



Meeting Agenda

City Council

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360.753.8244

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

5:30 PM

Online and Via Phone

Study Session

Attend: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89248978971?
pwd=bk1jbUw3VEZBb3k2UXd5aGJIYVZXZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89248978971?pwd=bk1jbUw3VEZBb3k2UXd5aGJIYVZXZz09)

1. ROLL CALL

2. BUSINESS ITEM

2.A [21-1156](#) Downtown Strategy Update

Attachments: [2022 Downtown Projects](#)
[Implementation Status](#)
[Downtown Strategy webpage](#)

3. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources. If you require accommodation for your attendance at the City Council meeting, please contact the Council's Executive Assistant at 360.753.8244 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. For hearing impaired, please contact us by dialing the Washington State Relay Service at 7-1-1 or 1.800.833.6384.



City Council

Downtown Strategy Update

Agenda Date: 12/7/2021
Agenda Item Number: 2.A
File Number: 21-1156

Type: study session **Version:** 1 **Status:** Study Session

Title

Downtown Strategy Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Discussion only - no action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing and discussion of the Downtown Strategy implementation.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Strategic Projects Manager, Community Planning & Development, 360.280.8947

Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Strategic Projects Manager, Community Planning & Development

Background and Analysis:

The Downtown Strategy (DTS) was adopted in 2017. It identifies a design framework, priorities and actions to move our vision for downtown forward. Over the past four years, the City has accomplished many of the actions in the DTS - See attached Implementation Status.

During this time period, the City has also had to pivot to address new challenges and opportunities that were not anticipated during the DTS process. While this has slowed down the original implementation timeline, the City and partners continue to make steady progress toward downtown goals. Exciting projects are on the horizon for 2022 - see attached Project List.

At the meeting, staff will review the Downtown Strategy, what we've accomplished so far and where we are headed in the coming year.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

An estimated 3,500 people engaged in formation of the Downtown Strategy through public

workshops; online surveys; business/development forums; and a Stakeholder Work Group. The Downtown Strategy is still referenced by community members today.

Options:

1. Receive an update on the Downtown Strategy.
2. Do not receive an update on the Downtown Strategy.
3. Receive an update on the Downtown Strategy at another time.

Financial Impact:

Estimated investment in implementation will be provided at the meeting.

Attachments:

2022 Downtown Projects
Downtown Strategy Implementation Status
Downtown Strategy Webpage



Downtown Projects List 2022

A vibrant urban destination

- Implement partnership with Downtown Alliance for COVID Response and Reopening (*re-opening campaign, Creative District development, business recruitment, crime prevention through design, placemaking/events*)
- Add public art component to the Franklin Street improvement project
- Develop Peace Park at Fertile Grounds
- Initiate activation of 108 State Ave (Old Fire Hall)
- Re-envision Percival Landing
- Open seasonal ice rink
- Launch PBIA/Arts Commission Self-Guided Mural Tours
- Launch PBIA Downtown Recovery Project
- Develop City communications strategy for downtown
- Continue marketing partnership with Downtown Alliance
- Initiate Art & Wayfinding plan
- Initiate planning for structured parking/mixed use building

Safe, clean and welcoming for all

- Implement Downtown Clean and Safe Program
 - Expansion of Ambassadors, Clean Team, Crisis Response and Familiar Faces*
 - Walking Patrol visibility and connection to businesses*
 - Crime prevention through environmental design (ODA contract)*
 - Lighting enhancements by PBIA and ODA*
 - Alley activation and lighting*
 - Vegetation management*
 - Enhance coordination of downtown teams*
- Remove blighted Griswold building (to be replaced by new "Old 99 Flats" Mixed Use Bldg.)
- Pursue additional EPA brownfield grants



Downtown Projects List 2022

A mix of housing for all income levels

- Implement the Housing Action Plan
 - o Expand use of multifamily tax exemption and maximize its use for affordable housing*
 - o Adopt tenant protections (includes consideration of relocation assistance)*
 - o Review fees/regulations to identify housing cost reductions*
 - o Explore parking reductions, including potential expansion of downtown parking exemption*
 - o Consider including housing when developing real estate*
- Develop the former Griswold's property with affordable housing ("Old 99 Flats")
- Acquire Quince Street property for future permanent supportive housing
- Move the mitigation site out of the downtown core (relates to One Community: Healthy Housed and Safe Plan)
- 439 new downtown housing units are in the permit pipeline, with 281 of these expected to be under construction or leasing in 2022

Engaging arts and entertainment

- Creative District Development (*contract with the Olympia Downtown Alliance to actively engage stakeholders, form a leadership team and grow district identity and placemaking*)
- Public outreach and planning for the Armory/Creative Campus concept
- Changes to zoning and regulations to allow for a greater variety of building uses within the Creative District
- Use LTAC funds to support local arts and entertainment partners
- Install Creative District Highway signage
- Explore a Cultural Access Program
- Install a Squaxin Land Acknowledgment with an art feature on Percival Landing



Master List

*O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed*

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
DONE – The City has completed these actions, in some cases implementing resulting steps				
LU.1	Form a Sea Level Response (SLR) Plan	PW	CPD; OPARD; Fire; OPD; LOTT; Port; State	Adopted in 2018. Implementation underway: Collaborative City/Port governance structure formed 2021; Installation of 22 tide gates nearly complete; Shoreline Management Program updated for consistency; Staff continues to monitor funding opportunities and coordinate with LOTT to prepare for flooding emergencies; Tide gage monitor to be installed soon.
LU.6.A	Establish Downtown as an urban infill exemption area for SEPA	CPD	OPC	Adopted in 2017. Environmental needs/impacts are addressed upfront in the development code, which eliminates the need for additional environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) at the project permit phase.
LU.7	Apply for an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant	CPD		Awarded in 2019, and currently pursuing a new round of funding. EPA assessment grants provide funding to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to contaminated soil or groundwater. To date, the City has completed/are actively working on 15 Phase I environmental site assessments (ESAs), 11 Phase II site ESAs (including 2 supplemental Phase II ESAs), and 1 cleanup plan. Several more Phase Is and Phase IIs are in the pipeline.
D.1	Update design guidelines	CPD	DRB; OHC; OPC; Steering Committee	Adopted in 2020. Addresses unique downtown needs and character and includes view protection updates based on 2016 views analysis.
D.2	Update sign code	CPD	OPC; Steering Committee	Adopted in 2019. Addresses unique downtown needs and character.
D.3	Inventory historic architecture in downtown – referred to as the “Reconnaissance Study”	CPD	OHC	Completed in 2017. Provides baseline of information on all buildings in a 75-block radius. Next step: On Heritage Commission Workplan to consider expanding historic district – big undertaking. Focus may be 4 th Ave and adjacent blocks to create 4 th Ave E historic district.
T.5	Develop a Transportation Master Plan	PW	CPD	Adopted in 2021. Citywide effort focused on creating a complete multi-modal transportation system (bikes, pedestrians, mobility devices, transit, cars, freight) included a closer look at Downtown. Improvements to 4 key downtown streets underway. See the Plan for 20-year project maps.



Master List

*O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed*

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
T.6	Update the Downtown Parking Strategy	CPD	PW; Steering Committee	Adopted in 2019. Implementation underway. New enforcement tools and new software implemented; strategy for the South Capital neighborhood completed; code/prices updated in 2020 and 2021; converting meters to pay-by-phone; Next steps for 2022: update lots for ADA; analyze expanding enforcement to Saturdays & evenings; wayfinding plan; continue assessing price adjustments relative to data; more meter conversations and expansion of pay-by-phone; initiate planning for mixed use bldg./structured parking.
T.7	Prepare and adopt a Street Tree Maintenance Manual	CPD	PW	Adopted in 2019 and updated in 2021. Informs maintenance and future street tree and streetscape plantings in downtown and along 10 major arterials. In 2022, if budgeted will plant trees in all vacant wells downtown over 5 years, replacing damaged trees and repairing adjacent sidewalks where necessary.
T.8	Complete an evening lighting audit	CPD	PW	Completed in 2019. Determines areas where more street and pedestrian lighting is needed. Upgrades underway. Next step: PBIA installing more overhead lighting in core, and alley lighting is part of 2022 clean and safe program.
HS.1	Convene a broad range of community stakeholders to form an action plan leading to a more coordinated response to homelessness/street dependency and the impacts to Downtown	CPD	County, Cities of Lacey and Tumwater; law enforcement; business community; social services	“The One Community: Healthy, Safe and Housed Plan” was completed in 2020. Implementation underway. Highlights: Scattered site pilot underway to improve hygiene and outreach at camps underway; All City-funded sites using Coordinated Entry; Hygiene, shelter and outreach at Mitigation Site improved; criteria and step by step procedures for camp removal developed; Crisis Response and Familiar Faces programs expanded; 120 units of permanent supportive housing funded. Next steps: Mitigation site will be moved to a new location outside the downtown core in 2022; City will continue funding for Mitigation, Plum Street Village, faith sites and make another Home Fund award; City is working with the County to open a safe parking site, which will enable us to address RV parking at Ensign Road.
HS.2	Initiate a discussion with regional policymakers about future social service siting needs throughout the region	City Council	Policy makers from other jurisdictions, Lacey, Tumwater, Yelm, Thurston Co.	Regional Housing Council formalized in 2020. The RHC’s primary purpose is to leverage resources and partnerships through policies and projects promoting equitable access to safe and affordable housing in Thurston County. The RHC will consider issues specifically related to funding a regional response to homelessness and affordable housing and how to better coordinate existing funding programs to implement the county's Five-Year Homeless Crisis Response Plan and increase affordable housing options.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
H.1	Develop a Comprehensive Housing Strategy to establish a mixed income residential community in Downtown - “Housing Action Plan”	CPD	Lacey, Tumwater, TRPC, HAT, various providers	Completed in 2021. Implementation underway – Highlights: revising the multifamily tax exemption to maximize use for affordable housing; sold former Griswold’s building for workforce housing; tenant protection ordinance; reviewing development code and fees to reduce construction costs. Next steps: reduce parking minimums for multifamily near frequent transit service.
R.1.A	Aim to accommodate a full-time walking patrol (6 officers all year)	OPD		Completed in 2018. Walking Patrol currently works from 6:20 AM to 8:40 PM. The unit is comprised of 6 officers and 1 sergeant.
R.1.F	Assess outcome of shared trash compactor pilot, and continue the program if it is successful	PW		The City has installed two shared compactors, and they are successful. Using City property, the cost to purchase and install a compactor is \$300k. There are no immediate plans to install more due to cost but will be further discussed as part of the Waste Resources Plan.
R.4.E	Identify additional steps to promote art and art activities in the Art/Tech and Entertainment areas – “Arts, Culture and Heritage Report”	OPARD	OPD; CPD; PW; Arts Commission	The Arts, Culture and Heritage Report was adopted in 2018. Implementation underway – Highlights: received Creative District designation; obtained the Armory for an arts and culture campus; supporting events; building and strengthening partnerships. Next steps: Concept plan for the Armory; Creative District Development (ODA contract); Explore cultural access program.
LU.2.A	Interim Plan for the Isthmus		CPD; OPARD; PW	Purchased and took down two blighted buildings in 2015. In 2018, interim improvements were made to restore the area for public access and enjoyment. Seasonal skate park and ice rink are popular.
T.1.A	Redo Legion Way SE			Completed in 2020. Festival Street; Improved pedestrian access; Connected bike lanes and installed bike sharrows.
H.2	Dedicate additional resources for an ongoing housing program to implement the Housing Strategy.			As of 2019, the City of Olympia has a new housing and homelessness division.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
ONGOING – The City implements these actions on an ongoing basis as part of existing programs				
LU.8	Explore how City-owned properties could be redeveloped through public/private partnerships to meet goals	ED	CPD	Some specific areas of interest to the community include structured parking, a more tech savvy library, a history museum and affordable housing. In 2015, the City sold a surface parking lot on State Ave to the Low Income Housing Institute for \$1 to advance affordable housing for homeless veterans, youth and disabled citizens; in 2021, the City sold the former Griswold’s to a developer for workforce housing.
H.3	Facilitate construction of new housing by using, promoting and exploring additional incentives/ tools to encourage a range of housing options for a range of incomes and lifestyles (e.g., various size apartments/studios, townhomes, live/work, collective living, etc.)	Housing ; CPD		More market rate housing as well as lower cost affordable options are needed in the Downtown. Tools identified in the DTS include: the Multifamily tax exemption; lower impact fees; parking reductions; SEPA exemption; brownfield assessment; incentives for adaptive reuse of existing buildings for housing purposes; public/private (CRA) partnerships that include mixed-use/residential projects; improvements to streets, walkability, and public realm; reduction of unnecessary regulatory barriers; a range of low-income housing tools, etc. Many of these are already available in the downtown.
H.5	Actively work with partners (i.e., higher education and artist organizations) to encourage affordable housing, studio, rehearsal, live/work and gallery space for artists	CPD; ED	OPARD	Note: A private developer has rehabbed the former Montgomery Ward Building on 4 th into Annie’s Artists’ Lofts - artist studios, housing and gallery space
T.1	Use upcoming street repaving projects as opportunities to improve multimodal circulation, intersections for pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort, and enhance streetscape character	PW	CPD; BPAC; Arts Commission	A need to repave 4 street segments in the core (Franklin, Legion, Washington and Capitol) presents opportunity to leverage dedicated funds to make transformational improvements to these retail-oriented streets. Guided by the palette of unique character areas, this ambitious investment should make a big impact in downtown’s retail core, attracting people and investment to the area. Legion & Franklin will be the first segments to be improved. Proposed changes to Washington and Capitol are more and require further traffic analysis.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
T.2	Explore traffic calming opportunities at intersections along 4th Ave SE	PW	CPD; BPAC; Arts Commission	Happening as part of the downtown street improvement/repaving projects. Includes sidewalk extensions at intersections, intersection improvements in conjunction with street repaving projects, art and other amenities and perhaps a raised intersection - dependent on transportation analysis.
H.8	Include housing as part of Community Renewal Area (CRA) public/private partnerships for Water Street and former Griswold's	ED; CPD	Housing	Example: The former Griswold's building which burnt over a decade ago will be removed in 2021. The property has been sold to a private developer with a stipulation for affordable workforce housing.
R.1.C	Ongoing Clean & Safe efforts in partnership with ODA & PBIA	ED	CPD; OPD; OPARD; PW; ODA; PBIA	Includes Downtown Ambassadors, Clean Team, flower baskets, etc.
R.2.D	Invite guest speakers to Downtown business groups to share information re: financial and technical resources and offer workshop training on best practices for local retailers (merchandising, understanding consumer options, online vs. brick & mortar marketing, etc.)	ED	EDC; Commercial Brokers; financial service providers; PBIA; ODA; Thurston Chamber	Although there are many business support services available in Thurston County, we find not all Downtown business owners are aware of these. Downtown business groups like the PBIA and ODA can help spread the word. Attendance and registration interest for these sessions has been lacking, but partners will continue to assess interest and identify opportunities.
R.2.H	Maintain City-driven Economic Development Program	ED	EDC; PBIA; ODA; Thurston Chamber; Port' Pac Mt; employers; other regional jurisdictions	
R.2.I	Provide support to carry out the PBIA's actions	CPD	ED; PW; OPARD; OPD	Staff supports PBIA's annual work plan.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
R.4.C	Support branding/marketing efforts in partnership with the Visitors & Convention Bureau, ODA, PBIA and others Relates to R.4.F & R.2.G	ED	VCB; ODA; PBIA; City	The City has a marketing contract with the Olympia Downtown Alliance, and the Economic Development Director participates on the Board of the VCB.
R.4.D	Support existing downtown assets, and provide support for investment interest for additional attractions, including a college presence and a full-service hotel	ED	Real estate community; EDC	The City has leased the former Ben Moore’s space to SPSCC for an education and workforce development venture. Referred to as Percival Place at Ben Moore’s, SPSCC will bring fine and performing arts, live music and film, and culinary and beverage arts to downtown Olympia. A 2016 Downtown market study identified “... it is important that at least one full-service hotel be included [within the number of supportable new hotel rooms over the next 20 years] in order to diversify the market segmentation and reinforce Downtown as the center of the local lodging and entertainment sector.”
R.4.F	Continue to support events by providing logistical support and implement the Music Out Loud Program. Work with marketing partners as part of R.4.C and R.2.G to consider new events and promote a cohesive event cycle	Depends	OPD; CPD; PW; ED	Examples include Arts Walk, Procession of the Species, Lakefair, etc. City could also consider alternating locations for Arts Walk so that different businesses can participate. The application process for public events needs to be streamlined and better supported. Staff is currently assessing the best approach.
R.2.K	Contribute funds for the regional Tune-Up Program (helps stabilize existing businesses)	City	ED; EDC	



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
LU.6	Promote incentives and other tools that encourage private investment Explore additional tools as listed in LU.6A-G.	CPD		A review of development incentives and other tools available to cities reveals Olympia already makes use of at least 16 tools (i.e., multifamily tax exemption, lower Downtown impact fees, Community Renewal Area (CRA)) During the DTS, we heard the City needs to do a better job of advertising these tools to prospective investors and developers. Staff continues to improve promotion through web presence, outreach and supporting materials. Specific tools to be further explored have been identified (see below)
LU.6.B	Explore - Program to offer façade improvement grants or loans	CPD		Could use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Might be accompanied by technical assistance.
LU.6.C	Explore - Establish a Local Improvement District (LID) to fund projects that benefit contributing property owners such as street improvements, flood protection, utilities, etc.	Exec?	CPD; PW; OPARD	Assessment of property owners for the costs of a public improvement (i.e., for public parking, transportation facilities, utility infrastructure or public facilities). LID could potentially be a good tool for Percival Landing rehabilitation and sea level rise response.
LU.6.D	Explore- Apply for Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) funds	?	CPD; PW; OPARD	Competitive funding offered by the State to fund infrastructure associated with job creation.
LU.6.E	Explore - Extend lower Downtown impact fees to additional uses in the Downtown	CPD		For example, multifamily uses currently have lower impact fees in the Downtown compared to other areas of the City, but pharmacies don't (or at least it's not clear that they do, hence a step to explore further).
LU.6.F	Explore - Defer utility hook-up fees until time of Certificate of Occupancy (rather than time of permit)	Legal?	CPD; PW	The City already offers this deferral for impact fees. Deferrals can help cut permit costs because it reduces interest paid by developers on large construction loans.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
LU.6.G	Explore - Grants or loans for structural assessment and fire sprinklers for older buildings	CPD		Helps with adaptive reuse of older buildings that require life safety upgrades (i.e., under building code to address fire, earthquake safety.)
LU.6.H	Explore potential incentives in the form of “development bonuses” when a public amenity or need is provided	CPD		In general, a “development bonus” is an incentive offered by a city providing for additional allowances or offsetting certain development requirements/costs when a development provides a significant public amenity or benefit sought. For example, the City currently offers a residential height bonus in parts of downtown to encourage housing development. This step would explore other types of incentives that may be appropriate to move forward significant public goals (e.g., structured parking, soil clean up or others.) CRA projects also offer opportunities to explore development bonuses on a case-by-case basis.
R.3.	Help connect businesses (new or existing) to available properties through real estate listings, local commercial brokers and property owners. Help connect businesses looking for real estate options or shared spaces with each other and available resources	CPD	Property owners; Real estate community; Commercial land trust	Helping businesses connect to available, appropriate and affordable business space was identified as a need during the DTS public process. Specific interest was expressed in small spaces for startups, larger spaces for expansions and co-op or condo options. Economic Development staff will provide information and often connect businesses to a broker.
Underway or on the workplan for 2022				
LU.5	Identify buildings and tools appropriate for adaptive reuse, and promote these tools	CPD		Adaptive reuse occurs when a previously developed site is rehabilitated for a different purpose. Downtown’s older office and industrial buildings particularly present opportunities for reuse to housing or retail/entertainment space. As reported to the Land Use and Environment Committee in July 2021, staff is researching code amendments for consideration by the Planning Commission as well as adaptive reuse incentives, to better align regulations for the Creative District with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Strategy.



Master List

*O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed*

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
LU.3.A	Update zoning & development standards - for the Art/Tech area (Creative District)	CPD	OPC;	As reported to the Land Use and Environment Committee in July 2021, staff is researching code amendments for consideration by the Planning Commission, to better align regulations for the Creative District with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Strategy.
T.1.A	Redo Franklin Street	PW		New sidewalks, bulb outs, street repaving. Project should be complete by end of 2021.
D.4	Develop an art and wayfinding plan that adds more public art and wayfinding to the streetscape in a well-coordinated fashion	Communications	CP&D; PW; OPARD; Arts Commission	Communications will initiate this effort in late 2022. Funding needs to be identified for consultant services. Wayfinding signage in downtown is in need of an update. Aim is for a 21 st century wayfinding that integrates with use of phones, and works for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Will direct drivers to parking options, pedestrians to attractions and aim to coordinate with the Capitol Campus.
D.5	Upgrade/establish gateway signage at key locations (Plum Street & Union; Capitol Way & Union)	Communications	PW; OPARD	Will be included with D.4 above. The current signage uses an old City logo and should be updated. Effort may include landscaping and art. To be informed by D.4.
R.4.B	Look into how signage along I-5 can be improved	CPD	ED; OPARD; DOT	Staff is looking at adding signage for the Historic District and Creative District. Coordinate with D.4.
T.3	Update streetscape design guidelines in the Engineering Design and Development Standards (EDDS) for alignment with street function and character area recommendations	PW	CPD	Stakeholder Engagement in 2022. Streetscape design guidelines establish the priority mobility function (i.e., walking, biking, transit, cars), the visual objective (i.e., traditional, historic, eclectic), and style of lighting, paving, furniture and landscaping in the streetscape. New guidelines will help set Downtown streets apart from other areas of the City, as well as enhance the five unique character areas within the Downtown. These guide both public and private sector investments.
R.2.F	Develop a media plan to regularly communicate about Downtown improvements & use data to tell a different story about Downtown	Communications	ED; CPD; Help with outreach: PBIA; ODA; media	Communications will work with key staff to develop a communications strategy for downtown in 2022. The Olympia Downtown Alliance can help boost the content.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/Participants	Notes
R.2.A	Develop and maintain a business support webpage	ED	CPD; Housing	This will be completed as part of Economic Resiliency Planning in 2022/23. Provide key stats, make it easier for businesses to find info about licensing, allowed uses, permit info, etc.
R.2.E	Promote and provide assistance with available development tools	CPD	Housing; CPD; OMB; Chamber; ODA; EDC	Staff continues outreach to the development community. An updated webpage (R.2.A.) will further this objective.
TODO				
LU.2	Develop and adopt a land use, circulation, design & environmental enhancement plan for the isthmus	CPD	CPD; OPARD; PW	Parcels on the isthmus are owned by both the public and private sector. Part of this effort would be to determine how the City-owned land should be used, and how that relates with plans of private property owners. This effort may lead to a public/private partnership and include mixed use development and/or park space.
LU.3.B	Update zoning & development standards - for the southeast neighborhood area	CPD	OPC; PW	Scope of development code update includes considering expanding Urban Residential (UR) zone boundaries to align better with SE neighborhood area, to stabilize residential property and encourage retail that serves local residents.
LU.4	With partners, develop actions to enhance and promote waterfront recreation activities	OPARD	CPD; PW OYC, Port; State; HOCM; LOTT	The Re-envisioning Percival Landing process may offer opportunities for this. Waterfront partners include City Parks, Olympia Yacht Club, Port of Olympia, State of WA, Hands on Children’s Museum, LOTT, etc. Include promotion for boating opportunities, kayaking, events, other recreation, etc.
D.5	Upgrade/establish gateway signage at key locations (Plum Street & Union; Capitol Way & Union)	Communications	PW; OPARD	Planning will occur as part of Art and Wayfinding Plan (D.4.) Actual physical improvements will follow. Current signage at Plum/Union and Capital Way/Union uses an old City logo.
D.6	Examine potential expansion of historic district and/or historic designation of additional structures	CPD	OHC	Consider adding key historic properties into the historic district or register so they are preserved and eligible for tax credits. This will be informed by the historic architecture inventory underway in 2016.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
H.4	Inventory current affordable units and study their risk of displacement. Identify actions to encourage property owners, housing agencies and non-profit housing providers to retain current inventory of affordable units	Housing		At the time of the Downtown Strategy adoption there were 1,645 total housing units in Downtown, and 299 were considered low cost/ unsubsidized. In other words, their rents are dictated by the market, but typically lower than 'market rate' due to being in older or smaller condition. These units are especially at risk of being lost as affordable units because the rents could increase as the market goes up. There are no silver bullets for protecting these privately owned units from lower cost affordable, but there may be some actions the City can take to encourage it. For example, offering incentives such as low-interest loans to encourage property owners to retain housing at lower affordability levels.
H.6	Foster Downtown neighborhood organization(s) through self-help activities, funding, and public services; and explore options for increasing a sense of community in mixed use/residential neighborhoods	CPD		Existing methods include Outreach to Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA), neighborhood grant program. Look into possible partnership with Eco Builders Guild for tool sharing program and other self-help efforts. Mixed use/residential neighborhoods will be located primarily in the Core and Artisan/Tech Character Area.
H.7	Explore Downtown park needs, particularly in the southeast neighborhood area	OPARD		The draft Parks Plan calls for securing land for a new park in downtown Olympia.
T.1.C	Capitol Way and Washington St. segments	PW	CPD	These projects have been pushed out due to funding shortages. Will likely be scoped in 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitol Way = Considering a lane reduction to allow wider sidewalks • Washington = Considering a protected N-S bike lanes to the Farmers Market • Multi-modal circulation and character enhancements
T.4	Explore new and diverse funding options for future streetscape improvements and sidewalk repair and replacement	PW	CPD	This action would focus on dedicated public funding as well as private funding opportunities (i.e., grants) for streetscape improvements. Although exploring funding options is a step for any individual street project, this all-inclusive action may also identify resources for longer-term opportunities identified in the DTS.



Master List

*O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed*

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
T.9	Convene partners and coordinate next steps for improving and marketing the 'Olympia Waterfront Route' (planned trail along the waterfront)	OPARD	CPD; OPARD; PW	Designated in the Regional Trails Plan, this 6.2 mile pedestrian and bicycle route along the shoreline extends from West Bay, around portions of the Port Peninsula, along East Bay to Priest Point Park. Most of the shoreline needed to complete the trail is now in public ownership. Next steps aim to complete missing segments of the trail, enhance the integrity and seamlessness of the route, and encourage waterfront recreation and tourism
R.1.B	Coordinate the development of a nightlife/safety plan for the Entertainment Area	?	OPD; PW; OPARD; CPD	Could include effort with partners to improve late night transportation options such as additional transit service, taxi stands or shuttle service to satellite parking facilities; law enforcement focus; lighting; expanding clean team & Ambassadors, etc.
R.1.D	Locate public restrooms Downtown	?	OPARD	In Fall 2016, the City Council voted to site a 24-hour permanent restroom at the Artesian Commons. In 2018, the City completed a Sanitation Master Plan, which was informed by experiences of other cities and Olympia's experience with a 2017 pilot project that dispersed porta-potties throughout downtown. The plan identifies best practices for locating, designing and maintaining public restrooms.
R.2.B	Conduct a business retention survey with local retail business owners	ED	ODA	Could be part of ODA's 2021 work, but not determined yet.
R.2.C	Improve upon existing permit assistance at the front counter by developing information and materials to help small business owners with opening a storefront	CPD; ED	ODA	2023. To follow business support webpage. This relates primarily to opening a storefront in an existing building, which may require upgrades per the building code or design guidelines, as well as sign permits, etc. It has been suggested that providing information about common change of use requirements and their purpose would be helpful. Note: The State provides assistance with business license applications. Also, the ODA provides a welcome packet to new downtown businesses.
R.2.G	Initiate partners to work with the State on a marketing strategy to encourage state workers to come Downtown Relates to R.4.F and R.4.C	ED	VCB; ODA; DES	The proposal is to encourage campus workers to come Downtown and experience all it has to offer. Could include advertising through crafted messages, flyers, posters, displays; presentations, promotions, etc.



Master List

O = Ongoing program
I = already Initiated action
F = Future action proposed

#	Recommended Action	Lead	Partners/ Participants	Notes
R.2.J	Consider expanding the Parking & Business Improvement Area (PBIA) Boundary	CPD	ED; PBIA	This was put on hold due to Downtown Improvement District (DID) conversation being had by Olympia Downtown Alliance. The DID has implications for PBIA as it is unlikely downtown businesses and property owners will desire two assessment districts.
R.4.A	Work with partners to leverage Thurston County's designation as an Innovation Partnership Zone for brewing and distilling to advance Art/Tech and Entertainment areas	ED	EDC; regional municipalities; SPSCC; WSU; VCB	In 2015, the State Department of Commerce designated Thurston County as a "Craft Brewing and Distilling Innovation Partnership Zone." Building this industry presents great tourism and employment opportunities in the region. The stated mission is to "ensure a world-class source for craft brewed beers and ciders and craft distilled spirits which are made from locally grown ingredients by independent expert producers and distributed nationally and internationally to great acclaim."
NO LONGER PURSUING				
R.1.E	Artesian Commons programming, Park Rangers and Artesian Leadership Committee and Action Teams	OPARD	Artesian Leadership Committee; CYS; CPD; OPD	The Artesian Commons was closed for safety reasons in 2020
R.2.K	Funding the Grow Olympia Fund (helps existing businesses grow)	City	EDC	This program was funded by the Community Development Block Grant, and the federal requirements made it difficult for businesses to use.
T.1.B	Jefferson Avenue segment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-modal circulation • Character enhancements • Focus on greener landscaping 	PW	CPD	Compared with other downtown and citywide transportation needs, Jefferson Ave is not a priority for improvements.

Downtown Strategy



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

[Downtown Strategy Summary](#)

[Downtown Strategy Implementation Status](#)

Search for file name:

RESET

[Downtown Strategy Chapters](#) ▾ 7 documents

[Appendices](#) ▾ 17 documents



