

OPC Neighborhood Center Project Public Outreach Plan for Phase 2

Goals:

- Move the community closer to neighborhood center goals expressed in the Comprehensive Plan
- Develop a greater understanding of and enable informed public dialogue about Olympia's neighborhood center areas: the concept & purpose, benefits, challenges, success factors, community desires and concerns
- Present what appear to be a realistic range of opportunities for Olympia's neighborhood center areas, including: placemaking activity; food carts/other temporary uses; live/work units; adaptive reuse of single family homes and existing commercial buildings; and new construction
 - Gauge the appetite of the community for these types of development (to inform scope of future code considerations)
- Help people understand the potential trade-offs of growing centers vs. not (i.e., more traffic vs. not having a walkable retail destination in neighborhood)
- Avoid turning this into a density conversation, and avoid the perception that this is the intention
- In very general terms, explain how current development regulations help or hinder goals
- Show the public that the Planning Commission is reflecting on feedback from Phase 1 and continuing to take action to implement the Comprehensive Plan
- Think carefully about how to best capture and reflect back the public's feedback during this phase

Context:

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan plans for and identifies 17 locations for neighborhood centers. These are intended to be small walk and transit-friendly business clusters within residential neighborhoods that serve the day-to-day retail and service needs of local residents and foster community interaction.

Despite the relevance of neighborhood centers to local and regional goals, over the past 20 years these areas have not developed as envisioned. OPC has sought to analyze why, and help create a path to better implementation. This is Phase 2 of OPC's project:

- **In Phase 1 (2014 Info Gathering):** The Commission gathered input about the public's desires as well as barriers to neighborhood center development. With help from staff, launched an online questionnaire on OlySpeaks.org and received 668 responses. Staff also interviewed 13 business owners and 8 property owner/developers who have operated a business, designed or developed a neighborhood center in Olympia.
- **In Phase 2 – (2015 Outreach):** Generate information and public dialogue to help the City gain a better understanding of what is feasible and preferred for centers prior to

consideration of specific code changes. The expectation is that the Planning Commission is leading and facilitating this conversation, with some logistical support from staff.

- **Phase 3 (2016): Consider changes to land use regulations**
(Tentative until approved on OPC's 2016 Work Plan)

Phase 2 - Activities/Timeline:

2015

- Summer:** Based on initial guidance from OPC, the OPC Neighborhood Center work group works with staff and MAKERS to develop slideshow with talking points
Lead: OPC work group
- Sept 21:** Review and provide feedback on the draft slideshow with talking points and the draft Public Outreach Plan
- Oct 5:** Discuss public outreach goals and approach
Lead: OPC
- Oct 6-Nov 6:** Refine Slideshow, website & materials; contact Coalition of Neighborhood leadership to ask for feedback on the concept & outreach method – what typically works better: reaching residents at their regularly scheduled neighborhood meetings, or through ‘larger’ meetings hosted at a central location in the NE, SE and westside
Lead: OPC NC work group
- Nov 16:** Review presentation of slideshow, website & materials at OPC meeting
Lead: OPC NC work group
- Dec 14:** Present slideshow & materials to Coalition of Neighborhoods at their regular meeting (a warm-up conversation & opportunity for feedback)
Lead: OPC NC work group
- Q1 2016:** Host 3-4 neighborhood meetings (i.e., SE, NE, westside) to present materials and gather feedback
Lead: OPC NC work group; CNA will help advertise this
- Q2-4 2016:** Plan and host an Open House at City Hall, open to the general public
- Incorporate feedback from neighborhood meetings and develop proposed code changes (timeframe & lead: TBD)
 - Main purpose of the open house is to inform public of types of code changes being considered and why
 - Do this on a regular meeting night about one month prior to public hearing on any proposed code changes for neighborhood centers
 - Create a buzz in the newspaper

Target Audiences:

- Olympia residents & neighborhood associations (*will get help advertising from CNA*)
- Property & Business owners in neighborhood centers (*City has a contact list from 2014*)

Outreach Materials:

PowerPoint Presentation: The OPC's neighborhood center work group created a PowerPoint presentation for use by Commissioners that includes talking points and graphics. (See 11/16/15 staff report Attachment 2)

The PowerPoint includes talking points which are not intended to be read verbatim, and can be adjusted for the comfort of the speaker. The presentation can be truncated as needed.

Projector, laptop, pointer, thumbdrive, paper pads: The City can provide these tools to Commissioners for use at engagement meetings if needed.

Letter of Engagement: The enclosed draft letter can be used to initiate engagement with groups if desired (**see example in appendix A**)

Posters: 6 posters have been drafted for use at a future public forum. These include a map identifying all of Olympia's NC sites, and 5 site-specific descriptions (**see example in appendix B**)

OPC Neighborhood Center Project Website: <http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/advisory-committees/planning-commission/neighborhood-centers.aspx>
To make it easy for Commissioners to refer citizens to additional background material, staff has created a project webpage. A featured link on the OPC's main webpage will link to this page. The webpage will include the following background materials:

- PowerPoint for 2015-16 outreach (see 11/16 staff report **attachment 2**)
- A snapshot of Olympia's neighborhood centers
- Summary of 2014 Outreach & Findings
- Current Policies & Development Regulations
- Driving instructions for a self-guided tour of Olympia's neighborhood center areas*
- Article: "Creating Walkable Business Districts" by J. Owen and G. Easton*
- 2014 article from the Olympian, "Wildwood is the poster child for neighborhood centers"*

Points of Contact:

- **Carole Richmond**, OPC neighborhood center work group, crichmon@ci.olympia.wa.us
- **Jerry Parker**, OPC neighborhood center work group, jparker@ci.olympia.wa.us
- **Missy Watts**, OPC neighborhood center work group, mwatts@ci.olympia.wa.us
- **Nance Lenzi**, Office Supervisor, CP&D, nlenzi@ci.olympia.wa.us, 360-753-8735
- **Amy Buckler**, Senior Planner, CP&D, abuckler@ci.olympia.wa.us, 360-570-5847

Roles and Tasks:

OPC Neighborhood Center Work Group:

- Lead on PowerPoint development
- Deliver presentation to OPC on 9/21
- Coordinate outreach with 2-3 key groups as identified

The Planning Commission:

- Review and provide feedback on the presentation materials and outreach plan on 9/21
- Provide guidance to the work group and others who may be involved in this phase of outreach
- At the end of this phase, refine the scope of code considerations and begin to plan the public open house

Individual Commissioners:

- Support outreach efforts as a presenter or note-taker, and report back to OPC at the next regular meeting
- Continue to learn about Olympia’s centers

Staff:

- Support OPC work group in creation of presentation materials
- Provide needed equipment or copies, answer questions, and assist with typing notes following the meetings, as requested
- Provide logistical support for public open house

Consultant:

- Consult on the development of presentation materials and talking points
- Create graphic elements

Appendix:

- A) Example engagement letter
- B) Example of a poster for public open house
- C) Preliminary Scope for Phase 3 (developed by OPC in Nov of 2014)
- D) Public Engagement Suggestions from Phil Schulte of CNA (2014)

Appendix A

CITY LETTERHEAD

[Date]

ADDRESSEE

Xx

X

Dear [Contact from Community Group],

The Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) invites you to explore how we can make Olympia's neighborhood center vision come to life. Neighborhood Centers are intended to be small walk and transit-friendly business clusters within residential neighborhoods that serve the day-to-day retail and service needs of local residents and foster community interaction.

Between October 2014 and April 2015, Planning Commissioners are available to speak to your group about Olympia's plan for creating vibrant, walkable neighborhood centers. Despite their relevance to many local and regional goals, few of these centers are developing as envisioned. OPC has sought to analyze why, and help create a path to better implementation.

Over the past year, Commissioners have learned a lot about what makes these locations successful, the (re)development and business challenges, potential opportunities, public desires and concerns. OPC is interested in sharing this information and engaging community members about how the City of Olympia and others can encourage new or enhanced neighborhood center areas.

If your group is interested in hosting a representative from OPC in order to learn more and provide valuable input, please contact [OPC Name, email, phone]. You can also learn more at the OPC's Neighborhood Center Project webpage at [web address].

Sincerely,

[Name]

OLYMPIA PLANNING COMMISSION



“Kellerman’s Korner” - 210 Kaiser Rd. NW

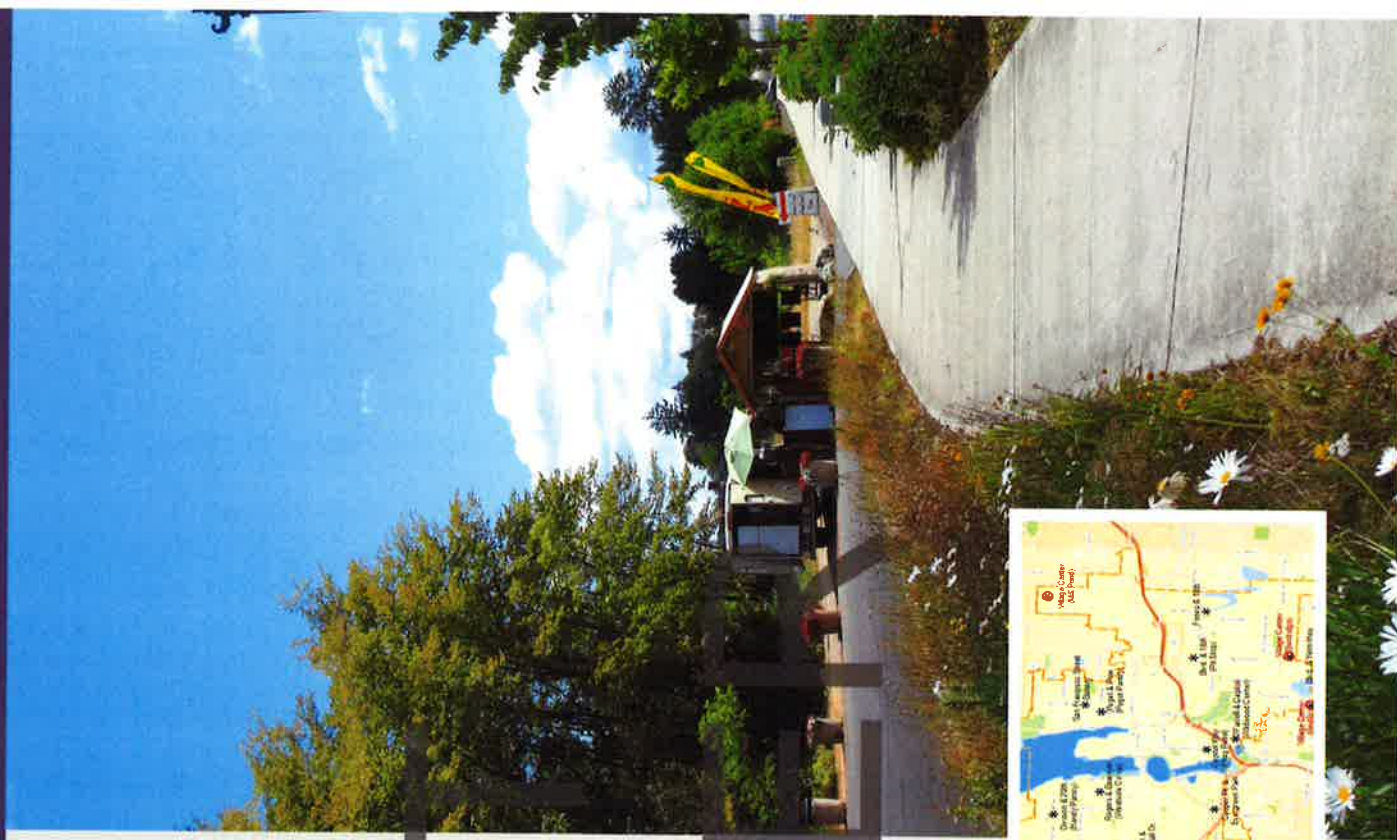
In the 1920’s, this site at the intersection of Kaiser & Harrison (formally Mud Bay) Road was developed as a corner grocery store called Kellerman’s Korner, now a retail store called Fun Junk. During the 1970’s, the vacant gas station building housed a business called Laid-Back Larry’s Do-It-Yourself Auto Repair. The owner of Stone Creek Wood Fire Pizza, a food truck on site, hopes to convert the old gas station into a permanent restaurant someday.

Success Factors for this Site:

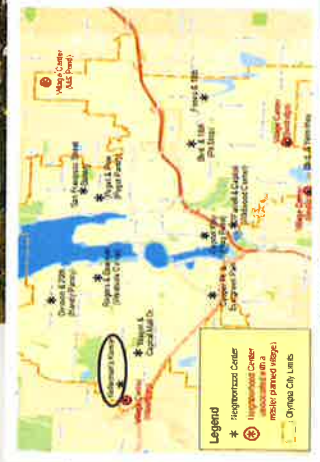
- Highly centralized and visible site.
- On a main arterial near Highway 101 with through traffic to major commercial area.
- One of the fastest growing areas in Olympia.
- Site is across the street from the Kaiser/Harrison Focus planning area, which could help to provide a stronger context for redevelopment of the area.

Potential Challenges:

- Costly street and sidewalk improvements will be required along the Kaiser Road boundary as part of a land use improvement permit (in most cases).
- Area businesses cite need for further pedestrian safety improvements to draw walkers within the area.



DRAFT POST



Appendix C

PLANNING COMMISSION - PRELIMINARY SCOPE FOR CODE CHANGES ON NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS RECOMMENDED ON December 1, 2014 (following November 17, 2014 Public Hearing)

CAUSE:	PROPOSAL/ HOW ACTION WOULD OCCUR:	ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:	EXPECTED OUTCOME:
<p>The Master Plan process is too onerous.</p> <p>Certain development regulations may be outdated.</p> <p>There are neighborhood concerns about design, primarily about the mass and scale of buildings.</p>	<p><u>Consider</u> code amendments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the master plan process for neighborhood centers, and update neighborhood retail zoning regulations as the alternative process. (update allowed uses and other development standards) • Allow higher density uses, mobile vendors, live/work uses, including relaxing home-based business standards • Decrease the number of required vehicle parking stalls for neighborhood center businesses. • (Added during Work Planning in 2015) Update the sign code to allow businesses to have more visibility, while also balance this with public concerns about sign clutter. <p>ACTION WOULD BE INCLUDED OF A FUTURE YEAR OPC WORK PLAN, AND REQUIRE A PUBLIC HEARING AND RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT CODE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the public informed – show them we are acting • Provide strong, visuals • Need a public info sheet with explanation of top 4-5 things OPC wants public to understand 	<p>Some things to consider <u>at time this action is completed</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the appropriate process for infill in established neighborhoods vs. planned communities. Is the master plan process still appropriate for larger undeveloped properties? • Consider transitional uses (gardens, small food carts) as a possibility for placemaking when larger mixed use retail is not feasible or desired. • Can there be different NC categories resulting in different types of centers in different locations? • Current requirement is to include a 1 acre village green or park, with a center between 2-10 acres in size. If open space requirement is kept, consider reducing the size or using a percentage instead of a flat acre. • Current requirement is to separate centers from each other by ½ mile, and also that centers be located on Collector Streets. Consider whether these requirements are necessary. • Incentives for food-related businesses, such as allowing wholesale food operation in conjunction with retail uses (small-truck operations only), food stands and small neighborhood food courts. • Should center design review in centers be administrative or Design Review Board level? • Standards regarding noise, odors, hours of operation, and size of trucks used to move goods that support center businesses. 	<p>The process and regulations around neighborhood centers will be easier to understand, apply for and administer.</p>

Appendix D

Suggestions for Public Involvement: Meeting with OPC and CNA

- I. Consider the Public Involvement Techniques in the CNA Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy
 - Show Active Support from the City Council and City Manager for this process
 - Address Barriers to Public Involvement
 - Focus the Discussion on what is important to neighborhoods
 - Talk about successful models that might be adapted to Olympia but avoid cookie cutter solutions
 - Identify places where people gather and communicate
 - Build networks: send materials to service clubs, businesses and civic organizations
 - Consider a community forum
- II. Take advantage of the Internet's Mass Communication Ability
 - Develop a clear and brief statement of what you want the public to consider and how to respond
 - Send it to CNA and ask CNA to distribute it to all 40 Recognized Neighborhood Associations and further to the email list or communication chain that each NA has. It could reach thousands of people
 - Harvest all email addresses that the city of Olympia has from its various outreach mechanisms (Imagine Olympia, Giving testimony at public hearings) and repeat the process
 - We have a smartphone app for graffiti reporting; why not one for commenting on OPC proposals?
- III. Consider Getting the Message Out through Mass Media
 - Have LUEC Council members and OPC Commissioners brief the Olympian editorial Board
 - Call Dick Pust, other radio stations, they have a lot of listeners who may be interested in your message
 - Ask Council members to get input on your proposal when they visit other groups who might be interested (Other cities with planning departments, Intercity Transit, TRPC etc.)
- IV. Reconsider the legalistic Public Hearing Methodology and Get Out in the Community
 - The 3 minutes or less at the mike discourages public input; only activists and what Stephen Buxbaum calls "the usual suspects" give their input. It is an echo chamber of the same 100-200 people
 - Get public input through neighborhood conversations by holding open houses, ask people who attend just to fill out a simple survey and talk to them informally. Pass out survey forms at other city events, put out a table at the Farmers Market, get a sense of what the people are thinking about
 - Attend the CNA Subarea A group meetings; they are talking about this very subject and beginning to formulate some strategies concerning neighborhood centers
- V. Most Important of all, Show the Public That Their Input really Matters
 - There is a great deal of cynicism about elected leaders and advisory committees; demonstrate through your deliberations that the public is a valued partner and public comments are taken seriously
 - Consult with the public at the policy development stage, not when decisions have already been made
 - Where widely held public opinions are counterproductive or wrong, say so and explain why this is the case
 - Don't make this a one-off event; think about some kind of annual/semi-annual effort when you are considering issues of importance to neighborhoods

Amy Buckler

From: philschulte@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, August 01, 2014 8:27 AM
To: Amy Buckler
Cc: -, Bob; commissionermax@gmail.com; Max Brown; Michelle Sadlier; Roger Horn; klwa-pha@msn.com; Kim Andresen; Roger Horn; Undisclosed, Recipients; Schulte Phil
Subject: Re: Upcoming Neighborhood Center Code

Dear Amy and OPC Members:

First, we are having an election on August 11th so that Steering Committee meeting will be Bob's last meeting as CNA Chair. Bob will continue to serve as City Military Liaison and in his leadership role in other organizations.

In general, the best way to get feedback from a variety of neighborhoods is to distribute the proposed public participation plan widely and then put it on the agenda for a future CNA Steering Committee meeting. It is also important to clarify exactly what is being changed (neighborhood center code?) and then set forth possible options for engaging the public or the reasons why one option or approach has been chosen.

Also, the plan might cover the desired outcomes from the public participation plan, adequate notice for public comment, transparency, an explanation of why public suggestions were accepted or rejected and using a broad range of engagement strategies and technologies. We may have some more comments or suggestions once we see the plan; concerning readability, the Federal government has put together some plain language guidelines (see plainlanguage.gov) which may be helpful in drafting "Plain Talk" regulations.

I will contact you after our Steering Committee meeting to see if the meeting on the 22nd at Noon works for us; if not, we can schedule a meeting later on. Thanks for contacting us and we look forward to collaborating with OPC.

Phil

From: "Amy Buckler" <abuckler@ci.olympia.wa.us>
To: "Schulte Phil" <philschulte@comcast.net>, "-", Bob" <bobjonesmilitary@comcast.net>
Cc: commissionermax@gmail.com, "Max Brown" <mbrown@ci.olympia.wa.us>, "Michelle Sadlier" <msadlier@ci.olympia.wa.us>, "Roger Horn" <rogerolywa@yahoo.com>, klwa-pha@msn.com, "Kim Andresen" <kandrese@ci.olympia.wa.us>, "Roger Horn" <rhorn@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2014 11:27:40 AM
Subject: Upcoming Neighborhood Center Code