

Nomination Form

Great Places in Washington Awards Program



An awards program co-sponsored by the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA WA) and the Planning Association of Washington (PAW)

Nominations Due: July 22

Please send a digital copy to office@washington-apa.org and a hard copy to Washington Chapter American Planning Association 2150 N 107th Street Ste 205, Seattle, WA 98133 postmarked by July 22. Submittals are limited to six pages total (including this cover page).

The 2019 Great Places in Washington Awards program will recognize **Great Streets** in Washington State. Awards this year will be given to three different streets based on their context and function (see below). This program is based on the American Planning Association's Great Places in America Program (www.planning.org/greatplaces/).

Who Should Apply?

All are welcome to apply. Examples include cities, counties, towns, community/neighborhood groups, chambers of commerce, and planning professionals.

Great Streets Award Categories and Criteria:

We plan to award three different categories of Great Streets:

1. Urban main streets
2. Small city/town and neighborhood main streets
3. Boulevards (street that successfully balance vehicular traffic with transit and pedestrian circulation)

These may be portions of longer streets or they may encompass the entire street, provided they meet the awards criteria below.

Great streets (awards criteria):

- Integrate a vibrant mix of uses that supports the greater community.
- Are framed by interesting and articulated building facades that contribute to the use and popularity of the street.
- Include attributes and design elements that create a distinctive character.
- Feel safe and welcoming to all, particularly pedestrians.
- Accommodate community events and facilitate social interaction.

NOMINATION FORM	
Name of Street	4 th Avenue from bridge to Plum Street
Name of Jurisdiction	City of Olympia
Contact Person/Title	Marygrace Goddu
Phone and Email	P: 360 753 8031 E: mgoddu@ci.olympia.wa.us

Submittals will be evaluated by a committee including academics and APA WA/PAW chapter members.

Winners will be announced at the Fall Washington APA chapter conference in Tacoma (October 16-17).

Questions?

Contact Bob Bengford, Great Places Co-Chairs bobb@makersarch.com or Amanda Tainio at amanda@synergyresourcesconsulting.com

NOMINATION STATEMENT — A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT (50 words or less)

Briefly describe the street and its context and which of the three awards categories you think it best fits under (they are purposely vague, so it's OK if they are a blend of two or all three!)

URBAN MAIN STREET CATEGORY

Fourth Avenue is the historic east-west route through the heart of Olympia's urban core, connecting East and West Olympia to our downtown across Budd Inlet. Once called the Pacific Highway, its place in our community grew from an 1870's mud track to a bustling urban thoroughfare that defines Olympia today.

MEETING THE AWARDS CRITERIA (this page and up to four additional pages, including graphics)

Tell us how the street meets each of the five awards criteria on the previous page. Please include photos supportive of the criteria (within the page limit) and assume that the evaluation committee have never been to the street before. Links to supportive websites or documents might be useful as background information (but don't over-rely on those links in explaining how the street meets the criteria!).

- ***Integrate a vibrant mix of uses that supports the greater community.***

Fourth Avenue is home to a remarkably vibrant and diverse mix of uses, reflective of the many sectors of Olympia's economic, cultural, and social milieu. True diversity brings a tension that is not always comfortable but is endlessly interesting, dynamic, and colorful, authentic and compelling. This is the spirit of Fourth Avenue. Meineke Mufflers operates next to a locally-owned bookstore. Tattoo and piercing are offered alongside beauty salons. "Dumpster Values" vintage clothing comfortably coexists near an upscale home décor business. There are old-time taverns and contemporary micro-brew pubs; dark, heavy-metal nightclubs and brightly lit wine bars. A brand new LEED-certified apartment building recently rose across the street from the oldest continuously-operating commercial residential structure in the city, the Angelus Hotel (ca 1900), and just blocks from an 1891 building with low income flats above a pizza parlor. Establishments along 4th Avenue represent every part of the spectrum in retail and restaurants, theaters, offices, work and performance spaces, and residential offerings.

There seems to be room for all, along the corridor of 4th Avenue.

In and of itself, this inclusiveness benefits the greater community, and it reflects Olympia's historic roots as well as its contemporary culture. This is a cultural corridor that includes historic waterfront where Native Americans fished and cultivated shellfish. Until the perpetually-soggy tidal land was filled by 1900, it was typically home to Olympia's poor and marginalized populations. In the 1870's Chinese immigrant laborers lived along 4th Avenue, and later the Chinese community forged a foothold here with restaurants and businesses. In 1879 black pioneers James and Mary Mar opened the well-loved "Our House" restaurant at 4th and Franklin Street a few blocks to the East.

These businesses supported a growing community focused on Olympia's waterfront industries, springing up around a wharf at 4th and Water Street that stretched northward into the Bay. Known as Percival Landing today, the wharf is a popular waterfront pedestrian pathway and park, still vitally connected to town at 4th Avenue. Today, some of the city's lowest cost housing can still be found here, while Olympia's homeless migrate east and west along the spine of Fourth Avenue for the services, resources, and security of the urban core.

- ***Are framed by interesting and articulated building facades that contribute to the use and popularity of the street.***

Olympia's 2017 *Downtown Strategy* identified community priorities for downtown, including critical design features like character-defining architecture, a pleasing streetscape palette, and view protection. The 4th Avenue corridor includes four solid blocks of the Downtown Olympia National Register Historic District and has many iconic properties beyond this historic core as well. The *Strategy* actions, many now in progress, work to protect historic character while ensuring that new development and city efforts improve the pedestrian experience and complement the familiar, historic cityscape.

The historic urban face of the 4th Avenue corridor includes typical turn-of-the-century commercial buildings, many of brick, stone, concrete, or a mix; two or three stories high with large street-level window bays, often with a clerestory band above; regular rows of windows on upper floors, horizontal banding between floors, and design features at cornice or parapet. Many have suspended awnings that keep Olympia walkable in wet weather. The sidewalks are generously wide and dotted with trees, many large enough to offer shade canopy in the summer.

The historic grid pattern of the downtown's streets includes a network of alleyways in between, allowing for deliveries and sanitation service to 4th Avenue's businesses to take place in the back. This contributes to a great pedestrian experience, and the alleyways themselves are intriguing. The city has worked to keep them clean, well-lit, safe and interesting, with mural art and access to businesses.

The 4th Ave corridor also includes its share of newer buildings, and these bring an eclectic sense of time, style, and generational character. The 20's and 30's left their mark in a number of car dealerships and auto-related service buildings east of Capitol Way, taking advantage of 4th Avenue's status as a State Highway at the time. It was a popular route to the Olympic Peninsula or to points south via the major crossroad at Capitol Way – then Highway 99. Most of these automotive showrooms, gas stations and shops are now creatively rehabilitated for restaurant and retail. The 1950's brought modernism, in the design and addition of department stores, and simplified storefronts with sleek façade treatments to attract shoppers in the post-war boom.

To better support current code requirements, *Downtown Design Criteria* are in progress that will firmly guide contemporary architectural additions toward compatibility of scale and character appropriate to the surrounding streetscape and architecture. Fourth Avenue's inevitable evolution will continue with sensitivity to overall design goals and community values.

- ***Include attributes and design elements that create a distinctive character.***

At its west end, 4th Avenue begins at Yashiro Friendship Bridge, connecting West Olympia to downtown at the point where the Deschutes River meets Puget Sound. Entering across the bridge, there are expansive views of Budd Bay, the State Capitol Building, the Olympic Mountains, and Mount Rainier. Public art lines the bridge, salmon leap to escape hungry seals below, Great Blue Heron nest in nearby firs, and the promise of all of urban Olympia lies straight ahead. It is a very powerful entry experience.

Fourth Avenue continues a bridge-like role as it travels east across a narrow landform known as the "Isthmus," formerly river delta and tidal flats. Seizing on the views and proximity to the water, the streetscape here includes the lively Heritage Park Fountain and two parks, a popular local grocery store, the oldest restaurant in the City, and a new residential rehabilitation of a commercial building (under construction). You can practically feel the potential jumping out of the ground, and the energy stays fresh as you continue east into the narrowed, turn-of-the-century streetscape of the downtown Historic District.

In the heart of downtown 4th Avenue crosses Capitol Way, which some might argue is Olympia's "Main Street." But 4th Ave connects and defines our community in a way that the wider, more grand and established streetscape of Capitol Way cannot. Fourth Avenue's eclectic mix of glitter and grit, old and new, people and cars, buskers and café's, sidewalks canopied by trees and awnings, and the railway that cuts through at Jefferson Street with clanging, active trains every day, are unmistakably hometown Olympia.

- ***Feel safe and welcoming to all, particularly pedestrians.***

Fourth Avenue is a rich pedestrian environment. The typical daily flow begins at 7:00 AM, with morning commuters, opening businesses, and maintenance teams cleaning the streets and watering the flower baskets. The busy retail day spikes at lunch hour with an influx of workers from nearby offices and many State workplaces within just blocks. The bustle continues into the evening when visitors come for dinner and a show as the happy hour crowd eases toward home. The local taverns and bars along 4th are some of the city's most popular and they keep the energy going until 2:00 AM, when the Uber and taxi drivers "make bank" to close the day. Tuesdays see protesters in place for weekly council meetings, and weekends see a rhythm of retail, events, park users, and entertainment.

With so much going on, Olympia works hard to create a safe, clean and welcoming environment for all. The city's programs include a **Downtown Walking Patrol** of police officers serving and connecting with the downtown community seven days a week. The City's **Clean Team** is on duty 7 am to 3 pm daily to provide general upkeep, repair, painting, and trash pick up in public spaces. Our **Downtown Ambassadors** provide outreach, business support and hospitality to residents, business and property owners, and visitors. A ground-breaking **Crisis Response Unit** connects individuals in crisis with social services. A **Familiar Faces** team uses peer navigators to assist individuals with complex health and behavioral problems. Our **Safe Olympia** program focuses on safe reporting for crimes and discrimination related to LGBTQ residents and visitors, with 17 safe reporting locations along 4th Ave.

In addition to these ongoing programs, the city is investing over \$140,000 in **downtown lighting improvements** to improve the sense of night time safety in alleys as well as at the street front.

The Olympia Downtown Alliance of local businesses is a critical partner. Their **Downtown Guides** partner with the programs listed above and provide a warm greeting to downtown patrons. The alliance also supports city cleaning efforts with a six-month cycle of **pressure-washing** that keeps our sidewalks attractive and clean.

- ***Accommodate community events and facilitate social interaction.***

While the local parades generally happen on Capitol Way, the local protests happen on 4th Avenue. This is because 4th Avenue's small-town streetscape, critical transit route, and the presence of City Hall, make us take it all more personally.

Fourth Avenue embraces the full Olympia community with its diversity of spaces and places for recreation, expression, performance, business, practical needs, and authenticity.

The numerous cafes, taverns, bars and eateries here feature local artists and live music, ensuring that 4th Avenue is an active social hub. Buskers and panhandlers often line the sidewalks. In a small public lot off 4th Ave, a natural artesian wells draws visitors with clean jugs, who sit on mosaic-art benches and socialize as they fill.

Down the street, reveling in clean water in a different way, the Heritage Park Fountain is scene of joyful shouts from adults and kids alike. The fountain features choreographed jets of water that shoot overhead and tumble down in surprising and mesmerizing patterns. Also on the Isthmus, a brand new 2.3 acre park is temporary home to a pump track enjoyed by riders on tricycles, skateboards and mountain bikes. With support from community sponsors the City placed a temporary ice rink in this location in winter 2018-19. To everyone's amazement, attendance doubled projections and the rink hosted 20,415 skaters. The community is eager to see what the creative folks at City Parks will bring to 4th Avenue's Isthmus Park next.

A seven-block stretch of 4th Avenue from Capitol Way to Plum Street is included in Olympia's newly state-certified Creative District. Creative District designation brings public focus and practical support to the creative economy that thrives along the 4th Avenue corridor -- artisans, entrepreneurs, local restaurants, creative business enterprises and makers of all kinds. The mix of creative resources and activities here with community events and recreational opportunities, attracts the full range of Olympia's demographics in ages, incomes, and abilities, to interact along 4th Avenue.