



October 21, 2019

Mayor Cheryl Selby and
City of Olympia Councilmembers

RE: Capital Facilities Plan and 2020-2025 Financial Plan Review

Dear Mayor Selby and Olympia City Councilmembers,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the 2020-2025 Draft Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and Financial Plan. We find that the CFP is not only consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, but focuses on the city's most pressing needs and does so in a clear and consistent manner. We would like to congratulate City Manager Steven Hall and the City staff who contributed to this document for a job well done.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan

We appreciate the CFP's consistent focus on walkability, which is a theme that runs throughout the Comprehensive Plan. This year's CFP demonstrates the City's solid commitment to walkability and cycling, especially in the Fones Road project, which represents a high bar for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Olympia, while also accommodating the need for truck access to industrial sites.

This project, along with a general focus on intersection improvements, bicycle infrastructure, and sidewalk investments demonstrates significant progress toward full implementation of multimodal transportation. In addition, we find that this CFP meaningfully prioritizes pedestrian-oriented development, and that these types of investments will prepare the city for a less car-dependent future.

I-967—Limiting State and Local Taxes, Fees, and Other Charges Relating to Vehicles

We believe the Public Works Department should plan to secure alternative funding in the event that I-967 is passed. If this measure were to pass in November, the CFP indicates that some critical transportation maintenance projects would not be able to be completed. We would like to recommend identifying a "Plan B" to assure the continued maintenance of our transportation infrastructure. This may not need to be included in the CFP, but we recommend careful consideration be given in the near-term.

Recommendations for Future Capital Facilities Plans

Public Involvement in the CFP

Budgets are in many ways one of the most significant documents on which we issue a recommendation to City Council. We and the community would be better equipped to consider how funding allocations over time are moving in alignment with the Comprehensive plan if we could see an analysis of how CFP funds have been directed annually over a reasonable time frame.

The Commission also suggests the following minor improvements or clarifications to future plans:

- A map, or maps, of project locations to help the Commission and the public visualize where CFP projects will take place;
- How volunteers, partnerships, and/or sponsorships help leverage funds and add value to the CFP;
- More information about our debt service (interest rates and terms) to highlight that the cost of borrowing affects the amount of funding available for projects;
- Clear communication about the uncertainty of funding sources so that the Commission and the public can identify projects that have secured funding and those in which there is only the hope or anticipation of funding; and
- A more explicit description of how projects are prioritized

We reiterate our support for the CFP and the careful work City staff has done to assure that it is clearly written, clearly connected back to the Comprehensive Plan, and supported by helpful tables and figures.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review the CFP, and we look forward to its implementation.

Best,



Carole Richmond, Chair
Olympia Planning Commission



Rad Cunningham, CFP Subcommittee Chair
Olympia Planning Commission



Kento Azegami, Vice-Chair
Olympia Planning Commission

October 5, 2020

Mayor Cheryl Selby and
Olympia City Councilmembers

RE: OPC Recommendation – Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan, 2021-2026 Financial Plan

Dear Mayor Selby and Olympia City Councilmembers,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan and 2021-2026 Financial Plan Review (CFP). **We find that the CFP is consistent with the current Comprehensive Plan.** We wish to commend the City staff who have pushed through extraordinary circumstances to prepare this document. We hope the following comments will guide you as you evaluate the CFP.

Changes from Previous Plans

We appreciate the permanent addition of sections for Fire and the Home Fund to the CFP. We also appreciate the inclusion of the 7-20 Year Future Needs project lists in each section. We hope that this will help guide how projects are prioritized and funded in the future.

Transportation

We commend the continued commitment to Comprehensive Plan goal Transportation 1, as demonstrated through continued investments in sidewalks. Proposed projects in this year's plan appear to dovetail well with the recent Transportation Management Plan updates.

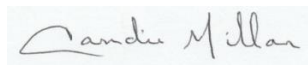
Home Fund

While we were pleased to see the two projects listed for the Home Fund, we are concerned about the speed of projects being brought forward. Considering the promises made to the voters of Olympia regarding the Home Fund; Comprehensive Plan goal Public Service 3; the 2018 declaration of homelessness as a public health crisis; and the recent publication of the One Community Plan; **we believe that more projects should be sought out and moved forward faster than the current pace. We hope you will convey these sentiments to the Home Fund advisory committee.**

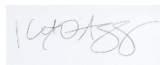
Thank you again for the opportunity to review the CFP; we look forward to its implementation.

The Planning Commission is honored to serve the Mayor, City Council, and people of Olympia. We look forward to helping Olympia achieve the goals expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,



Candis Millar, AICP
Chair, Olympia Planning Commission



Kento Azegami
Chair, Planning Finance Subcommittee

Olympia Planning Commission

October 4, 2021

Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967 Olympia
WA 98507-1967

Dear Councilmembers:

SUBJECT: Preliminary 2022-2027 CFP Recommendations

The Olympia Planning Commission appointed a Capital Facilities Plan Subcommittee to review the 2022-2027 Capital Facilities Plan for consistency with Olympia's Comprehensive Plan.

We would like to recognize the City of Olympia staff for consistently striving to improve the content, layout, and accuracy of the CFP. This year they added information about debt servicing which was responsive to previous comments by the OPC.

A common refrain on budgeting is that 'your budget is your values'. We have noticed that despite efforts of staff there has been little public involvement or interest in the CFP document over the years. We recognize that this document builds upon planning efforts such as the transportation master plan that included public involvement, so that involvement is to some extent 'baked in' to the projects and recommendations. Regardless, we believe that additional engagement on the CFP itself would help us assure that Olympia is investing in its values.

Olympia's comprehensive plan's Community Values and Vision section describes Olympia's values on public participation like this:

Olympians value their right to participate in City government, and to engage in a meaningful, open, and respectful community dialogue regarding decisions that affect our community.

We believe that there are opportunities to advance this community value through the capital facilities planning process by making the values advanced by investments in the CFP more accessible. For example, Olympians expressed their transportation vision as '*complete streets that move people, not just cars*'. It is difficult to read the CFP and understand the extent to which we are advancing that value versus investing in the status quo. We believe that we can increase community engagement with the CFP by continuing to improve the links between the

CFP and the plans that shape it. We hope that making this linkage would allow residents reading the plan to understand what values we are investing in and aid in a level of engagement that other documents the OPC reviews have.

Although it is not part of the comprehensive plan Olympia has committed to:

‘Continuing to learn and take action to dismantle all forms of oppression within our City government and its operations by lifting up and including the voices of our marginalized community members in decision making...’

Investments in projects across City government are clear opportunities to operationalize this value. There are a variety of ways in which the city is advancing their DEI values, for example through efforts to have a more equitable contracting process, but it is not evident in reading the CFP where we are advancing this value and where we have more room to grow.

Over the last two years the CFP has included a list of comprehensive plan goals that are being advanced in each chapter. This is a good step towards identifying how we are advancing these values, but they are detached from specific projects or dollar amounts and can be difficult to contextualize for even an experienced CFP reader.

In the pursuit of transparency, we also believe the City could do a better job of connecting the CFP to Operating Budgets and the impacts the two budgeting documents have on each other. We appreciate that this is a stated consideration of the budgeting process but could be more specific. For example, the City’s purchase of a second street sweeper to decrease run off pollution is exciting, however it is unclear what impacts a second street sweeper will have on the operating budget once the grant funding ends.

In addition, though it is noted in transportation planning, it is unclear in the CFP that current investments in maintenance are not sufficient to maintain the road system in good condition and that there is the potential for decline to levels that require more costly reconstruction rather than repair. Tracking the condition of our infrastructure is laudable but we need to clearly connect our investments to whether or not we are succeeding at our goals.

The Commission encourages the City Council to continuing to consider these documents, and how their focus might change, in light of the recently adopted Transportation Master Plan and Climate Mitigation Plan. These plans will have impacts to our community and budgets for years to come and the investments detailed in the CFP will be critical in meeting our goals.

The Olympia Planning Commission recommends adoption of the 2022-2027 CFP and applauds the efforts of staff to continue to improve the content and readability of the document.

We believe that to better engage Olympians on the content of the CFP we need to more clearly communicate how we are succeeding or failing to invest in our values. We believe that this will

benefit not just residents but also help city staff and officials see the extent to which we are or are not investing in the future we have envisioned for our city.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rad Cunningham', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rad Cunningham
Chair, Finance Subcommittee