper files/documents. Meanwhile here is an article about the problems with drive through businesses for downtown. Our downtown is aiming to be walkable and welcoming to bicyclists. Transit is seen as an important factor for dense residential and commercial development and transit cannot succeed without a safe walking environment.

This article in Strong Towns describes the problems with drive through businesses. (Even though it references Covid at first, the rest of the article applies well to Olympia.)

<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/9/21/no-we-still-dont-need-drive-throughs>

In summary from the article -

- 1. Drive-throughs are a bad financial deal for cities.*
- 2. Drive-throughs are traffic nightmares.*
- 3. Drive-throughs are pedestrian nightmares.*
- 4. Drive-throughs just aren't necessary. The needs they meet can be met in other ways.*

Karen Messmer

On 12/7/2023 2:30 PM, Mark Foutch wrote:

Thank you, Casey! All I can recall generally is that we (the council then) wanted downtown to be more residential \*and as part of that, pedestrian friendly, one more reason to avoid auto-oriented development. Our first Comp Plan post-GMA emphasized that, along with reducing urban sprawl and adopting design standards for downtown development. (For the past few years you've probably noticed the many projects downtown to promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk and crosswalk redesign. To me those are directly related to those pedestrian friendly goals. Holly Gadbbaw and Karen Messmer might be better contacts for more detailed information. I've cc'd them with this.

Many thanks again!

Mark

\*I can't remember an exact number but a good sized percentage of our anticipated growth was assigned in our plan to downtown. This led us to find ways to make that happen, thus the first few years of property tax postponement for both affordable and market rate residential development. (Speaking of which, the recently-vocal opponents of that incentive never seem to acknowledge that all those properties will be subject to taxation after their postponements run out,

public revenue that would not have been collected had they never been built.

Please note: message attached

From: Casey Schaufler <[cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)>

To: "[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)" <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>

Subject: RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

Date: Thu, 7 Dec 2023 21:45:03 +0000



**From:** [karen.karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen.karenmessmer.com)  
**To:** [Casey.Schaufler](mailto:Casey.Schaufler)  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Friday, December 8, 2023 7:02:40 PM

---

Casey -

I am curious why this is being called a 'text amendment' for processing. The proposal would seem to require a Comprehensive Plan amendment because of the strong policies relating to walking.

Can you point me to the decision documents for why this is a text amendment?

Thanks

Karen Messmer

On 12/8/2023 3:09 PM, Casey Schaufler wrote:

Good afternoon, Karen –

Thank you for this information. I will add it as a public comment in the project file, which will be available to the Planning Commission and City Council when they deliberate. Please let me know if you have any questions or additional comments.

Kind regards,

Casey Schaufler (he/him)

Associate Planner

City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development

601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967

360.753.8254 | [cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)

---

**From:** karen.karenmessmer.com <[karen@karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen@karenmessmer.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, December 8, 2023 3:07 PM

**To:** Mark Foutch <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>; Casey Schaufler <[cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)>

**Cc:** [hollygadbow@comcast.net](mailto:hollygadbow@comcast.net)

**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

I am away from home so I cannot research in my paper files/documents. Meanwhile here is an article about the problems with drive through businesses for downtown. Our downtown is aiming to be walkable and welcoming to bicyclists. Transit is seen as an important factor for dense residential and commercial development and transit cannot succeed without a safe walking environment.

This article in Strong Towns describes the problems with drive through businesses.

(Even though it references Covid at first, the rest of the article applies well to Olympia.)

<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/9/21/no-we-still-dont-need-drive-throughs>

In summary from the article -

1. Drive-throughs are a bad financial deal for cities.

2. Drive-throughs are traffic nightmares.

3. Drive-throughs are pedestrian nightmares.

4. Drive-throughs just aren't necessary. The needs they meet can be met in other ways.

**Karen Messmer**

On 12/7/2023 2:30 PM, Mark Foutch wrote:

Thank you, Casey! All I can recall generally is that we (the council then) wanted downtown to be more residential \*and as part of that, pedestrian friendly, one more reason to avoid auto-oriented development. Our first Comp Plan post-GMA emphasized that, along with reducing urban sprawl and adopting design standards for downtown development. (For the past few years you've probably noticed the many projects downtown to promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk and crosswalk redesign. To me those are directly related to those pedestrian friendly goals. Holly Gadbow and Karen Messmer might be better contacts for more detailed information. I've cc'd them with this.

Many thanks again!

Mark

\*I can't remember an exact number but a good sized percentage of our anticipated growth was assigned in our plan to downtown. This led us to find ways to make that happen, thus the first few years of property tax postponement for both affordable and market rate residential development. (Speaking of which, the recently-vocal opponents of that incentive never seem to acknowledge that all those properties will be subject to taxation after their postponements run out, public revenue that would not have been collected had they never been built.

Please note: message attached

From: Casey Schaufler <[cschaufli@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufli@ci.olympia.wa.us)>

To: "[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)" <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>

Subject: RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

Date: Thu, 7 Dec 2023 21:45:03 +0000



**From:** [karen.karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen.karenmessmer.com)  
**To:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?  
**Date:** Sunday, December 10, 2023 8:13:12 PM

---

I see you reference the OMC but the Planning Commission should have had the existing Comp Plan goals and policies related to this area before them when this briefing happened. Certainly before the hearing the staff report should include references to what the Comp Plan says about this area.

Whatever is decided by the Planning Commission should be grounded with reference to how this fits, or does not fit, with the Comprehensive Plan. The applicant should not be the only source for the Comp Plan references.

Also, the SEPA checklist on this, as provided by the applicant, is sorely lacking in detail. This is not a specific project application but the SEPA portion that responds about 'non project actions' is non-responsive.

This change in regulations will increase traffic along side streets surrounding Plum Street. Any new projects allowed by this will reduce walking and cycling safety because cars will be entering the property to go to a drive through. They will cross the bike lane and the sidewalk. ) Back-ups of traffic along those side streets could bleed out onto Plum Street potentially. Emissions will increase because cars will sit idling awaiting their turn. These impacts need to be addressed in the SEPA checklist.

I have two concerns here.

1. The process needs to include a fact-based approach to what is being considered and a grounding from the current Comp Plan.
2. Anywhere that we add drive through business reduces safety for people who are walking and cycling.

Karen Messmer

On 12/10/2023 6:19 PM, Casey Schaufler wrote:

Good evening, Karen –

This is a text amendment application, which is a Type IV application under [OMC 18.70.040 \(link\)](#):

A. 4. Legislative decisions by the City Council after a public hearing. The City Council may approve, conditionally approve, modify and approve, or deny the application. Type IV applications are not subject to review timeline limitations unless specified elsewhere in this Title.

Under table 18.70-1, a Type IV application is any of the following:

Code Amendment to Titles [17](#) and [18](#) OMC, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Development Agreement, Rezone requiring Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Shoreline Master Plan Amendment, Plat Vacation

Thomas Architecture Studios applied for this text amendment, and it is tentatively

scheduled for public hearing before the Planning Commission on January 8, 2024. I expect to send notice later this month. I will include you on notice routing as a party of record. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. Thank you.

Kind regards,  
Casey Schaufler (he/him)  
Associate Planner  
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967  
360.753.8254 | [cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)

---

**From:** karen karenmessmer.com <[karen@karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen@karenmessmer.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 8, 2023 7:02 PM  
**To:** Casey Schaufler <[cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

Casey -  
I am curious why this is being called a 'text amendment' for processing. The proposal would seem to require a Comprehensive Plan amendment because of the strong policies relating to walking.  
Can you point me to the decision documents for why this is a text amendment?  
Thanks  
Karen Messmer

On 12/8/2023 3:09 PM, Casey Schaufler wrote:

Good afternoon, Karen –  
Thank you for this information. I will add it as a public comment in the project file, which will be available to the Planning Commission and City Council when they deliberate. Please let me know if you have any questions or additional comments.

Kind regards,  
Casey Schaufler (he/him)  
Associate Planner  
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967  
360.753.8254 | [cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)

---

**From:** karen karenmessmer.com <[karen@karenmessmer.com](mailto:karen@karenmessmer.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 8, 2023 3:07 PM

**To:** Mark Foutch <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>; Casey Schaufler <[cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschaufl@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Cc:** [hollygadbow@comcast.net](mailto:hollygadbow@comcast.net)  
**Subject:** Re: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

I am away from home so I cannot research in my paper files/documents. Meanwhile here is an article about the problems with drive through businesses for downtown. Our downtown is aiming to be walkable and welcoming to bicyclists. Transit is seen as an important factor for dense residential and commercial development and transit cannot succeed without a safe walking environment. This article in Strong Towns describes the problems with drive through businesses. (Even though it references Covid at first, the rest of the article applies well to Olympia.)  
<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/9/21/no-we-still-dont-need-drive-throughs>

In summary from the article -

- 1. Drive-throughs are a bad financial deal for cities.*
- 2. Drive-throughs are traffic nightmares.*
- 3. Drive-throughs are pedestrian nightmares.*
- 4. Drive-throughs just aren't necessary. The needs they meet can be met in other ways.*

**Karen Messmer**

On 12/7/2023 2:30 PM, Mark Foutch wrote:

Thank you, Casey! All I can recall generally is that we (the council then) wanted downtown to be more residential \*and as part of that, pedestrian friendly, one more reason to avoid auto-oriented development. Our first Comp Plan post-GMA emphasized that, along with reducing urban sprawl and adopting design standards for downtown development. (For the past few years you've probably noticed the many projects downtown to promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk and crosswalk redesign. To me those are directly related to those pedestrian friendly goals. Holly Gadbow and Karen Messmer might be better contacts for more detailed information. I've cc'd them with this.

Many thanks again!

Mark

\*I can't remember an exact number but a good sized percentage of our anticipated growth was assigned in our plan to downtown. This led us to find ways to make that happen, thus the first few years of property tax postponement for both affordable and market rate residential development. (Speaking of which, the recently-vocal opponents of that incentive never seem to acknowledge that all those properties will be subject to taxation after their postponements run out, public revenue that would not have been collected had they never been built.

Please note: message attached

From: Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)>

To: "[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)" <[mfoutch@juno.com](mailto:mfoutch@juno.com)>

Subject: RE: Allow Drive-Throughs Downtown?

Date: Thu, 7 Dec 2023 21:45:03 +0000

**From:** [Knudson, Evan @ CBRE San Diego Occupier Division](#)  
**To:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Cc:** [Chris Knudson](#); [Robert Knudson](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Proposed Text Amendment  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 3, 2024 3:05:07 PM

---

Hi Casey,

We are writing today in support of the proposed text amendment by TAS architects which would allow drive-throughs as a conditional use on a small section of Plum Street when paired with a larger multi-family development.

My name is Evan Knudson, and I currently reside in San Diego, California and have worked in commercial real estate for almost 20 years. My brother, Chris, now owns and operates both of the Plum Street and Martin Way Casa Mia Restaurants, as well as Well 80 Brew House on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave downtown. My dad, Bob, was the visionary behind the expansion of Casa Mia and successfully owned and operated the Casa Mia franchises for 35+ years before Chris took over (though he still goes into his office on Plum Street daily to make sure things are going as smoothly as possible).

To provide a bit of background on our experience downtown; our family built the Plum Street Casa Mia in 1985 by redeveloping an old gas station and has owned and operated without pause for the past 39 years. In 2016, we further invested in Downtown Olympia when we built Well 80 Brewhouse. We have a unique understanding of Downtown Olympia and have witnessed first-hand the evolution of both areas and the substantial differences that have grown between these two locations. Put simply, if we hadn't purchased the Plum Street property in the 80's and subsequently paid off our loan; the Casa Mia on Plum Street simply wouldn't be financially viable for several reasons that we'll describe below.

The drive-through ban for Downtown Olympia was put in place in the 1990's. The intent of the code change was multiple, but mainly was created as an attempt to promote walkability to the downtown business district. Fast forward 30 years; Plum Street (specifically between Union and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave where the text amendment is proposed) has become almost exclusively a mix of grandfathered fast-food restaurants, vacant lots and empty or underutilized office buildings. We own and operate the only remaining non-fast-food restaurant. The motel and restaurants are gone, replaced by a tiny home homeless village, the car dealership is gone, replaced by a tire store, convenience store and assorted small businesses and a drive through espresso stand. The City Hall and offices have vacated. The largest development, Town Square, is largely vacant and listed for sale with almost zero probability of maintaining a bustling office use since the State of Washington has largely vacated those buildings. Contrast this with the rest of the Downtown Olympia business district which has seen largely the opposite trend. Formerly vacant or underutilized lots have been transformed into multi-family residential buildings and store front retailers like Well 80 have comparatively thrived due to the increased foot traffic and densification.

Our understanding of the proposed text amendment shows a focus on a very small section of Plum Street. The applicant has stated, and we also believe, that this focus will help promote future development while bringing much needed housing units and residents to Plum Street which has



largely seen a decline since the drive-through ban was enacted. Our family has invested heavily in the city and its future. But as we said, over these last 40 years, Downtown Olympia has evolved, and the City and businesses need to subsequently evolve or areas that have been left behind will continue to suffer.

Globally, COVID-19 changed almost everything, mostly in ways not anticipated. For a restaurant, certainly the lockdowns were a disaster for all of us, but the unintended consequences that manifested as a result continue and will likely perpetuate well into the future. By far the biggest negative factor that business owners and property developers on Plum Street are faced with is the movement away from in-person offices. Employees were forced to work remotely and as the pandemic subsided, they collectively decided that they didn't want to return to the office. Meanwhile, many business owners have realized that they can reduce overhead by having employees work remotely. The result is that office vacancies have skyrocketed and are not going to significantly change for the foreseeable future and probably forever.

One result is that restaurants which relied on lunch and other business from local office workers are struggling to get customers through the doors. As mentioned above, we own two Casa Mia Restaurants – one on Plum Street and the other on Martin Way. They are essentially identical in size and seating capacity. Pre-pandemic: revenue was essentially equal for the two. Fortunately for the Martin Way location, business has not only gotten back to pre-pandemic levels but has recently started to exceed the numbers from 2019. Contrast this with our Plum Street location, where sales are down approximately 35% since 2019 and we're doubtful that we'll ever be able to recover to anywhere near the levels we once had. Well 80, which had almost a full 3 years of business prior to the pandemic, has met or exceeded pre-pandemic revenues as well, so it seems clear that Plum Street's issues are unique.

Anything that will encourage development and stimulate business will be a huge plus for the "front porch" of Downtown Olympia. Drive-through uses are more valuable than storefront retail, so by allowing them as part of a larger multi-family developments, it would encourage developers to invest in Plum Street. More residential development would lead to better future business viability.

We understand that the drive through bans were put in place for a reason, so we've done a ton of research trying to understand not only why the bans were put in place both here and in other city centers around the country, but also broke down how we feel the proposed amendment has successfully addressed any and all issues that most city planners have with drive throughs in the first place.

- Drive-throughs have negative impacts on local businesses.
  - As an owner of food and beverage on both Plum Street (Casa Mia) and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Well 80), we strongly believe the benefits that would come by encouraging developers to build additional housing on Plum Street far outweigh any potential negatives (which, based on how the proposed amendment is written seem to be completely nullified)
- Drive-throughs discourage walkability in downtown areas, thus devaluing retail store-front property values.
  - The proposed text amendment does not attempt to allow drive through uses in all of downtown Olympia, rather outlines a small area that is not and will never be a walkable part of downtown, rather is a major freeway arterial and gateway into downtown.
  - As owners of restaurants on both Plum Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, we can attest that the foot traffic for these two downtown locations are and will continue to be vastly different.
- Drive-throughs are dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Plum Street is the major ingress/egress arterial for the I-5 freeway (the area proposed average 5-6 traffic lanes) and is not and will never be a walkable downtown street.
- The proposed text amendment addresses the potential danger by requiring clear pedestrian markings and visual cues.
  - Additionally, the majority of vehicles produced today are equipped with technology (sensors, alarms, auto-braking functionality) which help prevent potential interactions with pedestrians or cyclists)
  - Drive-throughs limit densification and are a low-returning land use.
    - This text amendment prohibits drive-throughs as a stand-alone use, or even primary use, and requires them to be a part of a larger mixed-use housing development, thus in this case the opposite effect would be true.
  - Drive-throughs create additional traffic and hazardous driving conditions.
    - The text amendment ensures that the queuing lines will be sufficient to prevent back-ups on city streets.
    - Even if there were a queue that happened to back up onto city streets, Plum Street averages 5-6 lanes in the proposed area, so traffic impacts even in that case would be minimal, at worst.
    - The proposed area has a median running the entire length, thus not allowing left turns.
  - Drive-throughs have negative impacts on air quality.
    - Cars today are significantly more efficient and emit significantly less greenhouses gas emissions vs. cars from 30+ years ago
      - Almost 20% of all new cars sold in Washington State are electric vehicles.
      - The vast majority of vehicles manufactured in the last 5 years have an auto start/stop system, whereby the vehicle turns off at idle.

It seems clear that the proposed amendment has addressed every potential negative outcome that we were able to find on the issue, and we're under the mindset that it would promote investment and development on a section of downtown that needs it the most. We strongly support the text amendment and hope the Planning Commission sees the overall benefits and votes in favor of the proposal.

Thank you for your time, please let us know if you have any questions.

Evan, Chris and Bob Knudson

**Evan Knudson**

First Vice President | Lic. 01846995  
CBRE | Advisory & Transaction Services  
4301 La Jolla Village Dr., Suite 3000 | San Diego, CA 92122  
T +1 619 696 8383 | C +1 858 997 9383  
[evan.knudson@cbre.com](mailto:evan.knudson@cbre.com) | [LinkedIn](#)

Details about the personal data CBRE collects and why, as well as your data privacy rights under applicable law, are available at **[CBRE – Privacy Policy](#)**.

**From:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**To:** [A Z](#)  
**Bcc:** [Joyce Phillips](#); [Leonard Bauer](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Drive Throughs  
**Date:** Friday, January 26, 2024 2:31:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Text Amendment Checklist \(060822\) \(2\).pdf](#)

---

Good afternoon, Joe –

I understand you oppose drive-throughs anywhere in the City of Olympia. I want to clarify that anyone, including yourself, could apply to amend Olympia Municipal Code. This is an open process available to anyone as outlined in the text amendment checklist that I've attached to this message. I am available to answer any questions you may have regarding the process. Thank you.

Kind regards,  
Casey Schaufler (he/him)  
Associate Planner  
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967  
360.753.8254 | [cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)

**Please note all correspondence is subject to public disclosure.**

---

**From:** A Z <[digranesjl@gmail.com](mailto:digranesjl@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 26, 2024 2:13 PM  
**To:** Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: Drive Throughs

Thank you for your reply.

Nonetheless, I strongly believe that drive throughs ANYWHERE in Olympia is a TERRIBLE idea - no need for me to reiterate. Developers must be thrilled to have such an input with elected and appointed city powerbrokers. Yes - I'm very frustrated because it seems that, in the last few years [unsure when it actually began], developers and city "officials" have developed a very cozy relationship; placing profits way above quality of life.

Joe Digranes  
Olympia

On Fri, Jan 26, 2024 at 11:45 AM Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)> wrote:

Good morning, Joe –  
Thank you for comments on the text amendment application regarding drive-throughs. It will be

included in the project file and available to Councilmembers and the public reviewing this project.

I wanted to make available to you the application materials from members of the public that initiated this review, as well as the staff report that outlines the basis for review of this request. The staff report and its attachments may be found on the [City of Olympia Planning Commission agenda webpage \(link\)](#). In addition to the materials found on that webpage, I've attached for your reference the staff presentation from the public hearing held by the Planning Commission on January 8, 2024.

The original application requested an amendment for drive-throughs be applied to Plum Street from Union Avenue to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The Planning Commission is recommending instead an amendment that would be from Union Avenue to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I have attached the Planning Commission's recommended text for consideration, as well as a Question & Answer document prepared by staff for the Planning Commission following the public hearing. It is important to note that even if the requested text amendment is adopted by City Council, any subsequent project that proposes a new drive-through would be subject to existing engineering design and development standards, as well as downtown design review requirements.

The Planning Commission recommendation will be forwarded to the Land Use & Environment Committee with a tentative date of February 22, 2024. The Land Use & Environment Committee will review all of these materials and then make their own recommendation to the City Council at a future date.

If you have any questions about this project or the review process, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you again for sharing your comments.

Kind regards,  
Casey Schaufler (he/him)  
Associate Planner  
City of Olympia | Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East | PO Box 1967, Olympia WA 98507-1967  
360.753.8254 | [cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)

---

**From:** A Z <[digranesjl@gmail.com](mailto:digranesjl@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:23 PM  
**To:** Casey Schaufler <[cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cschauf@ci.olympia.wa.us)>  
**Subject:** Drive Throughs

# Olympia Planning

# Commission recommends allowing Plum Street drive- throughs

Proposal sent to city council for consideration.

What a terrible idea:

1. Increased traffic/congestion!
2. Increased air pollution from idling vehicles!
3. Greater probability of accidents: pedestrians/bicyclists/vehicles!
4. Definitely a greater amount of litter!

Of course, developers love it!

Does Olympia REALLY NEED more fast food/drive throughs? Do the decision makers REALLY envision an extension of Lacey? Once again, it sure sounds like a sweet/lopsided relationship between [some] elected officials and the private sector.

Joe Digranes

Olympia

**From:** [CityCouncil](#)  
**To:** [John Van Eenwyk](#)  
**Cc:** [Councilmembers](#); [Jay Burney](#); [Rich Hoey](#); [Debbie Sullivan](#); [Kellie Braseth](#); [Leonard Bauer](#); [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Subject:** RE: drive-throughs on plum street  
**Date:** Monday, February 26, 2024 1:40:14 PM

---

Thank you for your comments. I will forward them on to all Councilmembers and appropriate staff.

Susan Grisham (*she/her*)  
Assistant to the City Manager  
Legislative Liaison  
City of Olympia | P.O. Box 1967 | Olympia WA 98507  
360-753-8244 | [sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us)

[Sign Up for a City Newsletter](#)

**Please note all correspondence is subject to public disclosure.**

---

**From:** John Van Eenwyk <jveoly@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 23, 2024 8:52 PM  
**To:** CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>  
**Subject:** drive-throughs on plum street

Greg Quetin and Carole Richmond are absolutely correct in opposing drive-throughs in Olympia. As if the Port's spewing of dirty exhaust from its log movers and the bunker fuel from the visiting ships weren't enough, drive-throughs will greatly increase exhaust emissions, including particulate matter that is known to activate cancer genes in our bodies.

Jim Cooper, who does care about the health and safety of Olympia residents and visitors, is

way off the mark on this one. There simply is no way to mitigate the exhaust from drive-throughs. Just ask those municipalities that have banned them completely.

I find it very interesting that the pop-up advertisement at the bottom of this page (at present) is for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. We'll need them if drive-throughs are allowed.

Please do not allow drive-throughs in olympia.

The Rev. Dr. John R. Van Eenwyk

[www.johnvaneenwyk.com](http://www.johnvaneenwyk.com)

**From:** [Tim Smith](#)  
**To:** [Casey Schaufler](#)  
**Cc:** [Joyce Phillips](#); [Leonard Bauer](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Drive throughs on Plum  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 19, 2024 2:28:41 PM

---

-----Original Message-----

From: CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>  
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 2:12 PM  
To: Holly Gadbow <hollygadbow@comcast.net>  
Cc: Councilmembers <Councilmembers@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Jay Burney <jburney@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Rich Hoey <rhoey@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Debbie Sullivan <dsulliva@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Kellie Braseth <kbraseth@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Leonard Bauer <lbauer@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Tim Smith <tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us>  
Subject: RE: Drive throughs on Plum

On behalf of the Olympia City Council, thank you for your comments. I will forward them on to all Councilmembers and appropriate staff. The Ordinance amending code related to drive-throughs in mixed use developments along Downtown entry corridors will be before the City Council for consideration at their April 9 business meeting.

Susan Grisham (she/her)  
Assistant to the City Manager  
Legislative Liaison  
City of Olympia | P.O. Box 1967 | Olympia WA 98507  
360-753-8244 | [sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sgrisham@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Sign Up for a City Newsletter

Please note all correspondence is subject to public disclosure.

-----Original Message-----

From: Holly Gadbow <hollygadbow@comcast.net>  
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 12:34 PM  
To: Dontae Payne <dpayne@ci.olympia.wa.us>; CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>  
Cc: Leonard Bauer <lenlor@comcast.net>  
Subject: Drive throughs on Plum

Sent from my iPhone

Dear Mayor Payne and Olympia City Council Members:

I am writing to support Council Members Madrone and Cooper's recommendation to allow ground floor drive throughs in only residential buildings on Plum Street. Mark Foutch wrote the Council recently that the Council we were part of disallowed drive throughs in the downtown. At that time, we thought prohibiting drive throughs would promote a more pedestrian friendly downtown. We also didn't realize how hard it was to find developers who would build housing in the downtown. Further, we weren't as aware of the housing crisis and the urgent need for all kinds of housing.

While eventually housing has materialized in Downtown's core, Plum Street has remained auto oriented and has no housing. Housing on Plum Street would allow people to live near employment, services, transit, and amenities within walking distance and would even give them a chance to live without a car reducing air pollution. While there will be some increased air pollution from drive throughs, I believe the trade offs from giving this incentive, in this area of the downtown only, to promote additional housing where residents could live car free make this proposed



change worth while.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Best regards,

Holly Gadbow

1625 Sylvester Street St.

Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 789-3616

**From:** [Gordon White](#)  
**To:** [Dontae Payne](#); [Yến Huỳnh](#); [Dani Madrone](#); [Clark Gilman](#); [Lisa Parshley](#); [Robert Vanderpool](#); [Jim Cooper](#)  
**Cc:** [Leonard Bauer](#); [Tim Smith](#); [Casey Schaufler](#); [Jay Burney](#); [Susan Grisham](#)  
**Subject:** Drive Through Text Amendment is wrong direction  
**Date:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 8:46:12 PM

---

Dear Council Member

I am opposed to the proposed text amendment to allow Drive-Throughs in Mixed Use Developments Along Downtown Entry Corridors (via portions of Plum Street). The project proponent has failed to provide evidence for how drive through business is essential for encouraging mixed use development in the City's downtown. Cities across the country have been banning new drive through developments because they create more traffic jams and reduce the aesthetics of High Density Neighborhoods. So instead of encouraging more housing, drive through businesses are seen to discourage more housing. Who wants to live above a Drive Through?

The text amendment also reverses policies in the City's Comprehensive Plan without going through a plan amendment process. Rather, the proposal falls back on the "auto-centric" nature of the corridor to encourage use of more auto specific uses. That is counter to the City Comp Plan and will likely discourage housing development.

### **SEPA Review fails to assess likely impacts**

The SEPA Checklist is deficient in assessing likely impacts of drive through businesses. Drive through businesses attract and induce additional motor vehicle traffic. That traffic will cross sidewalks and bike lanes and therefore present additional risk for people who are cycling and walking. Vehicle line-ups for these businesses will, at times, back onto the street blocking the sidewalk and bike lane increasing the risks for a collision. SEPA is supposed to assist the decision makers in understanding the impacts of the text amendment, not defer to project proponents' views of impacts. If you make a decision with such an inadequate SEPA assessment you are failing to recognize the impact of your decision.

The SEPA Checklist at the non-project phase should at least provide an overview of the likely impacts that will need to be addressed at the project level. I assume the City is serious about its climate policies and will be requiring developers to mitigate climate impacts. The non-project level SEPA assessment can be used to flag potential impacts for a project to anticipate. More importantly it should flag for the City Council to see the traffic and climate impacts from this text amendment and deny the amendment.

### **Drive Throughs Undermine City's Urban Density, Walkable City and Climate Goals**

The reasoning behind the proposal is opposed to the City's Comprehensive Plan in support of higher density in the urban core. Higher density creates proximity to services where residents walk or cycle to for their weekly errands and are not subjected to congestion from drive throughs. A more walkable community creates less vehicle pollution. The City is embracing the Comp Plan strategy by reducing parking requirements for high density housing projects, developing bike lanes and creating bus transit options along the major corridors. Drive Through developments threaten that investment. This text amendment will undermine the Council's walkable city and climate action goals.

### **Proposal reduces safety for pedestrians/cyclists**

The text amendment will create conflicts between pedestrians/cyclists with vehicles using

drive through businesses. I walk/cycle this corridor and crossing area regularly and already need to be extra alert to vehicles turning off of Plum into side streets between Union and 5th Avenue. The median barrier is helpful and NOT foolproof. Many times, even with the helpful pedex crossing lights at 7th and Plum, vehicles blow through the crosswalk. Driver attention is drawn away by the congestion of other vehicles entering Plum from parking areas and side streets along the corridor. I fear for kids who are walking/cycling downtown from the Eastside if more drive throughs come online.

Encouraging more vehicles by repealing the ban on drive-throughs makes it more challenging for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing this corridor safely. Importantly, it was this very kind of conflict that the City Council in the early 1990s decided to address by banning new drive through developments on Plum Street and other corridors of the city.

**City banned drive throughs in early 1990's to support high density housing and walkable City goals**

It has been a long term goal of the City to create higher density housing and have a more walkable downtown core. Hence the ban in the 1990s on new drive through activities by the City Council. That goal is even more important now with the City's Climate Action commitment and support for high density development without reliance on single occupancy vehicles. Many other cities in the US have followed Olympia's lead and banned drive throughs in order to create more walkable, less car dependent cities. Please do not repeal the ban on drive through businesses.

Please deny the proposed text amendment.

Gordon White  
2431 Columbia SW  
Olympia, Wa

cc: Council  
Jay  
Rich  
Debbie  
Kellie  
Leonard  
Tim  
Casey S.

**Casa Mia Real Estate, LLC**  
**716 Plum Street SE**  
**Olympia, WA 98501**

**RECEIVED**  
**APR 05 2024**  
**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**

Sent to Each  
Councilmember Individually

April 2, 2024

The Honorable Dontae Payne  
Mayor, City of Olympia

Dear Mayor Payne:

As long standing owners of Casa Mia Restaurants and Well 80 Brewing Company, we are deeply committed to the growth and prosperity of our city. It is with this commitment in mind that we urge you to consider the significance of this text amendment in shaping the future of our hometown.

The proposed text amendment, initiated by Thomas Architectural Studios on our behalf, is not merely about a particular project but about addressing the pressing economic realities facing Plum Street and Olympia as a whole. While some may argue against tying the amendment to a specific project, it's essential to acknowledge that our project has become public knowledge and serves as a case study for examining the challenges and opportunities of redevelopment in our city.

Several key points underscore the necessity of this text amendment. First, the City of Olympia needs to add 700 new housing units annually for the next two decades to keep up with projected growth. As things stand today, we're not even close, highlighting the urgent need for action.

Additionally, rising construction costs and interest rates have dramatically increased the financial burden on new developments, making it increasingly challenging to bring projects to fruition.

As local elected officials, you know more than most that the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the landscape of downtowns across the country. The shift to remote work has drastically reduced the need for commercial office space and has a ripple effect on retail and restaurant viability. Also, the requirement for ground-floor retail space, while well-intentioned, has created significant financial barriers, resulting in commercial vacancies that undermine the viability of projects. By allowing a drive-through, we can substantially impact the financial prospects of ground-floor spaces, and ensure the economic viability of a redevelopment.

Concerns regarding noise, pollution, and pedestrian safety have been raised in opposition to drive-throughs. However, it is essential to recognize the high traffic realities that exist on this section of Plum Street, which, given the proximity between the Port of Olympia and Interstate 5 are unlikely to change. Modern urban housing incorporates measures to mitigate these issues, such as post-tensioned concrete slabs and strategic placement of residential units. Additionally,

the benefits of drive-throughs extend beyond convenience to include accessibility for parents with young children and individuals with disabilities.

As a local family with deep roots in Olympia, our goals have always centered on contributing to the betterment of our city and Thurston County. The proposed text amendment aligns with these values by catalyzing the redevelopment of Plum Street and addressing the pressing need for additional housing.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and all that you do to help make Olympia a wonderful place to live, work, and play.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert Knudson



Christopher Knudson



Evan Knudson