

Olympia Planning Commission - 2023 Work Plan

(April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024)

The Planning Commission (OPC) is expected to hold approximately 21 regular meetings and may conduct an optional retreat during this period. Special meetings may be held and subcommittees may be formed. The staff liaison is David Ginther, Senior Planner, dginther@ci.olympia.wa.us, 360.753.8335.

Section 1: Policy Issues			
Commission recommendations on many of these items are forwarded to the City Council. Recommendations may be conveyed in writing, directly by the Commission chair or a delegate, or by City staff. Approximately 75% of commission effort.			
#	Title and Description	Anticipated Outcome from OPC	Schedule (Estimated start & completion)
1.1	Neighborhood Centers Strategy <i>(continued from 2022)</i> A review of current codes and policies, and market analysis of designated Neighborhood Centers, for encouraging neighborhood scale commercial development, higher density housing, and strategies for addressing barriers.	Recommendation on Final Report. <i>Policy and code changes may be proposed later.</i>	Est. 1-2 mtgs Jan - June
1.2	Capital Mall Triangle Area Subarea Plan <i>(continued from 2022)</i> Subarea plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) that facilitates transit-oriented development within the Capital Mall Triangle subarea. This area is designated as a High-Density Neighborhood Overlay in the Comprehensive Plan, envisioned to transform into multifamily residential, commercial, and mixed-use neighborhood.	Public hearing and recommendation to City Council.	Est. 2-3 mtgs Jan – June
1.3	Housing Action Plan Implementation <i>(continued from 2022)</i> Proposed amendments to reduce parking requirements for residential uses (including for multifamily developments near frequent transit routes) and to increase flexibility in the permit process.	Public hearing and recommendation to City Council.	Est. 1-2 mtgs Jan - June
1.4	Review Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) Review the Preliminary CFP, hold a public hearing, and identify whether proposals comply with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.	Public hearing and comment letter to City Council.	Est. 1-2 full OPC mtgs + 3-4 subcommittee mtgs: Aug - Oct
1.5	Creative District Code Amendments Code amendments to implement the Creative District vision in the Downtown Strategy. The Creative District is a 30-block area of downtown Olympia that is home to creative enterprises such as theaters, galleries, breweries, and industrial designers.	Public hearing and recommendation to City Council.	TBD

#	Title and Description	Anticipated Outcome from OPC	Schedule (Estimated start & completion)
1.6	Zoning Map and Development Code Text Amendments <i>(if proposed)</i> Review of privately proposed, staff-initiated, or Council-initiated amendments to the City's development regulations not referenced above.	Public hearing and recommendation to City Council.	TBD
1.7	Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update <i>(2023-2025)</i> Briefings and updates from city staff on the Comprehensive Plan update. May include a subcommittee of Commissioners for review and contributions. Commissioners may be invited to participate in community meetings and technical advisory committees. Includes review of state's Comprehensive Plan checklist.	Provide guidance to staff, participate in public engagement opportunities.	Est.6-8 mtgs Jan - Dec

SECTION 2: Optional Program Implementation and/or Input to Council or Staff

As programs are developed and implemented and code amendment proposals and administrative procedures refined, staff often consults with the Commission for their input and perspective. These items comprise approximately 5% percent of commission work effort.

#	Title and Description	Anticipated Outcome from OPC	Schedule
2.1	Subarea/Neighborhood Plan <i>(if proposed)</i> Review of draft Subarea Plan if any initiated by neighborhood association(s)	Comments to staff and neighborhood work group; optional recommendation to Council	TBD

SECTION 3: Administrative Activities

In addition to its role in providing input on policy and program implementation, the Commission reviews and approves its work plan on an annual basis. Other activities may include an annual retreat and meeting with other organizations. These items comprise approx. 5 % percent of commission work effort.

#	Title and Description	Schedule
3.1	Organizational Retreat <i>(optional)</i> Focus on improving Commissioner relationships, procedures, or on topics of interest that allow more time for discussion	TBD
3.2	Preparation of 2024 - 2025 Work Plan Time allotted for proposing and discussing work items for following year	TBD
3.3	Listening Sessions to Hear from the Community Members CNA, RNAs, Neighborhoods, Builders, Business Owners, etc. (Discussion of development costs and challenges)	TBD

SECTION 4: Informational Briefings

The Commission seeks to be a well-informed and effective advisory body. The activities below are intended to improve Commission information and knowledge necessary to fulfill its role. These items comprise approximately 10% percent of commission work effort. The Commission may not complete all of the briefings, as they are the first items to be displaced when time is needed for higher priority work items. Briefings are generally 30 minutes per topic.

#	Title and Description	Dept.
4.1	Development/Capital Project Updates Update on private development and public capital projects	CPD/PW
4.2	Housing Issues Update Update on implementation of the Housing Action Plan and Regional Housing Strategy, update on City plans and strategies for addressing housing supply and affordability	CMO/CPD
4.3	Martin Way Corridor Study (<i>continued from 2022</i>) Briefing on final land use and transportation planning recommendation for the Martin Way Corridor; joint effort with Thurston Regional Planning Council, Intercity Transit, City of Lacey, and Thurston County	PW/CPD
4.4	Park Projects Briefing on major park plans and projects	OPARD
4.5	Economic Development Briefing on economic development opportunities and actions in the city	CMO
4.6	Gridded Streets (<i>if carried over from previous year</i>) Briefing on use of gridded street systems with focus on how they shape neighborhood design, infill development, and transportation choices. Future networks, Connections, and Subdivision design. Discuss Pros and Cons, Alternatives for Objectives. Led by Commissioners.	OPC
4.7	Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Update Update on actions to implement the Climate Action Plan	CMO
4.8	Street Cafes and Curb Uses Discussion of parking requirements downtown (and across the city where necessary) to include the best use of the public curb where street parking is currently allowed. This would include expanding sidewalks, pick up/drop off/loading, removing parking, street cafes, parklets, bicycle parking, and benches. Also discuss how these spaces encourage social connection	PW/CPD
4.9	Urban Agriculture Briefing regarding urban agriculture and the Urban Farmland Work Group	CPD
4.10	Programmatic Alternatives Analysis for CFP Development Briefing on how City of Olympia completes its programmatic alternatives analysis to score, rank, and determine project sequencing for the CFP. Programmatic alternatives analysis is the decision-making process used to ensure an entity funds those projects, or sets of projects, that are most likely to help them achieve its goals and objectives	PW, OPARD, Fire, CPD
4.11	Operations Budget Briefing	Finance

	An overview of the city's operations budget and how it interacts with the Capital Facilities Plan. This overview would support work in the Finance Subcommittee and Planning Commission to review the CFP	
4.12a	Sidewalk Networks and Funding Issues Request clarity on existing sidewalk policies, projects, and funding. (Commissioners to develop questions for transportation staff)	PW
4.12b	Sidewalk Conditions and Maintenance Sidewalk conditions assessment, maintenance policy. (Commissioners to develop questions for transportation staff)	PW
4.12c	Traffic Calming & Reducing Speeding in Neighborhoods What options exist, in what context, and what pilot options might be available? Speeding enforcement options? Other safety measures and accident data to consider?	PW
4.15	Equity in Planning APA Policy Guide and appropriateness for inclusion in Olympia	OPC/Tracey
4.16	Form Based Codes What are Pros and Cons? Where might they be appropriate in City of Olympia? Should they be considered in Neighborhood Centers?	OPC/Candi, Carole
4.17	Building Materials and Embodied Carbon Data and information around building materials that are produced elsewhere (so not "counted" here) and how to reduce the carbon footprint of our buildings (Builders for Climate Action example from Ontario). Explore appropriateness for Olympia. Coordinate with Dr. Braff. (May be a retreat topic) (Hear from Builders and Community Groups before this is scheduled)	OPC/Aaron