



What is the Downtown Strategy?

At their retreat on 1/8/15, the City Council expressed a preference for the following purpose and fundamental concept for the Downtown Strategy:

Purpose for a Downtown Strategy:

A Downtown Strategy will help foster a rich diversity of downtown places and spaces that will attract and support the people who live, work and play in downtown Olympia, including 5,000 new downtown residents.

Fundamental Concept for 2015-2020:

Connecting and enhancing downtown places and spaces

We will connect and enhance downtown places & spaces by:

- Reducing uncertainty related to development (for the development community and public)
- Encouraging private investment (in terms of both new construction and rehabilitation)
- Enhancing public spaces to create a more active, pedestrian-friendly environment (streets, sidewalks, public art, landscaping)
- Continuing to ensure the environment and historic resources are protected and reinforced by future development

The Downtown Strategy will be the roadmap that defines what actions we will take to achieve our community vision for downtown as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan:

*People walk throughout downtown, shop at its small businesses, enjoy its artistic offerings and gather at its many fine restaurants and meeting places. The historic Capitol Way links the waterfront and downtown to the Capitol Campus invites and attracts residents to enjoy the City's civic space. Plazas, expanded sidewalks, and art in public places have **stimulated private investment** in residential development, which, in turn, has **greatly increased downtown's retail and commercial vitality**.*

Downtown will continue to be an attractive place to live, work and play. Future office, retail and residential development will bolster downtown's role as a regional center and home of state government, commerce, and industry.

Downtown will be:

- Home to **25% of the city's future residential growth**;
- The social, cultural and economic center of the region;
- An attractive and sustainable place to live, work and play;
- A mix of office, retail and residential uses;
- Full of public art, significant landscaping and public spaces;
- A pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment, and
- Protected from the effects of sea level rise.

The Downtown Strategy is a:

- Strategic action plan to implement our Comp Plan’s vision and goals for downtown
- Process that:
 - Involves stakeholders
 - brings people together to interact, learn, share, evaluate alternatives
 - Achieves some immediate milestone(s) during the planning stage (June 2015-16)
 - Establishes priority actions for the subsequent 5 years – realistic efforts that will have the greatest strategic impact toward achieving our vision
- A web-based ‘document’ that:
 - Guides/communicates what we are doing and why
 - Informs future decision making about capital facilities and other public investments
 - Includes text & visuals – illustrates future condition
 - Provides the basis for an attractive summary document that can be used as a marketing and communication tool
 - Is annually reviewed
 - Is updated approximately every 5 years

Stakeholders are anyone with an interest in downtown, including general public, business owners, downtown employees and residents, developers, elected officials, etc.

The Downtown Strategic Plan is NOT:

- A visioning process
- A master plan to determine how each and every parcel in downtown will develop
- A static document that sits on a shelf

How is the Downtown Strategy updated?

- During strategy development, existing conditions are reviewed and specific initiatives established for the next 5 years. Types of initiatives may include: code amendments, capital investments, programmatic changes (i.e., update parking strategy), etc.
- After adoption in 2016, the City Council can annually review and, if needed, amend initiatives, as part of the decision-making process for:
 - The Action Plan
 - The Capital Facilities Plan
 - Annual department, advisory board or Downtown Project work plans
- As the 5 year period comes to a close, the Downtown Strategy can be evaluated and more thoroughly updated, including:
 - Evaluating whether objectives were met
 - Updating existing and forecasted conditions
 - Establishing a new fundamental concept
 - Establishing new initiatives for the next 5 years