

**From:** jen olson <jenolson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 17, 2024 1:21 PM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** biking in West Olympia

Hello,

As the weather gets nice and I bike more around West Olympia, I realize how difficult it is to negotiate West Olympia by bike. Hopefully the Capital Mall Triangle subarea plan includes better access for those on bike. In particular:

- Biking on Black Lake Blvd is dangerous and I have to use the sidewalk between Harrison and 101 exits.
  - If I'm trying to get to the Cooper point/Black Lake area, I often might drive due instead of bike to avoid the dangerous route section from Harrison to Cooper Point.
- Harrison from downtown bridge to Black Lake is difficult to negotiate by bike. i use residential streets instead. The City may consider have a designated bike route (maybe up 5th Ave?) that is well marked so that cars look out for bikes on the designated bike route from downtown up the hill.
- There is no easy route to get from the SW neighborhood to TESC or the bike paths in that area. Hopefully the Triangle Plan will resolve that issue and not make it worse.
- Not many Jefferson or Capital kids bike to school. School age kids need safe routes to get to Coleman including possibly a "bike route" for school age kids coming from the SW neighborhood such as signage from the crosswalk on Harrison/Perry to the Jefferson/Captial area, more bike racks at both schools. This may also be needed for the other quadrants to increase safe access for kids to bike to school.
- Capital mall is car-centric. Bikes need to compete with cars in all lanes and negotiation of parking lots to get to the limited bike racks (and drivers are not always looking for bikes).
  - There are also no pedestrian sidewalks in some areas of capital mall for kids, those with strollers or other walking devices who cannot jump up on the grass if a car drives by.

My apologies for the laundry list. I have not read the most recent plan nor attended the recent public hearing, so disregard if these issues have already been addressed. I love to bike in Olympia and hope the younger generation does as well. We look forward to the West Olympia development and hope it is bike friendly,

Sincerely,

Jen Olson  
1023 5th Avenue SW  
Olympia, WA 98502  
503-901-4523

**From:** A Z <digranesjl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 17, 2024 1:41 PM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** Quality of Living

I've read quite a bit about increasing the amount of asphalt and the height of buildings. Not much about establishing parks, maintaining/increasing tree canopy cover, or environmentally sound noise reduction plantings

So, is the Planning Department really working for sustainable, quality of living growth ... taking taxpayers for a ride?

Joe Digranes  
Olympia



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April 2, 2024

To: Olympia Planning Commissioners

Subject: Joint Comment Letter on the Draft Capital Mall Subarea Plan

Dear Commissioners,

The Community Visioning Group (CVG) and West Olympia Business Association (WOBA) have carefully reviewed the Draft Capital Mall Subarea Plan dated March 7, 2024. We appreciate the extensive work that has gone into developing this vision for the future of the Capital Mall area. However, we have significant concerns about the plan's feasibility, impacts, and missing elements that must be addressed before it can serve as a reliable framework for the area's future.

First, the plan lacks a comprehensive transportation strategy to support the envisioned growth. Key issues like the future of the Harrison Avenue corridor, the location and capacity of the Intercity Transit Hub, and the phasing of transportation investments are deferred to future studies, leaving critical uncertainties. In particular, we believe planning for 4th Avenue should be coordinated closely with a vision for Harrison Avenue as a walkable, transit-oriented corridor, not addressed prematurely in isolation. A more integrated and definitive transportation plan is essential.

Second, we are concerned the plan's ambitious development vision may not be economically feasible or contextually appropriate. The proposed building heights, densities and uses need to be rigorously vetted for market viability to ensure the plan requirements and incentives are realistically calibrated. We worry that incompatibilities with the scale and character of surrounding neighborhoods may also hinder the prospects for successful redevelopment. More analysis is needed to confirm the plan offers a workable framework for stimulating change.

Third, the plan suggests extensive public investments in land acquisition, existing business support, affordable housing, transportation projects and amenities - but the City's capacity to fund these investments is not demonstrated. There also appears to be a risk that conversion of commercial space to residential and public uses could diminish the area's vital role as a regional economic engine and tax base for City services. Additional analysis of these fiscal implications and tradeoffs is required.

Finally, the omission of specifics on changes to parking ratios, development standards, and design requirements leaves the feasibility of the plan unclear. These details need to be pinned down and vetted thoroughly with the development community and property owners to ensure that the regulations, incentives and process will truly facilitate the envisioned transformation.

In sum, while the Subarea Plan is a start, it is not yet a complete, convincing and actionable roadmap for change. We urge the Planning Commission and City Council to invest the time needed to close these gaps, align the plan with market realities, and build solid stakeholder consensus before adopting it as the fixed blueprint for the area's future. The CVG and WOBA stand ready to fully engage in this effort.



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Thank you for considering our concerns and recommendations. We look forward to rolling up our sleeves with the City and community to shape a revised plan that we can all get behind - and that will deliver a thriving, equitable and sustainable future for the Capital Mall area.

Sincerely,

The West Olympia Community Visioning Group  
The West Olympia Business Association

1 April 2024

Greetings, Olympia Planning Commissioners –

For about 15 years now, I've been interested in the redevelopment potential of a significant part of the area referred to as the Capital Mall Triangle. My primary area of interest, as a westside resident and transportation planner, has been the 1970s-era triangle bounded by Harrison Avenue to the north, Cooper Point Road to the west, and Black Lake Boulevard to the east. Contrary to the study area boundaries – bounded inexplicably by the centerlines of Black Lake Boulevard and Cooper Point Road – the functional area actually includes both sides of those arterials and a swath around the perimeter.

In my capacity at TRPC at the time, I led the public engagement element of the original West Olympia Access Study in 2010-11, from which the Yauger Way ramp/Kaiser Road interchange concept was born. I facilitated TRPC's urban corridors policy maker initiative, focused on transforming the region's pre-I-5/US 101 federal and state highway corridors into walkable, people-oriented transit corridors. Harrison Avenue is the west end of the regionally significant Harrison/4<sup>th</sup>-State/Martin Way urban corridor extending all the way to the UGA boundary east of Lacey. This is where Intercity Transit is growing high frequency urban corridor service. I am a founding member of the West Olympia Community Visioning Group (CVG), a tiny non-profit hellbent on catalyzing West Olympia economic and geographic assets for the benefit of surrounding residents, the city, and the regional economy. CVG initiated the acquisition around 2011-12 of the 27-acre Yuell parcel between Yauger Park/Harrison Avenue and Grass Lake. We were also instrumental in getting this study on the city's 2021 planning docket and supported its efforts in obtaining a grant for this work. City staff and consultants will attest, with some degree of exhaustion, that I provided ample input and formal comment along the way.

At the end of the day, it was an unfortunate grant for what the city needed. The purpose of this Commerce grant program was to preserve housing affordability within established Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) areas like Northgate, where an old mall has transformed over the last two decades into a vibrant mixed use community. Massive public investments in a Sound Transit Link light rail station and supporting infrastructure is driving up housing demand and reducing the availability of affordable housing in that robust mixed-use, transit-oriented area. That is not West Olympia's situation.

The grant Olympia received was not really intended to help a community develop an understanding of what "Transit-Oriented Development" actually means and the mechanisms by which a highly suburban area that is also an economic engine for the city can transform over time to be a less car-dependent place. That kind of a process might have evaluated what kinds of retrofits make sense in different areas and why, and the various considerations and trade-offs that go into transforming an area from a thriving regional commercial center to a robust mixed-use area that retains its regional commercial significance. Drawing the study area boundary north of Harrison ensured the planning subarea included some residential uses, but no one would mistake those areas for TOD. Nor are recommendations of the draft plan concerned with making those existing residential areas more transit-oriented and mixed-use.

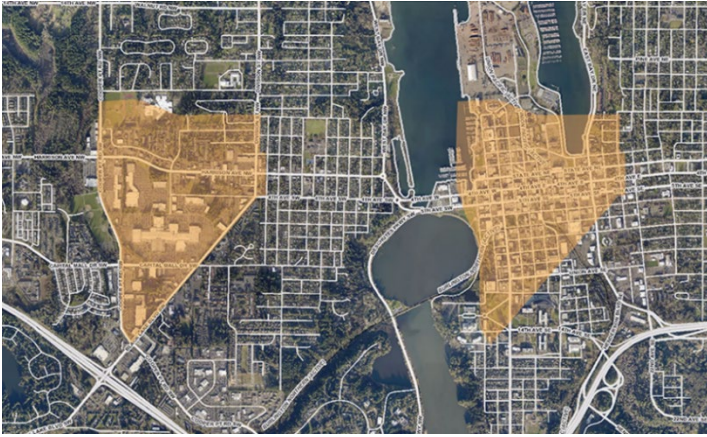
My concerns about unresolved transportation issues this plan dodges are well documented throughout the process and not worth additional time to rehash here, except to say they are compounded by the "black box magic" of the traffic mitigation fee structure associated with the recommendation. I'm more familiar than most people with transportation mitigation fee mechanisms, and I couldn't begin to explain this one beyond the theoretical intent.

Instead, my comments to you are concerned with the overall economic feasibility of the plan and the consequences of using it as the basis for a Planned Action EIS. I have some thoughts about Harrison Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup>, too.

**If it doesn't pencil out, it won't be built.**

I regret my comments don't reflect more confidence in the process, the resulting plan, and recommendations. I'm concerned it does not present a feasible, pragmatic strategy for stimulating the kind of infill and redevelopment that will transform this area over time. Saddling this whole thing with a Planned Action EIS only compounds that concern. No one is advocating for keeping the area as it is, generally. But if it is not feasible, little will change in this area over the next two to three decades. Distasteful as many find the sentiment, the reality is that if it won't pencil out, it won't be built.

This is a significant geography. The subarea is as big as all of downtown Olympia, from the Farmers Market to the Capitol.



It is an economic engine for the city, generating retail sales tax and B&O revenue for essential services and urban amenities across the city, pulling in revenue for Olympia's General Fund coffers from a retail-trade area that draws heavily from five counties. The "Capital Mall Triangle" underwrites many city services and amenities that people equate with the high quality of life in Olympia. Taxpayers from other counties grow the General Fund. My understanding is that the city intends for it to continue in this regard. This is good because residential uses cost more in taxpayer funded services than they generate in taxes.

With that context it seemed reasonable to expect we would look at the potential economic impacts of alternatives to assess how changes in land use will diminish or increase opportunities for revenue generation, for business and city tax base alike. Will there be more square footage for tax-generating commercial purposes in the future or less, given the intended repurposing of commercial areas for non-commercial uses? Concepts like Floor Area Ratio and aggregate taxes generated per square foot of building area are often employed when planning for commercial areas and changes in use over time, to evaluate the relative net impacts of proposed changes. This process was not burdened with that kind of analysis, and so it is hard to know what the likely effects will be on city resources of the proposed changes in land use and resulting tax base.

My efforts to pin down gross estimates were unsuccessful, but the Preferred Alternative will take a significant share of private land out of commercial use and put it into public use – for a connected grid of "Main Street treatment" streets built at developer expense, protected bike lanes and trails, public parks and gathering spaces, and public buildings. It aims to replace a sizeable share of the remaining commercial land with residential uses. We may end up with the same square footage of commercial uses, but it will be stacked into more expensive multi-story buildings. The Preferred Alternative will require developer-funded structured parking to support all of this, a very expensive proposition for replacing all of that surface parking to meet commercial and residential needs. All of this will be reflected in the resulting rents for businesses and residents alike, perhaps contrary to city objectives to focus a lot of affordable housing in this area and support small businesses.

The Preferred Alternatives is meant to stimulate private sector investments towards converting single-use commercial lands into mixed-use transit-oriented development with a high proportion of affordable units and extensive public amenities, and with assurance of a "streamlined" development process. I lack confidence that its recommendations are sound and make sense over the next two to three decades in our economic market here in West Olympia. It's unfortunate because there is a lot to be said for redevelopment potential in this area, but it isn't Northgate.

**Harrison Avenue is low-hanging fruit for neighborhood scale, walkable mixed-use infill and redevelopment served by high frequency urban transit services – aka Transit-Oriented Development. Future redevelopment of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be oriented towards Harrison, not the mall. Pull 4<sup>th</sup> from the Preferred Alternative and reserve it for the future Harrison Avenue corridor study and Black Lake corridor study.**

One consequence of the study emphasis on mall redevelopment is that it marginalized the potential of Harrison Avenue infill and redevelopment, designating it as low redevelopment potential and deferring it to some future study effort. Yet Harrison is arguably the ripest opportunity for neighborhood compatible transit-oriented infill and redevelopment of the entire subarea.

Failure to consider the role of Harrison Avenue in generating mixed-use infill and redevelopment compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and supported by high frequency transit service undermines the wisdom of including 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the proposed redevelopment scheme for the Planned Action EIS. Incentivizing redevelopment of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue without a clear vision for Harrison and the relationship between the two streets is short sighted.

Redevelopment of 4<sup>th</sup> should orient towards Harrison at least as much or more so than internally towards Capital Mall. It is local and neighborhood oriented, not regionally oriented like the mall. High frequency transit will be on Harrison, not internal to the hub envisioned in the plan. Planning for 4th jointly with Harrison presents rare opportunities associated with redeveloping an old highway corridor (Harrison Avenue was Primary State Highway 9 before US 101 was built, with buildings from that era) in coordination with a relatively undeveloped parallel road one city block away (4<sup>th</sup> Ave). It is part of the whole Harrison Avenue transit-oriented corridor development scheme that this plan ignores because it's not mall redevelopment. There are no more than two parcels between the two streets, and a couple of parcels go from street to street. Some parcels have land values in excess of building values, a key indicator in identifying properties with great potential for redevelopment in the near-term.

This study's focus on mall redevelopment minimized the potential value of Harrison in achieving actual transit-oriented development. Pursuing redevelopment of 4<sup>th</sup> before thinking through the strategy for Harrison (and the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup>/Black Lake/Division) misses an important transportation-land use relationship that can easily preclude high-value opportunities to orient development towards the actual high frequency transit corridor on Harrison Avenue. Redevelopment of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be excluded from this subarea plan recommendations and revisited whenever the city gets around to taking a serious look at Harrison Avenue.

**Is it a subarea plan or a subarea wish? Time will tell.**

The city is about to adopt a plan and Planned Action EIS for this subarea, whether it pencils out or not. We can articulate in fine detail the land use we want to occur and all the public features we want, but if it doesn't pencil out, it won't happen. That will be true here, too.

It was stunning to me to learn the city knew its development regs conflicted with the HDC4 zoning that has been in place here for over a decade and did nothing to correct that. No wonder no redevelopment occurred – there's not enough parking at Capital Mall today to meet the city's current parking standards, much less with intensified uses. This goes for trees, too. This highly developed area can't redevelop and meet the city's tree standards required in code.

It sure seems like there were obvious measures that could have been taken that may well result in more redevelopment interest and built form envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan than this will, but we'll never know. I fear this plan will result in a whole new array of internal inconsistencies and unrealistic developer requirements that will further delay reinvestment into this area and undermine future business and property owner opportunities.

As someone who's thought about how this area could grow and change more than most sane people, I close with a cautionary note.

The Nisqually Indian Tribe is finalizing its plans for mixed-use development of a 200+ acre tract of land just off I-5 in northeast Lacey. It's an area roughly the size of the commercial triangle within Olympia's subarea, without all the challenges that come with redevelopment anywhere. The Tribe and Lacey will be exacting in their standards, and their development process will be predictable for developers. It will be an attractive investment opportunity for the kind of built environment Olympia's plan would like to generate and it will suck up a lot of investment capital for a couple of decades or more.

There's only so much investment capital to go around. This region has a finite capacity to generate and absorb private sector investment. Investors have choices; Olympia is not the only show in town. We owe it to the businesses and property owners in West Olympia to ensure the plans and regulations that will bind their properties and investments for decades to come are reasonable and financially feasible, including a development code aligns with the city zoning.

I wish you luck sorting through all the comments you're receiving. It is no small task to help the city devise a rational and productive path forward. Thank you for all the time you put into your work.



*Thera Black*  
Conger Avenue, Westside

**From:** Gerald Y <geyezell@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 19, 2024 11:02 AM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** Input for Comp Plan Updates

Increase housing density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that supports minimal development in the unincorporated rural area of the county.

Gerald Yezell  
Sent from my iPhone



**From:** Lisa Bailey <squitahead@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 22, 2024 6:55 PM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** Leave rural areas Rural!

Please please:

Increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county, and don't support attempts by the county to rezone rural areas to urban to pretend that's not development of unincorporated rural areas.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

**From:** Judi Dedge <[kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com](mailto:kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 26, 2024 11:49 AM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** Re: PRESERVE RURAL LANDS

Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE THAN 5% of new housing in rural areas, and don't rezone rural areas to urban to claim you're accomplishing the goal. Most future housing growth should be in the denser urban areas.

Also, increase density in the city to create walkable neighborhoods with transit access that minimizes development in unincorporated rural areas of the county, and don't support attempts by the county to rezone rural areas to urban to pretend that's not development of unincorporated rural areas.

Thank you.

On Fri, Apr 26, 2024 at 11:44 AM Judi Dedge <[kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com](mailto:kleinsmithjm7@gmail.com)> wrote:

| Please adopt the sustainable Thurston goal of building NO MORE

March 25, 2024

Mr. David Ginther  
City of Olympia  
Community Planning and Development  
601 4th Avenue East, PO Box 1967  
Olympia WA 98507-1967  
Sent via email to: [dginther@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:dginther@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Dear Mr. Ginther:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) appreciates the opportunity to review the City of Olympia's (City) Capital Mall Triangle Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan) and Planned Action Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). WSDOT appreciates the City's consideration of WSDOT's comment letter in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Nonetheless, WSDOT remains concerned that the FEIS does not fully address our prior comments related to the scope of the DEIS transportation analysis and the proposed trip cap. WSDOT requests that the City defer any action to certify the FEIS or adopt the Subarea Plan until the items noted in this letter are fully resolved.

### **CAPITAL MALL TRIANGLE SUBAREA PLAN**

The City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan (Plan) describes the vision for the Capital Mall Triangle Subarea as a regional shopping center, which includes various types of jobs within walking distance of medium-density housing. The vision is for a "...complete urban neighborhood with a mix of jobs, housing, and services." WSDOT fully supports the City's vision for a job-housing balance and walkable/rollable urban neighborhood.

Transportation goals in the Subarea Plan include safe, efficient, multimodal mobility; convenient and reliable transit; and better-connected street pattern. Also, objectives around active transportation, multimodal, transit, climate and resiliency align well with WSDOT priorities.

While WSDOT supports the City on the above-mentioned vision, goals and policies in the Subarea Plan, there are certain key elements to improve upon to better understand and mitigate the proposed action's probable significant impacts to the state highway system.

## **PLANNED ACTION FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

### **Transportation Network Assumptions**

FEIS Table 4-5 (FEIS, page 4-30) lists the transportation network improvement assumptions for each alternative. The FEIS (page 4-12) states funding for the US 101/West Olympia Access Project design and right-of-way acquisition is programmed after 2029, and there is no identified construction funding. The lack of identified construction funding for this project and other potential transportation improvements makes these assumptions speculative in nature. WSDOT believes it is inappropriate to make speculative assumptions when assessing transportation impacts.

### **Transportation Impacts**

The potential transportation impacts of all Action Alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3, and the Preferred Alternative) are measured by the City against the expected conditions of Alternative 1 (FEIS, page 4-27). The FEIS states (page 4-28), "...any increase in trip generation over the Alternative 1 condition would be identified as a significant impact, as this would represent an increase in congestion when compared to Alternative 1." The City's rationale for this approach is stated in the DEIS (Page 4-27) as "[s]ince the City does not have any mechanisms to stop or amend development allowed under the current zoning, the trip generation and traffic congestion that could occur under Alternative 1 is an important baseline by which to compare the impacts of Alternatives 2 and 3."

WSDOT disagrees with this rationale and impact analysis approach. WSDOT notes that while zoning compliance is necessary for new development, zoning compliance, in and of itself, is not sufficient for development to proceed. For example, new development proposals need to comply with GMA concurrency requirements and multiple City review and approval processes (which may include a project-specific transportation impact assessment) prior to receiving approval. In fact, the City has multiple "mechanisms to stop or amend development" that does not comply with legal and administrative requirements even if the development is consistent with approved zoning.

### **Vehicle Trip Cap**

WSDOT requests modifications to the proposed trip cap to help meet the City's goals for shorter trips and mode shift as desired by the City's Transportation Master Plan and to reduce level of performance degradation on WSDOT facilities below adopted standards. Rather than all mitigations being tied to triggered SEPA actions for the 'last developer(s) on the block,' a more deliberate and tiered trip cap structure should be used.

The Capital Mall Triangle Subarea will continue to be a regional draw for trips outside of the area within the trip caps in the FEIS. Even a portion of those allowable trips under current zoning have the potential to degrade the performance of WSDOT facilities. A tiered trip cap can be structured in several ways. WSDOT proposes the following structure (rates and thresholds are subject to further analysis and change).

### *Internal Trip Cap*

Trip caps internal to the subarea itself can be retained as discussed in the FEIS. However, when redevelopment triggers these thresholds, the City's capital projects must be complete prior to further development. There must be a connection between allowed developments and programmed/funded capital projects and mitigating strategies. No significant modeling has been performed to align levels of development with the requisite level of future funded capital investments. WSDOT requests, projects without committed construction funding be excluded when assessing transportation impacts.

This internal trip cap may be similar to the trip cap mentioned in the FEIS document, but there remains significant uncertainty in how closely the methodologies will track with actual outcomes. For example:

- Are desired travel patterns shifting?
- Are novel trip generation and trip capture rates calibrated with pre-COVID data valid in a post-COVID environment?
- How are work-from-home and school/college enrollment trends solidifying?

The current trip cap internal to the subarea represents a three-quarters increase over what represents market conditions in the allowable zoning. This is a significant increase in traffic even after the internal trips subtracted via the MXD methodology. Therefore, we propose the additional trip cap, described below to separately monitor and track the regional trips.

### *External Trip Cap*

Trip cap at cordon line(s) external to the subarea (at least at the control count locations in the City's annual data collection – namely the Black Lake control point) is necessary for all regional partners to incentivize shorter trips and simultaneously plan for appropriate mitigations to WSDOT facilities. When data indicates a certain volume at the Black Lake control point, then no further subarea development can occur until the interchange project is funded and underway. This volume threshold can be based on either new analysis or analysis done related to the 2016 Interchange Justification Report (IJR) work.

Unless further analysis is performed, a 10% increase in peak hour volumes conservatively triggers the need for mitigations either within the City of Olympia (Transportation Demand Management and Transportation System Management & Operations strategies, increased connections in the city street network – both inside and outside the subarea to distribute trips to alleviating routes, enhanced bus services, etc.) or the funding and construction of interchange improvements.

This approach is more appropriate to incentivize the City and its partners to implement the most cost-effective ways to achieve the densified land use and higher levels of development and activity within West Olympia while maintaining a safe and resilient transportation system. WSDOT is happy to meet with the City to discuss and resolve the above-mentioned critical issues moving forward. We believe aligning our shared goals will result in successful outcomes.

Mr. David Ginther

March 25, 2024

Page 4

Thank you again for the opportunity to engage in the planning process and review of the Subarea Plan and FEIS. We look forward to successful resolution of these outstanding issues.

Sincerely,



George Mazur, P.E.

WSDOT Olympic Region Multimodal Planning Manager

GM:na

cc: Andrew Larson, WSDOT Olympic Region Development Services  
Teri Chang, WSDOT Multimodal Planning and Data Division

**From:** Kuba Bednarek <bednarej@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:47 PM  
**To:** David Ginther  
**Subject:** Triangle Comments

I'm emailing in full support of alternative four which would increase building heights to 12 stories and add significant additional housing and mixed zoning. I think this is a great strategy to meet the demand for housing in our area. I believe any future commercial development in the Capitol Mall triangle should include as many levels of residency as possible on top of it. There is no other way to meet the demand for housing. We must build up and not sprawl out! If they don't want it on the west side, build it on the Eastside, please. Please also include some space for a natural area park, or square for people to gather.

Thanks for such a great planning vision. I hope there are more in the city who support it.

Kindly,  
Jakub Bednarek  
Eastside Olympia

**From:** smahlum@proton.me  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 2:50 PM  
**To:** David Ginther  
**Subject:** Capital mall plans

Please can you just build more affordable housing we have so many homeless people in this state. OMG we need more housing please affordable housing.

Sent from [Proton Mail](#) for iOS



**From:** Yujin Ghim <ghim.yujin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 8:20 PM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** Capital Mall Triangle Input

Hello,

I know there is a meeting on April 1st, but I cannot attend. I would like to voice my input for the capital mall triangle. I believe option 3 would be the best to alleviate the housing issue in Thurston county.

Thank You for Your Time,

Yujin

**From:** Gary Wiles <wilesharkey@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2024 1:42 PM  
**To:** Capital Mall Triangle Plan  
**Subject:** comment on park planning for the Capitol Mall Triangle

Dear Mr. Ginther,

I attended the city's open-house on the Capitol Mall Triangle development project on March 7 and thought it was very informative. I'd like to submit a public comment for your planning process that pertains to the inclusion of a new city park to be built within the Triangle. I spoke with your parks representative who was present that evening and was told that the city would eventually try to establish a park 2-3 acres in size in the Triangle. I like this idea a lot, but based on the Triangle's large size, the several thousand people who are eventually expected to live within it, and the high-density of residents being planned, I suggest creating a larger park of at least 5 or more acres in size without having any athletic facilities added in (these already exist in nearby parks). A large park with lots of trees, shade, benches, etc would become a desired destination for Triangle residents to enjoy, especially during our increasingly hotter summers as climate change worsens, and more generally would be something the city could be proud of as it progresses with its future high-density development plans. I've seen city parks like this in large cities in the East and they are very popular with people who want go outside without having to drive anywhere. This would therefore fit right in with the city's goal to make the Triangle more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Thus, my suggestion is to think big, not small, when planning for this park. Thanks for listening to my comment.

Regards,  
Gary Wiles  
521 Rogers St SW  
Olympia

**From:** e norton <octaviavision19@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 1, 2024 4:59 PM  
**To:** David Ginther  
**Subject:** Capital mall subarea plan comment

Somewhere in here must be a plan to deal with the existing homeless population. The current situation of begging on sidewalks, intersections and streetcorners, and squatting in the nooks and crannies surrounding the mall, and doing hard drugs in parking lots and landscaped areas is bad for them and bad for us, their neighbors.

Please create a preliminary plan to house and provide services to these guys before any groundbreaking ceremonies take place. Learn from the downtown Olympia experience. Prioritize solving this problem over making money.

Thankyou.

Betsy Norton

1405 evergreen park dr sw,.olympia 98502

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Get [Outlook for Android](#)



# Wig Properties LLC

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4811 – 134<sup>th</sup> Place Southeast; Bellevue, Washington 98006 • Office: (425) 641-2044 • Fax: (425) 865-8648

April 1, 2024

Planning Commission  
City of Olympia

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Capital Mall Triangle Subarea Final EIS. We own the property located at the southwest-corner of Harrison Avenue and Cooper Point Road with MOD Pizza, Ace Hardware, and Goodwill. Overall, we support both the EIS and the Olympia Capital Mall Triangle Subarea Plan and would submit the following two comments for the Planning Commission's consideration:

1. On page 3-75 (and elsewhere in your Design Standards) of the final Environmental Impact Statement, it is noted that projects go through the Design Review Board or staff review depending whether they are over or under 5,000 square feet, respectively, however, regardless of square footage, standards require "a continuous row of storefronts, stoops porches, or distinctive entryways facing streets" and "surface parking location and design." **This should be clarified that (a) existing buildings' main entrances simply need to face toward the street, not necessarily be located on the street, and/or (b) allow existing structures (pre-2024) to reuse, repurpose, re-tenant, and even expand existing structures, without needing to add storefronts along the street nor requiring buildings to be located between the street and the parking fields.**

**We recommend requiring the creation of a street edge that is continuous and close to the street only upon full redevelopment of these sites (and perhaps only for residential-only buildings as recommended by the Subarea Plan).**

We are strongly opposed to any requirement that projects would need to create a street edge that is continuous and close to the street other than upon full redevelopment, as allowances need to be made for repair/reconstruction of existing structures. Otherwise, this could prevent positive, incremental changes from occurring for many years, and potentially decades, in the interim.

For example, if a desirable business wanted to locate in an existing building in the HDC zones, but to accommodate that business's needs, the building footprint had to be adjusted by more than 5,000 square feet, this could inadvertently drive that business away from the property by requiring that their whole building be located on the street edge, which may not be appropriate if the entire site was not redeveloping at once. If this requirement had such an effect, it would lead the property to have more vacancy, which could in turn lead to additional public safety issues, and a less activated pedestrian realm. This could also have the unintended effect of driving investment away from the City of Olympia.

2. **We would like to voice our strong support for, and encourage the building and façade improvement program that was recommended as ED-4 in the September 28, 2023 draft Olympia Capital Mall Triangle Subarea plan.** The City recommended looking at models in other cities in order to craft a program appropriate for Olympia. This could have the most meaningful near-term effect in beautifying the City. If cash-grants are deemed unlawful due to the "gift of public funds", an alternative option would be a credit against permitting and traffic impact fees, or even allowing owners to bank the credits toward future development costs otherwise payable to the City.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We are excited by the City's and community's vision ahead and thank you for your hard work on this important matter.

Warm regards,

Leshya Wig  
Wig Properties LLC-CV

Comments on the Draft Capital Mall Subarea Plan,  
dated March 7, 2024

Philip W. Schulte

April 1, 2024

I. Objectives and Actions For This Subarea Plan

The main purpose of this subarea plan was “help the Capital Mall Triangle achieve the high-density, walkable, mixed-use urban neighborhood”. Individual objectives are established for climate and equity (3), land use and development (4), housing (6), transportation (10), urban design and community livability (4) and climate and environment (6). Each of these 33 objectives are worthy of further discussion.

In addition, there are 78 individual actions proposed in Table 9-1 (see Pages 93-102) of this subarea plan. Commentary on all of these objectives and actions would take many pages and cannot be summarized in a three minute address. Therefore, I have submitted written comments to address only a few of the areas which need further review and consideration before this plan should be submitted to the city for final action.

II. Some Important Missing Pieces of the Puzzle

A. The Future for The Harrison Avenue Corridor

The draft subarea plan Recommendations ED-6 and T-5 (pages 52 and 73, respectively) includes the recommendation that the city “Work with businesses along the Harrison Avenue corridor to further develop the vision for the area, understand displacement risks, and connect businesses to resources for securing land and buildings.” There would also be a “Harrison Avenue corridor study to use Intercity Transit’s Prop 1 funds for high frequency bus service and signal prioritization, with the planning stage beginning in approximately 2026.”

The Harrison-4th Ave. corridor between Kenyon St. and Black Lake Blvd. is a key area for mixed use and mid-rise or high-rise residential development. Leaving it undefined is a major gap in the planning. If there is limited change in this area, it is difficult to see how adding 2,749 new housing units to the Capital Mall Triangle is even feasible at all.

B. The Future For The Intercity Transit Hub and Transportation Investments

1. Transit HUB and Bus Service

Increasing the density in the Kenyon St. area to the level indicated in the subarea plan requires a through transportation plan to accommodate additional businesses and housing units. Transportation Goal h (page 28) is “To move or upgrade the transit hub and provide a direct bus route to the mall transit hub”.

However, Transportation Recommendation No. T-6 (Transit Hub Location: page 73) indicates that Intercity Transit plans to focus on high frequency bus service in the subarea on Harrison Avenue. Given the growth planned for the Harrison-Fourth Avenue Corridor, Street upgrades, increased bus and other public transportation has to be a part of the solution and yet, the planning for installing higher frequency bus service and signal prioritization will not even start until 2026.

2. The Future of Black Lake Blvd.

Another of the three main Triangle arterials (Black Lake Blvd.) will be the subject of another study (Recommendation T-7, page 73) which has no target date. Finally, there will be a micro-mobility feasibility study at an undefined future date. So, the future transit hub and transportation network will be undefined until three additional studies are completed at some undefined time in the future. How will the additional thousands of average daily trips for the new residents and employees be addressed?

C. Re-development of Existing Low-rise Commercial Areas into A Dense, Compact Neighborhood

Plan Framework Concept No. 5 (page 30) provides that support for existing businesses will consist of “preventing residential and commercial displacement and support locals in surviving and thriving”. Yet, at the same time, the subarea plan calls for high rise housing, extensive street changes and transportation changes, connectivity measures, new public amenities, infrastructure etc. How is all of this change possible without extensive current land use conversions?

D. Neighborhood Character and Scale of New Housing Complexes

The existing built environment in the Triangle is one or two stories and the subarea plan proposes up to 130 foot tall housing structures. These buildings will tower over the existing landscape especially where they would be close to existing housing on Black Lake Blvd and Harrison Avenue. The existing HDC-4 height limits with first floor commercial and residential units are much more suitable.

III. A Major City Investment will be needed For the Plan to Be Implemented:

A. Strategic Land Purchases

Under Goal LU-16 (page 44), it is suggested that the city “purchase parcels for future public-serving uses like affordable housing, affordable retail, parks or parklets, or even stormwater retention”. Depending on the desired use, the City could also choose to undertake the development or transfer control of the land through a below market rate sale or lease.

Based on the County land tax assessments for three Harrison Avenue parcels, HDC-4 land is valued at an average of \$21.50 per square foot or \$940,000 per acre. Acquiring sufficient land for 2,739 new housing units at an average density of 75 units per acre would cost 36 million dollars. City property taxes and even in-lieu fees would be a small fraction of the cost of acquiring land.

B. Assistance to Existing Businesses and Individuals

Under Housing (page 33), there is an objective f to “prevent or minimize residential displacement in and around the subarea” and the plan lists grant and loan opportunities for low-income housing preservation. However, rent stabilization, weatherization and energy efficiency grants, downpayments for buyers and long-time residents are not defined and the cost of these measures has not been examined.



In the Economic Development Chapter, the subarea plan proposes to “mitigate commercial displacement through redevelopment”. There are also proposals for city building and façade improvement grants which are to have a strong displacement component, ground floor commercial financing assistance through city Community Development Block Grants or the formation of a Public Development Authority along with maximum store size mandates, and requiring that certain types of businesses have rental opportunities.

The city would also pay for marketing, signage, technical assistance, and/or grants or forgivable loans as reparations for revenue lost during construction projects (redevelopment or street/infrastructure projects). There would also be “commercial tenant protections through city actions such as tenant harassment protections, to give tenants the legal recourse. The costs and the impact of these constraints on the re-development of this subarea are not explored.

#### C. Transportation Projects

There are a total of 20 transportation projects listed in Table 7-1 (pages 75-77) consisting of multi-modal placemaking, cross walk improvements, bicycle facilities, a total of five or potentially more roundabouts and the US-101 West Olympia Access project. Most of the expensive roundabout projects on the three main arterial roads are projected for completion after 2045, long past the study period. Most of the new bicycle projects are projected for the Beyond 2045 period or have no projected completion date. The crosswalk improvements are the only transportation scheduled for the next twenty years.

The Kenyon Street-West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Mall Loop Drive investments which are key for this entire subarea plan are listed as beyond 2045 and placemaking on Capital Mall Drive has no projected completion date. Having most of the significant transportation improvements occurring after 2045 isn't acceptable for the transformation of this subarea into a mixed use, walkable community.

#### D. Catalyst Projects and Infrastructure

Table 9-2 (Page 108) shows that a total high cost estimate cost of 17 million dollars for a half acre public park with a spray foundation, 300 foot retrofit of Fourth Avenue and 300 linear feet of a new Half Street. However, these three projects do not cover the many utility improvements such as stormwater capacity enhancements to implement low impact development standards, utility enhancements, other public amenities etc.

#### IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

There are so many other issues such as parking, building facades, public amenities, changes in the development code, tree requirement etc. that also need some careful thought and reflection. However, it comes down to this: a subarea plan must not be merely exploratory but a cohesive framework for implementing change, having analyzed and considered all of the important factors, constraints and opportunities. This plan does not meet this test at present and additional refinements are needed before the subarea plan is completed.