

March 21, 2016

Honorable Members
Olympia City Council
P.O. Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507-1967

Subject: Approval of the *Draft Olympia Municipal Code Revisions, Draft Drainage Design and Draft Erosion Control Manual Revisions, and Draft Engineering Design and Development Standards Revisions* as they pertain to Low-Impact Development

Dear Council Members:

We are pleased to submit this letter recommending approval of the *Draft Olympia Municipal Code Revisions, Draft Drainage Design and Draft Erosion Control Manual Revisions, and Draft Engineering Design and Development Standards Revisions* as they pertain to Low-Impact Development (LID). These revisions have been developed by the Public Works Department and endorsed by the Utility Advisory Committee.

Beginning in January, we received presentations from the staff on the scope and result of their work, which was organized according to the titles of the 22 issue papers they had requested from their technical advisers. Our task was to ask questions, hold a public hearing, and evaluate the work according to whether it complies with the letter and spirit of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission recognizes there are still a number of unanswered questions relating to the adoption of the proposed LID rules and guidance. We agree with staff that it is important to proceed with what we know about reducing stormwater, even if there are still some uncertainties related to implementation and outcomes.

Because of current uncertainties, we suggest maintaining a list of the most important questions and issues that should be addressed *after* approval of the current revisions. It is clear that achieving the City's goal of making LID the preferred approach to land development will take more time and discussion, but the Commission believes we should proceed with caution and treat current revisions as experiments to be included in an "adaptive management" approach. We need to monitor what works and try to improve over time on what does not. As part of this approach, the staff may want to consider reporting on implementation success and "lessons learned" at regular intervals.

One area in which we diverge from staff recommendations is in regard to the percentage of compact parking stalls that should be provided in parking lots (OMC 18.38). While the staff proposes to reduce the amount of compact parking stalls to 15 percent, the Commission recommends retaining the current code's allowances of up to 30 percent.

In summary, we find the proposed draft revisions of the Low-Impact Development regulations and guidance manuals, as modified above, to be in line with the community's vision and State requirements.

Respectfully yours,



Carole Richmond, Chair
Olympia Planning Commission