



Meeting Agenda

Land Use & Environment Committee

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360.753.8244

Thursday, March 16, 2017

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 4.A** [17-0221](#) Approval of February 16, 2017 Land Use and Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [Minutes](#)

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 5.A** [17-0261](#) Parking Strategy Update

- 5.B** [17-0230](#) Sign Code Update Briefing

Attachments: [January Meeting Comments](#)
[February Meeting Comments](#)

- 5.C** [17-0244](#) Urban Design Regulation Update

Attachments: [Goals and priorities](#)
[Proposed timeline](#)
[Draft charter for technical work group](#)
[Preliminary analysis & recommendations](#)
[Design Review Board Notes](#)
[Link to Downtown Strategy Design Chapter](#)
[Link to Downtown Strategy webpage](#)

6. REPORTS AND UPDATES

7. ADJOURNMENT

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City Hall
601 4th Avenue E.
Olympia, WA 98501
360-753-8244

Land Use & Environment Committee

Approval of February 16, 2017 Land Use and Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

Agenda Date: 3/16/2017
Agenda Item Number: 4.A
File Number: 17-0221

Type: minutes **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Approval of February 16, 2017 Land Use and Environment Committee Meeting Minutes



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Land Use & Environment Committee

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501
Information: 360.753.8244

Thursday, February 16, 2017

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hankins called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: 2 - Chair Julie Hankins and Committee member Clark Gilman

Excused: 1 - Committee member Nathaniel Jones

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager, Steve Hall

Community Planning and Development:

Director, Keith Stahley

Deputy Director, Leonard Bauer

Senior Planner, Joyce Phillips

Office Specialist/Minutes Recorder, Stacey Rodell

Public Works City Engineer, Fran Eide

Planning Commission Chair, Brian Mark

Puget Sound Energy Senior Municipal Liaison Manager, Amy Toulsey

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 4.A** [17-0115](#) Approval of January 19, 2017 Land Use and Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 5.A** [17-0018](#) Pavement Restoration Fee

Ms. Eide provided an overview of the proposed pavement restoration fee and implementation via a PowerPoint presentation. She reviewed the following:

- Goals
 - Improve collaboration with private utilities

- Plan projects to complete repairs prior to paving
- Improve the overall pavement rating
 - Minimize pavement cuts in new pavement
- Collect funds to repair streets
 - Collection is minimal when collaboration is effective
- Background
 - Pavement Restoration Committee established and met in April, July, August, September and November of 2016
 - Committee was made up of private utility representatives and City staff
 - Developed updated fee structure and amount
 - Met to discuss upcoming Capital Projects
- Proposed Pavement Restoration Fee
 - Year 1:(new) 5X base fee (\$125.00 /sq. ft. or portion thereof);
 - Year 2: 4X base fee (\$100.00/ sq. ft. or portion thereof);
 - Year 3: 3X base fee (\$75.00/sq. ft. or portion thereof);
 - Year 4: 2X base fee (\$50.00/ sq. ft. or portion thereof);
 - Year 5: 1X base fee (\$25.00/sq. ft. or portion thereof).
 - Increase Base Fee to \$25/SF
 - Amend OMC, Chapter 4.04, Engineering Fees
 - Amend OMC Chapter 12.270, Excavations Through Pavement
- Proposed next steps upon approval by City Council
 - Update Olympia Municipal Code
 - Establish fees and associated process
 - Engage with utilities to develop a plan to move forward
 - Implement New Process
 - Permit Process
 - Schedule annual meetings with private utilities and LOTT
 - Periodic review of base fee and update base rate per City cost

The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend approval of the proposed pavement restoration fee and forward it on to City Council for consideration.

5.B [17-0104](#) Review Planning Commission Work Plan

Planning Commission Chair Mark and Ms. Phillips reviewed the proposed 2017 Planning Commission work plan. The Committee approved of the proposed work plan.

The discussion was completed.

5.C [17-0151](#) ‘Missing Middle’ Infill Housing Analysis - Public Involvement Plan

Mr. Bauer reviewed the draft schedule for public involvement and outreach for the ‘Missing Middle’ Infill Housing Analysis. The draft schedule includes a work group to provide in-depth discussion and feedback throughout the project. Mr. Bauer reviewed the draft Charter for the work group.

Chair Hankins suggested meetings be held with neighborhoods both on the west and

east areas of Olympia. Mr. Bauer and Mr. Stahley indicated they will look into implementing this suggestion.

The information was received.

6. REPORTS AND UPDATES

Mr. Stahley reported the next Land Use and Environment Committee meeting will be on March 16, 2017. The following items will be on the agenda:

- Parking strategy status update
- Sign code status update
- Urban design regulation updates

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.



Land Use & Environment Committee

Parking Strategy Update

Agenda Date: 3/16/2017
Agenda Item Number: 5.A
File Number: 17-0261

Type: report **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Parking Strategy Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive the update. Briefing only; No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a status update on the Parking Strategy project.

Staff Contact:

Karen Kenneson, Associate Line of Business Director, Community Planning and Development, 360.753.8277.

Presenter:

Karen Kenneson, Associate Line of Business Director

Background and Analysis:

The City with its consultant, Berk Consulting, has begun work on the Parking Strategy project. Staff will give an oral report on the status of the project, including updates on:

- Public outreach
- Advisory committee meetings
- Stakeholder interviews
- Data collection
- Next steps

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

This project continues to have a large amount of community interest and the public will have more opportunities to give feedback as the project progresses.

Type: report **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Options:

N/A

Financial Impact:

None at this time.

Attachments:

None.



Land Use & Environment Committee

Sign Code Update Briefing

Agenda Date: 3/16/2017
Agenda Item Number: 5.B
File Number: 17-0230

Type: discussion **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Sign Code Update Briefing

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive the briefing and discuss the sign code update. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to discuss the sign code update, including progress to date and projected timeline to complete the draft sign code.

Staff Contact:

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development, 360.570.3722

Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

Since meeting with the Land Use and Environment Committee in September 2016 and January 2017, progress on the sign code update has been steady. The sign code is being updated primarily in order to address issues identified in the US Supreme Court case of Reed, et al. v. Town of Gilbert, AZ, but also in order to streamline the code to make it easier to read, understand, and administer.

The City entered into a contract, after going through a Request for Proposals process, for legal and graphic consulting services to help meet the timeframe of the code update. Ogden Murphy Wallace PLLC, with BERK Consulting, was the successful team for the work. A Policy Advisory Committee has been created, made up of community members, businesses, and the sign industry, to provide input on sign issues and policy direction. The Advisory Committee had its first meeting in November and met again in January and February. At the first meeting the group discussed high-level sign issues, careful not to get weighed down in too much detail early in the process. We asked members to consider broad policy questions and followed up with a homework assignment after the meeting.

The January meeting focused on temporary sign issues. In February we focused the discussion on building mounted sign types, such as wall, awning, marquee, projecting, and window signs. The comments and responses are being used to help inform the development of a draft code. We intend to work our way down into more detail as the analysis continues. Staff is also considering sign codes of adjacent jurisdictions, those from similar cities, and looking at model signs codes to help develop code language. Committee members are engaged and providing useful comments. Summaries of the committee comments on the topics discussed at the January and February meetings are attached.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Some community members have asked to be kept informed of the sign code progress and a few have provided comments for consideration. Issues to date have focused on temporary signs, unique circumstances, fairness, and reducing sign clutter through better enforcement of noncompliant signs.

Options:

Discussion only.

Financial Impact:

None. This work is included in the Community, Planning and Development work plan and base budget for 2017.

Attachments:

January meeting comments
February meeting comments

Temporary Signs Discussion

Sandwich Board (A-frame) Signs

- Consider multi-tenant buildings that only have one main exterior door (like at Olympia Downtown Association offices, Rosser Chiropractic)

Temporary Sign Comments

- May want to reduce the amount of time they are allowed
- The banner over 4th Ave is always booked, hard to use. May want to consider having 2-3 more locations.
- Banners are often a new businesses first sign, for use until a permanent sign can be installed.
- For window signs, what is considered temporary?
- Are the wall sign size limitations so restrictive that they encourage more use of banners and other temporary signs? Is this especially true for businesses with a small/narrow business front?
- The sign code should promote the use of permanent signs.

Feather Signs (if allowed)

- Consider issues such as:
 - Distance from street
 - Distance between signs
 - Distance from driveways
 - Readability of message, condition of sign (faded, torn, shape, etc.)
 - Perhaps limit to a shorted amount of time (grand openings, sales or special events)
 - There should be a maximum size and height
 - They may make sense for some uses, like food trucks, regardless of their location (such as in the downtown)
 - Perhaps don't allow feather signs in the downtown where buildings are typically built up to or closer to the sidewalk (what about for buildings that are not close to the sidewalk)
 - There may be private commercial restrictions
 - Want to support small businesses (who may struggle to afford more permanent signage, especially in the beginning)





January PAC Mtg – Discussion Summary

Standards by Zoning District

- The city may consider treating different zoning districts differently (e.g. residential districts as compared to commercial or industrial zoning districts).
- The city may treat certain districts within those classifications differently (e.g. downtown, auto services, urban and neighborhood villages)

Homework

Staff will follow up with homework questions about temporary signs regarding use of them, potential standards, and potential placement standards.





February PAC Mtg – Discussion Summary

Building Mounted Signs Discussion

Size Calculation

- The ratio currently used to determine allowed sizes is good
- Would like to compare examples of current to 3% and 5% from the model code

Building Mounted Sign Comments

- Some signs are geared toward pedestrians (e.g. window painted signs) while others are geared to those in cars (e.g. wall signs)
- We still want to encourage art on buildings
- Limit of 1 building mounted sign is pretty restrictive
- May want different standards for downtown and pedestrian oriented streets
- Don't cover up all of the windows - still want to be able to see through
- Allow signs on both streets when more than one street frontage
- Sign clutter is a concern
- Public entrances from alleys should be allowed to have signs (more than a building entrance sign)
- Similar districts should be treated similarly (e.g. the hotel that only has a 24 square foot sign should be allowed a larger sign like the other new hotel in a different zone)
- Designated "corridors" may be treated differently
- Placement should consider building/architectural details
- Perhaps sign standards should transition when adjacent to neighborhoods (e.g. on State and 4th Avenues)
- Consider the scale (where the sign will be viewed from)
- There should be fairness to adjacent businesses about what signage is allowed
- What about businesses on second and third floors, etc.?
- Consider colors (intensity, saturation, etc.)

Standards by Zoning District

- The city may consider treating different zoning districts differently (e.g. residential districts as compared to commercial or industrial zoning districts)
- The city may treat certain districts within those classifications differently (e.g. downtown, auto services, urban and neighborhood villages)

Homework

Staff will follow up with homework questions about building mounted signs





Land Use & Environment Committee

Urban Design Regulation Update

Agenda Date: 3/16/2017
Agenda Item Number: 5.C
File Number: 17-0244

Type: decision **Version:** 1 **Status:** In Committee

Title

Urban Design Regulation Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to direct staff to proceed with the proposed timeline, technical work group and preliminary scope of work for updating Downtown design guidelines.

Report

Issue:

Whether to proceed with the proposed timeline, technical work group and preliminary scope of work for updating Downtown design guidelines. Updating the design guidelines is a recommended action in the draft Downtown Strategy. While this action has been anticipated and appears to have public support, staff requests direction to proceed from the Committee since the Downtown Strategy has not yet been adopted by the Council.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Senior Planner, Community Planning & Development, (360) 570-5847

Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Senior Planner

Background and Analysis:

One of the first recommended actions to implement the Downtown Strategy (DTS) is an update to the Downtown design guidelines. The design guidelines will be influenced by the Comprehensive Plan and priorities identified in the Downtown Strategy (**See attachment**). The guidelines influence site design, building orientation, massing, architecture and other building details, as well as historic preservation and view protection.

The city has retained MAKERS consultants to assist in this effort. Over an eight-month period, the consultant will prepare updated guidelines with help from a technical work group (citizen volunteers) and with input from staff, public and advisory boards. Then the Planning Commission will hold a

public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council regarding adoption.

Based on public feedback - including a recent Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) public hearing on the draft Downtown Strategy, and discussion with the Design Review Board - there appears to be public support and momentum for proceeding with a process to update the design guidelines. At OPC's hearing, some members of the public raised concerns related to the Strategy's recommendations about views which may inform the design guidelines related to view protection. Staff believes these concerns can be addressed as the draft Downtown Strategy proceeds through the final stages without the need to delay the kickoff to updating design guidelines. Whatever decisions regarding views are made in the final Downtown Strategy can be incorporated into the design guideline process at that time.

Proposed Timeline

The proposed timeline for the design guideline update is **attached** and includes the following steps in 2017:

- Direction from the Land Use & Environment Committee (March 16)
- Convene a technical work group
- Two public events (Open House tentatively scheduled for April 12; Fall)
- Briefings for the Design Review Board and the Heritage Commission
- Planning Commission briefings, public hearing and recommendation
- City Council adoption

Proposed Technical Work Group

The proposal is for the update to be guided by a technical work group. A draft charter for this group is **attached**.

Preliminary Scope of Work

As part of the Downtown Strategy, the City asked MAKERS to prepare an analysis of existing guidelines and preliminary recommendations for the update (**See Attachment**). The analysis concluded that while the City's current Downtown design guidelines are fairly good, some changes are recommended for consistency with the Downtown Strategy and to help improve outcomes. In summary:

- Organize Downtown guidelines into one section so that applicants can access all relevant guidelines in one place
- Make sure guidelines are focused and clear; not onerous. They should be flexible enough to allow for departures when this would result in something that better meets the intent.
- Avoid vague language. Discuss and update the existing use and definitions of "shall" and "should" to help better meet objectives
- Reinforce unique character areas. While basic standards should apply throughout Downtown, some variation should be applied.

- Craft new mixed use guidelines
- Improve historic guidelines, incorporating Secretary of the Interior standards that apply to alterations of existing historic structures
- Update requirements for nonresidential storefronts, considering essential locations where these should be required and design to promote active streetscapes
- Incorporate more Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures
- Consider doing away with, or simplifying, ratios as these are difficult to apply on smaller sites (as currently in Pedestrian Street Overlay)
- Update view protection guidelines and include moderate measures to protect and enhance views recommended in the Downtown Strategy.
- Various updates to address site planning and design, pedestrian access, amenities, open space, and building design
- Illustrate with photos, sketches, and diagrams, showing a variety of ways to meet the standards. Where used as good examples, make sure they are exemplary development examples consistent with the desired character for Downtown. Make sure the graphics are internally consistent.

The scope of this update does **not** include:

- Streetscape design, which will be covered in a subsequent update to the Engineering Development and Design Standards (EDDS)
- Park improvements, which are guided by a separate Parks, Arts & Recreation Plan
- Sign design, which will be included as part of the 2017 sign code update
- Changes to the review *process*, such as to the joint DRB/OHC process; however it may examine whether that is necessary and what it would take resource-wise to make a recommended change.

The Design Review Board reviewed the preliminary analysis and scope on Feb 9, 2017. See a summary of their comments in **attachment 5**. Staff will brief the Planning Commission on March 6 and the Heritage Commission on March 22.

Downtown Strategy Recommendation on Views

A summary of the views analysis process, and the recommendation and rationale regarding view protection, is included in the Design chapter of the Downtown Strategy draft (**pages 50-61 of the document linked in the attachment.**) The Strategy recommends moderate actions, including design guidelines, to protect and enhance three views, from:

1. West Bay Park to Mt. Rainer
2. Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier

3. East Bay Overlook to the Capitol Dome

Public comments received during the Planning Commission's public hearing that relate to views include: the validity of surveys related to views, the scope of the defined view of Budd Inlet from the Capitol Campus Promontory; urging further analysis of views along East Bay Drive, Percival Landing and the Waterfront Route; how the Capitol Dome is defined; and building setbacks and setbacks along the water. Decisions related to some of these issues could affect decisions about view protection measures that are part of the design guideline update. As stated earlier, staff believes those issues can be worked out as the Downtown Strategy proceeds through the final stages without a need to delay the kickoff to updating the design guidelines. There seems to be public support and momentum to proceed based on the preliminary scope of work; and whatever decisions are made regarding views in the final Downtown Strategy can be incorporated into the design guideline process at that time.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

An estimated 3,500 people engaged in formation of the Downtown Strategy through workshops and online, including input about overall urban design preferences for Downtown. The DTS summary is available online (**See Attachment**).

Options:

1. Move to direct staff to proceed with the proposed timeline, technical work group and preliminary scope of work for updating Downtown design guidelines.
2. Move to direct staff to delay starting the process to update the Downtown design guidelines, pending adoption of the Downtown Strategy.

Financial Impact:

Included as part of the \$50,000 budget for updating Downtown design guidelines

Attachments:

- 1 - Goals and priorities
- 2 - Proposed timeline
- 3 - Draft charter for technical work group
- 4 - Preliminary analysis & recommendations
- 5 - DRB notes
- 6 - Link to DTS Design chapter
- 7 - Link to DTS webpage

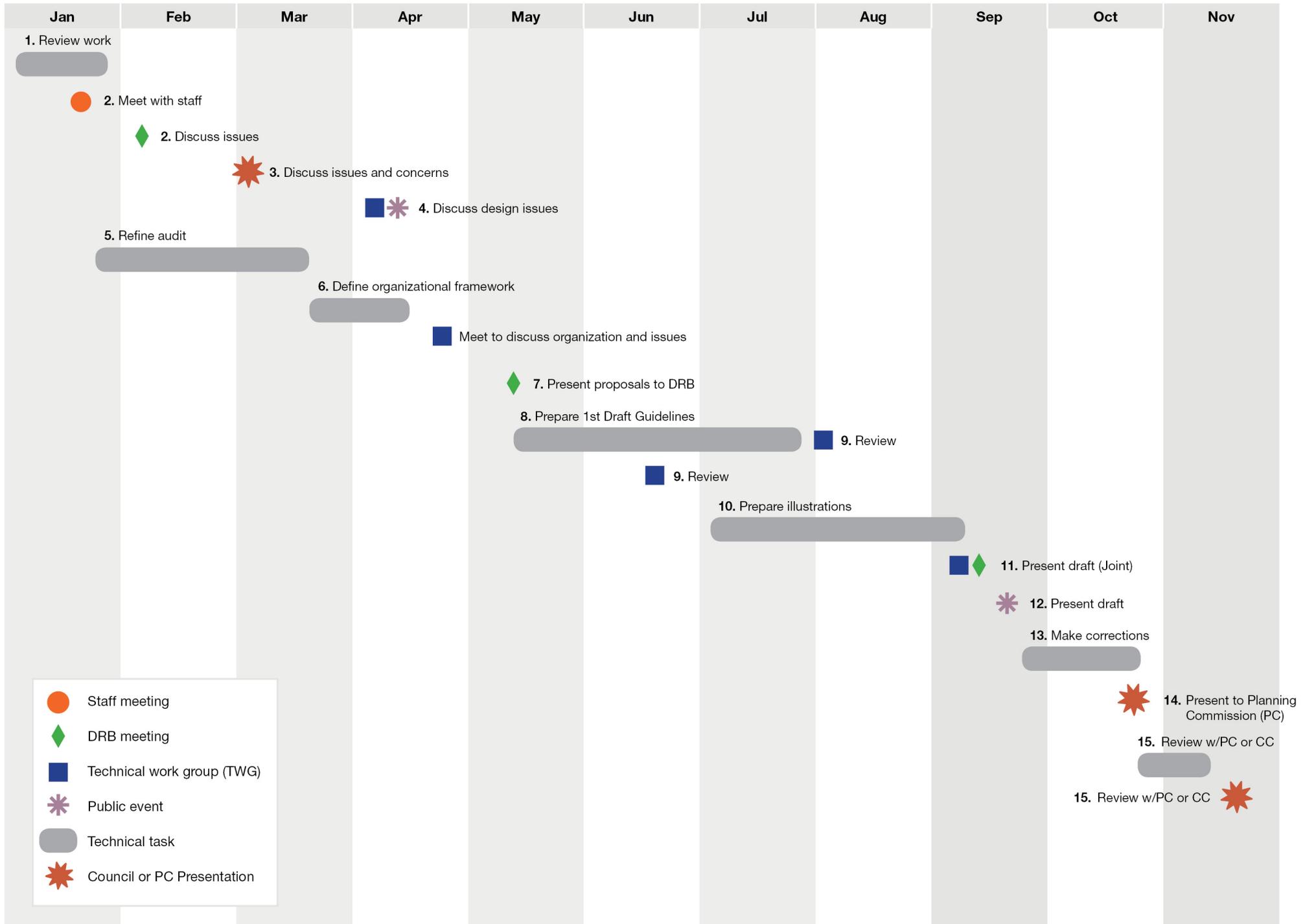
Comprehensive Plan Goals related to Downtown design:

- GL12:** Commercial areas are attractive, functional and appealing.
- GL18:** Downtown designs express Olympia's heritage and future in a compact and pedestrian-oriented manner.
- GL9:** Built and natural environmental designs discourage criminal behavior.
- GT16:** Streets are public space, where people want to be.
- GL6:** Community beauty is combined with unique neighborhood identities.
- LU3:** Historic resources are a key element in the overall design and establishment of a sense of place in Olympia.
- LU19:** Downtown's historic character and significant historic buildings, structures, and sites are preserved and enhanced.
- GE.8** Historic resources are used to promote economic stability in the City.
- GN1:** Natural resources and processes are conserved and protected by Olympia's planning, regulatory, and management activities.
- GL2:** Buildings, commercial and industrial processes, and site designs use energy efficiently.
- GL8:** Community views are protected, preserved, and enhanced.

Based on above, the following design priorities were identified during the Downtown Strategy planning and public engagement process:

- Apply a cohesive urban design strategy, considering how places and spaces between buildings and structures function for people as well as attract investment.
- Connect "places and spaces" with an integrated public realm network.
- Enhance Downtown's unique character to create a stronger design identity based on its historic fabric, waterfront setting, variety of human activities, and natural environment.
- Increase the variety and visual interest of Downtown, while emphasizing the unique qualities of its different "character areas"
- Ensure new buildings, private properties, and the public realm Downtown are high quality.
- Make sure that new development integrates within the existing context, making the area more attractive, while not overwhelming or diminishing the historic character.
- Reinforce the importance and appeal of civic assets, including City Hall, Children's Museum, East Bay Plaza, LOTT WET Center, Transit Center, Port Plaza, Heritage Park and Fountain, The Olympia Center, and The Washington Center for Performing Arts.
- Retain signature views of the Capitol dome, water, and mountains.
- Promote an attractive, pedestrian-oriented environment.

Olympia Downtown Guidelines Work Schedule - 2.08.2017



-  Staff meeting
-  DRB meeting
-  Technical work group (TWG)
-  Public event
-  Technical task
-  Council or PC Presentation

CHARTER - DRAFT

Technical Work Group (TWG) for Downtown Design Guideline Update

February 2017

PURPOSE

Make recommendations to staff and consultants for preparing a new set of Downtown design guidelines that integrate and address topics necessary to implement the Downtown Strategy and Comprehensive Plan. The group's perspectives and ideas will add to project objectives, evaluation of existing and proposed guidelines and the City's understanding of how design requirements impact project outcomes and costs.

The design guideline update will include measures that influence site design, building orientation, massing, architecture and other details, as well as historic preservation and view protection. A scope summary is on the last page.

ROLES/TASKS

- Help develop and review updates to Downtown design guidelines
- Receive, discuss and respond to information and analysis shared before and during meetings with thoughtful insights, perspectives and ideas
- Review comments and information provided during the public process
- Bring an experienced perspective and participate in a constructive manner in the discussion of viable alternatives, creative solutions and potential trade-offs
- Work group members are encouraged to attend and participate in other public meetings during the process
- No formal decision-making role. Input from the work group will be included into specific recommendations to City advisory commissions, and then to City Council.

MEMBERSHIP

The following is a list of desired characteristics for work group members:

- Experience in the fields of real estate development, construction, architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation or similar field – and/or-experience in local community affairs. (These criteria are desirable to balance the TWG but not required.)
- An interest in Downtown's design quality and livability.
- Good communication skills and ability to listen to and work well with others
- Ability to bring new views and information to other work group members
- Reliable attendance

Members will be sought who can represent or have knowledge of the following perspectives:

- 1-2 Design Review Board members
- 1-2 Heritage Commission members
- Parks and Recreation Committee member
- Developer/financer/commercial broker(s)
- Architect(s)
- Resident (southeast Downtown neighborhood interest preferred)
- Citizen at large
- City plan review staff

The work group will also include 1-2 members of the Olympia Design Review Board and 1-2 members from the Olympia Heritage Commission. Two of these three members will serve as chair and vice-chair to facilitate meetings and work with staff to create meeting schedules and agendas.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The Group will meet generally once per month for approximately seven months. If needed, the Chairs may assign 'homework' of members between meetings in order to achieve the roles/tasks of the group.

DOCUMENTATION

An Administrative Assistant from City staff will take meeting notes and provide them to all members. The notes will be primarily for the TWG and planning team's use as a way to capture comments and allow the TWG to refer back to previous discussions.

COMMUNICATION

Staff and work group members will communicate between meetings as needed by e-mail. A list of members and their e-mail addresses will be shared at the first meeting.

STAFF & CONSULTANT SUPPORT

Amy Buckler, Senior Planner, Community Planning & Development
John Owen, MAKERS architecture and urban design

Staff has overall responsibility for outlining the purpose of the Work Group and providing guidance. This includes reviewing the group's feedback to inform potential staff recommendations to City advisory commissions and City Council.

Scope Summary

A preliminary scope for the update includes:

- Organize into one section so that applicants can access relevant guidelines in one place
- Allow for flexibility, but be focused and clear; not onerous
- Discuss and update the existing use and definitions of “shall” and “should” to help better meet objectives
- Reinforce unique character areas. While basic standards should apply throughout Downtown, some variation should be applied to enhance character areas.
- Various updates to address site planning and design, pedestrian access, amenities, open space, and building design
- Craft new mixed use guidelines
- Improve historic guidelines, including incorporate Secretary of the Interior standards that apply to alterations of existing historic structures
- Update requirements for nonresidential storefronts, considering essential locations where these should be required and design to promote active streetscapes
- Consider doing away with, or simplifying ratios (as currently in Pedestrian Street Overlay) as these are difficult to apply on smaller sites
- Incorporate more Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (C-TED) measures
- Update view protection guidelines with moderate measures to protect and enhance three important views, from: West Bay Park to Mt. Rainer, Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier, and East Bay Overlook to the Capitol Dome
- Illustrate with photos, sketches, and diagrams, as necessary to visually explain the provisions and provide a variety of ways to meet the standards. Where used as good examples, make sure they are exemplary development examples consistent with the desired character for Downtown. Make sure the graphics are internally consistent.

More detail is provided in the document **Analysis and Recommendations for Upgrading Downtown Olympia’s Design Guidelines and Historic Preservation Program**

The scope does not include streetscape design measures, which will be covered in a subsequent update to the Engineering Development and Design Standards (EDDS); nor does it include park improvements which are guided by a separate Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan. This update will not result in changes to the design review process, such as to the joint DRB/OHC process; however this process may further examine whether that is necessary and what it would take resource-wise to make a recommended change.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UPGRADING DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA'S DESIGN GUIDELINES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Draft for review: January 23, 2017

This paper examines the current design guideline sections applicable to Olympia's Downtown and includes preliminary recommendations for preparing a new set of guidelines that integrates and addresses the topics necessary to implement the Downtown Strategy and Comprehensive Plan. This analysis assumes no substantial procedural changes will be considered at this time.

ORGANIZATION

Current Form

There are 7 separate sets of design requirements that apply to various parts of Downtown. The specific design guideline sections are:

- **Chapter 18.105 Historic Structures and Buildings within the Historic Districts.** This Chapter applies to structures listed on the Olympia Heritage Register, Washington Heritage Register, and the National Register of Historic Places, and all structures within a Historic District.
- **Chapter 18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria.** This chapter applies to all commercial projects throughout the City that require design review, in addition to the district specific requirements found in the following chapters, as applicable. It also applies to projects with a building area greater than 5,000 square feet in gross floor area that require a Conditional Use Permit in a residential zone, to commercial projects adjacent to residential buildings, to commercial or residential projects. The design districts are shown on the Official Design Review Districts and Corridors.
- **Chapter 18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown District.** This chapter applies to all commercial projects that require design review that are located in the Downtown Design Review District. In addition, commercial projects in the Downtown Design District may also be subject to the requirements of Chapter 18.16, Pedestrian Streets.
- **Chapter 18.170 Residential Design Criteria Multifamily.** Design criteria contained in this chapter (Sections 18.170.030 18.170.160) apply to all multifamily residential buildings with five or more units and any multifamily development with twenty (20) units or more throughout the city. Projects of this type and size are reviewed by the Design Review Board.
- **Chapter 18.175 Residential Design Criteria Infill and other residential.** Sections 18.175.020 through 18.175.060 of this chapter apply to single family dwellings, including designated manufactured housing, proposed on lots within the area depicted on Figure 42a, on lots less than 5000 square feet, or on substandard lots, duplexes, triplexes, four-plexes, and townhouse buildings of four (4) units or

less throughout the city. Sections 18.175.080 and 18.175.090 apply to accessory dwelling units throughout the city. Section 18.175.100 applies to cottage development.

- **Chapter 18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** which includes specific site planning and architectural design requirements for properties fronting on “Pedestrian Streets” shown on Figure 16-1.
- **Chapter 18.150 Port Peninsula** contains guidelines that apply to the Port of Olympia’s Urban Waterfront zoned properties on the Port Peninsula and are the only City guidelines which apply to the Port Peninsula.

Observations

There is no one best way to organize development requirements in a municipal code. Different cities organize design standards or guidelines according to district, use, both district and use –or they lump them all together into a single document. Generally speaking, however, it appears that it is easier for both the applicant and the reviewers to have a single document they can refer to without flipping back and forth between code chapters. Reducing the number of applicable code chapters also reduces the possibility of inconsistencies or conflicts between different provisions.

Experience indicates that the bulk of design objectives and provisions are similar for residential and commercial buildings, so that separating these building types and uses into different design guideline sections is not always necessary. Additionally, many new buildings in the Downtown will be mixed use developments that include both commercial and institutional building elements. Public buildings, single family residences and industrial developments do have some specific conditions that may make it useful to have separate guideline sections or chapters to address those uses.

On the Historic District Guidelines

Conversations with the Heritage Commission (HC) and the general public indicate the need for more specific design guidelines for the Historic District to retain its historic character. Specific design recommendations are included later in this document; however a change to organization should also be considered. While the Commission must use the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) standards for alterations to existing structures (as noted in OMC 18.12), these are not part of the guidelines used by the Design Review Board. Thus, when the Joint OHC/DRB Committee meets to review projects in the district there is often a disconnect. Including the SOI guidelines within the Downtown guidelines would help ensure that the Design Review Board (DRB) members of the Joint Review Committee are familiar with them.

Order of Guideline Topics

In addition to the approaches described above, it is useful to organize design guidelines to model the design process. For example, project designers will usually start with a site plan, identifying the large features, such as buildings (including footprint dimensions), parking, pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Next they will make sure the internal and external functions, building massing, setbacks, buffers and other required site features can be accommodated. Third, they consider the building’s architectural concept, its overall form, and building elements. Finally, they will design the façade treatments, materials, colors, lighting and signage.

This suggests that design guidelines be organized in something like the following:

1. Site Planning
 - Relation to site, adjacencies, topography, natural conditions, etc.
 - Relation to street fronts.
 - Location and size of parking, entries, service areas, and other site features.
 - Pedestrian and Vehicular circulation
 - Other site planning concerns
2. Site Elements and Landscaping
 - Design of parking areas
 - Design of pathways and circulation facilities
 - Site landscaping
 - Site lighting
 - Site signage (if not covered in sign code)
 - The design of other site features
3. Building Design
 - Building form and architectural character (This section could address the different characteristics of the Historic District and individual “Character Areas”).
 - Design relationship to historic or neighborhood qualities
 - Design measures to achieve desired architectural and human scale
 - Design of building elements and details
 - Materials
 - Colors (if applicable)
 - Building signs (If not covered elsewhere)
 - Building lighting

Recommendations

- Downtown is a unique place in the city, thus it would appear most useful for Downtown to have its own set of design guidelines that cover the basic requirements, including those for most building types and pedestrian streets.
- Ideally, applicants should be able to access all of the relevant design guidelines in a single document and not need to refer to additional guideline sections. Therefore, consider reducing the number of different guidelines by integrating the different provisions into a single design review instrument. However, needing to page through pages of material that may not be relevant to the project, is also not ideal. So, it may be appropriate to have specific guidelines for industrial uses or single family residences, for example. Or it may be useful to have separate special historic district requirements. However, if a multiple sets of guidelines is preferred each set of guidelines should stand alone in terms of use by the applicant and reviewing body. This organizational question can be best addressed when the guidelines’ contents are outlined and it can be determined how much difference there is between provisions for different character areas, uses and historic qualities.
- Address character area-specific provisions in the location and size of parking, entries, service areas, and other site features; pedestrian and vehicular circulation; architectural character and site landscaping sections of the guidelines
- In the introduction have a statement on how to use the guidelines and a checklist. Also consider a diagram, such as an axonometric with call-outs to identify what section of the guidelines covers

what parts of the development. Linked table of contents are also a useful tool to help with navigating the document.

- The guidelines should make it clear how mixed use buildings are addressed.
- Include design guideline specific definitions
- Organize the guidelines so that they model the design process

A NEED TO INCORPORATE CHARACTER AREAS

Current Form

Except for the Historic Core and the Pedestrian Street Overlay District, the design guidelines do not address the distinctive qualities of the different character areas.

Observations

The Olympia Downtown Strategy Framework describes “character areas” each with its own use orientation (although most character areas allow a wide variety of uses, each area will favor some uses over others) and streetscape and architectural character. The design guidelines can and should implement the intent of the character areas by including some area specific provisions in the location and size of parking, entries, service areas, and other site features; pedestrian and vehicular circulation; architectural character; and site landscaping sections of the guidelines. Another option would be to establish different design districts within the Downtown, each with its own special provisions, but this may get a bit cumbersome.

Recommendations

- Address character area-specific provisions in the location and size of parking, entries, service areas, and other site features; pedestrian and vehicular circulation; architectural character and site landscaping sections of the guidelines

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CODE SECTIONS

Current Conditions

- **Section 18.04.080** includes dimensional development standards for lot size, setbacks, building height, building coverage, and other requirements for buildings **in residential zones**.
- **Section 18.06.080 and 100** include dimensional development standards for lot size, setbacks, building height, building coverage, and other requirements for buildings in the DB, UW, UW-H, GC and other **commercial zones** in Downtown. Many of the development standards such as those for building front facades could be better located in the design guidelines.
- **Chapter 18.12** describes the process and additional criteria for reviewing alterations or construction for properties within the Historic District or on the Heritage Register
- **Chapter 18.36** includes extensive provisions for site landscaping.

- **Chapter 18.38** includes provisions for parking. Residential land uses and commercial land uses up to 3,000 sq. within most of the Downtown are exempt from all parking requirements; however, if parking facilities are provided they must meet required parking ratios and design standards.
- **Chapter 18.42** includes extensive provisions for signs.
- **18.34** includes public access requirements from the Shoreline Master Program
- **Chapter 18.100** provides the foundation for other chapters that contain the guidelines.

Observations

Olympia has substantial code standards for the topics identified above. The design guidelines must integrate with these other dimensional and physical code standards.

Recommendations

- During development of design guidelines, make sure that these other code provisions are referenced and check for conflicts.
- It may be useful to add design guidelines that also address topics such as landscaping, or provide some flexibility to dimensional code standards. These should be carefully checked.
- Many of the development standards in 18.06, such as those for non-residential front facades could be better located in the design guidelines.
- Consider unique standards for Downtown as part of the 2017 citywide sign code update

FORMAT, LANGUAGE AND GRAPHICS

Current conditions

The current language and specificity of the different guideline sections vary from very “loose” and unspecific to relatively prescriptive (especially in Chapter 18.16). The terms “should” and “shall” are not defined and so can cause some uncertainty. The graphics for the residential sections are primarily lower density housing than is expected in Downtown.

City planners note the required ratios in 18.12 may be full block developments, but are challenging for infill.

Observations

Photographs are becoming increasingly more prevalent in the newer sets of guidelines, particularly since they are so easy to incorporate on-line and in full color. The better documents employ contemporary development examples and include text notations to point out applicable design features. Diagrammatic illustrations and charts are prominent in the better sets of design guidelines as well. Useful diagrams point out acceptable and unacceptable examples and employ graphic techniques that focus on the key issues at hand.

Recommendations

- Emerging design review practice is to prepare guidelines that establish a minimum predictable standard but allows options for fulfilling that standard and/or opportunities to satisfy the guidelines’ objectives. The current guidelines’ format is to state a general “requirement” and

amplify it with more specific “guidelines” A more useful format may be to include in each guideline:

- An intent statement that clearly identifies the guideline’s objective
 - A requirement that clearly states a minimum level of performance that can be objectively evaluated. In some cases this may be a numerical standard.
 - Provisions that allow for alternate solutions that achieve the guideline’s intent. Determine if this provision applies generally to all standards or if alternative solutions are allowed only where specifically indicated.
- Examples that help explain the intent and types of alternative measures may be appropriate. This format allows both the specificity for staff review, plus the option for more flexibility if the applicant can show that the intent is met and has proven useful in other instances.
 - Discuss and update the existing use and definitions of “shall” and “should” to help better meet objectives.
 - Illustrate the document with photos, sketches, and diagrams, as necessary to visually explain the provisions and provide examples. Where used as good examples, make sure they are exemplary development examples consistent with the desired character for Downtown. Make sure the graphics are internally consistent. Use photos or graphics to show a variety of ways to meet the standards. This can be particularly important when examining issues such as façade articulation where there should be a number of ways that the requirements can be met.
 - Consider doing away with, or simplifying ratios (as currently required in 18.12).

INDIVIDUAL DESIGN TOPICS

A. Site Planning

(A-1) Relationship to street front

Current Standards

- **18.110.020** requires 50% of street front occupied by building.
- **18.120.020** adds requirement to align buildings according to existing pattern, which requires some judgment and is not clear about the purpose.
- **18.130** Visual context of streetscape addresses architectural and site design continuity along a street, but it is unclear when continuity is more important than variety and to what extent similar design elements and materials are required.
- **Chapter 18.16** has much more specific requirements for pedestrian oriented streets noted in Downtown. Pedestrian oriented streets are classified into “A” and “B” streets. Provisions include both site planning and architectural design requirements.

Observations

The four sections noted above do not align very well. Nor do they have the flexibility to set back buildings for landscaping, outdoor cafes, etc. While it is in some ways convenient to have a special section for pedestrian oriented streets, it does make it a bit harder for the applicant to go back and forth between the sections.

Chapter 18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District is quite detailed and also addresses building front design, which is good. There will be a question of whether storefront transparency, etc. should be in the site planning or architecture section, or if there is a whole different section for street fronts that combines the two. There is no straight forward answer to this. It does not appear this section limits parking lots adjacent to pedestrian oriented streets. Section 18.120.040 says to “maintain the visual continuity of the street” and “minimize the width of parking lots located adjacent to the street”, so parking lots are allowed in front of buildings. .

To activate the core retail area, a mix of requirements in 18.120 and 18.16 require certain streets to provide non-residential storefronts (or more accurately the look of a storefront). The required streets should be reviewed to make sure these are the most important streets for pedestrian activity. that the location can support pedestrian oriented retail, and that there will be vehicular access to the site. Also, this requirement needs to be more clearly laid out as the current organization with multiple cross-references makes this guideline confusing.

Recommendations

- Integrate the requirements of Chapter 18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District to substantially strengthen current requirements while adding the flexibility to vary setbacks for positive reasons such as street amenities, outdoor activities, etc.
- Review Chapter 18.16 carefully as it may be better to treat some sub-sections in a different organization. The current pedestrian overlay section is pretty complete but should be reviewed – especially for location of parking lots adjacent to the sidewalk. These provisions could be located in the Site Planning section as a sub-section titled “Relation to Street Fronts”.
- Ensure that the frontage requirements fit with the building façade sections
- Review and update the map of pedestrian oriented streets in 18.16.040 Identify streetfront in the Downtown where building adjacency, pedestrian oriented uses and pedestrian oriented facades are required. These conditions should be mapped. Also, the maps should indicate special corners where special architectural or building features are required.

(A-2) Relationship to adjacent properties

Current Standards

Section 18.170.110 addresses compatibility between new and old buildings and calls for setbacks, modulation and other means to address neighborhood character, but does not directly address loss of privacy and solar access.

Evaluation

Protecting the privacy, solar access and environmental conditions of adjacent properties will be an important issue in the Southeast Downtown neighborhood because a wide variety of residential building types are foreseen. A recent article by John Owen and Rachel Miller, [Protecting Existing Neighborhoods from the Impacts of New Development](#), examines ways to reduce the impacts of new mid-rise development on adjacent single family residences, based on human perception and geometric analysis. It offers a number of solutions from vegetation buffers and step backs to allowing office uses in

residences adjacent to more intense zoning. Some of these solutions may be more appropriate for the zoning code standards, although placing them in design guidelines would allow more flexibility. Another technique for reducing impacts to privacy from new mid-rise residential buildings is to restrict transparent balconies (in those areas within close proximity and facing single family zoned properties).

Recommendation

- Guidelines to address relationship to neighboring properties should be explored, particularly in southeast Olympia.

(A-3) General pedestrian circulation

Current Standards

- **18.120.100 and 110** cover internal walkways and access from parking areas, but they should be significantly strengthened to provide some minimum standards for these elements.
- **Chapter 18.16** has much more specific requirements for pedestrian oriented streets noted in Downtown, but these do not address internal walkways, etc. .
- **18.170.020** covers this a bit but is not sufficiently specific.
- **18.150.030 Port Peninsula** has general requirements that could work if strictly administered. However there is little specific guidance and requirements refer to “where feasible” without specific indications as to how that is evaluated.

Evaluation

Pedestrian connections are clearly an important design objective within current guidelines, but existing provisions lack the specificity that would make them easier to administer.

Recommendations

- Include guidelines for both pedestrian circulation planning and design. Pedestrian circulation planning design guidelines address the location and configuration of circulations systems, while pedestrian circulation design guidelines address more specific issues such as width and pavement of walkways.
- Pedestrian circulation planning guidelines should include provisions for:
 - Pedestrian routes connecting public ROW to all entries and site features
 - Location and connectivity of pedestrian routes to and within developments with multiple buildings and entries
 - Potential for inter-site pedestrian connectivity in some cases
 - Adequate sidewalks
 - Access to ground related residential units
 - Access to secondary entries
- Pedestrian circulation design guidelines can be located here or in the site design section (see below).
- Pedestrian circulation through parking areas can be located here or in vehicle circulation.
- Include provisions for vehicle circulation to address entries and driveways, safety, and relation to streetfront.

(A-4) Vehicular access and circulation

Current Standards

- **18.120 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not adequately address vehicle circulation, probably because Downtown properties have little opportunities for on-site vehicle circulation.
- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not adequately address vehicle circulation.
- **Chapter 18.16** has much more specific requirements for pedestrian oriented streets but does not limit parking lots adjacent to pedestrian oriented streets. So parking lots can face street fronts noted in Downtown, but these do not address internal walkways, etc.
- **18.170.030** covers this a bit but is not sufficient to direct parking areas and circulation into appropriate configurations. It does limit parking lots on street frontage to 30' which is not a useful dimension for parking lots.
- **18.150.030 Port Peninsula** does not address this and it might be more of an issue in this district.

Evaluation

Generally, the existing provisions could be improved with more specific language. It's surprising that the Port Peninsula guidelines do not address this issue.

Recommendations

- Include provisions for vehicle circulation to address entries and driveways, safety, and relation to the streetfront.

(A-5) Site planning of large lots (full block sites)

Current Standards

Not specifically addressed in any of the chapters.

Observations

Provisions for large lots generally apply to sites larger than 2 acres or with multiple buildings and address design concerns related to internal and external circulation, orientation of buildings to one another, open space and special techniques to reduce the scale of massive buildings. In Downtown Olympia, it might be useful to have some provisions for full block sites to make sure that the development is in scale with its surroundings and to take advantage of the special opportunities that such a site provides.

Recommendations

- Include a section to address possible impacts and opportunities that full block development provides. Provisions might address:
 - Interior pedestrian circulation and open space
 - The architectural break-up of facades running the full length of a block
 - Site access
 - Relationship between on-site buildings

- Or, it may be that these issues can be covered in the specific sections. This should be explored in the development of design guidelines.

(A-6) Service areas and mechanical equipment

Current Standards

- **18.110.190 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Covers screening of service areas and elements
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not cover this objective – covered in 18.110.190.
- **18.170.070 Multi-family Residential** covers location and screening of mechanical equipment but not service areas:
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not cover this objective – covered in 18.110.190.
- **18.150 Port Peninsula** does not cover this objective – covered in 18.110.190.

Evaluation

The lack of service area criteria is a gap. More specific guidance on location and screening could be added.

Recommendations

- Update guidelines for location and screening of service areas, mechanical equipment and utilities. There are a number of good models used by other cities. Screening design could be located in the Site Elements section or this section.
- Generally, guidelines should address location first, and then if an unobtrusive location cannot be found, screening should be seen as a mitigating action. For urban buildings in the core (and perhaps other locations), it may make sense to require service areas to be inside buildings.

(A-7) Storm water facility planning

Current Standards

This topic is not covered in the current design guidelines.

Evaluation

Design guidelines for stormwater management can supplement the stormwater management requirements in the Engineering Design & Development Standards (EDDS) by encouraging low impact development (LID) and green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) techniques. For example, guidelines can make it clear that landscape buffers and setbacks may be used for stormwater infiltration and provide examples of how this may be accomplished. In Downtown Olympia, such techniques will be limited to areas generally south of Legion Street due to high water table.

A more pressing concern is the effects of sea level rise on new and existing construction. The City needs to give a lot of thought to how new buildings address the required elevation change, existing buildings are retrofitted and landscaping withstands sea water inundation.

Recommendations

- Consider how the guidelines relate to the City’s sea level rise actions. Guidelines to address sea level rise may be in different sections. For example, sea level rise may be addressed through grade change, which will involve site planning and building front design. Or sea level rise might be accommodated through temporary flood proofing, which may involve architectural design issues.

(A-8) Multifamily open space

Current Standards

- **18.170.040 Multi-family Residential** includes a brief section on the design of residential open space.
- **18.04.080** requires that 15% (of the site be open space) may include stoops, porches or balcony areas in the Urban Residential (UR) Zone. Section J adds:

J. Private and Common Open Space.

Development of Open Space. *Open space (e.g., private yard areas and common open space) required by Table 4.04 shall be devoted to undisturbed native vegetation, landscaping (consistent with Chapter 18.36, Landscaping and Screening), and/or outdoor recreational facilities. Driveways, loading areas, maneuvering space and parking lots shall not be considered open space. Required open space shall not be covered with impervious surfaces, except for stoops, porches, or balconies, walkways, tennis courts, swimming pools, or similar uses which require an impervious surface. Up to a five (5) percent increase in impervious surface coverage may be allowed to accommodate such hard surfaced facilities.*

- **18.06.080 and 100** do not include provisions for multi-family open space since these are largely commercial zones. However, since residential and mixed use development is expected throughout Downtown, some provision or open space should be included.

Evaluation

Residential “open space” may be provided in a number of ways, including balconies large enough to accommodate human use, roof decks, courtyards, gardens, recreation rooms, etc. While open space is required in the UR zone, the Code does not require it elsewhere in Downtown (DB, UW, UW-H zones).

Recommendations

- The guidelines should include provisions for multifamily open space and include a variety of options specifically appropriate in the Downtown.

(A-9) Non-residential open space

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** No design criteria to address this topic.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** No design criteria to address this topic.
- **18.16.080 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** includes specific requirements for publically accessible plazas but does not indicate if or where they are required.
- **18.150 Port District:** No design criteria to address this topic.

Evaluation

There needn't be requirements for commercial open space in a downtown setting, however there might be some incentives for some plazas or small areas along the streetfront for outdoor dining or other activities.

Recommendations

- Update the design guidelines for public spaces in 18.16.080 and add some provisions related to security.
- Provide incentives for publically accessible open spaces.

(A-10) Site planning for security

Current Standards

- **18.110.160 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** includes some lighting provisions and refers designers to 18.40.060(D). Section 18.40.060 does address sight triangle requirements.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** No design criteria to address this topic.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential:** No design criteria to address this topic.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** No design criteria to address this topic.
- **18.150 Port District:** No design criteria to address this topic.

Evaluation

This is a missing element. Guidelines that address Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) criteria can be a useful way to increase safety and security.

Recommendations

- Include design guidelines to address
 - Safe pedestrian lighting levels
 - Passive surveillance
 - Natural access control
 - Defined territory
 - Visibility
 - Preventing entrapment areas
 - Other security issues

(A-11) View Preservation

Current Standards

- **18.110.060 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:**

View preservation. REQUIREMENT: In order to protect the existing outstanding scenic views which significant numbers of the general public have from public rights-of-way, applicants for development must consider the impact their proposal will have on views of Mt. Rainier, the Olympic Mountains, Budd Inlet, the Black Hills, the Capitol Building, and Capitol Lake or its surrounding hillsides. All development must reserve a reasonable portion of such territorial and immediate views of these features for significant numbers of people from public rights-of-way, and shall provide lookouts, viewpoints, or view corridors so that visual access to existing outstanding scenic vistas is maintained.

Refer to the Scenic Vista overlay zoning maps available at the Community Planning and Development Department.

- **18.150.050 Port Peninsula: Site design – View corridors** states:

REQUIREMENT: Provide for public view corridors of the Capitol Building, Olympic Mountains and Budd Inlet.

B. GUIDELINE:

- 1. Intermittent or partial views to the scenic vistas mentioned above may not be deemed necessary to incorporate into the site and building design.*
- 2. Refer to the Scenic Vista overlay zoning maps available at the Community Planning and Development Department.*

Evaluation

The recently updated Comprehensive Plan shifted an emphasis from protecting certain views from public streets to protecting and enhancing views from certain public observation points. The Plan guides the City to implement a public process to identify viewsheds (*line of sight between an observation point and important view.*) This was completed for views related to Downtown as part of the process to form the DTS. Subsequently, the citywide requirement in 18.110 should no longer be applied to Downtown. Instead, design standards to enhance the views identified as important through the DTS should be considered. In addition to the 29 views found to already be protected by current regulation and other conditions, three views were identified which need additional steps.

Recommendations

- The DTS recommends moderate design guidelines be crafted to protect and enhance three important views:
 - West Bay Park to Mt. Rainer

- Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier
- East Bay Overlook to the Capitol Dome

See the DTS report for more information.

B. Site Design, pedestrian access, amenities and open space design

*Note: this section addresses the **design quality** of site features, whereas Section A focuses on the planning of these elements.*

(B.1) Internal pedestrian paths design

Current Standards

- **18.110.050 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Pedestrian Amenities requires special features be included in projects where “people typically gather”. Applicants can choose from a menu of items.
- **18.120.100 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Walkways requires sidewalk paving material variety, alley enhancements, and interpretive elements.
- **18.120.110 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Pedestrian access from parking areas includes general, non-quantitative requirements for walkways in parking lots
- **18.120.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Waterfront public access includes guidance for waterfront trails and view corridors.
- **18.170.020 Multi-family Residential:** Pedestrian and vehicle circulation includes minimal direction for pedestrian design.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** includes design provisions for open spaces
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District:** includes similar provisions that are not quantified or specific

Evaluation

Many of the topics are covered in the current set of guidelines; however they are not very specific or sufficiently detailed to provide solid guidance. Some address sidewalk design which might be better in the EDDS or in a separated document. The location and design of pedestrian systems can have an important impact on the perceived quality of the Downtown.

Recommendations

- Upgrade the guidelines for pedestrian system design. Pedestrian circulation design guidelines should include provisions for:
 - Width and accessibility of pathways
 - Lighting, visibility and security issues
 - The design and landscaping of walkways between parking lots and storefronts
 - Measures to enhance pedestrian activity
 - Separation of public walkways and ground related residences

(B.2) Pedestrian-oriented open space

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** includes multiple sections that address specific elements such as fences, walls, pedestrian amenities and plant selection. However there are no more comprehensive design guidelines describing how these elements can be organized to provide a usable space.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not include specific design guidelines for this topic.
- **18.170.040 Multi-family Residential:** Usable open space addresses planning, but not design considerations.
- **18.16.080 Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** Specific development requirements includes specific open space design guidance
- **18.150 Port District** does not address this topic in detail.

Evaluation

18.16 goes pretty far in identifying the key design objectives in urban plazas.

Recommendations

- Build on 18.16.080 to refine publically accessible open space design standards.

(B.3) Site landscaping

Current Standards

- **Chapter 18.36** includes specific landscape design standards that cover landscaping for residential and commercial uses, landscape plans, parking lot screening, materials and installation standards, screen types, and performance assurance.
- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Includes some provisions for screening blank walls and very general requirements for plant selection.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** This section does not really address site landscaping.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential:** covers a variety of landscape related elements including fences, walls, and plant materials. Also
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** Landscaping is a part of this sections objectives.
- **18.150 Port District:** Most guidelines are fairly general and not stated as requirements.

Evaluation

Chapter 18.36 appears adequate to address the fundamental landscape objectives

Recommendations

- Landscape design guidelines should reference 18.36 and augment them rather than duplicate or compete with them.
- Generally landscape design guidelines should address character and integration with building and site design features.

(B.4) Fences and walls

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not address this issue.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not address this issue.
- **18.170.050 Multi-family Residential** calls for the minimum use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement of separate the project from the neighborhood and provides guidance regarding character and quality.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address this issue.
- **18.150 Port District** does not address this issue.

Evaluation

The provisions in 18.170.050 might be enhanced with some examples

Recommendations

- Include an enhanced section 18.170.050 in the guidelines

(B.5) Parking area design requirements

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not address this.
- **18.120.040 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Parking lots provides general direction on location of lots.
- **18.170.030 Multi-family Residential:** Parking location and design includes provisions to minimize the impact of parking areas. It only allows 30% of the frontage to be in parking.
- **18.16.080. H Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** Surface parking lots specifically restricts parking lots along the street front of pedestrian oriented streets
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not specifically address this.

Evaluation

Together, the different code sections cover the issues related to parking lot design but they need to be better coordinated and strengthened.

Recommendations

- Build on current provisions, especially 18.16 to address parking lot location and design.
- Parking area design can be its own element or the aspects of parking lot design can be located in other sections, including Relationship to street front, landscaping, and pedestrian connections.

C. Building Design

(C.1) Character (not including Historic)

Current Standards

- **18.110.070 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Building location and design includes design requirements for articulated entrances street edge orientation and, for buildings over 3 stories, a clearly defined base.
- **18.120.050 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Building design includes some general statements.
- **18.170.110 Multi-family Residential** describes techniques to respond to local neighborhood character through building forms, materials, rooflines, etc.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address architectural character.
- **18.150 Port District** does not address architectural character

Evaluation

While the design guideline sections to contain guidelines that address the quality of design, they do not address the general character (E.g.: should a building reflect the local historic character, fit in with the neighborhood, have a formal or informal character, etc.)

Recommendations

- The updated Downtown design guidelines should provide guidance related to a building's architectural style or character. This is especially true since the design guidelines can be used to reinforce the different "character areas" such as the Core, the Artisan/Tech area, etc.
- The guidelines should address the overall building form, elements, materials details and special characteristics of the different areas.
- Design guidelines for architectural character should not be too rigid and will require some judgment.
- Photographic examples and diagrammatic illustrations can facilitate discussions with the applicant and project review.

(C.2) Character in Historic District

Current Standards

The standards for the review of designated historic buildings and those in the historic district are summarized below.

OMC 18.12 B. *Review Process*

- *Whenever applications are made for alterations, changes, construction on any properties within a Historic District or on the Heritage Register, the Building Official notifies the Preservation Officer and the applicant so that the proposed change may be reviewed under the provisions of Sections [18.105.020](#) and [18.105.030](#).*
- *If no permit is required to pursue work on a designated property or within a designated Heritage Register District, whoever is responsible for the work is encouraged to consult with the Preservation Officer prior to commencement of the work for consistence with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
- *The Preservation Officer may review and approve minor work requiring a permit that does not involve substantial alterations, additions or removals that only alter the features identified when the property was listed on the Heritage Register, or District*
- *Recommendations are made at a regular meeting of the Heritage Commission or at a meeting of the Heritage Review Committee. The Heritage Commission's recommendations shall be in writing and shall state the findings of fact and reasons relied upon in reaching its decision.*
- *The Heritage Commission's recommendations are transmitted to the Building Official and are given substantial weight by the Building Official in establishing conditions for the permit*

C. *Standards for Review.*

1. For a property individually listed on a Heritage Register, the proposed work should not detrimentally alter, destroy or adversely affect any exterior feature or interior feature relating to the designation of the property to the Heritage 2. For any property located within a Historic District, the proposed construction, removal, rehabilitation, alteration, remodeling, excavation or exterior alteration shall conform to the standards in OMC 18.110.210, [18.105.020](#), and [18.105.030](#). 3. Proposed alterations or significant changes necessary or appropriate in order to meet the requirements of any other law, statute, ordinance, regulation, code or ordinance shall be coordinated with, and given consideration along with historic preservation concerns, in reviewing proposed changes to Heritage Register properties.

The provisions of 18.105.020 and 030 are excerpted below

- Additions or Remodeled Historic Buildings

Design criteria contained in chapter 18.105.020 Building Design apply to structures on the Olympia Heritage Register, Washington Heritage Register, and the National Register of Historic Places. These require that the owner Protect and preserve buildings of special historic significance and merit in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties through the following means: (.

- 1. Restore or retain as many historic features as possible.*

2. *Maintain or restore original proportions, dimensions and architectural elements.*
3. *Select paint and material colors which are historically accurate, coordinate the entire facade, and do not conflict with adjacent buildings.*
4. *Consult available historical resources, the Heritage Commission, or Community Planning and Development Department for assistance and detailed information.*

Structures within a Historic District

Design criteria contained in Chapter 18.105.030 apply to new and existing structures within a Historic District and require that new or remodeled structures within a historic district preserve the historic context and merit of the district through the following means:

1. *Use roof forms that emulate the historic property roof form.*
2. *Use windows, materials, relief and details similar to the historic property.*
3. *Use similar building articulation that breaks up the building mass into modules which reflect proportions similar to the historic building.*

Evaluation

Conversations with the Heritage Commission (HC) and the general public indicate the need for more specific design guidelines for the Historic District to retain its historic character. There is the concern that new buildings could intrude on the District's architectural character. While the requirements of the pedestrian overlay in Chapter 18.16 address street front qualities, there is general sense that the new buildings should respect the general character of the older structures. And, Special guidelines to address the architectural qualities of the Historic District could be incorporated into the Architectural Character section of the guidelines.

New buildings in the historic district are reviewed by a Joint Design Review Board with members from the Heritage Commission and the DRB. Section 18.105.030 becomes the most useful set of guidelines in this process. However, the guidelines do not adequately address issues of architectural consistency within the district because they do not identify the characteristics that the new building is supposed to support.

Recommendations

- Include a specific section within the Downtown Design Guidelines that identifies the important architectural characteristics that typify Downtown Olympia and establishes guidance regarding the retention of the critical architectural characteristics in the historic district.
- The guidelines should reflect the Joint OHC/DRB review process.

(C.3) Human scale and architectural scale

Current Standards

- **18.110.080 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** includes provisions for both human and architectural scale. The most effective guidelines call for the use of smaller building elements.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not have an explicit section but does require some elements such as awnings that help to provide a human scale.
- **18.170.120 Multi-family Residential** calls for building modulation and other techniques to provide for architectural and human scale.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not have an explicit section but does require some elements such as awnings that help to provide a human scale.
- **18.150.060 Port Peninsula District** guidelines describe architectural scale rather than human scale.

Evaluation

Architectural design guidelines should cover both human scale and architectural scale. Human scale addresses the perceived relationship between a person and the building with the objective of providing clues about how the building serves human functions (such as entry and visibility) and making the individual “feel comfortable”. Human scale is most often addressed by calling attention to those elements that have a clear human function, such as doors, windows, porches, weather protection, balconies, etc. and making sure that those elements are appropriately sized. Human scale is usually addressed through smaller building elements.

Architectural scale is the relationship of the building to other near-by architectural and site features and addresses the massing, height and perceived size of the building. The objectives of architectural scale are often to ensure that the building does not overwhelm its setting or appear too large for its context. Architectural scale can be addressed by guidelines that shape the building’s overall form such as modulation, setbacks, step-backs, rooflines, and larger building elements.

Current guidelines confuse these two types of scale. While they do address most of the issues related to scale, there are no specific standards to describe when and to what extent measures are to be taken to address scale issues.

Recommendations

- Guidelines to address scale issues should clearly identify the difference between human scale and architectural scale and address each separately.
- The guidelines should set minimum standards for achieving scale related objectives. It may be that different scales are appropriate in different character areas. For example:
 - The Core should have a consistent architectural scale based on historic precedents
 - The Artisan/Tech district may feature a wider variety of building sizes and scales based on the wider variety of uses and the objective of retaining some of the industrial character.

- Both architectural and human scale elements will be very important in the southern residential areas as there will be a wide range of building sizes and types but also the objective of a comfortable residential environment.

(C.4) Pedestrian-oriented facades and weather protection

Current Standards

- **18.110.090 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Street Walls requires window transparency and pedestrian oriented building elements. Section 110 calls for canopies, awnings and other elements. Section 140 requires that the visible building facades are consistent – that is of a similar architectural character.
- **18.120.090 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** adds an explicit requirement for weather protection and includes guidance regarding the character and quality of the elements.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential** does not address this issue.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** also requires weather protection and includes design standards. Section “a” requires transparent windows or other pedestrian elements along pedestrian oriented streets.
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not address this, and because this district is not subject to other design standards, it should be addressed if warranted.

Evaluation

The current 18.110.090 provides a good basis for pedestrian oriented facades and weather protection. Provisions in 18.16 are somewhat duplicative.

Recommendations

- The current standards should be combined into one consistent section.
- The map showing pedestrian oriented streets in 18.16 should be reviewed.
- Requirements for the Port Peninsula should be examined.

(C.5) Building corners

Current Standards

- **18.110.130 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Corners calls for incorporating features such as inset or angled corners and street corners and alley corners.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not address this issue.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential** does not address this issue.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address this issue.
- **18.150 Port District** does not address this issue.

Evaluation

The provisions of 18.110.130 might be strengthened to sufficiently address this issue. Note that one of the criticisms made at a public meeting of the 123 Fourth building is the poor corner design.

Recommendations

- Strengthen the provisions of 18.110.130.
- Denote specific corners where the guidelines apply. Not every corner needs to be special.

(C.6) Building design details

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not explicitly address this objective but does include some general guidelines in different sections, including 18.110.100 Windows.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not explicitly address this objective but does include some general guidelines in different sections.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential** does have some useful guidance regarding window design.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address this issue.
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not address this issue.

Evaluation

A building details section is often included in design guidelines to ensure that consideration is given to the quality and application of smaller elements such as lights, railing, trellises, awnings, window, etc. Guidelines usually require a certain number of building detail element selected from an inclusive menu of options. Because some of these elements are covered elsewhere (for example, awnings might be covered under weather protection and window details might be covered under human scale elements) guidelines usually allow requirements for building elements also count toward those other guideline requirements.

Recommendations

- Include a more explicit building details section in the guidelines with a menu of options for designers to choose from.

(C.7) Materials

Current Standards

- **18.110.150 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** includes a few guidelines – mostly to avoid reflective materials.
- **18.120.060 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** includes some fairly weak provisions.

- **18.170.140 Multi-family Residential** includes more substantial guidance.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address this issue
- **18.150.070 Port Peninsula District:** Color and Materials prohibits large expanses of bright colors and reflective materials.

Evaluation

Stronger material standards could be applied to prevent a variety of unattractive, impermanent and inappropriate materials. In many cases materials such as metal siding and concrete masonry units may be appropriate if handled appropriately.

Recommendations

- Prepare more specific material standards for the guidelines.
- Explore whether or not some materials may be appropriate in some character areas but not in others. For example, corrugated metal siding may be appropriate in the Artisan/Tech district but not in the Core.

(C.8) Blank walls

Current Standards

- **18.110.200 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Screening of blank walls calls for landscape screening of blank walls but does not define blank walls.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not address this issue.
- **18.170.090 Multi-family Residential** calls for screening of long expanses of blank building walls or fences.
- **18.16 (F) Pedestrian Street Overlay District:** Blank Wall Limitation provides more explicit quantitative restrictions on blank walls on pedestrian oriented streets.
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not address this issue.

Evaluation

This is an important consideration in the Downtown and should be address more substantively.

Recommendations

- Provide more specific guidelines to define and address “blank walls.”

(C.9) Building entrances

Current Standards

- **18.110 Basic Commercial Design Criteria** does not sufficiently address the location, design and quality of building entrances.
- **18.120.080 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** Building orientation requires that building entrances be oriented to the street but does not address the quality, weather protection or enhancement of building entrances which is key in the Downtown. Section 18.120.090 requires that new projects include awnings, canopies, and/or marquees on buildings that abut the sidewalk.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential** does not deal with this issue.
- **18.16 (G) Pedestrian Street Overlay District – Primary Building Entrance** requires that entrances face the street but does not address weather covering, lighting or enhancements.
- **18.150 Port District** does not address this issue.

Evaluation

Section 18.16 (G) should be a requirement for all buildings in the downtown unless there is a compelling reason to the contrary. There is a need for addressing the quality of entries to include weather protection, lighting and special features.

Recommendations

- Include stronger guidelines for building entries to address the size, location quality, lighting and enhancement of building entries.

(C.10) Parking garage design

Current Standards

- **18.110.170 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Parking structures requires a 6' recess from the façade plane and treatment of the ground floor façade with windows or other features.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown:** No specific guidelines for this issue.
- **18.170 Multi-family Residential** does not address parking garages.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address parking garages
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not address parking garages.

Evaluation

Section 18.110.170 covers this issue but applies only to commercial facades. There may be new residential buildings with structured parking on the ground floor so the same issues should be addressed for all new buildings.

Recommendations

- Retain section 18.110.170 and make it more broadly applicable.
- Re-examine the requirement for a 6' entry setback from the facade plane as this may make some structured parking not fit into the property dimension.

(C.11) Lighting

Current Standards

- **18.110.160 Basic Commercial Design Criteria:** Lighting encourages designers to use lighting to emphasize building features and landscaping and also for security.
- **18.120 Commercial Design Criteria Downtown** does not address lighting.
- **18.170.080 Multi-family Residential:** Site lighting requires lighting along pedestrian walkways and building entrances and to shield lights from adjacent properties and residential windows. It also encourages lower light poles and low-level landscape lighting.
- **18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District** does not address site lighting.
- **18.150 Port Peninsula District** does not address site lighting.

Evaluation

The requirement of 18.110 and 18.170 cover most of the concerns regarding site lighting. However some levels of lighting should be required where necessary for security.

Recommendations

- Combine the directions of 18.110.160 and 18.170.080
- Add ranges of acceptable lighting for different site and building conditions (e.g.: parking lots, building entrances, etc).

Notes from Design Review Board – Feb 9, 2017

- Design should have integrity with itself – a cohesive style and well proportioned
- Include concrete language about materials allowed and not allowed (for example, efface does not work for Olympia's climate and should not be allowed)
- Residential building details should not be brought into large commercial projects
- Be explicit about what we value in each character
- Support types of pedestrian life that are unique to each character area
- Promote continuous canopies
- Provide guidance for parklets – these should use durable materials, and the design should be reviewed by DRB
- Incorporate historic look with contemporary
- Clarify vague terms
- Guidelines should prevent what we don't want, but not limit something amazing. Allow for departures when judged to meet objectives
- After the update, consider making a video that explains what the design guidelines hope to accomplish



DESIGN

AN ATTRACTIVE AND HIGH QUALITY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

“Design” as described in this element, encompasses the visual and functional characteristics of the urban environment, including the public realm (streets and parks), private development, and remaining aspects of the natural environment. Far from being solely concerned with aesthetic objectives, design plays an important role in attaining functional and social goals in a number of ways. First, urban design measures help coordinate new development with surrounding structures, parks, and streetscapes. Second, urban design has proven effective in supporting business development strategies. They do this by:

1. Helping places feel safe and inviting, attracting a greater clientele,
2. Enhancing unique and desirable characteristics of a place to build a strong identity, attracting private investment in the form of new development, rehabilitation of existing buildings, and decision to locate businesses in the area, and

3. Encouraging a culture of collaboration—inspiring the cross-pollination of ideas and creative thinking that aids business development—through compact and attractive living/working/playing neighborhoods with great public and private spaces and the attraction of people and businesses as noted in 2 above.

Finally, urban design is useful as a problem-solving tool to address challenges such as accommodating grade variations due to sea-level rise response measures or enhancing security using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques.

Urban design measures include public realm improvements to streets and parks, as well as regulatory measures, such as building height and bulk regulations, landscaping standards, view protection provisions, and design guidelines that influence building orientation, characteristics desirable for human enjoyment of a place, and other details. Streetscape design measures are covered in the Transportation Element and the City has a separate Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan, so these topics are not covered extensively in this element. This Design Element does address design-related regulations, historic preservation activities, and view protection measures.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are Olympia Comprehensive Plan Goals that form the foundation of the concepts and recommendations in this element.

- GL12:** Commercial areas are attractive, functional and appealing.
- GL18:** Downtown designs express Olympia's heritage and future in a compact and pedestrian-oriented manner.
- GL9:** Built and natural environmental designs discourage criminal behavior.
- GT16:** Streets are public space, where people want to be.
- GL6:** Community beauty is combined with unique neighborhood identities.
- LU3:** Historic resources are a key element in the overall design and establishment of a sense of place in Olympia.
- LU19:** Downtown's historic character and significant historic buildings, structures, and sites are preserved and enhanced.
- GE8:** Historic resources are used to promote economic stability in the City.

GL8: Community views are protected, preserved, and enhanced.

Based on the Comprehensive goals the following design priorities were identified during the planning and public engagement process:

- Apply a cohesive urban design strategy, considering how places and spaces between buildings and structures function for people as well as attract investment.
- Connect “places and spaces” within the Downtown with an integrated public realm network.
- Ensure new buildings, private properties, and public realm in the Downtown are of high quality.
- Enhance Downtown’s unique character to create a stronger design identity based on its historic fabric, waterfront setting, variety of human activities, and natural environment.
- Increase the variety and visual interest of Downtown, while emphasizing the unique qualities of its different “character areas”
- Make sure that new development integrates within the existing context, making the area more attractive, while not overwhelming or diminishing the historic character.
- Reinforce the importance and appeal of civic assets, including City Hall, Children’s Museum, East Bay Plaza, LOTT WET Center, Transit Center, Port Plaza, Heritage Park and Fountain, The Olympia Center, and The Washington Center for Performing Arts.
- Retain signature views of the Capitol dome, water, and mountains.
- Promote an attractive, pedestrian-oriented environment.

CONCEPTS

Character Areas

As described in the Concept section, five unique “character areas” have been identified. Each character area is an informal sub-district within Downtown that has a distinct physical character and is especially appropriate for a specific set of uses. Because the boundaries of each character area are loosely defined, they are not meant to be translated directly into policy and regulatory language. However, they are intended to provide guidance when considering measures to implement this strategy. For example, design guidelines will establish Downtown-wide qualities with a few key differences for each character area to create impact.

Capitol to Market



Reinforce historic character and link to Capitol Campus.

Artisan/Tech



Encourage adaptive reuse, energy- and water-efficient architecture, and an eclectic, industrial character.

Waterfront



Reinforce maritime and Percival Landing character.

Entertainment



Emphasize pedestrian interest, small scale street facades, diversity, and art and creative architecture.

SE Neighborhood



Increase compatibility between new and older residences, avoid impacts of larger buildings, increase pedestrian activity, and enhance safety and security.

The following are some general design directions for each character area that arose during public engagement activities.

- **Capitol to Market.** Reinforce the historic character in the Core which features excellent examples of classically detailed buildings and early 20th Century storefronts. Improve streetscapes to emphasize pedestrian mobility and complement the traditional town center grid. Strengthen the visual connection between the Campus, Core, and Market by applying more uniform streetscape elements and encouraging substantial mixed-use development in the area. Improve east-west cross streets north of State Avenue to better connect the waterfront/Percival Landing, Market, Capitol Way activities, and the Hands on Children's Museum. Design guidelines for the area north of State Avenue should complement the Farmer's Market and neighboring development but could also allow architecture with character appropriate for the Artisan/Tech area.
- **Artisan/Tech.** Encourage a robust and eclectic character that accommodates "workshop" (e.g., light manufacturing; commercial kitchens; technical, art, and artisan studios) as well as other activities. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structurally sound buildings. Buildings with simple architectural forms, loading areas, industrial materials, and minimal detailing are appropriate in this character area.
- **Waterfront.** Include a design component in the proposed Isthmus plan. Prepare design guidelines that reinforce the maritime character along Percival Landing and the existing landscape along Capitol Lake.
- **Entertainment District.** Emphasize lively pedestrian-oriented character with night life. Architectural design might be a bit more expressionistic. Streetscape elements could be a mix of utilitarian and artistic features. Artwork is encouraged to provide a distinctive character.
- **Southeast Neighborhood.** Design guidelines and street improvements should promote a pleasant residential character and should address the compatibility between old and new buildings and potential impacts to existing residences. Street trees and safe, inviting sidewalks should be emphasized.

CHARACTER AREAS MAP

CHARACTER AREAS

- 
WATERFRONT
 Enhance and connect to waterfront attractions.

- 
CAPITOL TO MARKET
 Encourage a high activity mix of uses from the Capitol to the Farmers Market.

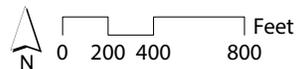
- 
ARTISAN/TECH
 Encourage an eclectic mix of commercial activities and residences to support a creative neighborhood.

- 
ENTERTAINMENT
 Continue the core's energy eastward in a safe and lively entertainment district.

- 
SE NEIGHBORHOOD
 Build a holistic neighborhood with services and amenities.

EXISTING FEATURES

-  Downtown planning area
-  City and State parks
-  State Capitol Campus
-  Attractions or landmarks





Some of the visual elements that make Olympia unique.

Civic Identity

While Downtown’s variety of physical settings and visual amenities is a valuable asset, a clear and cohesive identity is also important. This leads to two questions: What makes Downtown Olympia unique? What are the physical elements or attributes that tie the Downtown together?

Visual elements. Several elements make Downtown unique within the region. The most obvious is the Capitol Campus with its iconic dome. The fact that Downtown is a peninsula surrounded on almost three sides by water is an unusual feature. The historic retail core with Sylvester Park provides a strong, human-scaled visual and activity “anchor” for the rest of Downtown. Also, the number of amenities and attractions such as the theatres and museums is unusual for a city of Olympia’s size.

Connections. It is Downtown’s intimately scaled grid of streetscapes, rather than a consistent architectural style, landscape treatment, or single prominent element that provides both physical and visual connectivity and cohesiveness. Plum Street provides a defined edge to Downtown while Capitol Way is an especially important link between the Capitol Campus and the Farmers Market. Other streets such as Washington, Cherry, and Thurston have the potential to be high visibility pedestrian/bicycle connections. Finally, pedestrian and bicycle trails, especially those along the waterfront and between key attractions such as the Hands on Children’s museum and Percival Landing are especially important connectors.

The visual elements named above and the connections between them should be recognized and, where possible, emphasized to enhance the Downtown’s regional identity. The following table suggests some of the ways that this can be accomplished and references the proposed actions in this strategy that work toward that end.

IDENTITY GIVING VISUAL ELEMENT	ACTIONS TO ENHANCE OR CONNECT THE ELEMENT
Views of the Capitol dome, mountains, and water	Most significant views will not be affected by new development. Several will be retained as Downtown continues to develop. (See Action D.7)
A variety of expansive waterfront settings	<p>Improve the “Olympia Waterfront Route” trail around the peninsula (See Acton T.9)</p> <p>Develop a plan for the Isthmus (See Action LU.2)</p> <p>Design and streetscape guidelines that enhance character of the waterfront setting (See Actions D.1 and T.3)</p> <p>Public/private partnership for Water Street Redevelopment Area (See Action H.8)</p>
Historic Core and Sylvester Park	<p>Historic preservation measures, design guidelines, and streetscape design standards to protect the character of the Core. (See Actions D.1, D.4, and T.3)</p> <p>Streetscape improvements to Legion, Washington, and other Core streets. (See Action T.1)</p>
Civic attractions including the Hands On Children’s Museum, WET center, the Farmers Market, Olympia Center, Transit Center, Performing Arts Center, etc.	<p>Improve streetscapes between attractions, especially between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children’s Museum and Percival Landing: Thurston Ave (See Transportation element for description and Action T.4) • The Farmers Market and Percival Landing: “shared streets” (See Transportation element for description and Action T.4) • The Historic Retail Core, theaters, Sylvester Park, and Heritage Park: Legion Ave (See Action T.1), and • The Washington Center, Intercity Transit Center, and other Core attractions : Washington Ave (See Action T.1) <p>Develop an arts and wayfinding plan that helps connect visitors to attractions and coordinates with the State Capitol Campus wayfinding plan (See Action D.5)</p>
Signature streets (carry significant traffic volumes and connect major destinations)	<p>Improve Capitol Way to strengthen the visual and functional connection between the Capitol Campus and the Market. (See Action T.1)</p> <p>Establish or enhance gateway signage at key locations, most likely at Plum and Union and Capitol Way and Union. (See Action D.6)</p> <p>Slow traffic and develop a cohesive art identity on 4th Ave. (See Action T.2)</p> <p>Spur the redevelopment of the former Griswolds building on 4th Ave to improve this signature street. (See Action H.8)</p>
Connecting pedestrian trail	<p>Improve the “Olympia Waterfront Route” trail around the peninsula. (See Action T-9)</p> <p>See the Parks Master Plan for additional steps, including a potential trail connection between West Bay Park and Downtown, and other waterfront trail enhancements.</p> <p>Design and streetscape guidelines that enhance character of the waterfront setting (See Actions D.1 and T.3)</p>

Relationship between Public and Private Realms



Inviting streets combine high quality architecture with an attractive public realm.

Integrating public realm improvements such as streets and parks with the private and institutional buildings that front them is important for strengthening a Downtown's design character. For example, historic districts benefit from traditional streetscapes and parks that include uniform plantings and street trees, more ornamental street lights, ample pedestrian furniture, and sometimes, special pavements. A more utilitarian streetscape character with loading areas, standard street lights, simple sidewalk pavements, and street trees in locations where they do not interfere with necessary activities is appropriate adjacent to industrial/commercial buildings (see the character area descriptions above and in the Concept chapter for more on these distinctions). The recommendations for streetscape elements take this into account by considering the character area directions, and vice versa.

The vitality of any downtown depends on a comfortable, attractive pedestrian environment, so enhancing pedestrian mobility and attractiveness is an important objective throughout the Downtown. OMC Chapter 18.16 Pedestrian Street Overlay District currently designates some streets as "pedestrian-oriented" and lays out requirements for new development on those streets. The extent of the pedestrian-oriented street designations and associated requirements should be reviewed during the design guidelines update to ensure that the human experience is fully considered and bolstered where appropriate.

View Protection

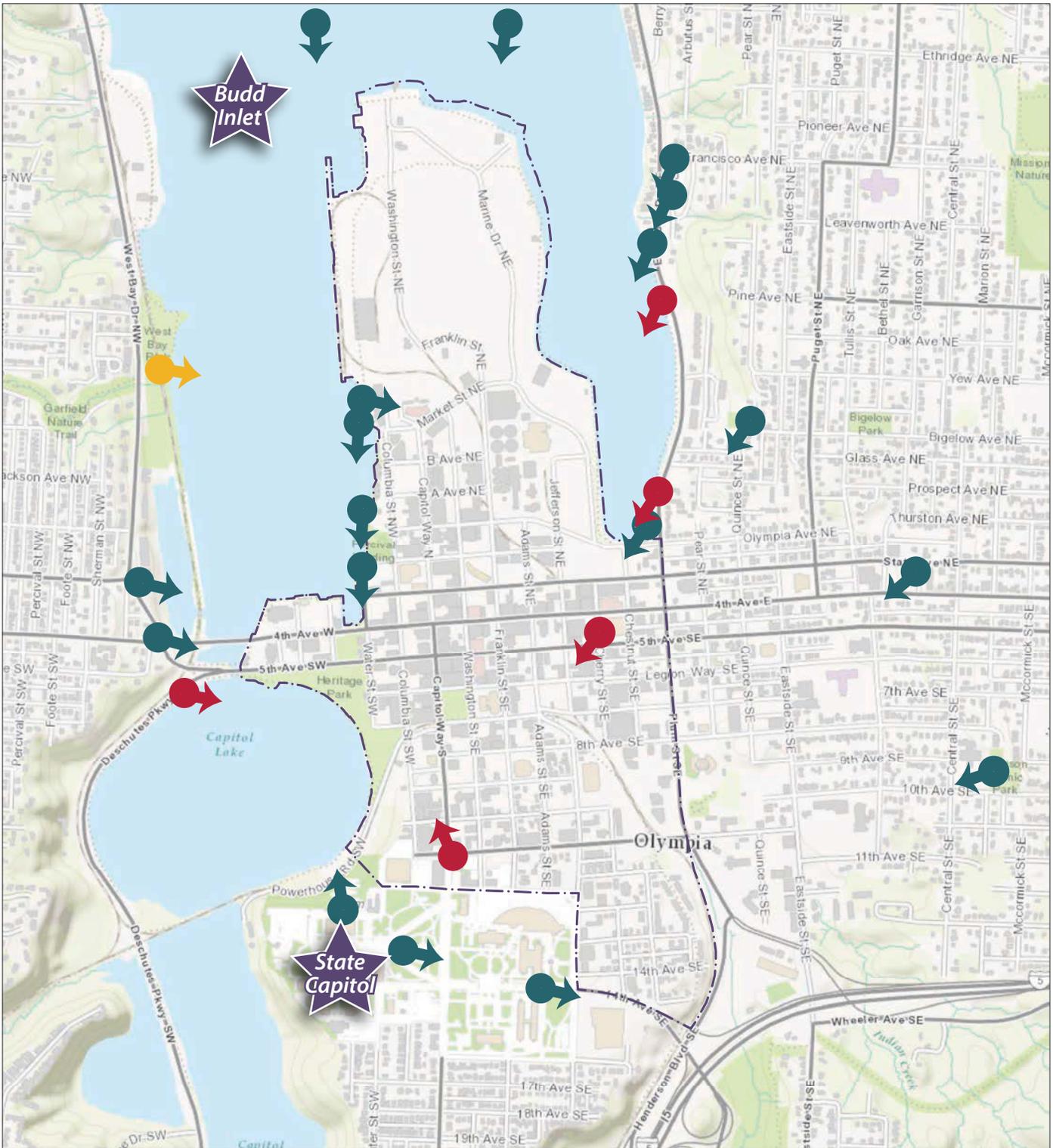
Views of prominent physical features such as the Capitol Dome, water, and mountains are an important part of Downtown's character and identity. They provide a sense of place and beauty and connections to the natural landscape and historic fabric. For this reason, the City Council direction for the Downtown Strategy scope of work included an analysis of Downtown views and recommendations for updating view protection standards in the Municipal Code. Views in question are a line of sight between specific *public* observation points to selected landmark views. In accordance with State law, the City does not protect views from private property.

Landmarks include:

- Mt. Rainer
- Puget Sound/Budd Inlet
- Olympic Mountains
- Capitol Dome
- Black Hills

The **Observation points** selected were located in Downtown or outside if the view was through Downtown.

EXISTING VIEWS MAP



MAXIMUM POTENTIAL DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT UNDER CURRENT ZONING WOULD:

- **Not** affect the view
- Have a **limited impact** on the view
- **Block** the view

Note: Only views that pass through the downtown study area are included on this map. For example, views from Percival Landing to Budd Inlet are not included as there is no potential downtown development between the viewpoint and landmark.

Views Analysis

Views impacts were considered throughout most of the planning process. Early on, the planning team looked at 52 potential views that were identified with help from the public. Of these, the team found:

- 29 views were unlikely to be affected by development; the community has already taken steps to secure these through existing regulation and public ownership of the shoreline.
- 10 views could potentially be affected; thus were selected for further analysis using 3D modeling. *(The team later found 4 of these views were unlikely to be affected.)*
- Some views on this initial list were redundant or outside of the planning area, thus were not further considered.

[Appendix D](#) details all of the views identified and explains the 3D modeling process.

The team conducted more detailed analysis and 3-dimensional modeling on the 10 views described in the chart below. The results of this analysis and potential tools for protecting views were presented for feedback at Public Workshop #3 and Online Survey 4. The team asked which views were important to protect in light of multiple goals for Downtown development. The recommendations in the chart below are based on this analysis and public feedback.

As a side analysis, the team was asked to explore the State Capitol Group Height District (CHD) regulations (see page XX for more information) and:

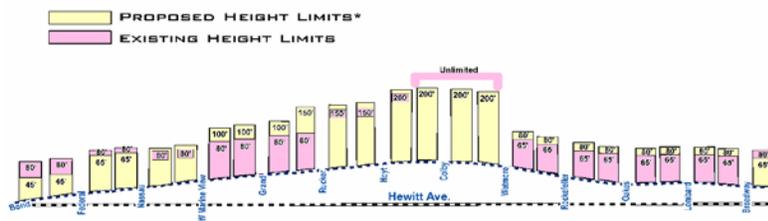
1. Determine if public views of the Capitol exist within the CHD and if so, if the CHD is protecting those views,
2. Examine the intent of the 42' height limit in the southeast part of the district, and
3. Better define the view of the Capitol (e.g., does it encompass the dome and drum or dome only?).

View Protection Tools and Tradeoffs

The Public Workshop #3 presentation ([Appendix D.2.b](#)) emphasized that actions taken to protect views may have tradeoffs or unintended consequences, potentially limiting future housing, livelier streets, and business opportunities. In addition, strong view protection actions can unfairly impact some property owners and be a legal challenge if a property's economic value is degraded without substantial public benefit.

View protection tools range in their effectiveness and tradeoffs. Moderate actions, such as **design guidelines**, may preserve or enhance some aspects of a view without significantly reducing development capacity. Design guidelines are used to “sculpt” a building and can encourage buildings to set back from a street or alley, upper floors to step back, rooflines to vary their form, and towers to separate a minimum distance from each other. These variations in building form may succeed in framing a view. In cases where development does impact the view, these variations, along with other design guidelines, ensure that quality buildings fit in their context, relate to other elements of the view, and augment the overall aesthetics of the view.

More stringent actions, such as **view corridors**, which require airspace between the viewpoint and landmark to remain free of development, and **downzoning**, which reduces the allowed building height for an area, can severely impact a site's development capacity. View corridors, depending on site orientation in relationship to the view, can be moderate or maximum measures. View corridors and downzoning can be challenging to implement if they reduce the development capacity of the site, and thus the property value. This leads to legal issues unless a clear public benefit can be demonstrated. Also, because they reduce the land capacity for housing, job opportunities, retail, etc, they can conflict with other goals outlined in the Downtown Strategy.

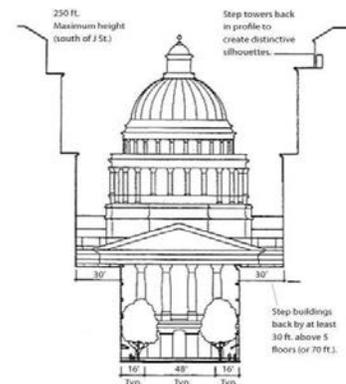


* PROPOSED HEIGHT LIMITS MAY BE INCREASED IF PROJECT MEETS DESIGN INCENTIVES. IN 200' HEIGHT ZONE, NO CAP ON POTENTIAL HEIGHT INCREASES. IN OTHER HEIGHT ZONES, POTENTIAL HEIGHT INCREASE MAY REACH 50% ABOVE PROPOSED LIMITS.

Sample graphic showing a transect through an urban area with height limits designed for views. Reducing height limits to preserve a view can be an extremely effective measure but challenging to implement.



Design guidelines sculpt a building so that views can be framed or enhanced. Note the upper stories stepping back and space between buildings, both of which can preserve views.



When a street, alley, or other corridor aligns with a view corridor (like in the photo on the right of the Space Needle), a designated view corridor is a mild tool that preserves and frames a view. However, when the view corridor does not align with an existing corridor, this tool can significantly impact development capacity.

Views Analysis Results

Landmark Views

The results of this input indicate that view protection is not the most important goal for a majority of community members when compared to other Downtown goals for job creation, vibrant retail, access to housing, and lively pedestrian streets.

The chart below summarizes the findings and recommendations for each of the 10 views:

3D VIEWS ANALYSIS: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

VIEW* From a public observation point to a landmark	EXISTING CONDITIONS	PUBLIC INPUT**	RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE
<p>VIEW 1</p> <p>From: State Capitol Campus Promontory To: Budd Inlet</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would not block view (<i>although slight obstruction of shoreline</i>) • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-H-35 and UW-35 • Limited space for new development • Redevelopment sites: market support for higher density projects 	<p>Would potential zoning build out negatively affect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No = 180 • Yes = 69 • Not sure = 39 <p>Most important view on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view in the Comp Plan given the public support for this view. No additional action is required, as current zoning does not affect the view and height increases are not under consideration.</p>
<p>VIEW 2</p> <p>From: Cherry Street To: Capitol Dome</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would block view • Current zoning/ height limits: DB-75 (+2 story res.) • Strong market support for buildings up to 6 stories • Redevelopment sites: market support for projects with higher density 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 175 • Moderate action = 66 • Max action = 29 <p>"Not important" on Survey 2</p>	<p>No further action given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The insignificance of the view and • Public desire and market support for redevelopment to enliven streets and provide housing

*In the 3D model images, colored blocks represent maximum build out under current zoning (i.e., simple masses) and do not intend to demonstrate architecturally designed buildings.

**Combined responses are from 9/17 Workshop & Online Survey #3

VIEW* From a public observation point to a landmark	EXISTING CONDITIONS	PUBLIC INPUT**	RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE
<p>VIEW 3</p> <p>From: Madison Scenic Park</p> <p>To: Capitol Dome, Black Hills</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would not block view • Current zoning/ height limits: DB-75 (+2 story res.); UR-various • Redevelopment sites: market support for higher density projects 	<p>Not addressed in Workshop or online survey #3 as view had previously been found to be unaffected.</p> <p>“Somewhat important” on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view in the Comp Plan given the public support for this view. No additional action is required, as current zoning, even if some additional height were allowed, would not affect the view.</p>
<p>VIEW 4</p> <p>From: Puget Sound Navigation Channel</p> <p>To: Capitol Dome</p>  <p><i>Note that the water form is an anomaly in the Google Earth model.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would not block view • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-H-35 and UW-35; RM-H-35 per SMP • Limited space for new development • Redevelopment sites: market support for higher density projects 	<p>Would potential zoning build out negatively affect this view?</p> <p>Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No = 210 • Yes = 36 • Not sure = 35 <p>“Important” on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view in the Comp Plan given the public support for this view. No additional action is required, as current zoning, even if some additional height were allowed, would not affect the view.</p>

*In the 3D model images, colored blocks represent maximum build out under current zoning (i.e., simple masses) and do not intend to demonstrate architecturally designed buildings.

**Combined responses are from 9/17 Workshop & Online Survey #3

VIEW* From a public observation point to a landmark	EXISTING CONDITIONS	PUBLIC INPUT**	RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE
<p>VIEW 5 From: West Bay Park To: Mt Rainier</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Current zoning</i></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Current zoning without 2 bonus floors</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would somewhat affect view • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-65 (+2 story res.); DB-75 (+2 story res.); UW-45; I-65 • Strong market support for mixed-use buildings up to 7 stories • Redevelopment sites: surface parking could redevelop 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 112 • Moderate action = 109 • Max action = 59 <p>"Important" on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view in the Comp Plan, remove the 2-story bonus option, and in the design guidelines, emphasize tower separation and roofline modulation to protect this view given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public support for protecting this view, and • Height limits (65' and 75') even without bonus floors are market supported.
<p>VIEW 6 From: Capitol Way and Union Ave To: Olympic Mountains</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would block view • Current zoning/ height limits: DB-75 (+2 story res.); UW-H-65 with 8ft. setback @35'; UW-35 • Strong market support for mixed-use buildings up to 7 stories • Redevelopment sites: market support for projects with higher density 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 138 • Moderate action = 95 • Max action = 43 <p>"Somewhat important" on Survey 2</p>	<p>No further action given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mediocre public support for the view, • The legal challenges to downzoning small areas, especially when neighboring sites have already developed under current zoning with heights that block the same view, and • Public desire for a lively, active streetscape in the Capitol-to-Market area, which development here would facilitate.

*In the 3D model images, colored blocks represent maximum build out under current zoning (i.e., simple masses) and do not intend to demonstrate architecturally designed buildings.

**Combined responses are from 9/17 Workshop & Online Survey #3

VIEW* From a public observation point to a landmark	EXISTING CONDITIONS	PUBLIC INPUT**	RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE
<p>VIEW 7</p> <p>From: Percival Landing</p> <p>To: Capitol Dome</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would not block view • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-H-35 and UW-35; RM-H-35 per SMP • Limited space for new development • Redevelopment sites: market support for higher density projects 	<p>Would potential zoning build out negatively affect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No = 198 • Yes = 50 • Not sure = 40 <p>Not included on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view in the Comp Plan given the public support for this view and the importance of landmark views in the Waterfront Character Area. No additional action is required, as current zoning does not affect the view and height increases are not under consideration. (Note that even an additional story would not block the view.)</p>
<p>VIEW 8</p> <p>From: East Bay Lookout</p> <p>To: Capitol Dome</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would block view • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-65 (+2 story res.); DB-75 (+2 story res.) • Existing trees may block view when in season • Council voted to keep 65' height limit at shoreline during SMP • Strong market support for buildings up to 6 stories • Redevelopment sites: market support for projects with higher density 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 114 • Max action = 81 • Moderate action = 74 <p>"Important" on Survey 2</p>	<p>Though the view is seen as important and many community members wanted to see some action taken to protect this view, no further action is recommended as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing trees currently limit the view, • The East Bay Overlook (View 9 in this study) has a similar view that would be more easily protected, • On online Survey 4, community members prioritized pedestrian-oriented lively streets, access to housing, vibrant retail, and job opportunities over view protection for this view, all of which would be facilitated by market-supported development, • The market supports up to 6-story buildings here, and • Council recently voted to maintain the 65' height limit.

*In the 3D model images, colored blocks represent maximum build out under current zoning (i.e., simple masses) and do not intend to demonstrate architecturally designed buildings.

**Combined responses are from 9/17 Workshop & Online Survey #3

VIEW* From a public observation point to a landmark	EXISTING CONDITIONS	PUBLIC INPUT**	RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE
<p>VIEW 9</p> <p>From: East Bay Overlook</p> <p>To: Capitol Dome</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would block view • Current zoning/ height limits: UW-65 (+2 story res.); DB-75 (+2 story res.) • Strong market support for buildings up to 6 stories • Redevelopment sites: market support for projects with higher density 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 117 • Moderate action = 96 • Max action = 54 <p>Not included on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view, remove the 2-story bonus option, and in the design guidelines, emphasize tower separation and roofline modulation to protect this view given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the community values East Bay views of the Capitol Dome and wanted to see some action taken, • The similar “View 8” is extremely challenging to protect, and • The market does not currently support buildings taller than 65’, so removing the bonus option would not be an unfair economic impact.
<p>VIEW 10</p> <p>From: Deschutes Parkway</p> <p>To: Mt Rainier</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build out under existing zoning would somewhat affect view • Current zoning/ height limits: CHD (DB-75 and UR): height varies from 65 to 80 ft; UW-H-65 with 8 ft. setback @35’) • Strong market support for mixed-use buildings up to 7 stories • Redevelopment sites: very desirable place for redevelopment 	<p>What level of action should City take to protect this view? Combined responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take no action = 121 • Moderate action = 79 • Max action = 76 <p>Not included on Survey 2</p>	<p>Memorialize this as a landmark view. Moderate action, including further analysis, is recommended because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members valued this view and many wanted to see it protected, • Maximum action would unfairly impact specific property owners (and would be legally challenging), especially given that neighboring development has already been built under current height limits, • Maximum action would be unwarranted as multistory development is desired in the Capitol Way South and Southeast Neighborhood Character Areas and supported by the market, and community members ranked pedestrian-oriented lively streets, access to housing, vibrant retail, and job opportunities as more important than view protection in this area. <p>Moderate action, following further analysis, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designating a view corridor over the affected properties where tower separation, setbacks, and step backs would be required to preserve and/or frame the view, and • Adopting roofline modulation and tower separation design guidelines.

*In the 3D model images, colored blocks represent maximum build out under current zoning (i.e., simple masses) and do not intend to demonstrate architecturally designed buildings.

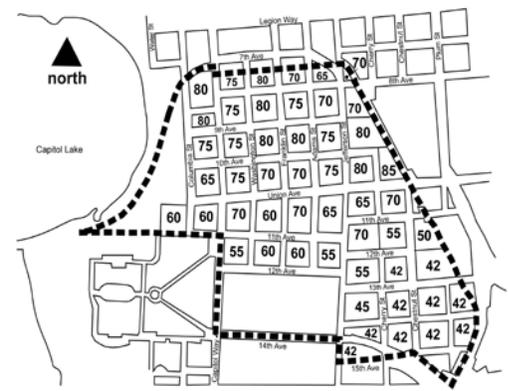
**Combined responses are from 9/17 Workshop & Online Survey #3

State Capitol Group Height District (CHD)

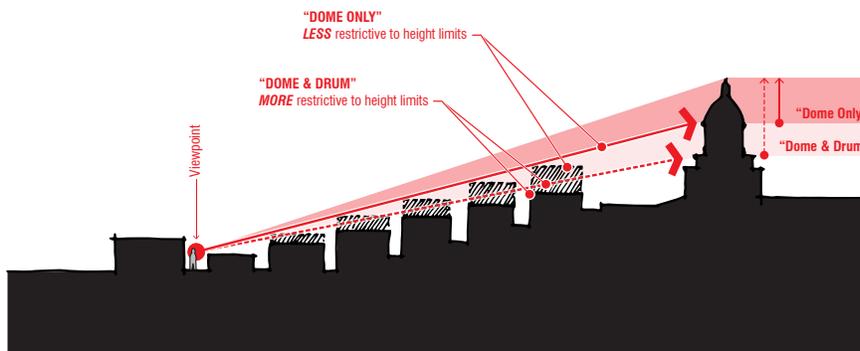
The intent of the special height district in 18.10 of the Olympia Municipal Code is “to protect the scenic beauty of the State of Washington Capitol Group for the citizens of this state and for out-of-state visitors.” To implement this, the allowable height for any building or structure within the area is prescribed as depicted at right, or by a special formula provided in the code.

Dome/drum definition. Defining the “Capitol” as the *dome only* vs the *dome and drum* affects any regulations preserving these views, as well as the number and extent of public views. The diagram below illustrates the distinction. Protecting the dome only would be less challenging than attempting to preserve views of both the dome and drum. Because the dome is the most distinguishing feature of the Capitol building and public feedback advised against onerous view preservation, **the landmark view has been defined as the Capitol Dome.** However, where significant views exist, development may be encouraged to preserve as much of the existing drum view as feasible since the view may benefit the sense of place for Downtown Olympia.

State Capitol Group Height District



CHD height limits. (Figure from OMC 18.10.)

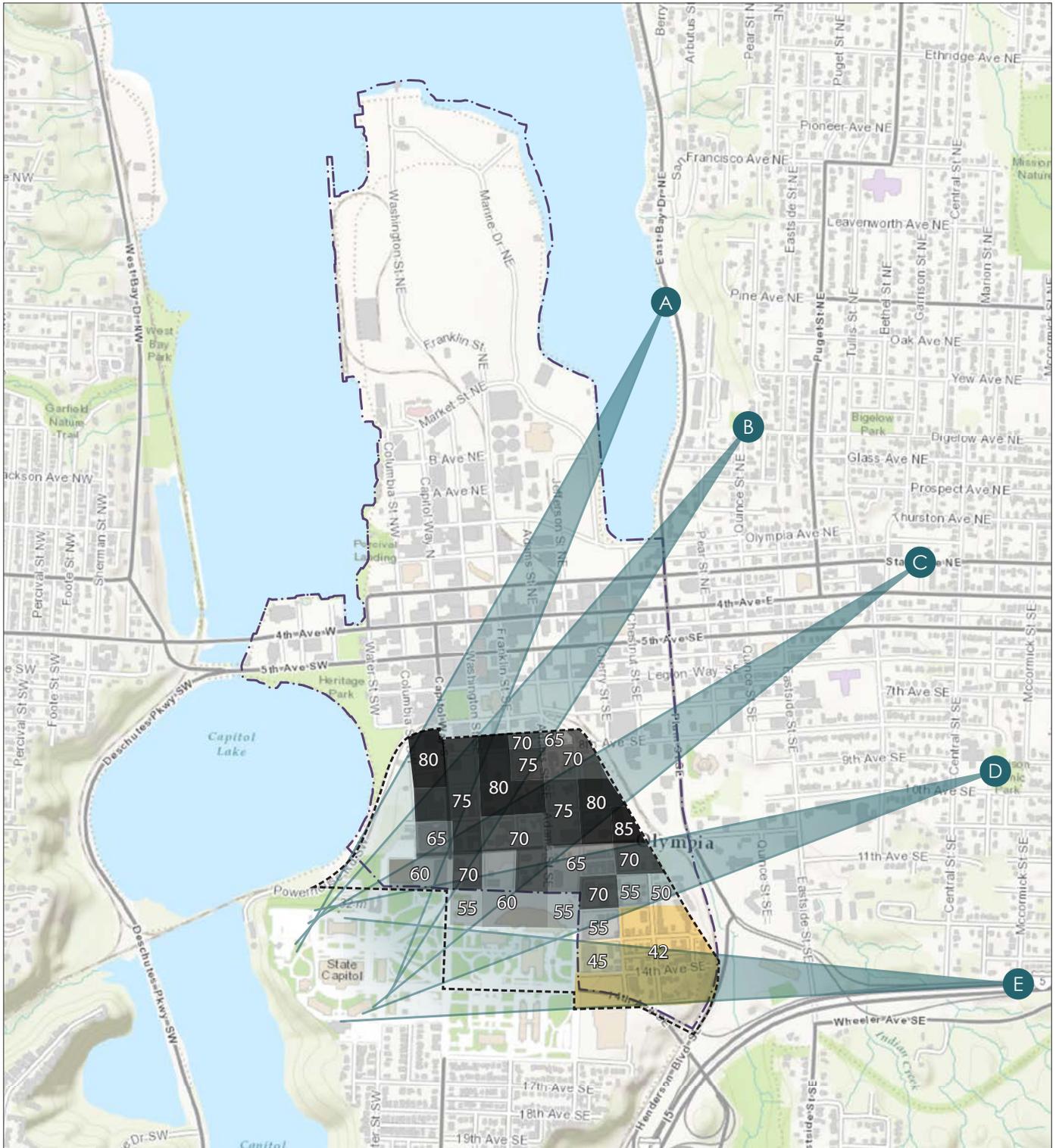


“Capitol” defined as dome only vs dome and drum and affect on height limits/preservation measures (diagram not to scale)

Public views of the Capitol. Early analysis answered the question about public views of the Capitol within the CHD. While there are some public views of the Capitol dome/drum within the CHD, mostly along rights-of-way (e.g., 8th Ave and Franklin St), none were raised in the public process as important views to protect, and the CHD regulations would not protect these views. Thus, the analysis shifted to examine the views mapped in “View Corridors over the CHD” on page 60. These views were selected because they transect the CHD. Note that:

- Views A and D were included with the set of 10 views analyzed during the DTS process;
- Views B and C were identified as important by the public, but not included in the DTS work since they involve lands outside of the planning area; these views have been noted for further exploration as part of a future citywide views analysis;

VIEW CORRIDORS OVER THE CHD



VIEW CORRIDORS

- A** East Bay Overlook (a.k.a. View #9)
- B** Bigelow Ave and Quince St
- C** Henry St and State Ave
- D** Madison Scenic Park (a.k.a. View #3)
- E** I-5 south/westbound entry to Olympia

 Capitol Heights District

- View E did not come up during the process, but is a notable view from I-5 to the Capitol Group.

42' height limit. As part of the Downtown Strategy's analysis to recommend potential zoning updates, the planning team looked at height limits. A question arose about the continued purpose of the 42' maximum allowable height for certain parcels within the Capital Heights District. The area is in the Southeast Downtown Neighborhood. Given the potential and desire for housing development in this area, the planning team explored whether important views of the Capitol Dome were being preserved by the height limits, and if increased height limits could be explored.

Public views of the Capitol Dome and their results include:

- **View A (a.k.a. View #9) – East Bay Overlook:** Zones closer to the viewpoint, not the CHD, affect the view. See recommendations in chart above.
- **View B – Bigelow Ave and Quince St:** Current zoning does not block the view. It appears additional height in the CHD would not block this view. (This view was partially analyzed early in the process as view BB.)
- **View C – Henry St and State Ave:** Existing zoning in the Downtown does not affect the view. It appears additional height in the CHD would not block this view. (This view was partially analyzed early in the process as view AA.)
- **View D – Madison Scenic Park (a.k.a. View #3):** Existing zoning does not affect the view. It appears additional height in the CHD would not block this view. However, because the 42' height area runs alongside this corridor, further analysis may be warranted to visualize any impacts from raised height limits on the view.
- **View E – I-5 South:** The view corridor transects the blocks where heights are limited to 42'. This appears to be an important landmark view "for the citizens of this state and for out-of-state visitors." If this view is determined to be significant and height limit increases are considered, further analysis would be required. The purpose would be to facilitate housing development in the Southeast Downtown Neighborhood Area.



Google Earth model of Bigelow Ave and Quince St view of Capitol with current zoning maximum in orange and peach blocks.



Google Earth model of Henry St and State Ave view of Capitol with current zoning maximum in peach and orange blocks.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

D.1 Update design guidelines for building and site development that organizes the several different design review chapters into a single, easy to use tool to address key design objectives.

Timeframe

Begin early 2017. A scope of work is included in the [Appendix D1](#).

Lead

Community Planning and Development

Partners and Participants

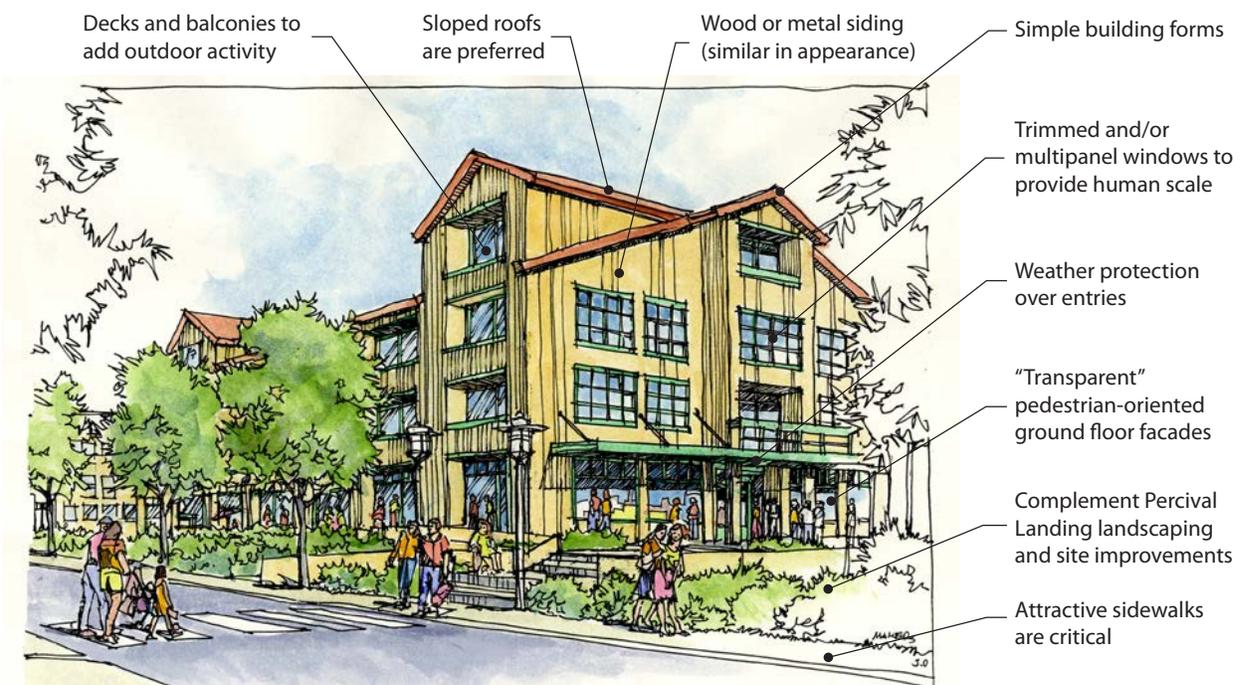
- City Community Planning and Development staff and consultant team;
- A technical committee to include members of the Design Review Board, Heritage Commission, Parks and Recreation Committee, architects, designers and developers;
- City Council;
- Planning Commission;
- Public

Description and Intent

Design guidelines are an important community development tool that can supplement land use zoning regulations to address more detailed concerns related to the character and quality of architectural and site design. Successful design guidelines address more than strictly aesthetic objectives. Rather, they derive their rationale and significance by addressing functional and human objectives such as access, maintenance, safety, cost and compatibility with neighboring properties. Properly applied, they can increase a Downtown's economic viability as well as its identity and attractiveness. Generally, design guidelines are more flexible than zoning standards, and allow for a productive dialog between the project applicant, City reviewers and the public.

There are currently six different chapters of design guidelines applicable to Downtown Olympia, leading to confusion and inefficient design review. These chapters should be integrated into a single set of design guidelines with a checklist, illustrations and examples to facilitate the design review process. Other objectives that the design guidelines should address include:

- Provisions that address the unique character and special development opportunities in the different character areas, such as in the following images.

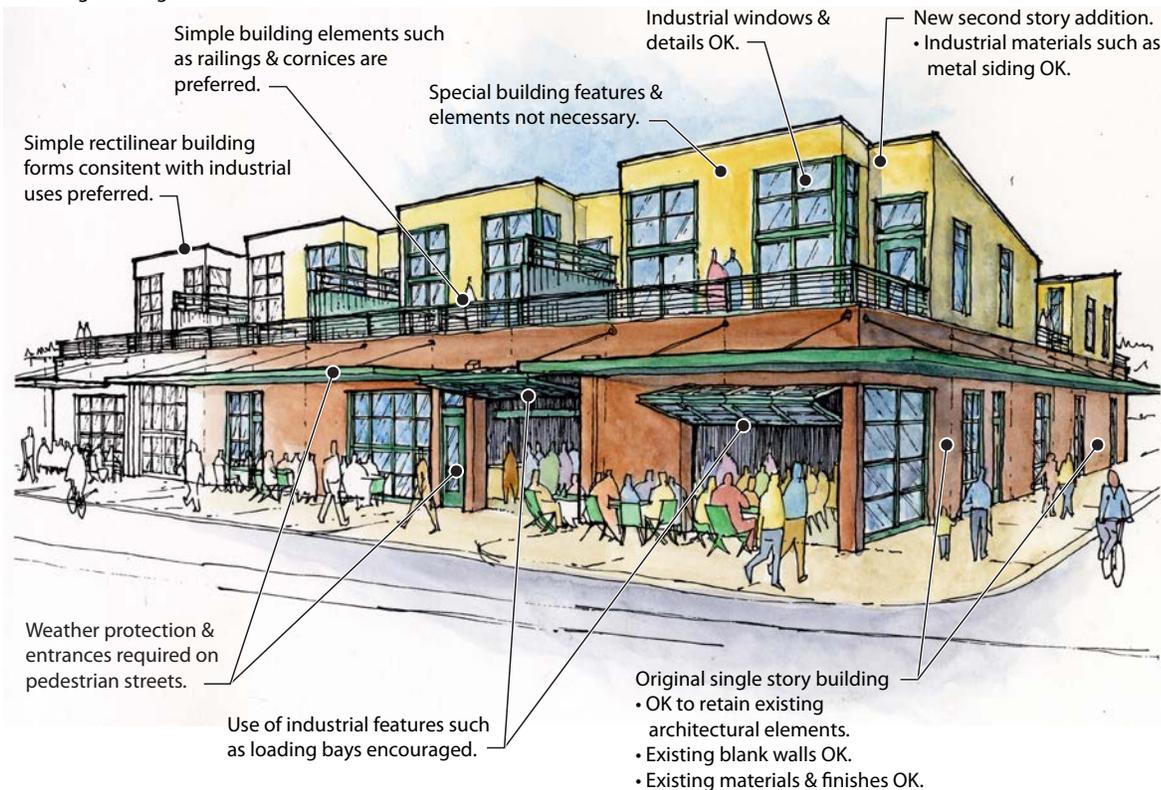


Waterfront Area design guidance

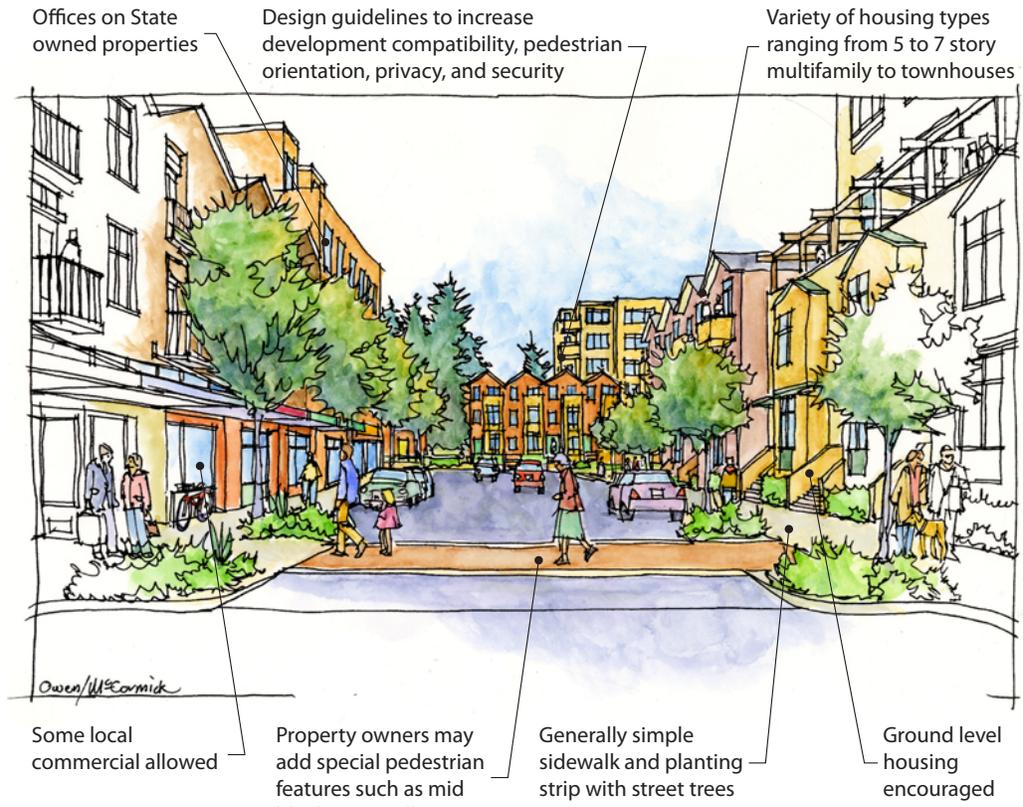


Entertainment District design guidance

New addition may either conform or contrast with existing building.



Artisan/Tech District design guidance



Southeast Downtown Neighborhood design guidance

- Various updates to address site planning and design, pedestrian access, amenities, open space, and building design
- Added provisions to address safety and security, historic character, pedestrian oriented streets and other objectives.
- Guidelines for mixed use development
- Improved guidelines and recommendations for the review of projects within the Historic District.
- Coordination with the new street design standards proposed in this Downtown Strategy
- Consistency with other zoning code sections such as parking requirements and landscaping standards.
- Requirements for nonresidential storefronts – essential locations & design to promote active streetscapes
- View protection updates

The guidelines should be flexible and focused; but not onerous. They should incorporate illustrative sketches, photos and diagrams.

Relationship to Other Actions

- T.1 & T.3** Coordination with the process to update street standards is very important.
- LU.3** The design guidelines should be coordinated with any changes to the Zoning Code.
- D.2** The design guidelines should be coordinated with new sign code provisions.
- D.5 & D.6** The design guidelines should be coordinated with wayfinding and gateway improvements.

Implementation Steps

1. MAKERS was retained to assist with design guideline update (2016).
2. Staff and consultant team prepare design guidelines, with help from a technical committee, and conduct public engagement (2017).
3. Olympia Planning Commission and City Council review and adopt the updated design guidelines (2017).

D.2 Update sign code to address unique Downtown needs and character.

Description and Intent

An effort to update the City's citywide sign code was launched in 2016. This effort will consider how signs can enhance unique character areas in the Downtown, with particular attention to the Entertainment Area and historic core. Business interests and sign manufacturers should be involved, and overall the appearance of Downtown appearance should be a priority. Use best practices regarding visual perception, signage effectiveness, and geometric placement.

Timeframe

Underway in 2016-2017.

Lead

Community Planning and Development

Key Relationship to Other Actions

- D-1** The design guidelines should be coordinated with new sign code provisions.

D.3 Inventory historic architecture in Downtown.

Timeframe

Underway in 2017.

Lead

Community Planning and Development

Partners and Participants

- Heritage Commission
- Olympia Downtown Association

Description and Intent

The City was recently awarded a Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation grant to conduct a historical architecture survey that will provide a reliable, consistent baseline of information on all buildings within a 75-block radius of the Downtown core. The City has hired Artifacts Consulting, Inc. to complete this work, and the project is underway.

The historic inventory will help identify buildings or groups of buildings that can be considered historically significant. This may lead to expansion of the historic district or register properties, along with opportunities to incentivize reuse of older buildings. The inventory should be accompanied by research to identify incentives and restoration resources for historic preservation activities.



Current historic district boundary (brown dashed line) and inventory area (blue line)

Relationship to Other Actions

- D.1** The historic preservation work should be coordinated with preparation of design guidelines.
- D.4** The inventory results will inform any changes to the historic district boundary and historic buildings register.

D.4 Examine potential expansion of historic district boundary and/or historic designation of additional structures.

Description and Intent

Consider adding key historic properties to the register of historic places to support their preservation and make them eligible for tax credits. The City may also consider expanding the historic district boundary to include some key adjacent properties that are currently not included. However, expanding the boundary should be done judiciously as including buildings of lesser significance would dilute the overall integrity of the historic district.

This will be informed by the historic architecture inventory described in D.3.

Key Relationship to Other Actions

- D-1** This effort might inform the design guidelines for the core.
- D-4** The historic and cultural resources inventory is necessary for this action.

Implementation Steps

1. Conduct historic resources inventory (completed 2017), then
2. Work with listed partners to designate eligible structures to the register. Applications for new designations can come in any time and are handled through the City's existing historic preservation program.
3. Work with the Heritage Commission and property owners to explore possible changes to the Downtown Historic District Boundary.

Timeframe

Following the 2017 inventory.

Lead

Community Planning and Development

Partners and Participants

- Property owners;
- State Historic Preservation Officer;
- Heritage Commission

D.5 Develop an art and wayfinding plan that adds more public art and wayfinding to the streetscape in a well-coordinated fashion.

Timeframe

2018-2019

Lead

Parks, Arts, and Recreation

Partners and Participants

- Public Works,
- Community Planning and Development,
- City Council,
- Olympia community

Description and Intent

Connecting people, places and spaces has been the primary goal of the Downtown Strategy. As the physical connections (streets and trails) and destinations are improved, signs and other wayfinding devices should encourage locals and visitors to explore and travel between Downtown's attractions. A combination of wayfinding and art elements can also be used to promote the attributes of each character area.

Clear and well-designed wayfinding devices ease the process of discovering new places and bolster the identity of the community. Appropriate wayfinding should be provided for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Specifically, the public process identified a need for better wayfinding at Downtown entry points and to direct drivers to convenient parking options. The Capitol Campus Master Plan also calls for new wayfinding on the Campus, presenting an opportunity to coordinate and provide more seamless connections between Downtown and the campus.

Wayfinding is not new to the City, as steps have been taken in recent years to add directional signage to light poles near key attractions and walking maps to traffic boxes. The advantage to developing a plan is to better define art and wayfinding needs, opportunities, and goals; identify opportunities to integrate ideas into street improvements, art installations and design guidelines; and coordinate their implementation. The plan may offer ways to further distinguish and enhance the character areas, address physical limitations and opportunities (e.g., how wayfinding devices might fit in a typical streetscape), coordinate an efficient and useful network of directional signs, and suggest ideal locations for public art.

The City is currently beginning a public process to develop a Gateway Art Plan for the city. While none of the "Gateways" are within Downtown, this Downtown effort might be informed by the citywide Gateway plan and follow a similar process. Artwork, gateway, and wayfinding elements will all be more effective if considered together.

Key Relationships to Other Actions

- T.1** The five repaving/ streetscape projects should include wayfinding and art.
- T.9** Waterfront improvements may include wayfinding signs and interpretive displays, especially along the Olympia Waterfront Route.
- R.1** The Downtown marketing strategy and entertainment district promotion may inform and benefit from wayfinding strategies.
- D.6** The art and wayfinding plan should establish goals for the Plum/Union and Capitol Way/Union gateway signs.

D.6 Upgrade/establish gateway signage at key locations such as Plum Street and Union, and Capitol Way and Union.

Description and Intent

Two major entries into Downtown include the intersections of Plum and Union and Capitol Way and Union. There is an opportunity to provide a more obvious and attractive entrance into Downtown at these locations. The effort may include signage, landscaping, and art. Current signage on Plum uses an old City logo and should be updated. Coordination with the art and wayfinding plan described in Action D.5, the citywide Gateways plan, and State Capitol Campus wayfinding efforts would ensure a cohesive strategy and design.

Key Relationships to Other Actions

- D.5** This project should follow the art and wayfinding plan and implement its goals and vision for these entries.

Timeframe

2019-2021

Lead

Exec – Communications

Partners and Participants

- Public Works;
- Parks, Arts, and Recreation

D.7 Implement view protection objectives by memorializing designated views in the Comprehensive Plan, updating view protection standards, and taking moderate action to protect views of concern.

Timeframe

Update design guidelines in 2017

Update Comprehensive Plan in 2018

Lead

Community Planning and Development

Partners and Participants

- Same as D.1;
- Property owners for any regulatory action

Description and Intent

The views analysis and associated public feedback identified significant public views, some of which may need additional protection measures for their preservation. The City will update the Comprehensive Plan to memorialize the following landmark views:

- State Capitol Campus Promontory to Budd Inlet
- Madison Scenic Park to Capitol Dome/Black Hills
- Puget Sound Navigation Channel to Capitol Dome
- West Bay Park to Mount Rainier
- Percival Landing to Capitol Dome
- East Bay Overlook to Capitol Dome
- Deschutes Parkway to Mount Rainier
- Views identified early in the process that were unlikely to be blocked (list to be confirmed as part of the Comprehensive Plan update (see [Appendix D.2](#)))

Of these, a few require additional measures as current zoning allows development that could potentially impact the view. These views and their associated actions are as follows:

- **West Bay Park to Mount Rainier:** Eliminate the 2-story bonus option and emphasize tower separation and roofline modulation in the design guidelines;
- **East Bay Overlook to Capitol Dome:** Eliminate the 2-story bonus option and emphasize tower separation and roofline modulation in design guideline;
- **Deschutes Parkway to Mount Rainier:** Analyze further to determine appropriate “moderate” measures to protect or frame this view. Options include: 1) implementing a view corridor where required separation between buildings, setbacks, and upper story step backs preserve and/or frame the view and/or 2) design guidelines that require roofline modulation and tower separation to improve the view (while not fully protecting the existing view).

If height increases are considered in the CHD's 42' height limit area to facilitate housing development in the Southeast Downtown Neighborhood, further analysis is warranted for the following views:

- Madison Scenic Park to Capitol Dome, and
- I-5 South to Capitol Dome.

Additionally, update the Code to clarify that in terms of view protection, the Capitol Dome is defined as the dome only, not including the drum.

See maps in [Appendix D.4](#) for properties that may be affected by these measures. The City will update view protection standards and guidelines as part of the 2017 Design Guidelines update.

Home » Community » Downtown » Downtown Strategy

Olympia's Downtown Strategy

Featured Links

- [Downtown Vision & Goals](#)
- [View 2017 Implementation Items](#)
- [Downtown Zoning & Basic Standards](#)
- [Downtown Design Districts and Standards](#)
- [First Floor Land Use Inventory Map](#)
- [Downtown Development Projects Map](#)
- [Community Renewal Area \(CRA\)](#)
- [Action Plan](#)
- [Grow Olympia Fund](#)

Navigation

- [About Olympia](#)
- [Diversity & Equity](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Regional Links](#)
- [Getting Around](#)
- [Visiting the Capitol](#)
- [Parks, Arts & Recreation](#)

What's Next?

The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to City Council regarding adoption.

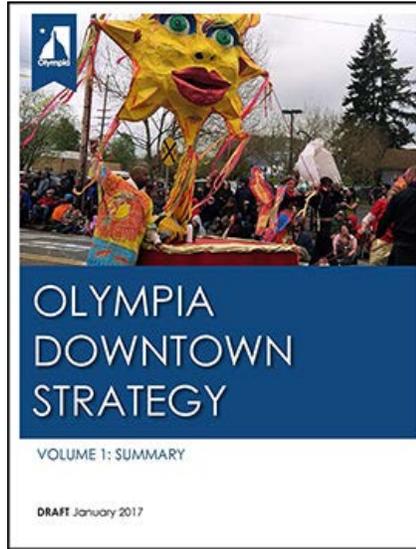
What is the Downtown Strategy?

The Downtown Strategy (DTS) will help to make the [community's vision and goals for Downtown](#) a reality. Our vision is for Downtown to be a more vibrant and attractive place to live, work and play. Based on an extensive public process, the Strategy also:

- Identifies community priorities
- Outlines realistic and impactful actions for the next five years
- Guides budgets and work plans
- Builds community partnerships
- Helps us market Downtown

[View the DTS Summary](#)

Additional background chapters are below.



Elements of the Strategy



Land Use

Focuses on development regulations and other City planning actions to support our vision of Downtown as a thriving multifunctional urban center - especially the community's desire for a family-friendly waterfront.

- [View Chapter](#)



Development Incentives

Describes 48 tools that support business and development goals, including funding methods, regulatory measures, programs and collaborative activities. Though many are already in use, the DTS recommends additions.

- [View Chapter](#)
- [View Appendicies](#)

- [Appendix 1: Toolbox](#)
- [Appendix 2: SEPA Memo](#)
- [Appendix 3: Impact Fee Memo](#)
- [Appendix 4: Utility Hook Up Memo](#)

Design

Addresses design-related actions toward a more attractive

Action Plan
 PUTTING OUR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INTO ACTION

New
 FINANCING OPTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

CRA
 OLYMPIA'S COMMUNITY RENEWAL AREA PROGRAM

City Calendar

- 03/10 - 3:15 p.m. [Ad Hoc Committee on Housing Affordability](#)
- 03/11 - 10:00 a.m. [Volunteer Work Party](#)
- 03/12 - 10:00 a.m. [Volunteer Work Party](#)
- 03/13 - 4:30 p.m. [Special Meeting of the General Government Committee](#)
- 03/13 - 5:30 p.m. [LEOFF Disability Board](#)

→ [View full calendar...](#)

City Updates

2017 WATER QUALITY REPORT. The City's annual water quality report is now available and shows that Olympia meets all State and Federal drinking water standards. [More...](#)

SANCTUARY CITY. Read Mayor Selby's statement on Olympia's commitment to remain a Sanctuary City in the face of increased pressure. [More...](#)

2017 PRELIMINARY OPERATING BUDGET. The [2017 Preliminary Operating Budget](#) is available for viewing.

2017-2022 ADOPTED CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN. The [2017-2022 Adopted Capital Facilities Plan](#) is now available to view online. For more information on Olympia's Budget process or how you can be involved please see our [Budget 365 page](#)

OLYMPIA MUNICIPAL CODE. Quick link to codes and standards including [Olympia Municipal Code](#).

MEETINGS. [Agenda and Minutes](#) for City Council and most advisory committees.

feedback



and high quality urban environment, including design guidelines, wayfinding and art, historic preservation, and view protection measures.

- [View Chapter](#)
- [View Appendices](#)

- [Appendix 1: Scope for Design Guidelines Update](#)
- [Appendix 2: Views Analysis Process](#)
- [Appendix 3: Public Workshop 3 Views Presentation](#)
- [Appendix 4: Support Graphics \(Views\)](#)



Transportation

New street design concepts and investments to achieve the Strategy's vision of "Connecting People, Places and Spaces" – While all modes are considered, there is a special focus on pedestrians and bikes.

- [View Chapter](#)
- [View Appendices](#)

- [Appendix 1: Conceptual Palette of Street Elements](#)



Homelessness, Street Dependency & Social Services

Focuses on the importance of taking next steps to address the human needs and impacts associated with homelessness in Downtown Olympia.

- [View Chapter](#)



Housing

Outlines proactive actions the City can take to help set the stage for strong, resilient Downtown neighborhood(s) with housing options for households with a wide range of incomes.

- [View Chapter](#)
- [View Appendices](#)

- [Appendix 1: Market Analysis](#)
- [Appendix 2: Feasibility Analysis](#)
- [Appendix 3: Housing Affordability Memo](#)



Retail Business, Community & Economic Development

Outlines a 6-point retail strategy with actions the City and partners can take to promote a vibrant, dynamic business environment that attracts people, activity and investment.

- [View Chapter](#)
- [View Appendices](#)

- [Appendix 1: Market Analysis](#)
- [Appendix 2: Business Forum Report](#)

Developing the Strategy - How We Got Here

[Step 1: Gathering Information - COMPLETE](#)

In Step 1 we will gather information and analyze downtown conditions and goals, leading to the identification of more specific objectives.

Deliverables for Step 1

- Preliminary real estate, job, housing and retail market analysis, describing how the

different sectors interact and influence the Downtown's overall economic vitality.

- Mapping of sub-districts (areas of special character or function) within the downtown strategy area

Results from Step 1

- [Step 1 Summary Report](#)
- [Results from online survey 1](#)

[Step 2: Evaluate Alternatives - COMPLETE](#)

Step 2 evaluates alternatives for land use, urban form and design, circulation, streetscape, high level parking strategies, and housing and social service measures.

Deliverables for Step 2

- Identification of priority viewsheds, and analysis of how these could be protected through urban form alternatives, and the impacts to economic, housing and other goals.
- Meeting with representatives of housing and social program providers to craft proposals that address housing and social support programs in downtown.
- Analyze feasibility of various development types, and the economic implications.
- Inform the scope of City's upcoming parking strategy with a general comparative analysis of what parking issues might arise under different land use options.

Results from Step 2

- [Step 2 Summary Report](#)
- [Q & A from Workshop #2](#)
- [Notes from Meeting with Social Service Providers](#)

[Step 3: Urban Design - COMPLETE](#)

Step 3 will develop a preferred land use & urban design strategy, and related real estate, housing, business and retail strategies.

Deliverables for Step 3

- Develop a comprehensive downtown street improvement strategy that describes concepts appropriate for sub-districts, and includes schematics for 5 streets segments in the core that will be transformed over the next 6 years.
- Meet with Design Review Board and Heritage Commission to discuss priorities for historic preservation and design guidelines.
- Meet with housing and social services to identify implementation measures, including the resources and organizational collaboration necessary to carry them out.

Results from Step 3

- [Step 3 Report](#)
- [Results from Online Survey #3](#)

Development & Business Forum #1

- [Executive Summary](#)

Urban Design Discussion

- [Video - event presentations](#) 
- [Presentation with e-polling results](#)

[Step 4: Develop Tools - COMPLETE](#)

Phase 4 will develop recommendations for zoning, view protection, design code amendments, and business and real estate incentives.

Deliverables for Step 4

- Provide design concept illustrations, and review design recommendations with the Design Review Board.
- Meet with housing and social services to identify implementation measures, including the resources and organizational collaboration necessary to carry them out.
- Discussion of potential SEPA exemptions for minor construction projects and infill exemption areas, along with methods to address historic and cultural resources.
- Draft a time phased implementation strategy that integrates recommended elements.

Results from Step 4

DTS Workshop #3

- [Powerpoint Presentation](#)
- [Workshop Results](#)
- [Online Survey #4 Results](#)

Development & Business Forum #2

- [Executive Summary](#)

[Step 5 - Draft Report Available](#)

In Step 5 the Draft Downtown Strategy will be reviewed by the Olympia Planning Commission, leading to adoption by the City Council.

Deliverables for Step 5

- The Olympia Planning Commission will review the draft Downtown Strategy for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Commission and Council review process, including any workshops, public hearings or other opportunities.

Step 5 Public Meetings

- **Open House for Draft Downtown Strategy:** (Done)
- **Open House & Planning Commission Briefing:** February 6, 5-6:30 p.m. (Open House), 6:30 p.m. (OPC Briefing) Olympia City Hall
- **Public Hearing:** February 27, 6:30 p.m., Olympia City Hall (Tentative)

[Stakeholder Work Group](#)

A group of 15 citizen and other stakeholder representatives advised staff and consultants in preparation of public workshop materials.

- [Letter from the Stakeholder Group](#)
- [Role of the Stakeholder Group](#)
- [Stakeholder Work Group Bios](#)

Questions?

Contact Amy Buckler, Senior Planner at **360.570.5847** or dts@ci.olympia.wa.us

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