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BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER  
FOR THE CITY OF OLYMPIA

IN RE:  
  
WEST BAY YARDS DEVELOPMENT  
AGREEMENT

NO. 20-3136  
  
DECLARATION OF HEATHER L.  
BURGESS IN SUPPORT OF APPLICANT’S  
RESPONSE AND CROSS-MOTION FOR  
SUMMARY JUDGMENT

I, Heather L. Burgess, declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of eighteen and otherwise competent to be a witness.
2. I am one of the attorneys of record for the Applicant, West Bay Development Group, LLC. (“Applicant”).
3. I have personal knowledge of the matters attested to in this declaration.
4. Counsel for the Appellant did not seek, nor did the Applicant or its counsel approve, any stipulation or statement of undisputed facts prior to filing of Appellant’s Motion for Summary Judgment on January 15, 2021.
5. Attached hereto as Exhibit A is a true and correct copy of the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement for the City of Olympia’s 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update.
6. Attached hereto as Exhibit B is a true and correct copy of the City’s SEPA DNS for the 2015 Shoreline Master Program Update (dated January 4, 2013).
7. Attached hereto as Exhibit C is a true and correct copy of the City’s SEPA Checklist for the 2015 Shoreline Master Program Update (dated January 4, 2013).

1 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the  
2 foregoing is true and correct.

3 DATED: this 27<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021, at Olympia, Washington.  
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7 Heather L. Burgess, WSBA #28477  
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**EXHIBIT A**

**Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement  
for  
Olympia's 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update**



# FINAL Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

**REVISED**  
January 2014

Periodic Update of Comprehensive Plan  
for  
Olympia and Olympia's Urban Growth Area







January 24, 2014

Greetings:

Washington's Growth Management Act requires that communities like Olympia review and update their Comprehensive Plan every eight years. Over four years ago the Olympia community began such an update. This "Imagine Olympia" public process is now reaching a decision-making stage. To that end, I am pleased to provide you with this "Revised" Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) analyzing the issues raised by that update. This Revised FSEIS supplements the Olympia Comprehensive Plan EIS of April 4, 1994. Therefore, this analysis does not re-analyze the 1994 version of the Comprehensive Plan. Instead, it examines the proposed substantive changes from the current Plan.

This FSEIS was originally issued in December 4, 2012. That version was one of the documents used by the Olympia Planning Commission in preparing its recommendations regarding the proposed Plan update. This revised version of the FSEIS reflects and addresses the Commission's recommendations. It will be one of the documents considered by the City Council in 2014 in reaching a decision regarding the proposal.

As listed on the contents page, this FSEIS addresses a variety of topics ranging from major issues such as climate change, to localized map amendments, to proposed new programs such as neighborhood and sub-area planning. The FSEIS is the primary vehicle for communicating the City staff's analysis of the proposed substantive revisions of the plans, so it includes both matters related to the community's environment and changes of a procedural or other nature which arguably may not impact the environment but still constitute a new direction in Olympia's Plan.

In addition to the substantive changes addressed in this FSEIS, the format of the Plan is proposed to significantly change. To create a more readable and accessible document, much of the background information has been removed, the Plan has been reorganized and restructured, jargon and technical language have been reduced, and – particularly new for Olympia – the document is now designed to be primarily an internet or 'web-based' document, rather than a paper format; although, paper versions can still be produced.

This FSEIS is issued pursuant to Washington Administrative Code Chapter 197-11. A draft of this document was issued in July of 2012. Comments regarding that draft and responses are included as an appendix. In addition, in the intervening months new population growth forecasts for the Olympia area have been issued. This and related background information has been added to this final version.

The Comprehensive Plan update will also be subject to review by Thurston County prior to adoption as a joint plan of the two jurisdictions. Note that this Plan update is only part of the City's periodic review to ensure compliance with the Washington Growth Management Act. Other steps such amendment of development regulations will probably occur prior to the state-imposed deadline of July 1, 2016. Accordingly, this FSEIS is only one part of the environmental review of all actions associated with growth management by the City of Olympia.

Revised Final SEIS  
January 24, 2014  
Page 2

For more information or to obtain additional copies of this document, please call 360-753-8314, email [imagineolympia@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:imagineolympia@ci.olympia.wa.us) or contact Community Planning staff at Olympia City Hall. The cost to purchase a paper document is \$33.00; copies on disk or other electronic format are free. Your interest and participation are appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Friddle', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Steve Friddle**  
SEPA Official

SF:nl

# Revised 2013 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

For the periodic update of

## Olympia's Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by

City of Olympia, Community Planning and Development

Prepared for the review and comments of citizens, citizens groups, and government agencies in compliance with the...

- State Environmental Policy Act of 1971
- Revised Code of Washington 43.21.C
- Chapter 197-11 WAC, effective April 4, 1984 and
- Olympia SEPA Ordinance, Title 14

**DATE OF ISSUE: January 24, 2014**



The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in the employment and the delivery of services and resources.

o l y m p i a w a . g o v



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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

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## Fact Sheet

### 1. Proposed Action

The City of Olympia of Olympia proposes to adopt a major periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan consistent with the Washington Growth Management Act. Adoption by the City would be followed by consideration by Thurston County. This Revised Final SEIS is based on that version known as 'Commission Draft' of the updated Plan that will be reviewed by the Olympia City Council. See [ImagineOlympia.com](http://ImagineOlympia.com) for more information.

### 2. Licenses And Permits or other Action

Adoption of Plan by ordinance by the Olympia City Council.

### 3. Action Sponsor And Location Of Reference Documents

City of Olympia  
Community Planning and Development Department  
P.O. Box 1967  
601 Fourth Avenue East  
Olympia, WA 98507-1967  
(360) 753-8314  
Contact Person: Todd Stamm, Principal Planner  
SEPA Official: Steve Friddle, Principal Planner

### 4. Lead Agency

City of Olympia  
Olympia, Washington

### 5. Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Authors

Todd Stamm, Planning Manager	Jennifer Kenny, Associate Planner
Liz Hoenig, Senior Planner	Laura Keehan, Associate Planner
Sophie Stimson, Senior Planner	Stacey Ray, Associate Planner
Amy Buckler, Associate Planner	

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 6. Date Of Issue Of Draft SEIS:        | July 18, 2012    |
| 7. End Of Review Period:               | August 20, 2012  |
| 8. Date Of Issue Of Final SEIS:        | December 4, 2012 |
| 9. Date of Issue of Revised Final SEIS | January 24, 2014 |

## FINAL SEIS DISTRIBUTION LIST<sup>1</sup>

Olympia City Council  
Olympia Planning Commission  
Squaxin Island Tribe – Jeff Dickison  
Thurston County – Scott Clark, Les Olson  
Timberland Library Olympia Branch  
Washington Department of Ecology – SEPA Unit  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington State Department of Commerce – Anne Fritzel

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<sup>1</sup> The majority of copies have been distributed in an electronic form. Paper copies are available to government agencies at no cost upon request, and to the public at copying costs.

## **II. SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FORMAT**

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## II. SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FORMAT

### A. Supplement to the 1994 Olympia Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement

This Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is an addition to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared in 1994 for the Comprehensive Plan for Olympia and the Olympia Growth Area (Plan). That 1994 EIS is hereby adopted by reference pursuant to WAC 197-11-630. The 1994 EIS can be viewed at [imagineolympia.com](http://imagineolympia.com); copies are available upon request. This SEIS builds on the EIS completed in 1994 for the Plan, and on EISs and other related environmental documents prepared for annual Plan amendments adopted since 1994. For example, “The Environmental Impact Statement for the City of Olympia Proposed 1994 Comprehensive Plan” also includes a list of related policies and plans which were references for that EIS. Those policies and plans are also relevant to this SEIS. A complete list of all such documents is available on request.

This Revised Final SEIS has been prepared based on the version of the updated Comprehensive Plan recommended by the Olympia Planning Commission in December of 2013. The City Council is expected to take final action on this proposal in 2014.

Because it is proposed as a “web-based” document, the format and look of the proposed Plan is significantly different than the current Plan. This SEIS analyzes both those substantive changes in the Plan that could result in environmental impacts, and other elements of the proposal which although not substantive are new to the Plan, such as a proposed sub-area planning process. The proposed revisions all reflect the ‘scope’ of the update as directed by the City Council in June of 2011, and are intended to address the issues of the twenty-first century. A cumulative impact analysis is included to provide a overview of all of the issues presented.

This SEIS was prepared for a Plan update, which is a form of non-project or “programmatic” action; in other words it represents a planning decision and not the decision to make any particular change in the physical environment. Thus, as described WAC 197-11-060(5), this SEIS is part of a “phased review” and outlines the potential impacts that could become more or less likely as a result of adoption of the proposed Plan. Because this Plan is at a “high level” and specific impacts cannot be predicted, most analysis is in a qualitative rather than quantitative form. Further environmental review would be conducted when implementing measures, such as regulations, more detailed plans, or specific construction activities are proposed. The level of detail of subsequent review will vary based upon the specific provisions of those later proposals.

This SEIS is the basic document analyzing the substantive changes in the proposed Plan update. Its scope extends beyond those proposals that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the environment (as required by the State Environmental Policy Act) to include other proposals in the update that could make a significant difference in the future of the Olympia community. For example, implications of new public processes are explored even though their impacts may only be with regard to ‘social’ or ‘political’ environment. Although to provide a ready point of



reference the focus is on specific goals and policies, this SEIS is intended to be an analysis of all related aspects of the proposed Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan for Olympia and the Olympia Urban Growth Area was adopted jointly by Olympia and Thurston County in 1994 and any amendments must be considered by both jurisdictions. The proposed 'Commission Draft' is first being considered by the City. Following action by the City Council, it will be presented to the County for evaluation. This SEIS was prepared for that first step, and may be adopted by the County at the subsequent stage.

## **B. Format of the SEIS**

The SEIS follows a similar format to the original 1994 EIS. Section I is a Fact Sheet and SEIS distribution list. Section II is a description of the overall format of the document. Section III is a broad summary of the impacts of the proposed Comprehensive Plan update. Section IV is a more detailed discussion of the affected environment, certain aspects of the proposal and the related issues, analysis, and specific staff recommendations.

## **C. Process for Review of the Proposed Plan Amendments and How to Comment**

The City of Olympia staff was responsible for preparing this SEIS. However, decisions regarding the proposed updated Plan will be made by the City Council following hearings and recommendations by the Olympia Planning Commission. The Olympia Planning Commission held initial hearings regarding the proposed Plan beginning on Monday, July 23, 2012. Comments were accepted by the Commission through October 29, 2012. The City Council is expected to hold hearings early in 2014. For more information regarding the Council's review process, please contact the parties listed on the Fact Sheet. Final action by the City Council is anticipated in 2014.

# **III. SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SUMMARY**

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### III. SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SUMMARY

#### Purpose

The purpose of this section is to summarize the expected adverse environmental impacts and mitigation measures associated with the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update.

#### Proposed Action and Objectives of the Proposal

The role of the “Comprehensive Plan for Olympia and the Olympia Growth Area” (Plan) is to clearly state Olympia's vision for its future, and describe how to get there. Subsequent implementing measures can include more detailed plans, such as the Water System Master Plan, development regulations such as zoning, and construction projects and other actions by government agencies or private parties. The proposed updates are intended to refine the vision set forth in 1994 and not to mark a significant departure.

The intent of the 1994 Plan can be described briefly as follows: Olympia's recent lifestyle has been based on a suburban pattern. Accommodating more population means that the Olympia of tomorrow will be a higher density city than today. It will not be adequate to merely build higher density housing. Growth is also a tool to reshape our community into a more sustainable form where already developed land is fully used and accommodates projected growth and changing demographic needs of the area, creates an urban form that supports less car dependence, and uses good design for streets, buildings, and neighborhoods.

To maintain a healthy and desirable community, and still accommodate the projected residential and employment growth of the next 20 years, higher densities need to be accompanied by improved urban amenities. This includes improvements to the park system, more street trees, and the preservation of enough wildlife habitat to allow diverse native species to survive. Olympia will also have to invest more of its financial resources into these sorts of capital improvements than in the past. At the same time, the City will need to address expanding demands upon traditional City facilities, such as sanitary sewers, drinking water supplies, street system, stormwater control, and solid waste disposal.

#### Cumulative Impacts of the Proposals

The cumulative impacts of the proposals are summarized in the table below. This table is intended as a means of viewing the relationships to the environment of the collective set of changes proposed in this Plan update. Rows in the table refer to the proposed substantive changes in the Plan, each of which is addressed in more detail in Section IV. Columns refer to elements of the environment identified in the SEIS ‘scoping’ documents.

As indicated by the Cumulative Impacts Table below, because the proposed Plan update includes a broad range of topics the proposal does touch on most elements of the environment. However, no one aspect of the proposal touches on all of these elements. The long-range cumulative effects of the proposal on selected elements of the environment are identified in this table simply as being positive, negative, unknown or not addressed for each of the aspects of the proposal. Whether a potential impact is identified as positive or negative is relative to the Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan. This cumulative analysis is intended as an aid in understanding the relationships between the many proposed Plan changes.

### **Specific Analysis**

Section IV provides a summary of the process that led to the 'Commission's draft' of the Plan update, and an overview of the state of the community and surrounding environment today. The following analysis focuses on about forty separate aspects of the proposed Plan update. Of the changes proposed in the Comprehensive Plan, these are the revisions that are most likely to make a substantive difference in the community's future. Each of the analyses compares the current provisions of the Comprehensive Plan (the 'no action' alternative) with a proposed change that is proposed and recommended by City staff. In some cases, a third alternative is offered for consideration. To aid in evaluation and decision-making, the analysis encompasses possible impacts to the environment and other implications of each proposal. The issues presented are regarding the community's vision for the future and broad goals and policy questions, but where applicable specific proposed text or maps from the proposed 'Commission draft' of the Comprehensive Plan update are included.



**Table: Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Proposal Topic (Section IV)		Soils/Geology	Air Quality	Water Resources	Habitat	Shorelines	Transportation	Land Use	Parks	Economy	Utilities
1	Sustainability	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+
2	Increasing the Level of Public Involvement	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+
3	Public Participation in Implementation	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+
4	Sub-area Planning	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+
5	Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map	N	N	+	+	+	—	+	+	N	N
6	Regional Coordination of Environmental Regulations	N	+	+	+	+	N	N	+	N	N
7	Preserve Existing Topography	+	N	+	+	N	N	+	N	N	N
8	Green Building & Low Impact Development	+	+	+	N	N	?	+	N	?	+
9	City-wide Framework for Public Land Conservation	N	N	+	+	+	N	+	+	+	?
10	Invasive Plants and Wildlife	+	N	+	+	+	N	N	+	N	N
11	Urban Wildlife Habitat	N	N	N	+	N	N	+	+	N	N
12	Urban Forestry	N	+	+	+	N	N	+	+	?	?
13	Capitol Lake Basin	N	N	?	?	?	N	N	N	?	N
14	Sea Level Rise	?	N	?	—	?	N	+	?	+	+
15	Stormwater Treatment Retrofit	N	N	+	+	+	N	N	N	—	+
16	Floodways	N	N	—	—	?	N	+	?	+	N
17	Climate Change	N	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	?	+
18	Dark Skies	N	N	N	+	+	—	?	N	-	?
19	Limit Toxins	+	+	+	+	+	?	N	?	?	?
20	Future Land Use Map	N	N	N	N	?	+	+	?	+	N
21	Future Land Use Map Amendments	N	N	+	?	N	+	+	N	?	N
22	Development Codes	+	+	+	+	+	N	+	?	?	?
23	Bike Parking Requirement	N	+	N	N	N	+	N	N	?	N
24	View Protection and Enhancement	N	N	N	?	+	?	+	?	?	N
25	Design Review Areas	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	?	N
26	Light Industry in Commercial Areas	N	N	N	N	N	?	?	N	+	?
27	On-street Parking and Traffic	N	—	N	N	N	?	+	N	?	N
28	Special Area Planning	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	?	+	+
29	Cottages and Townhouses	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	N	+
30	Large Multifamily Housing Projects	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	N	N
31	Private Use of Public Property	N	N	N	N	N	?	+	?	+	N
32	Urban Agriculture	N	N	?	?	N	N	?	?	+	N
33	Plan for Healthy Lifestyles	N	+	N	?	N	+	+	+	?	N
34	Secure Designs	N	N	N	+	N	+	+	N	N	N
35	Residential Clustering	+	+	+	+	?	N	?	N	N	N
36	Green Space	N	+	?	+	?	-	?	+	N	N
37	Gateways to Downtown	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	?	?	N
38	High-density Neighborhoods	N	+	+	+	N	+	+	?	+	?
39	Reduced Urban Corridors	N	?	N	N	N	-	?	N	?	N
40	Low-Density Neighborhoods	N	+	?	?	N	+	?	?	N	?
41	Medium-Density Neighborhood Centers	N	+	N	N	N	+	+	?	+	N
42	Street Connectivity	N	+	N	N	N	+	?	N	?	+
43	Transportation System Capacity	N	+	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	N
44	Bus Corridors	N	+	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	N
45	Alleys	N	+	?	N	N	?	?	N	N	+
46	Design Standards for Streets	N	?	N	N	N	?	+	N	N	N
47	Park Drive (specific street)	N	-	N	N	N	-	+	N	N	N
48	Bus Corridor Parking	N	+	N	N	N	-	+	N	?	N
49	Sidewalk Construction	N	+	N	N	N	+	+	N	N	N
50	Speed Limits	N	?	N	N	N	?	+	N	-	N

**Proposal Topic  
(Section IV)**

		Soils/Geology	Air Quality	Water Resources	Habitat	Shorelines	Transportation	Land Use	Parks	Economy	Utilities
51	Adopt Engineering Standards	+	N	+	N	N	+	N	N	?	+
52	Undergrounding of Utilities	N	N	N	?	N	?	?	N	?	+
53	Art Space	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	?	+	N
54	Contaminated Land	+	?	+	N	+	N	+	?	+	N
55	Home-Based Businesses	N	+	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	N
56	Code Enforcement	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	?	N
57	Earthquake Preparation	?	N	?	N	?	+	?	N	?	+

**Legend**

- ? = Likely impact, but difficult to assess
- +
- = Positive impact likely – but may not be significant
- = Adverse impact likely – but may not be significant
- N = Not applicable or no likely impact

# **IV. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL**

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## **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSAL**

The “Comprehensive Plan for Olympia and the Olympia Urban Growth Area” (Plan) adopted by the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners is the blueprint for the community’s development, growth and public facilities and services. It sets forth goals and policies to protect the health, welfare, safety and quality of life of Olympia’s residents, and contains elements that address city-wide issues like land use, housing, transportation and utilities. The Plan applies to both the area within the city limits and to the adjoining Urban Growth Area. Olympia is required to review, evaluate and if needed, revise the Plan and related development regulations every eight years to ensure compliance with the State Growth Management Act (GMA or Act).

### **GMA Update Requirement**

The Act provides guidance to local governments developing comprehensive plans and regulations to provide for growth without sacrificing the future livability of communities. Olympia and other cities within Thurston County must review and evaluate their comprehensive plans on an eight-year cycle. This review is different from annual amendments allowed by GMA. It represents a broad and mandatory examination of goals and policies in the context of development patterns and new information rather than responses to specific proposals.

Although the Plan has been amended almost annually, the entirety of Olympia’s GMA-mandated Comprehensive Plan had not been reviewed and updated since it was first adopted in 1994. (Note: The 1994 Plan was a major update of the pre-GMA Plan adopted in 1988.) Anticipating the first major review of the Plan in nearly twenty years, in 2009 Olympia began the update process well in advance of a periodic-review deadline of December 31, 2011. This update process was labeled “Imagine Olympia.” The Act was later amended and Olympia’s deadline was postponed to June 30, 2016. However, the City elected to proceed with a major aspect of the update already in progress, while postponing some actions until closer to the new deadline. The proposal analyzed in this SEIS is that “major aspect” of the periodic update.

### **Public Participation Program**

Beginning in the summer of 2009, the City reached out to citizens, staff and advisory boards through an extensive scoping and public involvement process. The Planning Commission (Commission) and City staff have engaged citizens in a variety of formats, including:

- ‘Community Conversations’ (neighborhood meetings and public-place interviews)
- City-wide telephone survey
- *Imagine Olympia* Kick-off event and community meeting
- *Imagine Olympia* website comments
- ‘Home Kit’ (do-it-yourself meeting) feedback



- Focus meetings

Phase one of *Imagine Olympia* concluded in the summer of 2010 with the City Council adopting a Commission-recommended scope for the update. That scope is summarized below. In March of 2011, the Commission completed phase two -- eight public Focus Meetings. In April of 2012, the City staff issued a rough draft of the updated Plan for public review and comment. This step led to a few refinements, and on July 6, 2012, the City issued the "July draft" that was the subject of the Planning Commission's review and public hearings. In March of 2013 the Commission issued a set of recommendations that were incorporated into the 'Commission draft' that is the subject of this Revised Final SEIS. That draft of the proposed Plan update will be reviewed by the City Council in 2014.

### **Scope of the Update**

The proposal is a key element in the City of Olympia's efforts to both comply with the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) and ensure that the Comprehensive Plan continues to reflect the vision of the community. Although a substantial step in complying with GMA mandates, the proposal analyzed in this SEIS is only one of the actions the City will likely take in the next few years to ensure conformance with GMA. For example, between now and 2016 the City expects to receive an updated Buildable Lands Report prepared by Thurston Regional Planning Council staff, which may lead to further review and amendment of the Plan.

As noted, the scope of this aspect of the Plan update was established by the City Council on June 22, 2010. The Council directed that this step would include ten elements. The proposal addresses each of the following:

- 1. Meet GMA requirements** – Washington Department of Commerce guidance, including a checklist and technical assistance have been used to ensure compliance with the Act's requirements.
- 2. Update the vision statement** –The Planning Commission developed a new vision and values statement that reflects what was heard throughout *Imagine Olympia* (the update process).
- 3. Improve access to the plan** – While nearly all of the substantive content has been preserved, the format of the Plan has been significantly changed. To improve readability, the proposed updated Plan is modeled on the State's "Plaintalk" guidance and is half as long as its predecessor. The updated Plan is a 'web-based' document, i.e., designed to be viewed on the internet, much background information has been removed and replaced by 'hyperlinks,' goals and policies have been consolidated to remove redundancy and increase clarity, and the chapters have been reorganized to reduce redundancy while addressing all Plan elements required by GMA. For example, historic preservation is addressed as an aspect of Urban Design, and housing is now addressed in both the Land Use and Urban Design and the Public Service chapters rather than standing alone as a topic separate from other land uses and public programs.

4. **Update background information** – Background information, charts and data have been updated and minimized to include only what is beneficial to illustrate the Plan or required by GMA.
5. **Incorporate recent planning efforts** – The proposed Comprehensive Plan includes goals and policies that reflect more detailed planning tasks completed since 1994, such as the Transportation Mobility Strategy and the latest Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan.
6. **Utilize the Commission’s 2009 planning goals review** – Early in the update process the Planning Commission reviewed all goals in the 1994 Plan. The Commission’s review helped identify goals that were redundant or more reflective of an action that should be included in the Implementation Strategy described below.
7. **Revise (and expand) the Public Involvement Chapter** – Public involvement is now addressed in the Public Participation and Partners chapter, and includes the addition of new goals and policies for sub-area and neighborhood planning.
8. **Provide an opportunity for public to address downtown, neighborhood planning, high-density corridor, and environmental stewardship issues** – Feedback from nearly 500 participants at eight Commission-hosted focus meetings confirmed some existing goals and policies, provided the basis for new goals and policies, and contributed to a growing list of potential action items.
9. **Address a miscellaneous list of issues** – These specific ‘other’ issues identified through scoping as new or emerging since 1994 are addressed in the draft Plan. (This list is available on request.)
10. **Add an “Action Plan” or “Implementation Strategy”** – A document, of undecided title, with performance measures is to be added to or supplement the Plan. The draft Plan describes enhanced public involvement and coordination with partners related to this next-steps strategy.

### **Substantive Changes to the Plan**

Throughout *Imagine Olympia*, the public described a community that is sustainable, engaged, a model for environmental stewardship, and connected through a variety of transportation options. The current Plan is consistent with those desires, and they continue to be reflected in the Commission Draft. In addition, there are proposed substantive changes to the Plan in the form of entirely new goals or policies, a new policy direction, or a new policy emphasis. These updates may result in a change in how the community grows and develops or in how the City does business. The Draft’s substantive changes that might adversely affect the environment are analyzed in this SEIS. In addition, this SEIS is to serve as a primary options-analysis document for the public and the City Council, and thus this SEIS also addresses those significant changes to the Plan that may not lead to adverse environmental impacts but do constitute major changes in the vision, goals or policies.

## **Scope of this Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement**

On April 2, 2012, the City of Olympia issued a “Notice of Determination of Significance, Adoption of Existing Environmental Document [1994 EIS], and Request for Comments on the Scope of the Draft Supplemental EIS” for this proposed Comprehensive Plan update. This notice was accompanied by a “Comprehensive Plan Update Draft EIS Scoping Report.” That report indicated that the SEIS would probably address potential impacts of the proposal upon elements of the environment including “earth, air quality, water resources, plants and animals, shoreline use, transportation, land use, environment, parks, economy, and utilities.” Comments regarding the scope of the SEIS were due on May 2, 2012. This SEIS does address all of these elements of the environment and more.

The proposed Plan update is not a unitary proposal. It includes about forty somewhat related and somewhat discrete proposals for substantive changes to the Plan. Each in turn is individually summarized and addressed below. The City Council in reaching a final decision may elect to adopt all, none, or various parts of the proposal. Thus, the structure of this SEIS is intended to provide both a cumulative or collective view of this set of amendments, and directly-related information for evaluating each of the various proposed substantive changes to the Plan. The ‘Affected Environment’ section below provides a broad description of the existing environment for considering all aspects of the proposed Plan update.

## **Affected Environment and Planning Background**

The City of Olympia is located in Thurston County, Washington, at the southern tip of Puget Sound. It is approximately 65 miles south of Seattle and 105 miles north of Portland, Oregon. Olympia is the capital city of Washington and home to two regional hospitals, a deep-water port, and one college (South Puget Sound Community College) with two more nearby (The Evergreen State College and Saint Martin’s University). It is a destination for parks, arts, and recreation, tourism and retail shopping. The City together with its Urban Growth Area (UGA) encompasses approximately 25 square miles.

## **Population and Employment**

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Thurston County and its cities to accommodate a fair share of Washington State’s population and employment growth. For this purpose, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) prepares a range of 20-year county-wide population projections. Pursuant to the *Thurston Countywide Planning Policies* adopted by the County and its cities, each jurisdiction is expected to accommodate a share of the region’s growth.

The local Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) prepares ‘most likely’ forecasts for such local planning purposes, including a county-wide forecast which by law must fall within the range provided by the State. TRPC also assists Thurston County and the cities in assuring that the minimum 20-year population projection is accommodated county-wide, and that urban growth areas are of sufficient area and densities to permit the projected urban population. TRPC forecasts include 20-year residential and

employment growth allocations for Olympia and other areas. These forecasts are based on current adopted plans, zoning, environmental regulations and development trends. The City of Olympia uses these forecasts for city planning, as well as regional coordination.

According to the *2012 Thurston County Profile*, Thurston County is one of the fastest growing areas in Washington. Its population more than doubled between 1980 and 2010. The forecasts prepared by TRPC in 2012 suggest that the area will add about 140,000 residents during the next 30 years, comparable to the population increase of 128,000 more residents which occurred during the last 30 years. On November 2, 2012, TRPC, which includes a representative Councilmember from the City of Olympia, approved new population forecast allocations for the cities and towns of Thurston County.

Since Olympia became incorporated as a city in 1882, its population has grown by about 2% per year. By 1995 there were about 46,400 people living in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area (UGA). The UGA includes both the area within the city limits and adjoining areas that the County deems eligible for annexation. According to the U. S. Census, by 2010 this number had reached 58,310.

TRPC’s 2012 population forecast allocation yields a UGA population in 2035 of 84,400. The proposed update of the Comprehensive Plan is grounded on this basic residential population forecast together with the employment forecasts described below.

The table below provides 2012 forecast excerpts based on an assumption that the city limits will not change. See “*The Profile*” of Thurston County produced annually by TRPC for more information about population and demographic trends.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>2010 Population</b>	<b>2015 Forecast</b>	<b>2020 Forecast</b>	<b>2025 Forecast</b>	<b>2030 Forecast</b>	<b>2035 Forecast</b>
City of Olympia	46,510	49,550	54,610	60,130	64,980	67,730
Olympia UGA Total	58,310	61,820	67,850	74,030	79,940	84,400
Total Thurston Urban Growth Areas	171,120	182,800	207,500	229,890	252,320	270,570
Thurston County Total	252,300	266,500	295,900	322,200	348,600	370,600
Olympia UGA % of Thurston County	23.1%	23.2%	22.9%	23.0%	22.9%	22.8%

Note: In 2007, TRPC’s 2030 forecast for the Olympia Growth area was 82,090.

As noted in the proposed Plan update, an aging population presents particular opportunities and challenges for a community like Olympia. The aging ‘baby-boomer’ generation and other factors are expected to result in both increasing numbers of older residents and increasing percentages in the Olympia area. In particular, State forecasts presented in TRPC’s 2012 Profile indicate an estimated 33,754 residents of the County were age 65 and over as of 2011. This was about 13% of the population. By 2030, those forecasts suggest that over 67,252 residents will be in this age group, which would comprise over 20% of the county population.

TRPC also produces employment forecasts. Such forecasts were last prepared in 2012, and small area employment allocations were adopted on February 1, 2013. In 2010, there were an estimated 128,500 jobs county-wide. This number is projected to increase to 188,400 by 2035 – an increase of 59,900 jobs countywide. TRPC estimates there were 51,346 jobs within the boundaries of Olympia’s UGA in 2010, or about 41%, of all jobs in the County. This number is forecast to rise to 72,215 jobs by 2035.

Thus Olympia is expected to continue to have employment exceeding the proportionate share of residential population, and to continue to have a ‘day population’ that exceeds its residential count. The largest percentage increase is expected in the service sector. See [TRPC’s website](#) for more specific information.

## **Land Use Conditions**

The land use pattern in the City of Olympia has resulted from a combination of natural and human-caused events. Over 15,000 years ago, glaciers moved across the landscape carving out several lakes and other geologic features. The resulting shoreline of Puget Sound was a focal point for activity before European settlement, and continued to be the focus when Edmund Sylvester and Levi Lathrop Smith began developing a community on these shores in 1846. The City’s future as a key place was established when in 1889 it was selected as the Capital of Washington State.

Significant environmental change began in 1911 when Budd Inlet was dredged to create a deep-water port, and the fill was used to create 19 city blocks downtown. Early development in Olympia concentrated around the harbor, and grew in a grid-street pattern as compact single-family neighborhoods fanned out from downtown’s central core. Commercial growth outside the downtown followed the arterial street systems east toward Martin Way and Pacific Avenue, and west along Harrison Avenue.

The development pattern began to change significantly after World War II as the increased mobility provided by the automobile spurred suburban development. During the mid-1940s, significant expansions of residential areas occurred to the southeast and later in the westside neighborhoods. In the early 1950s the construction of Interstate-5 and State Route-101 redefined the direction and intensity of growth to areas with good freeway access. New subdivisions incorporated the new “cul-de-sac” design which promoted neighborhood privacy and placed more demands on the network of arterial streets.

During the 1970s and 80s, extensive medical service areas grew up around Providence St. Peter’s Hospital and professional offices were built on and near the State Capitol Campus. Commercial growth increased on the westside with development of the Capital Mall and Olympia Auto Mall followed by construction of The Evergreen State College in the rural area northwest of the city. Through the 1980s, new neighborhoods were typically characterized by low densities and few street connections.

Immediately preceding and following updating of its Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1994, the City underwent some fundamental changes in its approach to land

use and urban design. A more compact pattern of development began to take shape as the City phased urban development outward from core areas and encouraged increased residential densities through infill development and more intensity of new land uses. These new developments utilized smaller blocks with more street connections. Additional emphasis was placed on improving aesthetics and quality of life in neighborhoods.

Some of the land use changes foreseen in 1994 included:

- Establishing minimum development densities to increase residential densities by roughly 25%.
- Allowing the construction of accessory living units within single-family areas.
- Removing residential density limits within most commercial land use categories.
- Converting some formerly residential single-family areas to multifamily areas.
- Establishing architectural design standards for much of the City.
- Planning for a few large undeveloped tracts in key locations as “Neighborhood Villages”; and one tract as a more commercial “Urban Village.”
- Increasing residential densities along selected “High Density Corridors.”
- Establishing new “Neighborhood Centers” throughout the community.

### *Land Supply and Development 1994 to Today*

Two basic goals of the Growth Management Act are to: 1) Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low density development; and 2) encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist and can be provided in an efficient manner. The Act directs urban areas, like Olympia, to absorb more of the state’s population growth than rural areas. This helps preserve agriculture, forest, mineral and other natural resource lands, while also reducing traffic, pollution and the costs of providing city services. Higher density development also leaves more room for parks and open space in urban areas.

The GMA requires that each jurisdiction has enough developable land to accommodate its 20-year projected population growth. TRPC provides estimates of buildable land supply through the “Buildable Lands Program.” The program answers two key growth-related questions: 1) Whether residential development in the urban growth areas is occurring at the densities envisioned in local comprehensive plans; and 2) whether there is adequate land supply in the urban growth areas for anticipated future growth in population and employment.

The most recent land capacity analysis is contained in the 2007 Buildable Lands Report for Thurston County. In summary, the evaluation shows that based on adopted policies and regulations in place as of September 2007, there is sufficient land supply to accommodate 20 years of projected population growth. It also shows that there is enough vacant, partially-used and redevelopable land to support the job growth forecast for urban areas in Thurston County. The next Buildable Lands Report is due in 2015 but may be prepared at an earlier date.

Achieved residential density is the measurement of how much land each new home, condo, or apartment complex requires. Net density measures the number of homes over the total area of a subdivision after subtracting for environmentally sensitive areas and buffers, open space and roads. As a 'rule of thumb,' if development is occurring at four or more dwellings per net acre, it is considered urban and consistent with the GMA.

According to the 2007 Buildable Lands Report, achieved net density has increased in Olympia since 1994. In Olympia, new lots occurring between 1995 and 1999 had an achieved net density of 5.3 units per acre. This number rose to 7.4 for the years 2000 to 2004. This result suggests that mechanisms to achieve higher density put in place with the passage of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan in 1994 have helped to increase density in the City.

Development has occurred in all areas of the City and its UGA within the past two decades. During that time, many of the large ownerships that were readily developable were subdivided. Three "Neighborhood Villages" have begun to develop, as has the City's one "Urban Village." (These have been named Mill Pond, Woodbury Crossing, Bentrige and Briggs Villages.) Large tracts that remain may not be as readily developable due to the presence of environmentally sensitive areas. (See the Critical Areas section below.)

Since 1994, the City has acquired several parcels with wetlands and other critical areas for parks and open space. These include 47 acres at Chambers Lake, 37 acres at Mission Creek and 31 acres for the Olympia Woodland Trail. See the Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan for a complete inventory and maps of parks and open space in the City of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area.

Within the past 18 years, there have been few major changes to the City's commercial or industrial areas. Despite efforts to increase density and mixed use in downtown and along major corridors, the potential change anticipated in 1994 has not been realized. The City's neighborhood centers have also not been developed as envisioned.

In 2003, TRPC convened a Vision Reality Task Force to analyze what was perceived as disconnects between land use visions expressed in adopted plans throughout Thurston County and what has actually occurred. The Task Force had two responsibilities: 1) Validate whether or not there are actual disconnects, and; 2) if disconnects are evident, identify and evaluate contributing factors. The project found five specific areas where there are disconnects between market realities and adopted plans:

- Urban residential development is taking place at lower densities than expected.
- Very little mixed-use development is taking place in the cities.
- Rural residential development is taking place at higher densities than expected.
- The share of residential growth locating in urban areas has not increased as planned.
- The share of workers commuting into our out the region continued to increase relative to those who live and work within the region.

See *Understanding Public Vision and Marketplace Realities in the Thurston Region* for more information.

## Housing

The City of Olympia is responsible through comprehensive planning to accommodate its allocated new residents, housing and jobs. In the *Thurston County Profile*, TRPC details the housing units and new building for each city in Thurston County. The expected number of homes to be built in the near future can be estimated by housing starts, which is the number of building permits that are taken out in a specified period of time. From 2000 to 2010, the percentage (but not the number) of new housing starts in urban areas has increased and the percentage of housing starts in rural areas has decreased.

According to the *2012 Profile* for Thurston County:

*“The majority of housing starts in 2011 continued to be single-family homes, and these homes accounted for 75 percent of the total market share ... Multifamily homes captured 22 percent of the new housing starts in incorporated communities and urban growth areas in 2011. This proportion was lower than the 38 percent market share in 2007 and the 31 percent share in 2010.”*

By 2010, the City of Olympia included over 22,000 housing units, plus about another 4,000 in the unincorporated growth area. Recovery from the recession seems to be redirecting Olympia’s housing market toward multifamily housing. While ten years ago, the single-family housing market was booming, today – and unlike some other parts of the County – Olympia is experiencing relatively more multifamily development. In 2010 over 500 new housing units were proposed for development, most of these were apartments. Since 2010 the City of Olympia has issued permits to build more than 800 more new apartments.

### *Projected Housing Need*

Projected housing needs are determined by a variety of means. Population forecasts are reviewed in relation to current population and demographics. From this one can estimate the likely housing needs compared to current supply. The State Office of Financial Management (OFM) releases population estimates for each county, which frame the Thurston Regional Planning Council’s county-wide forecasts. This county-wide forecast provides a basis for estimated sub-area allocations prepared by TRPC in cooperation with the County, the cities, and other local agencies.

In the spring of 2012, OFM adjusted its population forecast downward. This adjustment together with the economic shift resulted in TRPC releasing a lower population forecast for Thurston County and lower allocations for the sub-areas. The county-wide forecast, adopted on July 13, 2012, is about 8% lower for 2040 than the previous forecast. And, as noted above, the new population allocations suggest that Olympia’s urban growth area won’t reach the population previously forecast for 2030 until about 2033.

Note that long-range housing demands and needs estimates depend not only upon population forecasts and household size, which has been declining for many years. These estimates also generally assume



constant vacancy rates. Such vacancy rates vary with supply and demand, but are also subject to economic and financing conditions. These and other factors actually result in substantial changes in vacancy rates. For example, between 2001 and 2011 the rental apartment vacancy rates in Thurston County ranged from less than 2.5% to about 6%. (See TRPC's Profile of Thurston County for more housing information.)

As described above, TRPC also prepares a periodic "Buildable Lands Report" for Thurston County. This report evaluates whether urban growth areas are growing at residential density rates projected in the Comprehensive Plan. It also indicates whether there is an adequate land supply in the urban growth areas for anticipated future growth in population and employment. Together the Buildable Lands Report and the Population and Employment Forecast form a foundation for estimating housing needs in Olympia and the surrounding area.

At the moment, estimates – primarily the 2007 Buildable Lands Report -- indicate that without a substantial change in plans, Olympia and its Urban Growth Area can accommodate about 15,000 new housing units. TRPC's reports also estimate that the community can expect about 12,000 new housing units to be built in the next twenty years. Depending upon economic conditions and resident preferences, these could be in the form of detached single-family homes, townhomes, apartments, or special purpose housing such as group homes and seniors housing. Should growth be slower than forecast, Olympia's Comprehensive Plan will have addressed the community's housing and other needs for a few more years than expected.

As set forth in the Housing section of the Land Use and Urban Design chapter of the proposed Plan update:

Olympia is a part of a larger housing market extending throughout Thurston County and beyond. Thus planning for housing is done based on anticipated shares of this larger area. The 2010 Census indicated that Olympia and its urban growth area included almost 26,000 housing units. Of these, as estimated in the TRPC Profile, 57% were single-family homes, 39% were multifamily (shared wall) units, and 4% were manufactured housing. As amended in 2008, the Buildable Lands Report for Thurston County estimates that over 11,000 new housing units will be needed by 2030 to accommodate population growth in the Olympia urban growth area. Of these, about 60% are expected to be single-family homes.

Based on existing zoning and development patterns, that report indicates the area can accommodate almost 15,000 units. In addition to large areas zoned for single-family development, almost 400 acres of vacant multifamily and duplex zoned land is available, and an additional 500 acres of vacant, partially-used, and redevelopable commercial land is also available for new housing. Because Olympia generally allows small group homes and manufactured housing wherever single-family homes are permitted, allows larger group homes by special approval, and does not discriminate with regard to government-assisted housing, foster-care, or low-income housing, the area is expected to be adequate to accommodate all types of housing.

Similarly, the Thurston County Consolidated Plan of 2008 for affordable housing indicates that there is no shortage of land for affordable housing. However, there is a "mismatch" between the availability of affordable housing and the need for such housing, both at the lowest end of the income scale and the upper end of the moderate income bracket. That Plan and the Public Services Chapter describe efforts to close these gaps and make adequate provisions for all economic segments of the community.

**Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

The Growth Management Act (GMA) includes planning goals that guide the preparation and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. These goals include retaining open space; enhancing recreation opportunities; conserving fish and wildlife habitat; protecting the environment and enhancing the state's quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water. Counties and cities are required to identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas for multiple purposes, including recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas.

Olympia manages approximately 736 acres of open space. Priest Point Park, Grass Lake Refuge, and Watershed Park together comprise over 630 acres. According to the GMA, critical areas include wetlands, geologic hazard areas, frequently flooded areas, areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, and fish & wildlife habitat areas. Cities are to avoid directing new growth to areas where new development would conflict with protecting critical areas.

The City of Olympia’s Critical Areas Ordinance (Olympia Municipal Code Chapter 18.32) provides regulations to protect critical areas within the City. In general, the City requires applicants to provide site-specific studies with development proposals in areas containing critical areas. The City requires applicants to: 1) Identify the presence of critical areas and whether the proposal meet regulatory thresholds according to the code definition or criteria; and 2) prepare technical reports to assess site conditions, evaluate risk and identify necessary mitigation. Specific locations of critical areas are identified during the land use review process. General locations for the five critical areas regulated under OMC 18.32 are on the followings maps.

<b>Critical Area</b>	<b>View Map</b>
Wellhead Protection Areas	Olympia Wellhead Protection Areas map*
Important Habitats & Species	Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas map*
Streams and Important Riparian Areas	Washington State Department of Natural Resources maintains and updates stream maps to help identify and classify streams. Only some of the streams on these maps have been field verified. **
Wetlands and Small Lakes	Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas map*
Landslide Hazard Areas	Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas map*

\* Map included in the Natural Environment Chapter of the Commission-draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update

\*\*Stream maps are available on the Department of Natural Resources website. Also, for reference purposes only (not official maps) the Wild Fish Conservancy website maps certain fish-bearing streams.

### *Natural Hazards*

Geologically hazardous areas are places highly susceptible to erosion, landslides, earthquakes, or other geologic events. The intent of identifying, classifying and designating geologically hazardous areas is to evaluate whether development should be prohibited, restricted or otherwise controlled because of danger from geological hazards. In some cases, the risk from geological hazards can be reduced or mitigated to acceptable levels by engineering design or special construction practices.

*The Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Thurston County Region* describes the risks posed by natural hazards and the actions that can help our community be more disaster resilient. That document identifies the following hazards and the extent of risk to Olympia:

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Probability of Occurrence</b>	<b>Vulnerability</b>	<b>Risk</b>
Earthquake	High	High	High
Storm	High	Moderate	Moderate
Flood	High	Moderate	Moderate
Landslide	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Wildland Fire	Low	Low	Low
Volcanic Event	Low	Moderate	Low

According to the *City of Olympia’s Annex to the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*, earthquakes pose the highest risk to Olympia. Geologic conditions and history suggest a high probability that Thurston County could experience another damaging earthquake sometime in the next 25 years. The concentration of buildings and population in Olympia, particularly in downtown and other older neighborhoods, may increase the impact to Olympia as compared to other areas in the county.

Liquefaction caused by earthquake is a particular risk for certain areas in Olympia. Liquefaction is defined by the United States Geological Service as “a process by which water-saturated sediment temporarily loses strength and acts as a fluid, like when you wiggle sand near the water at the beach. This effect can be caused by earthquake shaking.” The *City of Olympia’s Annex to the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* includes a map depicting high risk liquefaction areas for Olympia. These areas occur along the Port peninsula, Moxlie Creek, West Bay Drive, Capitol Lake, and in the southeast along the Deschutes River.

For more information, see the *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*. More information about the risk of liquefaction can also be found in the *Geological Folio of the Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater Urban Area, Washington: Liquefaction Susceptibility Map*.

## *Flood Zones*

Of all natural hazards that affect the Thurston County region, floods are the most common. There are four types of flooding: riverine, tidal, groundwater and urban. Olympia experiences localized urban flooding in certain areas depending on rainfall conditions. Storms are a major factor associated with flooding, particularly on Olympia's Westside. Downtown also experiences occasional flooding due to extreme tides. For further descriptions and information, see the *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*. Also, see the section on *Sea Level Rise* below for associated impacts.

Olympia's Flood Damage Protection ordinance (OMC 16.70) provides regulations to protect uses and structures susceptible to flooding, and to prevent activities that may cause erosion or flooding. Flood zones in the City are identified on *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps*. See the FEMA website to view the maps.

## **Sea Level Rise**

Sea-level could rise in Olympia by 50 inches over the next century due to warming of the oceans and settling land. Recent work by the City of Olympia indicates there may be more risk of flooding in the downtown due to sea level rise than is depicted on FEMA flood maps. This is due to the relatively low ground level in downtown, which lies only one to three feet above the current highest high tides, and the multiple open stormwater outfalls discharging into Budd Inlet. Flooding also results from high precipitation runoff when combined with a high tide that inundates a major gravity storm drain system.

The 'Commission Draft' of the Comprehensive Plan Update includes a policy to protect Olympia from and adapt to the probable impacts of sea level rise. Current efforts are underway to better understand how this might be implemented. Near-term actions include incorporating sea level rise policies into planning documents, developing better emergency management responses, improving field data, considering possible construction needs, supplementing flood maps with local knowledge, and completing small retrofit projects.

Long-term actions may include constructing a sea-wall or levee, installing new tide gates and pump stations or consolidating stormwater systems. These solutions would require significant financial investment. For more information, including maps depicting level of flood risk under certain scenarios, see *City of Olympia Engineered Response to Sea Level Rise*.

## **Native Plants and Wildlife**

The Olympia area is categorized as a West Lowland Forest Ecosystem. Trees native to the area include Douglas fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, big leaf maple, red alder and madrone. Understory species uniquely adapted to filtered light grow here, including vine maple, salal, sword ferns, and trilliums among others. Large leaves for harvesting the minimal light and white flowers are common, as found on big leaf maples and devils club. Our area is home to a variety of animals, many of which are

listed on the Priority Habitat and Species list by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. These include bats, and salmon and some nearshore fish, geoducks, clams and oysters. Also, birds such as loons, grebes, herons, owls, eagles and falcons among many others, call our area home. Sea mammals common here include harbor seals, with an occasional visit from porpoises and whales. Land dwelling mammals include a variety of deer and elk, gophers and squirrels. We also have a variety of butterflies, worms, beetles and other animal and plant species common to this ecosystem.

### *Invasive Species*

Native plants and animals are threatened by land development and by invasive plant species. Invasive plant species harm natives by taking over their space, changing the composition of the soil, and covering and shading native plants. Invasive plants also harm animals by altering their habitat and by eliminating favored food plants. Invasive plants are spread both by humans and by animals. Examples include knotweed, butterfly bush and scotch broom.

### *Development Impacts and Mitigation*

The Growth Management Act requires local governments to protect public resources, including fish and wildlife, from the potential impacts of population growth. Washington's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy reports that habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation are the major challenges to Washington's wildlife and is associated with the state's increasing human population and the residential development.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife reports that wildlife is best served by:

- Keeping large connected patches of undeveloped native vegetation intact.
- Encouraging and maintaining low densities within and immediately surrounding high-value habitat areas and encouraging maintenance of native vegetation.
- Managing road systems to minimize the number of new roads and new barriers to important animal movement corridors.
- Planning open space to incorporate high-value habitat and corridors for animal movement.
- Zoning for higher densities within urban and developed landscapes to avoid sprawl.

The benefits of habitat retention include improved water quality, improved water storage and availability, control of storm water and floods, pollination, food production, soil fertility, pest control and the reduction of carbon dioxide production.

## **Water Quality**

Many federal, state and local laws, regulations, policies form the legal context within which our water resources are managed. That legal framework is described in the City's *2009-2014 Water System Plan*.

## Surface Watersheds

All of the water that runs through Olympia drains to one of three inlets: Eld Inlet, Budd Inlet, and Henderson Inlet. Most of Olympia drains to Budd Inlet. Watersheds are areas of land that drain to a common body of water. Through an interlocal agreement with the City of Olympia, Thurston County collects surface water quality data and prepares a *Water Resources Monitoring Report* every few years. The most recent report for 2007-2009 provides information about the health of ten watersheds in Olympia. Water quality is described as “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” or “poor,” as defined differently for lakes and streams within the report.

Olympia’s watersheds are identified on the Olympia Drainage Basin map included in the Natural Environment Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan update. All of the streams, lakes, marine shorelines and wetlands in Olympia are located in one of twelve watersheds:

	<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Drains to</b>	<b>Water Quality Description</b>
1	Capitol Lake	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Fair to Poor
2	Chambers Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Good
3	East Bay	Budd Inlet	Not available
4	Ellis Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Good
5	Indian Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Poor
6	Mission Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Fair
7	Moxlie Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Poor
8	Percival Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Fair
9	Schneider Creek	Budd Inlet/ Deschutes River	Poor
10	West Bay	Budd Inlet	Not available
11	Green Cove Creek	Eld Inlet	Good
12	Woodard Creek	Woodard Creek	Fair

Capitol Lake is listed as being in “fair” to “poor” condition, and is included on the state’s list of water quality impaired water bodies. High levels of phosphorus and fecal coliform are major contributors. Sediment deposition in the lake from the Deschutes River, Percival Creek, shoreline erosion, and landslides is an ongoing issue. The Lake is also infested with the noxious aquatic plant, Eurasian water milfoil, and the New Zealand mudsnail. A 10-year Capitol Lake Adaptive Management Plan of 2003 guides clean-up and administration by the Washington Department of Enterprise Services.

Three watersheds, Chambers Creek, Ellis Creek and Green Cove Creek were reported to be in “good” condition; meaning they usually meet water quality standards. The remaining streams in Olympia are reported to be in “fair” or “poor” condition; in general, this means they are impacted by pollution and other parameters such as high nutrient levels which cause them to frequently or routinely fail water quality tests. For more information, see *Thurston County Water Resources Monitoring Report, 2007-2008 Water Year, 2008-2009 Water Year*.

Stream health is impacted by numerous factors including the amount of impervious surface, tree cover, stream bank and habitat conditions and other factors. Impervious surfaces include pavement, such as asphalt, concrete, and compacted gravel, roofs, revetments, and other man-made surfaces which substantially impede the infiltration of precipitation. Research shows that streams are impacted when as little as 10 percent of a watershed (1 acre in 10) is covered with roofs, streets and sidewalks. According to the TRPC's *Estimates of Current and Future Impervious Area for Watershed Based Land Use Planning, March 2011* the entire Budd Inlet/Deschutes River watershed, which encompasses much of Olympia, is approaching this 10 percent threshold, while the Henderson Inlet watershed which encompasses the northeast part of the City already substantially exceed this limit. The existing coverages within specific more urban sub-basins vary greatly with some, such as Indian-Moxlie creek, exceeding 25% while others such as Green Cove creek only slightly exceed 10%.

Increases in impervious surfaces and subsequent reductions in tree canopy that occur with urban development reduce the ability of the ground to absorb water and recharge the aquifer. This increases the volume and velocity of stormwater, which can result in flooding, streambank erosion, degradation or loss of habitat, and sediment deposits. A leading cause of water pollution in Puget Sound is stormwater runoff. Water running over concrete picks up contaminants such as pet waste, fertilizer, pesticides and soil. This pollution negatively affects aquatic ecosystems and can make the water unsafe for drinking, swimming or fishing.

Stormwater treatment and control can help to mitigate some of the negative impacts of stormwater flows to our surface waters. Stormwater control applications vary by intent, effectiveness and technique. In general, more control regardless of type provides a greater environmental benefit. The level of stormwater control in Olympia varies widely. Older developments typically route stormwater flows directly to streams, wetlands, and/or marine waters. New developments provide progressively more onsite water quality treatment and downstream flow control, for example stormwater ponds.

The City maintains over 130 miles of underground pipe, over 6,300 storm drains, and 40 stormwater ponds that carry stormwater runoff from roads and rooftops to our streams and Budd Inlet. Restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of water resources is a top priority. The City provides public education and outreach, illicit discharge detection and elimination services, pollution prevention services and regulations that control runoff from developments. Over the years, the City has consistently raised standards for stormwater control consistent with federal and state law. For more information, see the *City of Olympia Storm and Surface Water Plan*.

### *Drinking Water*

McAllister Springs provides the majority of drinking water for the City of Olympia. Every day the City delivers affordable, high quality drinking water to nearly 55,000 people through about 19,000 connections. This water consistently meets 100% of the US Environmental Protection Agency's standards for safe drinking water. For more information, see the *City of Olympia 2012 Water Quality and Efficiency Report*.

## *Puget Sound*

Taking action to improve the health of Puget Sound is a priority of the State of Washington. The City of Olympia is part of the Puget Sound Partnership, a community effort of citizens, governments, tribes, scientists and businesses working together to restore and protect Puget Sound. The Partnership is required to produce a *State of the Sound Report* every two years that documents the current status of the ecosystem. According to the report, in Puget Sound nitrogen is the main pollutant causing low dissolved oxygen levels which lead to stress and high mortality in fish and other aquatic life. See the report for more information.

In 2006, the State and Thurston Regional Planning Council published a *South Puget Sound Forum Environmental Quality Economic Vitality Indicators Report*. The report includes baseline data about six indicators: population, land cover, shoreline armoring, shellfish water quality, freshwater quality and marine water quality. In summary, the report states population and employment growth is expected to continue along with increasing traffic and environmental impacts, that impervious surfaces are not increasing as rapidly as population, that large stretches of the area's shorelines have been 'armored' but new bulkheads are uncommon, and that we are challenged to improve our marine and fresh water quality (especially in Budd Inlet). See the report for more information.

## **Air Quality**

Air quality in Olympia is monitored by the Olympic Regional Clean Air Agency (ORCAA), and regulated under state and federal laws. Air quality of a city is primarily based upon the type and amount of pollutants being emitted and dispersed locally. Federal ambient air pollution standards exist for the following pollutants: particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide, and lead. Emissions of these and other pollutants, such as toxic air pollutants and hydrocarbons, are regulated under the Federal Clean Air Act.

The dominant pollutant in Thurston County as well as statewide is Particulate Matter of less than 2.5 microns in size (PM2.5). This form of pollution comes mainly from smoke associated with home heating devices, and field stubble and other outdoor burning. Transportation sources also contribute but much less than smoke in its various incarnations. The EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standard annual mean for PM2.5 is 15 micro-grams per cubic meter. ORCAA measures PM2.5 in Thurston County from a location in Lacey on a monthly basis. In 2011, Lacey's PM2.5 was 5.2 micro-grams per cubic meter, or 33% of the federal standard.

ORCAA also monitors ozone during the summer months. Other pollutants are monitored at a state level, but not specifically in Thurston County. Trends indicate air quality in the County and state is improving. Monthly air quality summaries and other archival data are located on ORCAA's website. Also view the publication, *2010 Washington State Ambient Air Monitoring Network Report*.



## Climate Change

The Washington State Department of Ecology summarizes the concept of climate change on their webpage:

*Carbon dioxide is a major component of the Earth's atmosphere and because it traps heat, is necessary for a livable climate. But, since humans started using fossil fuels for transportation, electricity and other purposes, we have been releasing vast amounts of the carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. And since carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere longer than other major heat-trapping gases and it is accumulating in the atmosphere at increasing concentrations due to human activities, it is logical that the Earth's temperature will rise as carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases" increase.*

Threats of increasing carbon dioxide and climate change include: sea level rise; increased natural disasters such as storms and flooding; ocean acidification that threatens shellfish and other aquatic life; and rising temperatures that negatively impact wildlife, urban landscapes, and human health.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a priority of the State of Washington. In 2007, the Governor and Legislature convened a multi-sector, multi-disciplinary Climate Action Team to evaluate and identify the most promising strategies for reaching greenhouse gas emission reduction. For more information, see the Climate Action Team report, *Leading the Way: Implementing Practical Solutions to the Climate Change Challenge*. As both the Regional Transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organization for the area, the Thurston Regional Planning Council works to ensure that regional transportation plans provide people with transportation alternatives to reduce greenhouse gases and achieve vehicle miles traveled reduction identified by the state between now and 2050.

Addressing climate change is also a priority of the City of Olympia. The 'Commission Draft' of the Comprehensive Plan includes a new policy to adapt, mitigate, and maintain resiliency for changing environmental conditions due to climate change. Some implementation efforts include: land use and transportation planning that encourage people to walk and bike rather than use a motor vehicle; promoting tree planting and health through our urban forestry program; using hybrid vehicles for the City fleet; and building structures that meet Leadership in Engineering and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

## Transportation System

### *Sidewalk Inventory*

The 2003 Sidewalk Program report found 84 miles of sidewalks lacking on arterials, major collectors and neighborhood collectors. These three types of major streets total 156 miles and represent 43% of the total street system. Local access streets and other neighborhood streets, represent the remainder of the street network and were not inventoried nor included in the Sidewalk Program. Since the Sidewalk

Program began guiding sidewalk construction in 2003, 7 miles of sidewalk have been constructed on major streets. As a result by 2012 of the 156 miles of arterials, major collectors and neighborhood collectors, 77 miles are lacking sidewalks.

### *Commuter Statistics*

Washington’s Commute Trip Reduction law affects large employers in the state’s nine most populated counties. Employers in Olympia with over 100 employees who begin work between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. are affected by this law. Every 2 years, these worksites are required to survey their employees on commute behavior. The results of the 2011 survey, compared to prior surveys, were:

Survey Year	Drive alone	Carpool	Vanpool	Bus	Bike	Walk	Telework	Compress week	Other
2007	75.6%	11.8%	1.3%	3.8%	1.7%	2.3%	1.0%	1.6%	.9%
2009	73.4%	12.1%	1.7%	3.9%	1.9%	2.2%	1.4%	1.8%	1.6%
2011	75%	11.1%	1.6%	4.0%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	1.5%	1.5%

Source: WSDOT and Thurston Regional Planning Council

### *Public Transit Trends*

Intercity Transit (IT) is Thurston County’s public transportation provider. IT reached an all-time high in ridership in 2011, exceeding 5.3 million boardings on all its services. Fixed route bus service experienced a 4.7 percent annual ridership increase with 4.5 million boardings, and vanpool experienced a 7.8 percent increase in ridership with 684,442 boardings. Intercity Transit ridership increased 24 percent in the past 5 years, and 86 percent in the last decade. As of May 2012, ridership was up 2 percent over the same month in 2011.

### *Trails Inventory*

Existing and proposed public trails that fall within Olympia’s Urban Growth Area are listed below. Some are City trails, while others belong to other governments.

Trail Name	Type of Trail	Total Planned Miles	Miles Existing in 2007
Capitol Lake Interpretive Center	shared use and recreational	0.9	0.7
Capitol Campus to Capitol Forest	on street	9.2	1.5
Chehalis Western	shared use	24	20.5

Trail Name	Type of Trail	Total Planned Miles	Miles Existing in 2007
Deschutes Parkway	on street	1.8	1.8
Downtown Railroad	shared use	2.0	0
East Olympia	shared use	5.4	0
Grass Lake Refuge	recreational	1.2	0
Highway 101	shared use	1.2	0
I-5 Bike	on street and shared use	9.0	4.1
McLane School Forest	shared use	2.5	2.1
Olympia Waterfront Route	on street and recreational	4.7	3.5
Percival Canyon	shared use	2.1	0
West Bay	on street and shared use	1.5	0
Woodland	shared use	3.8	2.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>69.3 miles</b>	<b>36.7 miles</b>

### *Traffic Model*

Traffic volumes forecast for 2030 on Olympia’s street system are generated by a traffic model used for transportation planning in the Thurston region. The volume data is based on projected population and employment forecasts for the Thurston region. The model is used to identify transportation capacity projects needed in our system. These projects are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. The model indicates that, between 2009 and 2030, p.m. peak hour volumes will increase on our streets at varying levels. Some examples:

Location	Traffic Percentage Increase 2009-2020	Average Annual Traffic Percentage Increase
4 <sup>th</sup> and State Avenues near Wilson Street	44%	2.1%
4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridges	37%	1.8%
Capitol Way Corridor north of I-5 bridge	127%	6.1%
Harrison Avenue near Perry Street	17%	0.8%

### **Utilities**

The City provides essential public utilities including solid waste collection and recycling, storm and surface water management, drinking water, and wastewater collection. Olympia’s growth and urbanization has placed increasing demands on these systems.

### *Waste ReSources*

This utility's mission is to lead and inspire our community toward a waste-free future. This utility is directly responsible for providing collection services for residential and commercial garbage, residential recyclables and residential organics (yard debris, food waste and soiled paper) and also encourages waste reduction through educational programs. Services outside the city limits are provided by a contractor selected by Thurston County.

### *Storm and Surface Water*

The mission of this utility is to provide services that minimize flooding, improve water quality, and protect or enhance aquatic habitat. The utility maintains over 130 miles of underground pipe, over 7,000 storm drains, and 95 stormwater ponds that carry stormwater runoff from roads and rooftops to our streams and Budd Inlet. The "surface water" for which Olympia's Storm and Surface Water Utility share responsibility include nine streams within the City, four lakes, four large wetlands, and about six miles of marine shoreline. Thurston County's stormwater utility provides comparable services outside the city limits. The utility is guided by the Storm and Surface Water Plan, which outlines utility challenges, goals, implementation tools and financial implications. Increasingly, the utility is affected by state and federal regulatory requirements such as the Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit.

### *Drinking Water*

This utility's mission is to provide and protect drinking water for a healthy community. This involves protecting groundwater and promoting water conservation as well as ensuring that our drinking water meets the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. A series of springs, wells, pumps, reservoirs and transmission lines supplies water to Olympia's customers. McAllister Springs provides the majority of drinking water for the City. McAllister Springs is unfiltered surface water and therefore subject to more stringent treatment requirements. A 36-inch transmission main moves water from the springs (a new wellfield is planned) to the Meridian reservoirs, and then on a nine-mile journey into reservoirs at Fir Street. From there it is pumped and piped throughout most of the Urban Growth Area. The rest of the City's drinking water is provided by six wells (Kaiser, Indian Summer, Shana Park, Hoffman and two wells at Allison Springs). This utility serves the entire urban growth area, except for properties served by a couple small private systems.

### *Wastewater*

This utility's mission is to collect and convey wastewater to treatment facilities in order to protect public and environmental health. In addition, the utility works to reduce the number of onsite sewage systems in the City. The City partners with LOTT Clean Water Alliance for wastewater treatment. This utility serves the entire growth area.

## *Private Utilities*

Most private utilities are regulated at the state level by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The WUTC ensures that safe and reliable service is provided to customers at reasonable rates. The Commission regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities and practices of most of Washington's investor-owned gas, electric and telecommunication utilities.

Growth in residential, commercial, or industrial development often requires expanded utility services, therefore local land use decisions that affect density and direct development drive new utility needs. In Olympia, private utilities provide these services:

- *Electricity.* Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is the only provider of electricity to Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. PSE is an investor-owned utility serving electricity to nine western and central Washington counties
- *Natural Gas.* PSE is also the only natural gas provider to Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. PSE serves natural gas customers in six western and central Washington counties
- *Standard Telephone Service.* The only provider of standard telephone service in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area is Century Link Communications International, Inc., (Century Link). Century Link is an investor-owned corporation offering local telecommunication services to customers in 14 states. They also provide broadband data and voice (including long-distance) communications services outside their local service area, as well as globally
- *Telecommunications and Cellular Telephone Service.* Many new telecommunication providers have entered the market and provide options that create a very competitive environment in this area. As a result it is very difficult to accurately assess how future telecommunications will be provided.
- *Cable Services and Programming.* Comcast is the only cable provider serving Olympia. Properties that lie within the UGA are covered under Thurston County's franchise. Currently, cable companies are not regulated by the state as a private utility. Cable companies are regulated by local governments and the Federal Communications Commission. Comcast has a 10-year non-exclusive franchise agreement to use public right-of-way to provide cable services within the Olympia city limits. This agreement was adopted by the City Council in 2009.

## **Economy**

Economic conditions are a product of employment and housing factors, income and inflation, land use, retail sales, demographic trends, availability of infrastructure, and larger national and international circumstances. Olympia is part of the larger metropolitan economy that includes the cities of Lacey and Tumwater. The three cities largely make up the urban areas in Thurston County, and are considered to operate as one market area.

The lead organization for addressing economic vitality in the area is the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC). The EDC produces an annual *Economic Vitality Index (EVI)*. The EVI provides both a trend analysis and snapshot of Thurston County's economy based upon a series of key indicators.

Data coverage includes taxable sales, housing, employment, income and key industry characteristics among other topics. For more information, see the EVI. *The Profile* for Thurston County produced by the Thurston Regional Planning Council also includes information relevant to the economy of Thurston County. In addition, the Economy Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan Update provides a snapshot of Olympia's economic conditions and the role of local government.

## **Social and Human Health**

The Washington Department of Health (DOH) reports that regular exercise such as walking or bicycling improves physical and emotional health. Research shows that people who are physically active live longer, have more energy, have less stress, burn more calories, and are stronger. Another important aspect of health is social connectedness - both within a neighborhood and the community-at-large. DOH also tells us that eating healthy food is equally important for overall health.

While governments generally don't require residents to exercise, eat well or maintain social connections, they can help create safe, convenient and fun opportunities to pursue wellness. Olympia has a long history of providing such opportunities, many of which are in the current 1994 Comprehensive Plan and continue in the Commission Draft.

### *Active Community*

The Transportation Chapter provides for "complete" streets which continue the City's approach of the last few decades. These are streets built for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders, as well as cars, trucks and buses. Complete streets help increase the number of people walking, biking and using transit, while meeting the safety needs of motor vehicles. Complete street policies complement other goals related to economic vitality, reducing congestion, increasing land-use density, and providing people more opportunities to be physically active. Olympia's construction standards also include streetscape improvements, such as street trees, planting strips and decorative lighting, which draw people to walking, support transit use, and create active street life. The Land Use and Urban Design Chapter supports these goals and policies by calling for development and public improvements consistent with healthy and active lifestyles.

### *Strong Neighborhoods*

Olympia has had a Recognized Neighborhood Association program since 1989. The program offers support for residents to organize around common issues, needs and aspirations for their neighborhoods. Programs offered to Recognized Neighborhoods include Block Watch training, crime mapping, graffiti removal, beautification grants, and notice of development proposals. Many of the programs, such as training in neighborhood emergency preparedness, are also offered to other neighborhoods and organizations. The Draft Plan includes a proposal for a new geography-based sub-area planning process to address neighborhood-scale issues such as provisions and priorities for community health,

neighborhood centers and places of assembly, streets and paths, cultural resources, forestry, utilities and open space and parks.

### *Recreation and Lifelong Learning*

Olympia's Parks, Arts and Recreation programs promote health by designing parks that include trails, tennis courts, basketball courts, skate courts, public art, community gardens and off-leash dog areas. The City also offers low-cost classes ranging from cooking to dance. These facilities and programs improve people's quality of life, promote active lifestyles, create a sense of place and history and contribute to the local economy. These programs are designed to bring balance, relaxation, and lifelong learning to people of all ages and stages of life.

### *Healthy Food*

The City provides space for community gardens. Community members have expressed strong interest in increasing access to local, healthy food including neighborhood farm stands and more community gardens.

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# 1. Sustainability

## General Proposal

Add new goals and related policies to the Comprehensive Plan to support Olympia becoming a model sustainable city; specifically Economy Goal 4 and Economy Policies 4.1 and 4.3, Natural Environment Policy 2.7 and Public Services Goal 21.

## Section 1: Model Sustainable City Goal

### Proposal

Address the community's desire for Olympia to become a more sustainable city by including it as a key challenge in the Introduction Chapter and adding a Public Services goal combined with existing policies regarding internal City actions toward sustainability; specifically, Public Services Goal 21: *City of Olympia is a model sustainable City.*

### Background

A sustainable city is one that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Olympia community has a long-held vision of being a sustainable city. In the early 1990s, the Olympia City Council adopted the following philosophy statement: *a sustainable community is one that persists over generations and is far seeing enough, flexible enough and wise enough to maintain its natural, economic, social and political support systems.*

The current Comprehensive Plan includes "sustainability" as one of four guiding principles. The Plan also has a "Sustainable Economy" chapter that includes the following goal: *SEC 4: To set a good example of sustainable business practices.* This goal is followed by policies to guide the City's internal operations, design and maintenance of facilities, purchases, and promotion of such practices. In addition to this specific sustainability goal, many goals and policies throughout the existing Plan represent what can be considered best practices toward building a sustainable community (i.e., complete streets, water conservation, waste reduction.)

Over the years, the City has implemented a wide variety of programs that advance our community's and region's sustainability. These include Zero Waste, community gardens, preservation of open space, greening of the City fleet, and building a City Hall that meets criteria for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). The City has also invested millions of dollars into revitalizing our downtown, and in transportation and utility infrastructure to reduce environmental impacts, emphasize efficiency and improve our health.

Throughout *Imagine Olympia*, two strong trends emerged from public comment: 1) desire for Olympia to become and earn a reputation as a model sustainable city, and 2) desire for the City to strengthen its leadership role by modeling and encouraging sustainable practices.

## Options

Option 1. Olympia Planning Commission Proposal. Address the community's desire for Olympia to become a more sustainable city by including it as a key challenge in the Introduction Chapter and further addressing in the Public Services arena.

Option 2. Staff proposal. Add a new overarching goal – possibly in the Public Participation and Partners chapter, “Olympia is recognized as a model sustainable city through the leadership and action of the City and other partners.”

Option 3. No action. Do not add a goal about Olympia becoming a model sustainable city. Leave the goal and policies about sustainable City operations in the Economy chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

## Analysis

Goals are intended to be the community's goals not just the City government's goals, and policies are the broad actions that the City organization will take to help the community achieve its goals. Each option above embodies a slightly different approach to how the City and community address the overall concept of becoming more sustainable. (Note that as in the proposed Plan update, throughout this SEIS City capitalized refers to the government organization while 'city' refers to the community at large or geographic urban area.)

Option 1 recognizes that becoming a sustainable community is a significant challenge. Goal GS21, in the Public Services chapter, would emphasize the City organization will strive to become a model for other organizations, and that this is a service provided to the public. The role for the City would be similar to the goal in the current Comprehensive Plan regarding the organization's commitment to sustainable business practices, but with more emphasis on being a model for other cities.

Option 2 would replace the current goal and emphasizes that Olympia, the place, will be a city that people recognize as a model sustainable city. It establishes that the City organization, as well as other partners within the community, has a leadership role in making that happen. The goal would be followed by policies that describe how the City will act to achieve this goal.

Option 2 is responsive to significant public comment expressing a desire for Olympia (the place) to become a model sustainable city, and for the City organization to take a lead role in this endeavor. This concept of City leadership is consistent with feedback from the City's Utility Advisory Committee (UAC). Such a role for local government is well-established. It is a topic of focus for both the International City Management Association (ICMA) and Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), of which Olympia is a member. Option 2 also takes into account that sustainability cannot be achieved by the City alone, thus other partners (including individual citizens) have a role.

Option 3 is no change from the current plan. Here, the City's goal is to achieve sustainable business practices, and since the goal is placed in the Economy chapter, it would emphasize how this would aid the local economy.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. This option would establish a formal goal that reflects the emphasis and spirit of the public comments received during *Imagine Olympia*. Placing the goal in an overview chapter emphasizes that sustainable practices apply to all elements of the Comprehensive Plan, rather than just being a function of economic development or a public service. It acknowledges that sustainable actions are the responsibility of not just the City organization, but other community partners and citizens as well. This is an important concept to acknowledge if Olympia is to truly become a sustainable community.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## **Section 2: Sustainable Investment Goal and Policies**

### **Proposal**

Add new goals and policies regarding the relationship of infrastructure and the economy, specifically: Economy Goal 4 with two policies below:

*GE4: The City achieves maximum economic, environmental and social benefit from public infrastructure.*

*PE4.1: Design infrastructure investments to balance economic, environmental and social needs, support a variety of potential economic sectors, and shape the development of the community in sustainable patterns.*

*PE4.3: Base public infrastructure investments on analysis determining the lowest life-cycle cost and benefits to environmental, economic and social systems.*

### **Background**

The current Comprehensive Plan includes policies that guide the City to use and promote sustainable business practices in internal operations, design and maintenance of facilities and purchases. The Plan describes in its background text a concept of "*Consider[ing] how today's decisions will affect the quality of life for future generations. Think 20, 40, 100 years ahead, and beyond. The goal is to establish ways of living that can be sustained indefinitely.*" However, the current Plan does not have a formal policy that guides the City to consider the economic, social and environmental impacts of major decisions.

In 2011, the Utility Advisory Committee (UAC) developed a list of issues they would like to see addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update. The UAC recommends better integration across City departments so that recommendations are based on a holistic understanding of the economic, social and environmental impacts of various options. They anticipate such a policy will facilitate a more deliberate process resulting in more sustainable decisions. The UAC emphasized this again recently in a June 18, 2013 letter to City Council.

For example, currently staff reports to the City Council often do not analyze or prioritize options from a sustainability (economic, social and environmental) perspective, nor address the relative costs and benefits of various options through a city-wide framework. Instead, the current criteria for analysis in staff reports varies according to the staff member, program, supervisor, legal or other requirements of the proposal.

## **Options**

Option 1. Revise existing goal SEC9 and related policies, which guide the City to regard economic benefit and lowest life-cycle costs as basis for public infrastructure designs and decisions, such that social and environmental benefits and costs are also regarded as a basis for such decisions.

Option 2. Same as Option 1, plus another new policy: *Evaluate environmental, economic and social factors, and compare and prioritize relative costs and benefits when making major policy decisions and capital investments.*

Option 3. Same as Option 1, plus add the policy: *Departments proactively collaborate and use established decision-making tools so that proposed policies, programs and capital investments most effectively meet city-wide sustainability goals.*

## **Analysis**

Option 1 expands an existing set of goals and policies so that in addition to analyzing and considering economic costs and benefits as a basis for public infrastructure decisions, the City will consider social and environmental costs and benefits as well. This is consistent with the basic concept of sustainability as a balance between all three of these major topics.

Potential impacts to the City include greater financial costs for preparing options for Council's consideration, as more time or expertise may be needed to prepare analysis. Another impact could be greater up-front financial costs, for example, to purchase recycled materials or design structures with added aesthetic benefits. However, financial costs may be reduced over time; for example, due to less waste, use of durable materials, and greater community acceptance.

Option 2 is the policy proposed by staff in 2012. It addresses the UAC's comments and clarifies that the analysis should apply to major policy decisions, in addition to decisions about public infrastructure. However, this proposal may: 1) be vague regarding what constitutes a "major policy decision;" 2) imply

extensive, quantitative analysis that may not be necessary or financially feasible for all applicable decisions; 3) lead to comparing and prioritizing relative costs and benefits, or instead prioritizing by comparing costs and benefits; and 4) not address the UAC's concern regarding lack of interdepartmental collaboration.

Option 3 attempts to provide more clarity and better reflects feedback from the UAC on this issue. The challenge with articulating this policy is keeping it broad enough to allow for flexibility in the implementation, but with enough substance to guide staff, citizens and elected officials. Sustainability is a thread throughout the Comprehensive Plan, and was noted by many citizens during the public review process as an important element of the update. Staff agrees that having a city-wide strategy with cross-department participation and coordination is a significant factor in ensuring that the City achieves its vision of sustainability.

Option 3 provides some flexibility to develop tools during the implementation stage. An example of one decision-making tool is the City's [Sustainable Action Map](#) (SAM.) SAM is a one page worksheet where users consider the impacts of policy choices from a natural, individual, community and economic perspective. SAM has been used by some City workgroups to make internal decisions or provide some analysis to the City Council; however, not all departments use SAM. There is a sense that although it can be a valuable tool, it is not appropriate for all decisions. Should the City adopt a policy such as Option 3, additional tools and processes would need to be created. The City would need to consider up-front what types of decisions and thresholds would require such analysis, who would do this, at what stage in the process, and how it should be communicated.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## **Section 3: Sustainable Maintenance and Operations Policy**

### **Proposal**

Adopt a new policy regarding operation and maintenance of City facilities, specifically, Natural Environment Policy 2.7, *Practice maintenance and operations that reduce the City's environmental impact.*

### **Background**

City staff are responsible for implementing an array of services, some more visible than others. City staff sweep streets, repair water lines, maintain athletic fields, prune trees, collect solid waste, clear roadside



vegetation and more. A common thread is that nearly all maintenance and operations practices have an environmental impact, whether from use of a gas-powered vehicle or heavy equipment, purchase of materials or application of a chemical product.

During *Imagine Olympia* it was clear the public wants the City to model environmentally-friendly practices. Environmental stewardship was a topic of the focus meeting series, and a main theme arising from public comments was a desire for Olympia to be recognized as a “green” community. The public has indicated that reducing environmental impact should be a standard practice of the City.

Currently, there is no city-wide strategy and little cohesiveness for addressing the environmental impacts of City operations and maintenance. Some departments or programs have individually made a conscious effort to use environmentally-friendly methods. For example, to reduce the use of toxic chemicals the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Department adopted an Integrated Pest Management Program. As there is no policy to guide maintenance and operations with a focus on reducing environmental impact, not all programs may do so as a standard practice.

Striking a balance between using resources efficiently and affordably while also reducing the City’s environmental impact can be a challenge. In some cases, the most efficient system is also the most environmentally friendly. For example, Waste Resources is piloting a program where waste and recycle bins are being collected from one side of the street only. The primary intent is to develop a more efficient route by reducing time required to complete the work, and to reduce noise and disruption generated from the collection vehicles. This method also reduces the route distance, thus the amount of fuel needed and vehicle emissions generated.

In other cases, the most efficient and cost-effective method of maintenance may not be the most environmentally-friendly. It is typically more effective to use chemicals to control noxious weeds instead of rigorous and repeated manual removal, which requires many more hours of staff time.

## **Options**

Option 1. Add policy to practice maintenance and operations that reduce the City’s environmental impact.

Option 2. Add policy: *Consider the economic, environmental and social benefits of the City’s operations and maintenance practices, and choose the option with the least negative environmental impact whenever possible.*

Option 3. No action: Continue to practice maintenance and operations that reduce the City’s environmental impact on a case-by-case basis, when required, or when the opportunity is readily available.

## **Analysis**

Option 1 guides the City to reduce environmental impacts associated with City maintenance and operations. This does not necessarily mean other factors, such as cost, will be ignored, but it does imply that reducing environmental impact is a priority. Overall, negative environmental impacts from City maintenance and operations would be reduced as the policy is implemented city-wide.

Option 2 provides clarity that maintenance and operation decisions should be considered from an economic, social and environmental perspective to ensure the more environmentally-friendly practice is feasible before being chosen. It is more consistent with other sustainability policies, yet may not be as impactful as some community members would like.

Option 3 maintains status quo. Some departments may consider the environment more than others when making decisions.

No significant negative environmental impacts are expected from these policies. However, although intended primarily to minimize long-term environmental impacts, Options 1 or 2 could result in accepting adverse environmental impacts of one type in order to achieve long-term environmental benefits of another. For example, a sustainable approach could result in installation of porous concrete sidewalks to minimize impacts to ground and surface water despite the releases of greenhouse gases that result from creating concrete.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Option 1 is the staff proposal put forward in 2012. Staff would also support Option 2. Both options recognize the public expects the City to act as a role model of environmentally-friendly practices. Option 2 may be more viable as it clarifies maintenance and operations decisions should be balanced to ensure they are affordable and otherwise socially acceptable in addition to environmentally-friendly.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 2. Increasing the Level of Public Involvement

### Proposal

To increase the level of public involvement, and results from the perspective of citizens, add a goal and policies to the Public Participation and Partners section of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically:

- *PP3.1. Support and encourage City staff and other community leaders to strengthen their capacity to design and implement effective public involvement strategies.*
- *PP3.3. Provide opportunities for citizens, neighborhoods, and other interested parties to get involved early in the land use decision-making processes. Encourage or require applicants to meet with affected community members and organizations.*
- *Goal 4: Citizens and other key stakeholders feel their opinions and ideas are heard, valued, and used by policy makers, advisory committees, and staff.*
- *PP4.1: Build trust between all segments of the community through collaborative and inclusive decision making.*
- *PP4.2: Replace or complement three-minute, one-way testimony with participation strategies that facilitate rich dialogue between and among interested citizens, other key stakeholders, City Councilmembers, advisory boards, and staff.*
- *PP4.3: Clearly define public participation goals and choose strategies specifically designed to meet those goals.*
- *PP4.4: Evaluate public participation strategies to measure their effectiveness in meeting desired goals.*
- *PP4.5: Select strategies from the full spectrum of public participation tools and techniques.*

Note: Goal 4 and policies 4.1 to 4.5 were added by the Planning Commission.

### Background

During *Imagine Olympia* and other outreach, the public expressed frustration about a lack of opportunities to meaningfully participate, be heard and influence City actions. Citizens are not satisfied with traditional forms of involvement that offer one-way exchanges of information. They want the City to be more creative in its efforts, and desire greater influence over decisions.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) provides a tool for understanding the public's level of impact in decisions, called the [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#). The Spectrum describes a range of public participation goals and associated expectations and techniques regarding how the public

might be involved. The tool describes various levels of public engagement where the level of public impact increases along a spectrum of Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.

Traditionally, local governments have used tools to “Inform” and “Consult” with the public, meaning they provide information and obtain feedback. The City of Olympia often also “Involves” the public, meaning the City will work directly with citizens and groups throughout a process to ensure that public concern and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Early in the Comprehensive Plan update process, the Planning Commission identified that the public wanted more “Collaboration.” In general, this means they want the City to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

## Options

Option 1. The Proposal above.

Option 2. Adopt policies 3.1 and 3.3, but do not add goal and related policies regarding subjective sense of the public regarding participation.

Option 3. No action. Do not add these new goal and policies to the Comprehensive Plan.

## Analysis

The City of Olympia is a representative democracy in that citizens elect and authorize a City Council to make decisions on their behalf. While this form of government does not always allow citizens to directly influence every decision, it can be an efficient form of decision-making.

Different types of decisions lend themselves to different levels of public involvement. For example, it may not be necessary to employ a lengthy collaborative process to determine whether or not to install recycling bins in downtown; whereas, a more robust process may be needed for more controversial or complicated issues, such as how the City responds to homeless issues. Overall, it would be impossible from a financial perspective to have a collaborative level of involvement for all decisions.

Proposed Policy PP4.2 would provide guidance to the Council, staff and advisory boards to replace or complement 3-minute, one-way testimony at the microphone. In some circumstances, public hearings are required, and it would be impractical to increase public engagement outside this process. Thus, the policy should not be interpreted to mean that *every decision* will include public process different than or to complement 3-minute testimony. However, it is possible for the City to more proactively consider the level of public involvement that is necessary and practical, and implement this policy when appropriate.

Land use issues can be particularly frustrating for citizens. Citizens tend to get involved when there is a project in their neighborhood they object to, and become frustrated over a limited ability to influence

decisions at this stage. However, it is possible to improve citizen engagement in land use in other ways. While proposed Policy PP3.3 is not entirely new (the City currently notifies registered neighborhood organizations when land use applications are received), in response to public input a specific policy is proposed to increase such opportunities.

How these proposed policies would be implemented would be determined following their adoption. For example:

- The City could adopt a performance measure resulting in collection of qualitative data at events to gauge whether citizens “feel their opinions and ideas are heard, valued and used.”
- The City could host trainings or other educational opportunities for staff and public to help facilitate better public process.
- To involve citizens earlier in the land-use process, the City may pursue alternative forms of development codes for some areas of the city; this could help achieve early community buy-in on building and site designs, as well as more predictability and a faster permitting process for developers.

This set of goal and policies reflects public input from *Imagine Olympia*. Part of the challenge to becoming a more urban environment is developing public processes that enable citizens to effectively deal with living in close quarters and depending more readily on shared resources that are limited resources. The City is in a unique position to facilitate this, and will likely be more effective stewards of the public realm by expanding an effort to increase public impact when it can.

No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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### 3. Public Participation in Implementation

#### Proposal

Add goal and policies to increase the public's level of impact in civic affairs, and to emphasize implementation, the role of citizens, and other agencies and organizations; specifically:

- *Goal P1. The City, individual citizens, other agencies and organizations all have a role in helping accomplish the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan.*
- *Policy P1.1. The City Council and the Planning Commission, with the support of City staff are to identify the elements to include in the action (implementation) plan. The action plan should reflect City advisory groups' priorities. The public shall be engaged by doing outreach to neighborhoods, the business community, environmental and other public interest groups and citizens. This strategy will include an updating, monitoring and reporting process.*
- *Policy 1.2 The committee, established by the City Council, will on a yearly basis review the progress of the action plan and make a report to the City Council, Planning Commission, staff and citizens. The committee should include members from the Planning Commission, neighborhoods, business community, environmental, and other public interest groups and citizens.*

#### Background

The City Council adopted Scope of the Comprehensive Plan Update includes, "add an action plan or implementation strategy with performance measures as an element of or supplement to the Comprehensive Plan."

During *Imagine Olympia*, community members expressed a strong desire to increase focus on implementation. While the Plan is implemented on a daily basis through the City's programs and services, citizens cannot readily access information that clearly links City actions with specific Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. And, while the City does collect data and evaluate progress on a variety of programs and services, there is no coordinated Comprehensive Plan-based strategy for how this should be done or communicated to the public.

#### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Update the public participation element of the Plan to emphasize all community members have a role in implementation, and guide the City to be more consistent and cohesive with implementation through the development of an action plan. Include that the City Council and Planning Commission identify the elements of the action plan, which are to reflect the priorities of the City's advisory bodies; establish a committee of citizens and interest groups to review progress of the action plan on a yearly basis.



Option 2. Same emphasis on the role of community members and development of an action plan. However, this option is not specific about which groups would choose the elements of the action plan; nor does it include the establishment of a citizen committee. Note: the term “partners” is intended to be general, including organizations or groups from any sector of the community, or individual citizens.

Option 2 is the same Goal P1, a revised version of P1.1 (below) and does not include PP1.2.

- *Policy P1.1. Engage partners in development and regular updating of an implementation strategy to fulfill Comprehensive Plan goals. This strategy will include a monitoring and reporting process.*

Option 3. No action: Do not address the implementation strategy (aka action plan) directly in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Analysis**

Lack of a Comprehensive Plan implementation strategy has caused problems for the City in tracking and communicating progress implementing the Plan. The addition of a policy could ensure a strategy is pursued. Creation of an “action plan” document would help to achieve multiple goals:

- Enable streamlining and simplification of the existing Comprehensive Plan by placing action items in a separate document
- Provide a separate, public-friendly interface to the Comprehensive Plan
- Detail specific steps to be taken in pursuit of the vision of the Comprehensive Plan
- Allow for more regular public updates of implementation strategies and priorities
- Leverage partnerships with external organizations and expand the community role
- Facilitate progress monitoring and reporting

Options 1 & 2 are very similar, as they both call for an action plan and include involvement of either “public interest groups and citizens” or “partners,” terms that mean substantively the same thing. Both options would enable the City to expand and leverage resources, increase local community building, and enhance the concept that the Comprehensive Plan is a “community plan” rather than just a “City plan.” No adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

The key difference is the details provided in Option 1 regarding the groups responsible for developing the action plan, and the creation of a new citizen committee. Providing support to advisory committees has high associated costs, so the City Council should consider this course of action from a financial perspective. While Option 1 provides certainty that advisory boards will be involved, and the Planning Commission has a lead role; Option 2 allows for flexibility in shaping the process.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. This option does not preclude the involvement of the groups outlined in Option 1, instead it provides more flexibility for City Councils to shape the process.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 4. Sub-area Planning

### Proposal

In cooperation with residents, landowners, businesses, and other interested parties, prepare strategies for the sub-areas shown on the Planning Areas Map. The specific area, content, and process for each is to be adapted to the needs and interests of each area. At minimum, the process would address provisions and priorities for community health, neighborhood centers and places of assembly, streets and paths, cultural resources, forestry, utilities, open spaces and parks. Specifically:

- *Goal P5: Sub-area planning is conducted through a collaborative effort by community members and the City and is used to shape how neighborhoods grow and develop.*
- *Policy P5.1: Work with neighborhoods to identify the priorities, assets and challenges of the designated sub-area(s), as well as provide information to increase understanding of land-use decision-making processes and the existing plans and regulations affecting sub-areas.*
- *Policy P5.2: Encourage wide participation in the development and implementation of sub-area plans.*
- *Policy P5.3: Define the role that sub-area plans play in City decision-making and resource allocation.*
- *Policy P5.4: Allow initiation of sub-area planning by either neighborhoods or the City.*
- *Policy P5.5: Encourage collaboration between neighborhoods and City representatives.*

The draft Plan also calls for the section of the current Plan addressing Downtown in detail to be removed from the Comprehensive Plan and readopted as a separate ‘Downtown Plan.’ See GL17 and GL18 and associated text and policies.

### Background

“Sub-area planning” is a concept formerly in Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan but deleted many years ago. It’s being reinserted to provide a public process for focusing on smaller portions of the Olympia area with contiguous geographies and some common challenges and opportunities.

Much of the Comprehensive Plan applies to the entire Olympia community. However, this is a large area of over ten square miles with tens of thousands of residents. The Comprehensive Plan cannot address all of the details of our community. Planning areas are proposed to provide that opportunity. The Planning Areas Map displays the twelve proposed planning areas of the urban growth area. In general, planning areas are comparable to the scale of an elementary school service area with five to ten thousand residents. This scale will provide the opportunity for the community to do more detail planning for these areas, consistent with this Comprehensive Plan.

Through sub-area planning, the City will work with stakeholders to identify neighborhood assets, challenges and priorities for development. There is also an educational component aimed at helping community members understand the plans and regulations that guide development in each area, as well as how land use decision-making processes work in accordance with federal, state and local laws.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposal: Create a sub-area planning process.

Option 2. No action: If sub-area planning is not added to the Plan, neighborhoods will retain participation in civic affairs through Recognized Neighborhood Associations.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Delay adding sub-area planning to the Comprehensive Plan until more details are established or more resources are available.

## **Analysis**

Sub-area planning can help everyone communicate and define roles and responsibilities for needed projects. Neighborhood leaders have expressed a willingness to help better define and implement the sub-area planning process after each is concluded. The results of the process could influence Plan implementation and the direction of City policies and decisions. As noted, the ultimate design of the process and how many would be conducted annually would depend on the issues of each sub-area. The resulting product would probably be “accepted” rather than adopted as formal policy documents, and could be incorporated into larger City programs. Staff estimates that at least one-half of a City staff member’s time would be needed to manage the sub-area planning program, plus assistance would be needed from other staff.

Many community members have asked for more direct input in shaping their neighborhoods. Still, there are challenges inherent in creating a new program. Concerns include the risk of unmet community expectations. Adding a sub-area planning process does not guarantee a neighborhood will get everything it wants.

Specific environmental impacts would vary depending on the results of each sub-area planning process. Further environmental review would be conducted at appropriate stages in the planning or implementation stages.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To improve public participation in civic affairs and planning in particular, approve sub-area planning process as proposed.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 5. Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map

### Proposal

Revise the “Possible Open Space Corridors” and “Possible Future Trails” as shown on the proposed Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map.

### Background

The Growth Management Act requires that as an element of comprehensive planning, jurisdictions are to identify areas for potential open space corridors, and specifically areas that have potential for making connections between adjacent jurisdictions. In the case of Olympia, this means connections with Lacey, Tumwater, or unincorporated Thurston County. The corridors are intended to be potential locations that include land useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of environmentally sensitive areas. The possible future trails are shown on the map in the Plan as context for where land might contribute to siting an open space corridor, and are indicative of where the community would like to use land for creating a trail, or lengthening an existing trail.

### Options

Option 1. Add Potential Open Space Corridors and Possible Future Trails areas where shown on the Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map of the draft update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Option 2. No action: Leave the Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas map to reflect Open Space Corridors and Possible Future Trails as they are in the existing Comprehensive Plan. Do not update the Possible Future Trails to reflect the adopted 2010 Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan.

### Analysis

The potential “Open Space Corridors,” shown in yellow on the map in the Plan, have been revised to reflect current conditions, such as areas where land development has occurred, and where there is little potential for future preservation of open space, or enough that would adequately serve the needs of a viable corridor. The “Possible Future Trails,” shown on the map with green dotted lines, have been revised to reflect the 2010 Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan.

Option 1 recognizes that, since the last major update of the Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map, conditions on the ground have changed that make it unrealistic to plan for or attempt to locate corridors in some of the locations identified. In most cases, it was due to land having been developed either within Olympia, or in the adjacent jurisdiction. For example, the current map indicates an open space corridor proposed in the northeast area of the City, extending from the Mission Creek neighborhood east into Lacey. At this time, that area is well developed, and there are few confirmed instances of wetlands, tree tracts, parks, or existing trails, so establishing a corridor in that area is not



feasible. Option 2 would leave open the possibility or provide an avenue for additional public input from community members who wish to see a connection made in that general area.

Option 1 also takes into account the extensive process the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan underwent prior to adoption in 2010. Extensive input was sought from community members during the development of the Parks Plan. This process included review and approval by the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Advisory Committee, and adoption by the City Council. Ultimately the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan must be consistent.

Preservation of open space and creation of trails are measures to mitigate adverse impacts of urban development. Potential impacts would include secondary impacts of lower density development (“sprawl”) resulting from open space preservation, and impacts of trail construction and associated active-use impacts on wildlife and neighboring residents. Impacts of trails could be evaluated and appropriately mitigated when construction of each trail is proposed.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Approve new map as shown. Possible Open Space Corridors should correspond with real conditions on the ground to meet the intent of the Growth Management Act. The Possible Future Trails should align with the 2010 Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan, which underwent a thorough and detailed review and adoption process.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 6. Regional Coordination of Environmental Regulations

### Proposal

Add new policy focusing on the need for a coordinated effort with other local jurisdictions to have environmental regulations that are consistent when the areas they regulate cross jurisdictional boundaries – such as watersheds and drinking water (wellhead) protection areas. Consistency would include ensuring each jurisdiction’s regulations are equally protective based on best available science. Specifically, Natural Environment Policy 1.2, *“Coordinate critical areas ordinances and stormwater management requirements regionally based on best available science.”*

### Background

There is inefficiency, confusion, and ineffectiveness when one local jurisdiction adopts environmental regulations that are vastly different from an adjacent jurisdiction. Elected officials in Olympia have encouraged staff to work collaboratively with adjacent jurisdictions to adopt environmental regulations which are generally consistent with one another. For example, in 2009 this approach was used for revisions to the Critical Areas Ordinance relating to Drinking Water (Wellhead) Protection Areas because many of those areas are within both the City and the County.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt proposed policy.

Option 2. Do not adopt new policy. Practice of staff-level coordination would probably continue.

### Analysis

This policy is proposed to build in consistency within watersheds and drinking water (wellhead) protection areas when it comes to critical areas and stormwater management regulations. This policy also sets the standard for review and analysis as best available science as defined in the Growth Management Act. See Washington Administrative Code [Chapter 365-195](#). The specific regulatory areas addressed in this policy are Critical Areas Ordinances and Drainage Manuals which are adopted separately by each local jurisdiction.

This policy proposes that the City of Olympia coordinate with other local jurisdictions when developing and adopting Critical Areas Ordinances and stormwater management regulations. This could lead to other local jurisdictions adopting similar policies and contributing staff time to the coordination effort. The result of this work would improve efficiencies by eliminating overlap and confusion. No significant adverse impacts are expected. Instead, if local jurisdictions adopt regulations that are consistently protective, this effort could also help to improve the conditions of the environment, for example, by

having similar regulatory approaches within a Drinking Water Protection area better compliance and overall better water quality may result.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt the proposed Policy PN1.2 relating to the coordination of Critical Areas Ordinances and stormwater management requirements based on best available science.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 7. Preserve Existing Topography

### Proposal

Add Natural Environment policies to, *“Preserve the existing topography on a portion of new development sites; integrate the existing site contours into the project design and minimize the use of grading and other large land disturbance.”* (PN1.5) And to, *“Limit hillside development to site designs that incorporate and conform to the existing topography.”* (PN1.7)

The intent of these two policies is to guide how new land development is designed and constructed, particularly on sites with existing significant hillsides or other steep slopes. If implemented, new land development would be designed to preserve and integrate, for at least a portion of the site, the existing contours and topography of the land. Minimizing heavily engineered methods for site preparation and stormwater treatment preserves the natural hydrology of the site, existing soil structure, aesthetics and character, and vegetation. All of which contributes to a natural system of capturing and treating storm water and site disturbance, and lessens a community’s reliance on engineering solutions that often require costly management to ensure they remain effective.

### Background

Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan once included policies discouraging extreme changes in landforms when development occurred. However, existing development regulations are limited to preserving topography on new land development sites to areas associated with designated critical areas, such as wetlands, streams, and the habitat of certain animals. Residential developments are required to set aside tree tracts, in which existing mature trees and the surrounding topography may be preserved.

But, none of those regulations are for the specific purpose of retaining topography. Developers commonly regrade sites to reduce future development costs or to change the direction of flow of storm and wastewater systems. Even areas designated as potential landslide hazard areas, a form of critical areas where the angle of the slope measures greater than 40 percent, may be altered or constructed upon so long as it is demonstrated that construction methods will minimize failure risks.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: New land development would be guided to retain at least a portion of the existing topography, integrating existing site contours into the project design, and minimizing grade changes.

Option 2. No action: New development may include grade and topography changes to the extent desired by the owner wherever not required to protect a designated critical area or tree tract.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Adopt a policy of requiring all new development sites to retain existing topography project-wide. Grading would be limited to the minimum needed to establish building pads, streets, and sidewalks.

## **Analysis**

Virtually every site proposed for new land development requires changes in the existing grade. The extent can vary, but is generally a large percentage of a site. Some changes in the topography are necessary. For example, roads and sidewalks need to be a certain slope or grade for safety and visibility reasons. However, in other situations, grading may be optional and is used as a means to make development of a site more efficient or cost-effective by enhancing access or increasing the number of potential building lots. Wide-scale grading is also used to redirect the flow of wastewater or stormwater.

Option 1 assumes that retaining natural topography on a site and the percentage of the site, or how much is retained may vary and contributes to preservation of the natural hydrology of a site encouraging stormwater treatment through existing natural means where possible and limiting the overall environmental disturbance caused by widespread changes in topography. Option 1 may reduce the need for extensive and management-intensive treatment ponds, and reduce disturbance or alteration of conditions adjacent to existing adjacent residential developments. Option 1 recognizes, though, that any new land development will require some percentage of grading, and that by retaining the existing topography and existing contours on a portion of the site, it allows for the most reasonable and environmentally beneficial location on site to be selected.

Option 2 would continue the practice of limiting the preservation of topography to areas designated as critical areas or tree tracts. It assumes that engineered methods for addressing stormwater runoff are sufficient, and that developers should be able to choose to alter the grade as they deem necessary to efficiently maximize a land development site and address stormwater runoff. Option 2 is potentially the most efficient at also maximizing density within the urban area. With more land being converted to flat, buildable sites at less cost, a greater number of affordable homes can be constructed and made available to meet the needs of a growing population. Although allowing substantial regrading to increase density can be an effective method for accommodating growth within an urban growth boundary, it is not always viewed as a positive thing by adjacent property owners, who are often concerned about potential impacts to traffic, localized stormwater runoff, and the loss of nearby green space.

In contrast, Option 3 would require that the topography of an entire site be considered in the design of a new land development project. Option 3 would not preclude grading necessary to establish appropriate topography for needed roads, sidewalks, stormwater facilities, and building footprints. Coupled with additional measures, such as preservation or replacement of native soils on site, this option may significantly increase the amount of stormwater that is naturally retained on site; however, developers with steep sites or varying grades may be limited in how and where they can build structures, parking, and other new facilities on a site. This may discourage new land development because of the high cost

or lack of feasible building sites, and in particular make it difficult to achieve a high density or variety of housing types within the City.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Option 1 for reducing the negative environmental impact changes in topography on new land development sites can have on the natural environment, and in particular the soil structure, vegetation, and hydrology of a site. Option 1 recognizes the necessity for some grade changes and flexibility, and reserves the ability to design around the most reasonable area on site where contours and topography can best be integrated.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 8. Green Building and Low Impact Development

### Proposal

Add Low-Impact Development (LID) and ‘green’ building policies to Natural Environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically:

- *PN1.9. Foster partnerships among public, private, and non-profit agencies and community groups to identify and evaluate new and innovative approaches to low-impact development and green building.*
- *PN1.10. Increase the use of low-impact and green building development methods through a combination of education efforts, technical assistance, incentives, regulations, and grant funding opportunities.*
- *PN1.11. Design, build, and retrofit public projects to incorporate sustainable design and green building methods, require minimal maintenance, and fit naturally into the surrounding environment.*

### Background

“Green building” and “Low-Impact Development”(LID) stormwater practices have typically been allowed in Olympia when they have been shown to be functional and consistent with applicable codes and engineering standards. Although the City’s approach has been largely reactive, some progress toward stimulating green building and LID has been made over the years. For example, an interdepartmental staff team meets to analyze and coordinate changes to City codes and engineering standards to foster sustainability in construction and may propose that the City adopt the International Green Building Code.

In the community, the number of local organizations and businesses associated with sustainable building practices has grown over the years and there is increasingly more interest and demand to not only allow, but encourage and in some cases require certain sustainable building practices. Considerable public input during the *Imagine Olympia* public process mentioned the importance of supporting and increasing the use of sustainable construction practices in Olympia. The proposed policies were crafted to support future progress toward sustainable building practices becoming the norm in Olympia.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Provide policy direction in the Comprehensive Plan that calls for City support of green and low-impact development construction practices in both public and private projects.



Option 2. No action: Do not specifically address green and low-impact construction practices in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Analysis**

The specific addition of policies supporting green building and low-impact development will allow the City and its staff to foster and support these new development techniques. In preparation for the Comprehensive Plan update, staff prepared a “white paper” entitled, “How Should the City Promote and Facilitate: Green Building, Green Infrastructure, and Locally Generated Renewable Energy?”, which provides background on green development techniques and outlined options for fostering them in Olympia. This document is available on request.

Adding policies to the Comprehensive Plan regarding green development would lay the basis for a more proactive, coordinated, and consistent planning effort for green building and low-impact development in Olympia. Continuation with the current approach of no overarching City-wide guidance in the Comprehensive Plan will support only piecemeal implementation of projects and policies in these areas and would probably put the City on a slower path toward meeting environmental protection and enhancement goals. Adoption of the proposed policies would serve to mitigate some of the impacts of urban development. No direct adverse impacts are expected from these policies.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Consistent with community input during the *Imagine Olympia* process adopt above policies regarding new and innovative development techniques that help decrease the effects of development on the environment.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 9. City-wide Framework for Public Land Conservation PN2

### Proposal

Adopt a single Natural Environment policy supporting prioritization of acquisition and conservation of land. Specifically, *PN2.1 Prioritize acquiring and preserving land by a shared set of priorities that considers the environmental benefits of the land such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, and access to recreation opportunities.*

### Background

Comprehensive Plan policies related to natural resource conservation of public lands within the City and region are currently in many chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this proposed policy is to establish guidance for City staff and departments regarding the need for a City-wide coordinated effort when planning for the long-term acquisition, preservation and conservation of public lands.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt the new policy and related policies and Goal GN2 for coordination of public land conservation and preservation within the Olympia area.

Option 2. Retain current policies regarding the acquisition and conservation of land within separate chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Analysis

This policy proposes a City-wide framework for coordinating the prioritization, acquisition and conservation of public lands. Implementation of this policy could occur through an annual meeting of staff where priorities and plans are shared, and could also include meetings with local land trusts, state funding agencies, other local staff and regional partners. The focus of this policy is to use City resources more efficiently and effectively through a coordinated effort - looking for overlap and partnership opportunities where they might be available. The goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan would guide this coordination effort.

The key benefits of this approach are using limited City resources more efficiently and effectively by looking for partnership opportunities within the City as well as with other organizations and agencies. Currently, the City has funds set aside for parks and open space acquisitions, groundwater protection land acquisition, and acquisition of land for stormwater management and surface water protection.

No significant adverse environmental impacts are expected from this policy. Improved coordination could result in more efficient and better-targeted conservation practices and thus better mitigation of urban development.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt the proposed policy that leads to a coordinated, city-wide framework for land conservation and preservation.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 10. Invasive Plants and Wildlife

### Proposal

Adopt a Natural Environment policy regarding invasive species, specifically, *PN2.3. Identify, remove, and prevent the use and spread of invasive plants and wildlife.*

### Background

Olympia has acquired or preserved hundreds of acres of open space and natural areas. Priest Point Park, Grass Lake Refuge, and Watershed Park alone comprise over 630 acres. While set aside as “natural,” these open spaces are surrounded by urban areas, and are by default more urban than natural, and constantly exposed to urban influences including invasive vegetation and wildlife.

Due to a relatively mild climate year-round, the Pacific Northwest is plagued with a variety of widespread and aggressive invasive plants. Often referred to as noxious weeds, invasive plants are difficult to eradicate because they establish easily, grow fast, and adapt quickly. Species commonly found in natural areas in our region include English ivy, Butterfly bush, English holly, Himalayan blackberry, Scot’s broom, Japanese knotweed, reed canarygrass and Eurasian water milfoil.

Similarly, invasive wildlife once established can be nearly impossible to eradicate and extremely costly to control. Local invasive wildlife includes New Zealand mudsnails, American bullfrog, and nutria.

Both plant and wildlife species become invasive because they can establish quickly and adapt easily, while outcompeting native plants and wildlife for food, shelter, sunlight, or soil nutrients. Typically spreading voraciously, they are difficult to remove and require constant monitoring and management to control.

Despite the devastating effects of invasive species on native habitats and animals, some nurseries still sell noxious weeds as ornamental garden plants. There are also very limited local resources dedicated to invasive species identification and removal. A handful of local, dedicated non-profit organizations work towards education and eradication, and Thurston County and the City of Olympia also contribute to the identification and removal of invasive species. However, although efforts include potentially hundreds of volunteers, at this time these efforts to remove and restore degraded areas of invasive species are done on a piecemeal basis, with little overall cohesive strategy, long-term planning, or efficient use of community resources.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt policy to identify, remove, and prevent the use and spread of invasive plants and wildlife.

Option 2. No action: Continue a minimal approach to identifying and removing invasive species.

## **Analysis**

Option 1 recognizes that open space is a critical asset in an urban area. It serves as a respite from urban life for community members, and habitat for urban wildlife. Mature trees provide a multitude of benefits, including stormwater retention, filtering of air pollutants, soil erosion prevention, and shade for streams. However, studies of natural areas in Seattle that are invaded by English ivy have shown that in 20 years 70% of the acreage will be an ecological 'dead zone.' The native deciduous tree canopy will be dead or dying, and the native conifer understory will be unable to become established and grow to maturity. An invaded natural area has little to no diversity, and can't meet the basic needs of native wildlife, including food and shelter. Because it is necessary to manage urban open space, regional non-profits, such as the Green Seattle Partnership and Forterra, are implementing new and effective methods for invasive removal, and are demonstrating positive results when paired with long-term management strategies, enthusiastic volunteers, partnerships and coordination with local park department staff, and diligent restoration planting.

The intent of the proposed policy is to respond to the growing threat of invasive plants and wildlife by recognizing that what is needed is a three-pronged approach to management including identification, removal, and prevention. Potential implications of this policy include an increase in attention drawn to the issue; development of a coordinated community approach to managing invasive species; and the encouragement of the City staff and potential community partners to seek grant funds or assistance from regional non-profits who have expertise and experience in the management of invasive species.

Option 2 recognizes that the management of invasive species can be costly and complete eradication is nearly impossible. For example, the Department of Enterprise Services, which manages Capitol Lake, has been taking steps to try and control New Zealand mudsnails using a method of lowering the water level during freezing temperatures. While reducing the number, the snails continue to exist. This may be the only reasonable and cost-effective option available to combat the infestation. However, if ineffective methods are used, or areas once cleared left to become reinvaded, the enthusiasm of volunteers can wane, and resources exhausted with little progress made.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Option 1 recognizes that urban open space requires management in order to continue to provide benefits and fulfill the purpose of preservation. Proactive management ensures open spaces remain diverse, tree-canopied, and healthy for future generations.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 11. Urban Wildlife Habitat

### Proposal

Adopt a Natural Environment policy regarding habitat conservation, specifically, *PN2.6. Conserve and restore habitat for wildlife in a series of separate pieces of land, in addition to existing corridors.*

### Background

A 1994 study conducted by the City found that focusing exclusively on narrow corridors for wildlife habitat protection would not be effective within Olympia's urban setting. That study led to adopting a series of Comprehensive Plan policies outlining a process for prioritizing parcels for protection and acquisition based on this scientific information. Over the past twenty years, these policies have been removed or diminished – and as result there is no clear guidance in the current Comprehensive Plan regarding wildlife habitat management.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt policies which conserve and restore habitat for wildlife in a series of separate pieces of land, in addition to parcels that connect with existing wildlife corridors.

Option 2. Do not establish policies on how urban wildlife habitat should be acquired, protected or managed.

Option 3. Adopt policies that focus conservation of urban wildlife on corridors only.

### Analysis

This policy would state the City of Olympia practices for protecting wildlife habitat in an urban setting. This policy guides both land use decisions regarding wildlife habitat protection and open space and land acquisition purchases oriented towards wildlife habitat protection. The scientific basis for this approach comes from a variety of studies conducted on how wildlife adapt in urban environments, including the 1994 study conducted by the City of Olympia. This policy would restore the specific guidance derived from the 1994 City of Olympia Wildlife Habitat Study, which is still scientifically valid. This policy would provide guidance to the City to focus acquisition and protection of wildlife habitat in a way that creates a geographically dispersed series of “islands” throughout the City for small and medium sized wildlife. These could be acquired through purchase, easements, or through land use decisions.

The proposed policy is largely intended to mitigate the environmental impacts of urbanization upon natural habitat. The most likely scenarios for implementing the proposed policy would be protecting a variety of small, medium and larger sized “islands” for urban wildlife, geographically distributed around the City. The smaller islands can provide habitat for small birds, mammals and amphibians – for

example, small ponds and wetlands within a neighborhood park. The larger areas would be acquired in the outer boundaries of Olympia's urban area and would link-up to larger regional corridors such as Capitol Forest west of Ken Lake, and the Deschutes River corridor.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Conserve and restore habitat for wildlife in a series of separate pieces of land, in addition to existing corridors.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 12. Urban Forestry

### Proposal

Add policies to recognize the importance of preserving and growing the urban forest through the establishment of long-term goals and implementation of strategic planning for a vital resource that is continually threatened by increasing urban density. Specifically:

- *PN3.2. Measure the tree canopy and set a city-wide target for increasing it through tree preservation and planting.*
- *PN3.4. Evaluate the environmental, ecologic, health, social and economic benefits of the urban forest.*
- *PN3.5. Provide new trees with the necessary soil, water, space, and nutrients to grow to maturity, and plant the right size tree where there are conflicts, such as overhead utility wires or sidewalks.*

### Background

The City of Olympia has had an established Urban Forestry Program since 1991, and has been a ‘Tree City USA’ for over 16 years. Urban Forestry has long been a valued program in Olympia; residents have come to know and value trees through such education and planting programs as NeighborWoods, which provided free street trees to Olympia residents for over ten years. Community members recognize that trees contribute greatly to the livability of the City and provide a multitude of important environmental benefits.

Chapter 16.60 of the Olympia Municipal Code regulates tree protection and removal in the City. New land development sites are required to retain existing trees, and plant new ones. Existing properties are required to maintain a minimum number of trees. While these regulations have been very effective in bringing attention to the need for mature tree preservation, and have retained hundreds of acres of mature trees that might otherwise have been removed, the City is still experiencing an overall loss of tree canopy. Reasons for this vary, but include new land development, removal of mature trees in residential areas, removal of trees in downtown or dense commercial areas that have “outgrown” their planting locations, removal of trees that have become hazardous to people or property, and competition from invasive species, such as English ivy.

Tree canopy coverage goals have been successful nationwide as catalysts for tree planting campaigns and other kinds of community involvement in urban forest management. To date, the City has completed an initial tree canopy cover measurement, but has not used the data to determine an appropriate tree canopy coverage goal. When last measured in 2010, Olympia had approximately 30% City-wide tree canopy coverage. Many communities strive for 30% overall tree canopy. Further analysis could identify how that percentage may be preserved or increased by examining where tree coverage is minimal, where there are potential locations for planting more trees, and where it can be anticipated we



will see future tree canopy losses due to new land development. A detailed canopy cover analysis, or an on-the-ground tree inventory, can also provide the information needed to calculate precisely the amount of environmental benefits trees provide and associated savings. For example, trees intercept water, store some of it, and potentially reduce the need for urban flood control or stormwater treatment.

Trees need a large amount of uncompacted soil to allow for oxygen exchange and the water percolation necessary for long-term growth. A large tree, such as an American elm, needs more than 1,000 cubic feet of soil to reach the size where it significantly contributes to a healthy urban ecosystem. Existing standards for planting trees are very limiting in the amount of soil and growing space available to an urban tree, in particular street trees. Some new street tree spaces are only 4' by 4' and may include only two feet of uncompacted, nutrient-rich soil.

At the moment, there are very few options for community members who wish to participate in organized tree planting. The City still hosts planting opportunities with native vegetation in wetlands and near streams, and the Park Stewardship Program provides some restoration planting opportunities. The local non-profit Native Plant Salvage salvages native plants from land slated for development and also hosts local planting opportunities; sometimes in partnership with City programs.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposed policy could lead to measuring the tree canopy, evaluating the environmental benefits of the urban forest, and providing new trees with the necessary soil, water, and space to grow to maturity.

Option 2. No action: Continue administration of the tree ordinance.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Reduce the amount of urban forestry planning and management; and shift decisions regarding the planting and preservation of trees to private parties.

## **Analysis**

The existing Comprehensive Plan includes goals and policies that recognize trees as a defining characteristic of the City but focus on an urban forest made-up of street trees. Option 1 recognizes that the urban forest should be more broadly defined as all the trees in the City: those along streets, in parks, and on private property. The proposed policies would provide direction for establishing a tree canopy goal, determining the environmental and community benefits realized from the urban forest, and intentionally creating the space needed in an urban environment for trees to be preserved or grown to maturity.

The urban forest is a community asset with a value that can be quantified. Research has demonstrated the environmental benefits of the urban forest: how much carbon dioxide is being captured, how much stormwater runoff diverted, and how much energy saved through natural shading. By measuring

changes in canopy coverage over time, one can visually assess and demonstrate success or not in the retention of existing trees and planting of new trees. This kind of information could provide the basis for either maintaining or improving upon the existing tree preservation and protection regulation and standards.

Option 2 recognizes that long-term urban forestry management requires an investment in technical expertise. Long-term urban forest management requires an understanding of trees and how they respond and grow in urban conditions. Providing new trees with the necessary soil, water, space, and nutrients to grow to maturity means planning for and installing infrastructure that accommodates larger soil volumes in dense urban areas. This may mean evaluating and investing in new design standards, or potentially more costly tree installation techniques, such as structural soil, silva soils, or something as simple as larger tree planter strips or larger tree wells and tree grates. Trees are a community asset, and City involvement ensures that that asset is preserved and available equally to all members of the community.

While traditionally a role of the City, Option 3 notes that urban forest management can be turned over to the community; this typically means the responsibility of homeowners adjacent to street trees, neighborhood associations or homeowners' associations, or local non-profit groups. This is largely the state of new tree planting in Olympia; however, overall urban forest management is still under the purview of the City. Not all community members have an incentive or belief that more trees or larger trees are beneficial. A majority of the new trees being planted now are due to City requirements, and often commercial business owners would rather forgo trees in exchange for more business signage and visibility, combined with reduced maintenance costs.

The proposed approach is primarily intended to mitigate the impacts of urbanization by ensuring a viable urban forest. Possible adverse impacts include localized risks of property damage due to tree failures or flooding caused by leaves clogging drainage systems, and secondary impacts from slightly less urban density.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Option 1 is a commitment to trees providing an essential environmental contribution to Olympia.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 13. Capitol Lake Basin

### Proposal

Add the following Natural Environment policy,

- *PN4.4. Support the process for determining a balanced and sustainable approach to the management of Capitol Lake; participate when the opportunity is available as a party of significant interest in the outcome.*

### Background

The current Comprehensive Plan does not address the future of the Capitol Lake Basin. In response to issues facing Capitol Lake, including sedimentation, declining water quality, and invasive species, in 1997 the Washington State Department of General Administration organized the Capitol Lake Adaptive Management Plan (CLAMP) Steering Committee to guide management of the Capitol Lake Basin. Numerous scientific and technical studies were produced that analyzed long-term options for the future of Capitol Lake. In 2009, the CLAMP Committee forwarded its long-term management recommendations for the Capitol Lake Basin to the Director of General Administration (since renamed the Department of Enterprises Services). The Committee recommendation was not unanimous. Five members favored an estuary recommendation, two favored a managed lake, and the City of Olympia developed a set of prioritized management considerations against which any outcome should be assessed, including an observation that the quality of implementation is more significant than the selection of a preferred alternative.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Add a policy to the Comprehensive Plan to support a balanced and sustainable approach to the Capitol Lake Basin as an interested party.

Option 2. No action: Do not address the Capitol Lake Basin planning process in the Comprehensive Plan.

### Analysis

The future of the Capitol Lake Basin ultimately lies in the hands of State of Washington through a potential funding measure. The City of Olympia's past participation as a member of the CLAMP Committee in a thorough, multi-year study of the scientific and technical issues associated with various basin management alternatives subsequently resulted in a summary of Olympia's interests and considerations for inclusion in the Committee's recommendation to the Director of General Administration (Council Staff Report, 6/16/09 and Long-Term Management Recommendation for the Capitol Lake Basin from the CLAMP Steering Committee, 9/3/09). The proposed policy does not go so

far as to comment on the outcome of the Capitol Lake planning process, but rather would confirm that the Olympia community supports the process and is a stakeholder.

Although the City does not have authority to decide the fate of the Capitol Lake Basin, our community has a significant interest in the outcome as it could have significant impacts to Olympia's downtown and the community at large. For this reason, including the proposed policy in the Comprehensive Plan is appropriate and reinforces Olympia's position that the City be involved as a party of significant interest. Because no specific outcome is called for, the potential environmental impacts of this policy are unknown. Any such impacts would best be assessed by the State as part of the process supported by the proposed policy. If a policy is not added, the Comprehensive Plan would remain silent on this specific issue and future involvement would be decided as issues and opportunities arise.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Support of a balanced and sustainable approach to the management of the Capitol Lake Basin is consistent with the recommendation the City of Olympia provided to the CLAMP Committee in 2009.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 14. Sea Level Rise

### Proposal

Add new Natural Environment and Utility goals and related policies regarding Olympia's response to anticipated sea level rise. The proposed goals, GN5 and GU11, are identical, "The City has used best available information to devise and implement a sea level rise strategy." The policies differ in each section, in combination they envision a comprehensive analysis, coordination with stakeholders, engagement with the community, resilient infrastructure, and maintaining control of publicly-owned shorelines needed for flood control.

### Background

Sea level has been rising in Olympia by about six inches per century due to post-ice age warming of the oceans. This rate will increase with increased global warming. Additionally, land in Olympia may be subsiding, exacerbating the effect of sea rise. Much of Olympia's downtown is at risk, lying only six inches to three feet above the current highest high tides.

In 1993, the City completed its first sea level rise report titled, "Preliminary Assessment of Sea Level Rise in Olympia, Washington: Technical and Policy Implications." Since 1998, the City has focused on the near-term threat to urban flooding downtown from storm surge and from sea level rise resulting from climate change. As the sea-level rises, old sewer and stormwater conveyance pipes and catch basins in downtown are unable to function properly, increasing the risk of flooding downtown from a combination of salt water and stormwater runoff. In early 2007, the 1993 report on sea level rise was reviewed and found to still be relevant. Maps and analysis were updated and current projections of the amount and rate of sea level rise were considered and the City Council renewed its commitment to address climate change. City staff are continuing to investigate the risks, while identifying and evaluating scientifically-based potential engineered solutions to protecting downtown.

If no protection measures are taken, the nine to nineteen inches of sea level rise expected by 2050 would result in extensive flooding of streets and low-lying structures during the high tides. Greater rises would impact an even greater area. With high tides, pipes designed to convey stormwater away from downtown would be unable to discharge fast enough to prevent flooding during storms. High tides would also result in flows from Budd Inlet traveling up stormwater pipes to street drains and into the streets. A nineteen to fifty-five inch sea level rise, expected by 2100, would overtop many places along the shoreline and flood most of downtown Olympia during high tides. The wastewater system is combined with stormwater in much of the downtown. Higher sea levels would flow into the wastewater pipes through combined drains and infiltrate through pipe joints, challenging capacity at the LOTT Clean Water Alliance regional wastewater treatment plant.

Tide flats, estuaries, and coastal wetlands are expected to decline dramatically with a rising sea. These systems emerge in response to a delicate balance of inundation and exposure as tides move in and out

and salt and fresh waters mix. Some habitats will gradually reform in new locations, and others may adapt, while others will meet bulkheads and other shoreline protective measures and be lost.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposal: Provide Plan guidance on a process for analyzing and determining a response to the impacts of sea level rise.

Option 2. No action: Do not provide guidance in the Comprehensive Plan for planning to mitigate the effects of sea level rise.

## **Analysis**

Climate change and one of its effects, sea level rise, are areas of significant concern for Olympia as a waterfront city. Most recently, the City developed the “Engineered Response to Sea Level Rise” report (2011). Then in January, *Transition Olympia-Climate Change* and staff from the City of Olympia Public Works Department presented a sea level rise update to the community. Subsequently, Council in November 2011 approved the following next steps:

- Incorporate climate change and sea rise into the Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Master Plan revisions
- Consider City supplements to the 1983/2003 Federal flood risk map
- Consider Capital Facility Plan project funding for sea rise
- Continue coordination with the LOTT Clean Water Alliance and Port of Olympia
- Update the sea level rise report to the community

The proposed Comprehensive Plan policy is in alignment with this direction from Council. While alternatively, failure to add any policy guidance to the Comprehensive Plan would be in contradiction with Council’s direction and would minimize the importance and ongoing nature of planning for sea rise in Olympia. Because this policy supports a planning process, specific future impacts of the policy cannot be predicted, however protecting the built environment to resist sea level inundation could result in adverse impacts to shoreline habitat.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Because the effects of sea level rise will likely be significant in the coming years, and it is important to lessen the impact of those effects through thoughtful planning and preparation, add policy guidance to the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 15. Stormwater Treatment Retrofit

### Proposal

Add new Natural Environment policy reflecting current practice; specifically, *PN6.3. Retrofit existing infrastructure for stormwater treatment in areas of the City with little or no treatment.*

### Background

In 2010, Storm and Surface Water Utility staff performed a basin analysis (“City of Olympia GIS Basin Analysis 2010”) that was a technical evaluation of basin characteristics and available monitoring data for watershed basins in Olympia. The results of this study concluded impervious areas without stormwater treatment are a problem and warrant heightened focus. Based on this work, the City’s Utility Advisory Committee (UAC) endorsed retrofitting for water quality treatment as a program priority.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Add new policy regarding stormwater treatment retrofits.

Option 2. No action: Do not address stormwater retrofit in the Comprehensive Plan.

### Analysis

A major premise behind stormwater management is the assumption that stormwater controls help to mitigate some of the negative impacts of stormwater flows on surface water resources. These impacts can be associated with water quality contaminants, as well as physical impacts (e.g., scouring and mass erosion), which are linked to unnaturally high flood flows. In areas without treatment for water quality, stormwater can carry pollutants to local fresh and marine waters and impair water quality and aquatic health.

The level of stormwater control within Olympia’s basins varies widely. Older developments provide for flood control typically by routing stormwater flows directly to streams, wetlands, and/or marine waters. Newer developments have provided progressively more onsite water quality treatment and downstream flow control (e.g., stormwater ponds). Stormwater control applications vary by intent, effectiveness, and technique. More control in general, regardless of the applied technique (i.e., treatment, infiltration, detention, etc.), provides a greater environmental benefit.

Prior to the 1990s, stormwater quality treatment was not required for development. As a result there are many areas in Olympia that would benefit from stormwater treatment retrofits. The proposed policy specifies that the older areas of Olympia, built before stormwater treatment was required, will be priority areas to retrofit with treatment. The addition of this new policy to the Comprehensive Plan supports current practice and is consistent with UAC direction. This policy is primarily a mitigation



measure, although it could indirectly deter maintenance, remodeling and other improvements to existing developments by adding to the cost of such projects.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. This policy aligns with current research, practice and guidance regarding priorities for stormwater retrofits.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

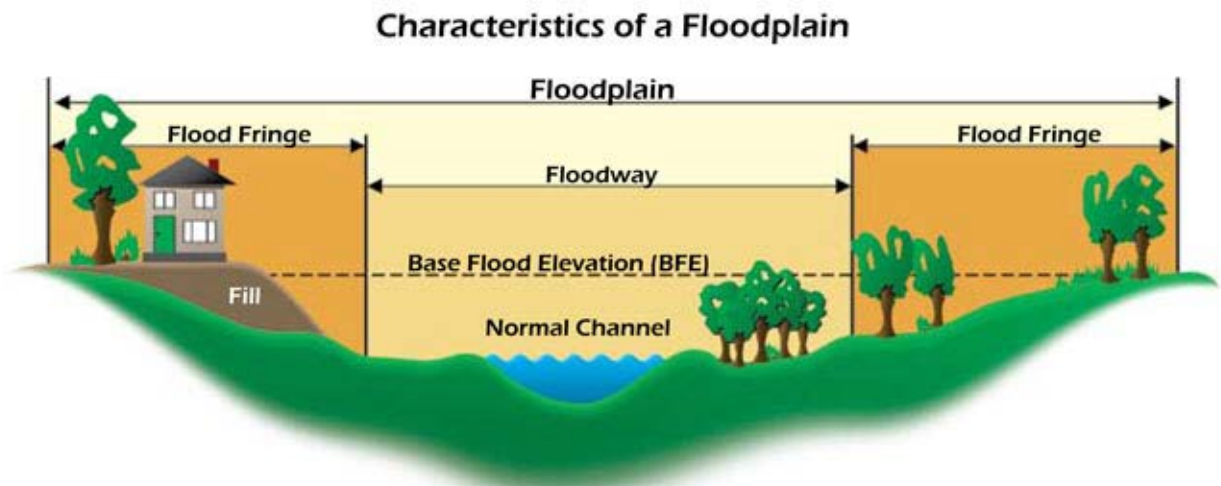
## 16. Floodways

### Proposal

Reduce scope of existing Natural Environment policy from floodplains to floodways by replacing, “ENV 3.6: Retain floodplains and their wetlands in as natural condition as possible because of their ability to reduce flood peaks, improve water quality, and provide habitat;” with “PN7.5: Retain and restore floodways in a natural condition.”

### Background

To understand the difference between these two policies, it is necessary to be aware of the definitions of floodplain and floodway. There are a number of definitions of floodplain, ranging from an ecological definition meant to describe the area a river historically flooded or meandered, to the more commonly used definition that is synonymous with the Flood Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA’s) Special Flood Hazard Area definition: the area that will be inundated by a flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. (See illustration below.) The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. These 100-year floodplain areas are shown on the *Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas* map of the proposed Comprehensive Plan update.



Olympia Municipal Code 16.70 “Flood Damage Prevention” outlines the City’s regulations pertaining to development in the floodplain/special flood hazard area. New construction is prohibited in floodways. Construction in the flood fringe must be elevated to at least one foot above the base flood elevation, which is a federal requirement in order to qualify for government-subsidized insurance.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposal: Revise the Comprehensive Plan to reflect current practice of only prohibiting development in floodways.

Option 2. No action: Retain the existing Comprehensive Plan policy, which the City may choose to implement in the future.

## **Analysis**

Because there are no major rivers in Olympia that carry substantial flood waters and the topography adjacent to Olympia's streams is often steep the actual land area difference between the floodplain area and floodway area within the City of Olympia is minimal. See the proposed *Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas* map regarding the extent of the 100-Year Floodplain areas. These floodplains are quite small and typically already protected under the stream buffer and/or wetland regulations of the Critical Areas Ordinance. Although a policy of more restrictive floodplain management is included in the current Comprehensive Plan, the development regulations do not reflect this more restrictive approach.

If development was broadly prohibited in the floodplain (Option 2), buildings already located in them would become non-conforming, such as Olympia Supply downtown, and new buildings would not be allowed. If the current practice of only prohibiting building in the floodway continued (Option 1), then future new buildings would be allowed in the flood fringe if elevated at least one foot above base flood elevation.

Continuing to allow development within the flood fringe could cause increased flooding within the floodway and adversely affect stream and associated habitats. However, both the City's stream protection regulation and those of the State, and a federal requirement to consider salmon habitat impacts whenever floodplain development occurs, serve to minimize such impacts.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Approve policy reflecting current practice, subject to Critical Areas protection measures.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 17. Climate Change

### Proposal

Add Natural Environment goals and policies to the plan regarding the challenge of climate change. Specifically:

- *Goal N9.* “Community sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and other climate-changing greenhouse gases are identified, monitored, and reduced.”
- *PN9.1.* “Coordinate with local and state partners to identify and monitor sources of greenhouse gas emissions using best available science; identify reduction targets and actions.”
- *N9.2.* “Monitor the greenhouse gas emissions from City operations, and implement new conservation measures, technologies and alternative energy sources to reach established reduction goals.”
- *PN9.3.* “Reduce the use of fossil fuels and creation of greenhouse gases through planning, education, conservation, and development and implementation of renewable sources of energy.”

### Background

Olympia was one of the first local jurisdictions in the country to develop a plan for responding to climate change issues. A 1991 Climate Action Plan marks the beginning of the City taking action to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change. In 2005 the City developed a baseline inventory of greenhouse gas emissions from City operations and maintenance. In 2007, the City published a report defining what was known at the time about the expected local impacts of climate change, and discussing what’s being done regionally and locally to respond. It also served as a guidebook for community members who wished to reduce their own “carbon footprint.” This was followed by a second inventory in 2008 that outlined Olympia’s accomplishments to that point in addressing climate change by reducing emissions.

The studies done by the City are in partnership with a local non-profit organization that is actively engaged in addressing climate change: Transition Olympia—Climate Change. Climate Solutions is another non-profit agency with a strong presence in Olympia.

## Options

Option 1. Adopt a Plan goal and policies to identify, monitor, and reduce community sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and other climate-changing greenhouse gases within City operations and in coordination with local community partners.

Option 2. No action: Continue to address emissions of carbon dioxide and other climate-changing greenhouse gases on a minimal scale and as opportunities, such as grants or City Council directives, arise, with some coordination with local groups or non-profits to promote both their and the City's efforts.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Determine that the City can have little effect on climate change, and that the focus should be on adapting or identifying ways in which to maintain the current levels of emissions.

## Analysis

The intent of the climate change goal and policies is to recognize that our community will be impacted by climate change, and that we should play an active role in reducing our contribution, whether those emissions are City-generated or community-generated. This is a response to a desire expressed by the community throughout *Imagine Olympia* that the City be a role model in sustainable practices, and that the City assist in educating and promoting techniques and methods of environmental stewardship. The proposal recognizes that to be highly effective in identifying, monitoring, and reducing sources of greenhouse gases, the City should involve the community, in particular non-profits or other groups with expertise, passion, and resources to engage people in changing their habits or preparing to adapt to changing climate conditions. The proposal also recognizes that, at minimum, the City should be measuring and reducing its own carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.

Implementation could be accomplished through a variety of means, such as planning, education, and the invention, promotion, and implementation of new technologies. The City can proactively engage partners and other local agencies and non-profits in identifying, monitoring, and reducing community sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and other climate-changing greenhouse gases community-wide, while focusing on City operations and maintenance, where City staff can have the most immediate and direct impact.

Responding to climate change is primarily a mitigation measure intended to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of greenhouse gas emissions. Depending upon the specific measures selected, the proposed policies could have secondary impacts. For example, reduced reliance on fossil fuels could lead to increasing impacts associated with wind power, hydropower in the form of dams, or nuclear power.

Option 2 assumes that other organizations are better suited for identifying greenhouse gas sources, monitoring levels, and implementing new or creative ways to reduce them. The City may help in

promoting those activities, recognizing that addressing greenhouse gases may be a monumental task, and one in which it would be challenging to begin to address because of a need for coordination among departments and access to the technical expertise to make decisions that reflect consideration of climate change. Option 2 would result in any existing programs that promote or result in the reduction of emissions continuing; however, there would be no expansion, measurements or benchmarks established, change in emphasis, or enhanced coordination with community partners.

Option 3 highlights that this may not be the best or most environmentally effective area in which the City should spend its resources; especially if the majority of community members are unwilling or unable to change their lifestyles enough to reduce carbon emissions. Climate change may be an issue that is better addressed on a national or global scale, and the focus for Olympia could be on adapting to impacts when they occur. Option 3 would also shift the focus to other local agencies or non-profit entities to take the lead.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt Option 1 to recognize that reducing emissions is a goal that can engage all community members, and that the City is well-positioned to have a beneficial impact.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 18. Dark Skies

### Proposal

Adopt new Natural Environment goals and policies regarding night-time lighting, specifically:

- *Goal N10. Artificial sources of nighttime light are minimized to protect wildlife and vegetation, and preserve views of the night sky.*
- *PN10.1. Design nighttime lighting that is safe and efficient by directing it only to the areas where it is needed. Allow and encourage reduction or elimination of nighttime light sources where safety is not impacted.*
- *PN10.2. Eliminate or reduce lighting in proximity to streams, lakes, wetlands, and shorelines so as not to disrupt the natural development and life processes of wildlife.*

### Background

Light pollution is defined as any adverse effect of artificial light. The National Lighting Product Program characterizes nighttime light or light pollution, as being made-up of three different elements: sky glow, light trespass, and glare. Sky glow is the result of electric light emitted directly upward or reflected off the ground. Sky glow is the most troublesome for astronomers, because it greatly reduces the contrast of stars against the dark sky. Light trespass is light being cast where it is not wanted or needed, such as parking lot light extending onto residential property. Glare is light that is so bright it can be disabling or uncomfortable. All three kinds of light pollution can be controlled through appropriate light levels, light standard design, and placement.

Light pollution can have a dramatic and destructive affect on human health, wildlife, and vegetation. Humans who experience insufficient or disrupted sleep from artificial light can suffer from health problems such as high blood pressure, depression, and obesity according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. Exposure to light at night can also lead to suppressed levels of melatonin, which in turn may be attributed to higher rates of breast cancer.

The natural behavior, life cycles, and development of insects, plankton, bats, birds, salmon, and turtles can all be impacted by artificial light at night. Light can disrupt a creature's ability to hunt, stay alert to predators, navigate, and reproduce. The natural cycles of trees and other plants can also be negatively impacted by light pollution. A tree near an artificial source of light will interpret that light as a longer day length, thus delaying the natural processes that trigger dormancy in the winter.

Since 2005, the City standards for streetlights have been updated to require mechanisms built into the light fixtures that minimize light trespass and glare. The City is also continuing to look for ways to retrofit existing fixtures that do not have the built-in mechanisms to direct light downward. The older



fixtures still have light allowed to cast upward, but the wattage on the lamps has been reduced to the lowest possible.

Currently, the City already has design standards in place that require that all new light fixtures associated with public infrastructure, for example sidewalks, streets, and trails, meet dark skies standards. The City continues to explore the usage of new technologies. For example, some streetlight fixtures are being outfitted with Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs, which are more energy efficient and compliant with dark skies guidelines. In 2007, City Council asked staff to research options for limiting lighting associated with private development; however this proposal was 'tabled' awaiting consideration of all aspects of night-time lighting issues.

## **Options**

Option 1. Artificial sources of nighttime light would be minimized to protect wildlife and vegetation, and preserve views of the night sky.

Option 2. No action: Lighting installed as an element of public infrastructure voluntarily meets "dark skies" design and brightness standards.

## **Analysis**

The intent of this goal and policies is to minimize nighttime light whenever possible. If Option 1 is selected, efforts to reduce nighttime light may be expanded to address light fixtures on private property, including both residential and commercial properties. While the intent would not be to diminish security or safety, some sources of light desired by commercial businesses might be limited, such as electronic signs, signs that remain on 24 hours-a-day, tall pole signs, and decorative landscape lighting or lighting for aesthetic purposes. Because aquatic wildlife are greatly affected by nighttime light, selecting Option 1 may mean reducing lighting in areas where people gather or spend time in the evening, such as the downtown waterfront, the Port peninsula waterfront areas, or private residences along the water.

Option 1 could support maintaining what many community members called the "small town" feel in Olympia. Less light pollution means views of the night sky are more common, and there are still dark places in the City that support wildlife. Commercial signage may also be less visible or noticeable at night.

Option 1 is primarily a mitigation measure to minimize adverse environmental impacts of urban development. Option 2 would have little or no impact on light pollution originating from private property.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt Option 1 to reduce nighttime light, protecting sensitive wildlife and vegetation, minimizing the disturbance and distraction of ambient light, and preserving views of the night sky.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 19. Limit Toxins

### Proposal

Add new Goal and Policies to the Natural Environment Chapter to address environmental toxins, specifically:

- *Goal N11 Risk to human health and damage to wildlife and wildlife habitat due to harmful toxins, pollution, or other emerging threats is tracked by appropriate agencies and significantly reduced or eliminated.*
- *PN11.1 Minimize the City's purchase and use of products that contribute to toxic chemical pollution through their creation, use, or disposal.*

### Background

In January 2006, the Olympia City Council adopted Resolution M-1621 to guide Olympia toward practices that reduced the exposures of community members and workers to products that contain persistent toxic chemicals. M-1621 calls for evaluating the products currently used that are manufactured with these substances, and pursuing a goal that would phase-out over time, the purchase and use of these products. The proposed Comprehensive Plan provisions are intended to confirm that Council Resolution, and expand it to include other potential health threats.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt Comprehensive Plan policies which support and guide activities consistent with Resolution M-1621 and expand it to include emerging health threats related to harmful toxics and pollution.

Option 2. Maintain the Resolution, but without specific Comprehensive Plan support.

Option 3. Develop more detailed policies in the Comprehensive Plan to implement Resolution M-1621.

### Analysis

These policies are designed to guide the implementation of City Council Resolution M-1621, as well as components of the Waste Resources Master Plan and the Regional Hazardous Waste Management Plan. The City does not regulate these substances, but does make choices about which substances to purchase, use and how those are managed and disposed. The intention is to contribute to improved health in the community and within the workforce by limiting human exposure and reducing health threats. The policy is worded broadly to include any emerging environmental health-related threats which may arise and be worthy of similar review and evaluation.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt Comprehensive Plan policies which support and guide implementation of Resolution M-1621 and expand it to include emerging health threats related to harmful toxics and pollution.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 20. Future Land Use Map

### Proposal

Replace the current version of the Future Land Use map which includes over thirty land use categories with the version consolidating uses into fifteen or fewer categories with less distinct boundaries. See proposed Future Land Use Map and Appendix A of Land Use and Urban Design chapter.

### Background

The State's Growth Management Act requires that Comprehensive Plans include "a land use element designating the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the use of land ...." Such designations usually include a map, as the Act says, "The plan shall be an internally consistent document and all elements shall be consistent with the future land use map." RCW 36.70A.070. Development regulations, such as zoning, must be "consistent" with this map, i.e., no feature is incompatible with any other feature or regulation. WAC 365-196-800. In 1994, in response to this mandate, Olympia adopted a Future Land Use map that virtually mirrored the zoning map. As a result, since 1994 reviews of any zoning map amendment proposals have been done in tandem with amendments of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt revised Future Land Use map, together with descriptions of each new category as set forth in Appendix A of the Land Use and Urban Design chapter. As described in the Plan, although the new boundaries are not parcel specific, zoning boundaries would generally not deviate from the map's boundaries by more than 200 feet.

Option 2. No action: Retain the Future Land Use map in current form, i.e., mirroring the zoning map.

### Analysis

The proposed Future Land Use map would generally reflect the current Future Land Use map, but provide more flexibility for regulating development and for property owners to seeking regulatory changes consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This flexibility would likely result in development options more responsive to changing economic conditions, better-suited to specific site conditions and more consistent with design preferences, and possibly more consistent with public preferences. By no longer linking the zoning map directly with the Future Land Use map, the City and County would have the option of encouraging phasing of development and sprawl avoidance by creating 'growth reserve' zoning in areas where urban services are not readily available. (Current zoning sometimes allows urban development even though such municipal utility extensions are not affordable, which can result in inappropriately high assessed values.)

Specific environmental impacts from such flexibility cannot be forecast. However, because all such changes in zoning and other regulations must conform to the Comprehensive Plan and further environmental review, significant environmental impacts are unlikely.

Unless the City's Development Code were amended, rezones and other regulatory code amendments consistent with the Plan would be heard by the Olympia Hearing Examiner instead of the Planning Commission and would no longer be subject to the 'once per year' Plan amendment limit. Such amendments would be judged according to standards set forth in the Code and other laws, such as Comprehensive Plan consistency requirements and "spot" zoning prohibitions. Final decisions would continue to be made by the City Council. Because such changes in zoning would be 'untied' from Plan amendments, they could be more readily appealed.

Retaining the current more detailed map, with the resulting more limited amendment process for zoning, would result in more predictability for property owners and residents in the short-term. Long-term predictability would be based on interpretation of the text of the Plan, as the Future Land Use map itself would continue to be a reflection of current zoning rather than a long-term vision of the community. Washington cities comparably sized to Olympia are split about evenly between the general land use map and 'mirror map' approaches.

For more information, see "Mirrored Maps Policy Discussion – The Relationship of the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map" submitted to Olympia Planning Commission on August 22, 2011.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Approve new less specific form of Future Land Use map to provide long-term guidance and regulatory flexibility.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Accompanied by a recommendation that the City reconsider whether proposed rezones are to be reviewed by the Commission or the Hearing Examiner.

## 21. Future Land Use Map Amendments

### Proposal

Amend Future Land Use map to change designation for; change LOTT downtown wastewater treatment plant site from Industrial to Urban Waterfront; and change property known as 'Henderson Park' (a commercial development) from Capitol Campus/Commercial Services High-Density (CSH) to General Commerce; change two north of and along Eighth Avenue SE and west of Eastside Street from Commercial-Service High-Density to Professional-Office/Multi-family; and change portion of Heritage designated for High-Rise Multifamily to 'Planned Development'. *(These independent proposals are combined here due to similarity of issues.)*

### Background

LOTT Industrial. The LOTT (Lacey-Olympia-Tumwater-Thurston) Alliance's wastewater treatment plant site is a single-ownership, single-use, three-block property of slightly less than ten acres. The site is generally surrounded by light industrial uses, such as warehouses, a coffee roaster and boat repair, plus LOTT's new office building. (The Industrial designation is only for the treatment plant and does not include all of LOTT's contiguous property; and as a result of expansion it no longer includes all of the treatment plant.) At the nearest point, this site is about 400 feet from East Bay. The new Hands-on Children's Museum is to the southeast.

Henderson Park. "Henderson Park" is a four-lot, seven-acre commercial binding site plan at the Henderson Boulevard – Interstate-5 interchange and is accessed directly from an interchange roundabout. This site is believed to once have been wetlands associated with the vestigial Moss Lake to the southwest, and to have been filled decades ago in association with an I-5 widening project. It is located adjacent to the freeway at the foot of a bluff and overlooked by single-family housing. Except for a 'backdoor' emergency access, the only motor vehicle access is by private driveway from the freeway interchange. The 1988 Comprehensive Plan designated this area for "Commercial" uses, but in 1994 it was changed to Capitol Campus/Commercial Services High-Density (CSH).

Commercial-Services High-Density areas. In general this designation is applied to the Capitol Campus and other locations expected to be used for associated purposes – like private office buildings leased to the State. The two blocks at issue along Eight Avenue include the two Capitol View office buildings leased to the state. The Henderson Park property is land at the interchange serving the Capitol Campus that was filled as part of an I-5 widening project. The site is accessed directly from the State's interchange, is privately-owned and is largely undeveloped, although a binding site plan envisioning a hotel and other uses has been approved.



Heritage Park. The High-Rise Multifamily site within Heritage Park is at the foot of the bluff below the Capitol Group and until about 1990 was used as a railroad siding. Only a through rail line remains. It is now part of the Capitol Campus and designated in the State's master plan for open space and park uses.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposal: Designate the Kaiser Road light industrial area as 'General Commercial' on the Future Land Use map, designate the South Bay Road light industrial area as Auto Services on that map, and the Henderson Park site as General Commerce.

Option 2. The proposal plus: area southwest of 'intersection' of Kaiser Road SW and Highway 101 from Light Industrial to General Commercial; change area bordering South Bay Road NE north of State Avenue extended from Light Industrial to Auto Services

Option 3. No action: Retain one or all current designations.

## **Analysis**

The LOTT Wastewater Treatment Plant site is a remnant of a larger industrial designation that extended south to State Avenue in the 1976 Comprehensive Plan. In 1988, the surrounding area was redesignated as Central Waterfront, a precursor of the Urban Waterfront label, but for unknown reasons the treatment plant site was not included in that change. The proposed Urban Waterfront designation, "provides for a compatible mix of commercial, light industrial, limited heavy industrial, and multifamily residential uses along the waterfront." "Sewage Treatment Facilities" are a permitted use in the implementing Urban Waterfront development regulations. A change of use of this property is not anticipated, but should it change in the future heavy industrial uses could conflict with other land uses in the vicinity. No environmental impacts are expected from this map amendment. (Note, LOTT officials have been notified of this proposal.)

Various commercial uses of the "Henderson Park" property have been considered over the years and a hotel proposal is now under review. Except for Capitol Campus and two blocks on Eight Avenue SE that are the site of state-leased office buildings known as Capitol View (proposed to be redesignated as Professional Office – Multifamily Residential), this is the only private property in the 1994 Plan's CSH designation. (Note, the Capitol Campus is proposed to be designated a Planned Development site.) The 1994 Plan describes CSH as, "This designation contains the State of Washington Capitol Campus and areas where limited commercial services and high-density multifamily can enhance activities near chief employment centers such as the Capitol Campus, Downtown Business District and Central Waterfront. The zoning ordinance will establish building height limits which protect views of the Capitol Dome." The proposed Plan update describes General Commerce as, "This designation provides for commercial uses and activities which are heavily dependent on convenient vehicle access but which minimize adverse impact on the community, especially on adjacent properties having more restrictive development characteristics. The area should have safe and efficient access to major transportation routes. Additional

"strip" development should be limited by filling in available space in a way that accommodates and encourages pedestrian activity. As proposed, the site would revert to a 'General Commerce' designation. Given the direct access to the freeway, Henderson Boulevard and public utilities, no substantially different environmental impacts are expected as a result of this change.

The City lacks zoning jurisdiction within the Capitol Campus. Instead, the City works cooperatively with the State on their master planning of the site. The proposed Comprehensive Plan update would acknowledge this relationship by placing the Capitol Campus in a 'Planned Development' designation, which would replace the Commercial Services designation. Accordingly, the proposal would also change the two remnant private 'Commercial Services' site to more appropriate but comparable designations. Similarly, the redesignation of a portion of Heritage Park from High-Rise Multifamily to Planned Development would reflect that the property is now part of the campus.

Option 2 would add:

Kaiser Road Industrial. The 20-acre area southeast of Kaiser and '101' is in three ownerships. Primary current land uses are a building supplies wholesaler and a handful of specialty industries such as precision cutting tools. This area is within the Allison Springs wellhead protection area (estimated to be within five years 'time of travel' from the City's well site). An eastbound on-ramp to and westbound ramp from Highway 101 are planned by the State and City for Kaiser Road near this site. This land use designation is a 'remnant' of a larger industrial area north of Highway 101 in the County's 1988 Comprehensive Plan and apparently survives due to the existing uses. This area is outside the city limits in the Olympia Urban Growth Area. It is bordered on the south, east and west by residential zoning and land uses.

South Bay Road Industrial. The eastern portion of the South Bay Road area has been designated for light industrial uses since at least the mid-1970s. By 1988, the designation had been extended west of the road. This area of slightly less than ten acres has two owners, one on each side of the road, and is primarily used by businesses supporting auto use, such as collision repair, powder-coating, and general maintenance. This area is bordered on the north, east and west by residential zoning and land uses, and "high-density corridor" zoning and residential land uses on the south. Indian Creek, flowing south to Budd Inlet, is 20 to 200 feet to the east.

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan generally calls for most for the area's industrial development to occur in three concentrated areas – the Mottman Industrial Park, in the vicinity of Fones Road SE, and at the Port peninsula. However, the two areas in question on Kaiser and South Bay Roads have been developed for decades and the current Plan apparently was intended to recognize such prior uses. However, at these sites, minimal light industrial development has occurred. Instead, these sites are almost fully developed with uses generally of a commercial nature. Each area is bordered by relatively low-density residential uses (with resulting potential for land use conflicts), lacks quality freight access (both are about one mile from the nearest freeway interchange and border streets lacking sidewalks and other improvements), and have relatively high potential for contaminating surface or ground water if accidental spills occur.

For the reasons described above, these sites do not seem well-suited for long-term light industrial use. The proposed new categories are intended to reflect both the existing uses and appropriate long-term uses. General Commercial designation of the Kaiser Road site would provide for it to both serve future residential development in the area, and for uses supported by the future direct access to Highway 101. Designation of the South Bay Road area for auto services would provide for an eastside cluster of such uses in the City (currently the only such area is the Olympia Auto Mall on the westside). In both instances, new classifications could result in more traffic but present less risk of environmental contamination and residential land use conflicts than the light industrial category.

Each decade about two hundred more acres of industrial land is developed in Thurston County. Olympia's Urban Growth Area includes about 300 acres of industrially-zoned land. Less than 20-acres of this area is privately owned and "redevelopable." Retaining the current light industrial classifications at one or both sites, which total about thirty acres, would retain a small part of the Olympia's already small industrial land area. Although Olympia has generally not planned for the bulk of the area's industrial job growth, the City's Plan policies generally do favor protection and preservation of opportunities for industrial development. See "Industry" section of proposed Land Use and Urban Design chapter. Although no specific industrial lands need has been determined for Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, the 2007 Buildable Lands Report did estimate that 190 industrial jobs would be added in Olympia over the next twenty years, which the report equates to about ten acres.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Change the designation of all sites as described above (or any combination) and as shown on the proposed Future Land Use map to reduce potential conflicts with surrounding uses, protect the environment, and accord with planned supporting public facilities.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Retain the two light industrial areas (along Kaiser and South Bay Roads); approve all other map amendments as proposed.

## 22. Development Codes

### Proposal

Add policies of adopting development regulations to ensure consistency and conformity with Comprehensive Plan; specifically:

- *PL1.4. Require functional and efficient development by adopting and periodically updating zoning consistent with the Future Land Use map.*
- *PL1.5. Require development to meet appropriate minimum standards, such as landscaping and design guidelines, stormwater and other engineering standards, and buildings codes, and address risks, such as geologically hazardous areas; and require existing development to be gradually improved to such standards.*

### Background

For over 100 years, Olympia has adopted building codes, zoning, and other regulations governing development. However, Olympia's Comprehensive Plan has not explicitly stated the City's intention to utilize these 'tools' as one of the means of implementing the Plan.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt policies stating intention to utilize zoning and development standards to implement the Plan.

Option 2. No action: Plan would not specifically address this topic.

### Analysis

Because state laws including the Growth Management Act generally require, or at least encourage, local governments to adopt building codes and other development regulations, the addition of explicit policies in the Plan would probably not result in significant changes or adverse environmental impacts. The addition of such policies could result in implementing development regulations more expansive or restrictive than the State-required standards. For example, the State does not require local governments to adopt landscaping or architectural standards. At minimum, such policies could ensure a common understanding of the community's intent on this topic.

Failure to add such policies would continue the practice of adopting development regulations on a case-specific basis without general guidance from the Plan.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To establish basic guidance in the Plan, adopt the policies as proposed including the policy of pursuing gradual improvement of existing development.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 23. Bike Parking Requirement

### Proposal

Revise policy to indicate that bicycle parking will be required of all commercial development, and encouraged at existing sites; specifically,

- *PL1.13. Require new, and encourage existing, businesses to provide bicycle parking.*

### Background

To support bicycling as a form of transportation, many communities require developments to include bike parking in addition to car parking. Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan policy is to 'require bicycle racks at office and industrial sites'. (Transportation Policy 1.10, emphasis added.) Other provisions of the plan suggest that the City work with Intercity Transit to provide bicycle parking. When Olympia added bicycle parking as a development regulation requirement in 1995 the development requirements were extended to other commercial development and most multifamily housing.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Expand scope of bicycle parking requirement policy to all commercial development.

Option 2. No action: Retain existing policy – limited to office and industrial projects.

### Analysis

Olympia has been at the forefront of communities supporting bicycling by ensuring adequate provisions for securely parking bicycles. Depending on the land use, Olympia requires short-term bicycle parking – such as for customers, or long-term more secure parking – such as for employees or tenants, or both. The amount of bicycle parking required by Olympia and other cities varies substantially, but is generally about 10% of the number of spaces required for cars.

Impacts of requiring bicycle parking vary with specific standards, but in general result in minor modification of building exteriors and slight reductions in car traffic associated impacts of that traffic. Secondary impacts may include overall improvements in health and well-being as a result of increased physical activity. Provision of bicycle parking generally requires less than 1% of a site thus minimally reducing development density; and to the extent car parking is reduced it may actually increase overall development density.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt new policy that better reflects current practice.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 24. View Protection and Enhancement

### Proposal

Shift policy emphasis from protecting certain views from public streets to protection and enhancement of views from public gathering places; and expand street-end water view protection to all water bodies. Proposal would add a specific views goal to the Plan.

- *PL6.10 Preserve and enhance water vistas by retaining public rights-of-way that abut or are within one block of water bodies and by not siting public buildings within associated view corridors.*
- *GL8. Community views are protected, preserved, and enhanced.* (See the draft Plan for policies associated with this goal.)

### Background

Since at least the 1980s Olympia has used development regulations in an attempt to preserve and enhance views valued by the public. In general, that effort has focused on views of the Capitol Campus, Mount Rainier, Black Hills and major water bodies from streets and points near the water. Among the regulations that have been adopted are the Urban Waterfront Plan, height restrictions in Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) Chapter 18.10, and the ‘View preservation’ requirement of the design criteria at OMC 18.110.060: “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.” Specific views to be preserved by this last provision are based on a 1982 map of existing views from streets. Except for a State-mandated Shoreline Master Program provision, the City’s policies and regulations do not provide for protecting views from private property. During the Imagine Olympia outreach, members of the public expressed strong opinions regarding the importance of preserving views valued by the community.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Expand existing policy regarding preserving street end views of Budd Inlet and Capitol Lake to all major water bodies, and modify valued-views protection policy from streets to a new set of “landmark views” and “observation points” to be identified at a later date. In general the features viewed would remain the same although the list of views that may be protected has been expanded to include the “State Capitol Campus Promontory” and “Olympia valley’s forested hills and slopes.” The proposal does differ from current policy by deleting most street corridors from the protected viewpoints and substituting public observation points.



Option 2. No action: Retain existing policy, including: “Protect, to the greatest extent practical, scenic views of the Capitol Dome, Budd Inlet, Mount Rainier, the Black Hills, Capitol Lake, and the Olympic Mountains from designated viewing points and corridors.” Comprehensive Plan Policy LU2.2.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Identify and designate specific views in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Analysis**

The current policy of protecting views from street “corridors” is difficult to apply on a project specific basis. Due to the linear nature of streets, view lines from a street often encompass an entire property. For example, the new Olympia City Hall fell within an area where views of the Capitol Dome from Fourth Avenue were to be protected.

Shifting the emphasis from street view protection, which apparently is derived from a ‘scenic driving’ experience of the 1970s and earlier, to protection and enhancement of views specifically from places where the public gathers would significantly reduce the number of affected properties, thus increasing opportunities for more intensive development in other areas and providing for a focused effort to retain and enhance the views most enjoyed by the general public. The revised policy regarding community-valued views could enhance the public’s continued ability to appreciate and enjoy these views, while also increasing predictability for private property owners.

As noted, associated development restrictions could result in some reduction in the development potential of certain properties and portions of the City. Such limits could lead to secondary adverse impacts associated with overall lower density development. Detailed analysis of such views and potential implications for development of specific properties would be conducted as part of the process of evaluating and adopting any such regulations.

The related change would expand an existing water-vistas-at-street-ends policy to include all water bodies and not just Budd Inlet and Capitol Lake; for example, to include the Fish and Wildlife Department access to Ward Lake. (Compare current Comprehensive Plan Policy LU2.10 and proposed Policy PL6.9.) As such, it would result in slightly reduced potential for development on shorelines, would preserve and potentially enhance public access to shorelines consistent with Shoreline Management Act goals, and provide the potential for habitat and other environmental enhancement in these few locations.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt revised policy reflecting shift in emphasis from views from streets to views from other public places and expanding street-end view protection to include all major water bodies. Although staff did not propose view protection as an ultimate goal, the policy originally proposed by staff was to, “Identify and designate significant public viewpoints and – with consideration of trees and other enhancing landscaping – protect, preserve and enhance particular views of the Capitol Campus, Budd Inlet, Downtown skyline, Mount Rainier, the Black Hills, Capitol Lake and surrounding treed slopes, and

the Olympic Mountains, such as ....” (The staff proposal concluded with a set of examples different from those proposed by the Commission in Policy PL6.10.)

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Note, although in substance substantially the same as the version proposed by the staff in 2012, the Commission’s recommended version is more verbose and includes different examples – as a result the evaluation of view-examples that was included in earlier drafts of this SEIS is no longer directly relevant and has been removed.

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## 25. Design Review Areas

### Proposal

Expand policy of subjecting development to architectural design standards to include all development adjacent to public streets. Specifically proposed:

- *Policy L6.1. Require that residential and commercial development adjacent to freeways and public streets be subject to a design review process.*

### Background

Many communities require that development conform to certain architectural and aesthetic standards. Olympia first adopted such standards in 1988. Initially, only development downtown and along entrance and exit corridors was subject to such requirements. Gradually the types and locations of development subject to 'design review' have expanded until there are only a few exceptions – primarily most single-family housing and a few commercial and industrial areas. In some areas, the design criteria are focused on the portion of the project abutting residential uses and not on the public street face. The few remaining commercial areas exempt from design review are generally in the vicinity of Fones Road, along Lilly and Ensign Roads (Providence St. Peters Hospital area), the portion of Olympia Auto Mall not adjacent to Cooper Point – Auto Mall Road, and the Yauger Road - Capital Mall Drive - McPhee Road area near Capital Medical Center. (Note: The Evergreen Park PUD has privately-adopted design standards and also is exempt from City design review.) Except for the older portions of the City near downtown, most single-family development on ordinary-sized lots is NOT subject to design criteria.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Expand design review requirement to all development along public streets.

Option 2. Expand design review requirement, but do NOT extend to single-family housing on lots larger than 5,000 square feet in newer parts of community, i.e., those built after World War II; and continue to exempt small institutional structures and industrial development in industrial areas.

Option 3. No action: Designated design review areas would remain 'as is.'

Option 4. Alternative to the proposal: In addition to commercial development, require industrial and institutional development along all public streets to meet design criteria.

## Analysis

Olympia’s design criteria generally apply to the exterior architectural forms of buildings, but extend to other aesthetic components of development such as landscaping. These standards are intended to enhance the appearance of the community and mitigate some of the impacts of development. But they also reduce flexibility and options and can increase costs. Expanding the geographical area subject to these requirements would expand these impacts into new areas. The architectural quality of projects not subject to City design review varies greatly. For example, compare the award-winning offices at 2415 Heritage Court SW in the Evergreen Park Planned Development with the former NAPA Auto Parts store at 1319 Fones Road SE.



The proposal would extend design review requirements to nearly all new building and major exterior remodels throughout the community. Further, a new set of design criteria would be needed for ordinary single-family housing. Reviewing the architecture of single-family housing throughout the City could add up to one-quarter full-time-equivalent to the staff’s workload and add about \$250 in review fees – plus whatever costs were associated with revising the design of such structures.

Because the City already has a set of ‘basic’ commercial design criteria, Option 2, which would extend design review only to all commercial structures along public streets, would not require any new design criteria. It would expand commercial design review to the vicinity of Capital Medical Center and Providence St. Peters Hospital, the portion of the Automall not along Cooper Point Road, the Evergreen Park Planned Unit Development (aka courthouse hill), and commercial buildings in industrial areas (such as Mottman and Fones Roads).

### Original Staff Proposal

Option 2. Expand design review to commercial projects along all public streets.

### Planning Commission Recommendation

Option 1. Expand design review to all buildings along public streets.

## 26. Light Industry in Commercial Areas

### Proposal

Provide for light industry in commercial areas, specifically:

- *Policy L10.8. Provide opportunities for light industrial uses in commercial areas consistent with the commercial and multifamily uses of those areas, such as low-impact production within buildings with retail storefronts.*

### Background

Olympia has only a few acres of undeveloped land in industrial areas such as the Mottman Industrial Park. Current development regulations allow manufacturing in commercial areas if in association with a retail location that sells those products and if the process does not emit loud noises or noxious odors. For example, Wagner's Bakery on Capitol Way both retails and wholesales baked goods. Historically, downtown Olympia was both a retail and industrial center of the community. A few of these industries remain, such as Ziegler's Welding at 322 Capitol Way North.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt new policy specifically providing for light industry in commercial areas.

Option 2. No action: Plan would continue to emphasize industrial areas for light industry.

### Analysis

Manufacturing and similar light industry is a shrinking component of the area's employment. According to the Thurston Economic Development Center's Vitality report, between 2000 to 2010 "manufacturing" declined from 6.7 to 4.5% of the county's jobs. The proposed policy could lead to relaxation of development regulations to allow more industrial development in locations other than primary industrial areas.

Production activities within commercial areas provide industry and property owners with a broader range of options. It can also result in more efficient land use by enabling use of sites that do not lend themselves to commercial or residential use. By combining production facilities with nearby use or sales, environmental impacts of transporting products can be reduced. However, it also creates the possibility of increased local traffic congestion due to associated freight traffic, possible conflicts with other land uses especially night-time conflicts with residential uses, and risks of pollution and hazardous materials releases.

The current policy leads to concentration of industrial activities in a few locations. This approach generally reduces risks of land use conflicts and pollution by allowing focused pollution management and supervision. It also focuses freight traffic in a few locations providing for more efficient use of transportation facilities.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To support a greater variety of uses, adopted policy of providing for light industry in commercial areas.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 27. On-street Parking and Traffic

### Proposal

Shift on-street parking policy from locations where it would 'not unduly slow traffic flow' to 'where safe;' specifically,

- *Policy L11.5. Encourage efficient use and design of commercial parking areas, reduce parking requirements (but avoid significant overflow into residential areas) and support parking structures, especially downtown and in urban corridors, and designate streets for on-street parking where safe.*

### Background

Generally Olympia has on-street parking in residential areas and minor commercial streets, plus in the City Center and vicinity of the County courthouse. During the *Imagine Olympia* process, some of the public have urged adding on-street parking to more streets. The proposed policy would slightly shift the balance between competing policies favoring both on-street parking and minimizing traffic congestion when designating which street should have on-street parking.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Provide for more on-street parking by removing consideration of slowing of traffic.

Option 2. No action: Retain limiting phrase such as, 'except where it would unduly slow traffic.'

### Analysis

In addition to providing a pool of shared parking, on-street parking also serves as a buffer between traffic and sidewalk areas and adjacent uses, and provides 'friction' that slows traffic. This 'friction' results in slight reductions in the capacity of the associated street. But - especially where traffic speeds are higher – on-street parking can result in safety hazards particularly when entering and exiting a parking space.

The proposed policy could result in an increase in shared parking thereby reducing the total land area used for parking in the City, reductions in traffic capacity of certain streets could lead to more 'cut-thru' traffic on adjacent streets, and some increases in development costs could result where construction of street parking exceeds the cost of constructing onsite parking. The 'where safe' provision of the policy should mitigate safety hazards associated with on-street parking on high-speed streets.



## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Replace 'where not unduly slowing traffic' with 'where safe' limit of on-street parking policy.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 28. Special Area Planning

### Proposal

As described below, revise Plan to remove elements of special area plans prepared at the discretion of other governments, such as the Port of Olympia and Washington State and replace with policy of coordination, identify vicinity of Capital Mall, Martin Way east of Lilly Road, and Lilly Road as areas as locations where special area plans will be prepared for the City of Olympia, and provide for special area plans to be prepared for 'campuses' such as South Puget Sound Community College and hospitals.

### Background

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan references and sometimes adopts many other plans, many of which must be consistent – or at least not inconsistent – with the Comprehensive Plan. Among these are plans prepared to provide more detail regarding specific geographical areas within the Urban Growth Area. These 'special areas' differ from the 'sub-area planning' proposed elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan in that these special areas are smaller and sometimes have specific geographic boundaries and single owners. For example, the current Comprehensive Plan references and incorporates elements of the Port's plan for the Port peninsula and identifies the area in eastern Olympia between I-5, Lilly Road, Pacific Avenue and the city limits for similar more detailed planning.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: (A) Remove details of Port plan from Olympia's Comprehensive Plan; (B) Adopt policies of cooperation with State and Port re: planning of Capitol Campus and peninsula area; (C) Identify Capital Mall area, Lilly-Martin area, and an expanded Pacific-Lilly area as "focus areas" for detailed planning; and (D) Adopt policy providing for other Campus plans.

Option 2. No action: Port Comprehensive Plan would be retained as an element of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan, and area of east of Lilly and south of I-5 would remain only identified 'focus area.'

### Analysis

- A. Beginning at page 65 of the Land Use and Urban Design chapter, Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan includes five pages regarding the Port peninsula and references the then-new "Port Comprehensive Plan." These five pages include descriptions of the physical condition and history of the Port, and, among other provisions, "adopts by reference the Port's Land Use District Drawing" (Policy LU18.9). The City's current Comprehensive Plan also describes that the Port may elect to redefine boundaries of the drawing consistent with the industrial and urban waterfront zones of the City's Future Land Use map and Zoning. The Port of Olympia, which is a separate special-purpose government from the City, has replaced its "Port Comprehensive Plan" with an annually updated "Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements."

The relationship between the City and Port’s planning activities is often a topic of public interest. Unfortunately, incorporating so much detail of the Port’s former plan into the City’s Comprehensive Plan has led to confusion and disputes regarding the role of the City government in Port activities. The proposed updated Plan would remove much of that detail, retain the industrial/urban waterfront divide on the Future Land Use map, and add a policy intended to describe the continuing relationship between the Port and City planning efforts, specifically proposed Policy PL10.6, “Coordinate with the Port of Olympia to allow for long-term viability of Port peninsula industry, compatibility with surrounding uses, and continuation of marina uses along East Bay. Such coordination should at least address transportation, pedestrian and recreation facilities, environmental stewardship, and overwater development.”

- B. As the capital city of Washington, Olympia has a long history of working with the State to further both the community’s and the State’s goals in this regard. However, the City’s Comprehensive Plan doesn’t include an express policy on this topic. Proposed Policy PL15.6, “Work cooperatively with the State of Washington regarding planning for the Capitol Campus ...” would establish that relationship in a City planning document. No particular environmental impacts are anticipated from this new policy. A cooperative relationship could serve to mitigate impacts of future campus development on the area’s environment, the community-at-large, and neighboring private property and City infrastructure in particular.
- C. Owners and managers of large properties with extensive development potential, such as South Puget Sound Community College, often prepare long-term development plans. This approach can help ensure that land is used efficiently and sustainably. However, except for specific “village” sites where master plans are required, “development agreements” (contracts approved by the City Council following a public hearing, and “binding site plans” (staff approvals comparable to subdivisions), the City lacks a means to grant reliable long-term development approval. (In some instances the Olympia Hearing Examiner also has the discretion to grant limited long-term approvals, but only for uses designated as ‘conditional uses.’)

Proposed Policy PL15.6 “... provide opportunities for long-term ‘master planning’ of other [than Capitol Campus] single-purpose properties of at least twenty acres such as hospitals and the college and high-school campuses” would establish support for creating an additional mechanism for this approach for providing predictability. Depending on the mechanism adopted, this policy would reduce environmental and especially neighborhood impacts by establishing an agreed future for large properties, or could have additional impacts as a result of allowing development to proceed for long periods consistent with outdated standards or expectations.

- D. Urban Corridors planned for a mix of commercial and residential uses exceeding fifteen residential units per acre on average are key pieces of the City’s plan for providing areas with vitality and less reliance on the automobile for transportation. These areas extend east and west from downtown to Lacey around the Capital Mall. (A small, less dense urban corridor is also proposed on the eastside of Capitol Boulevard.) Although in the Plan since 1994, development consistent with the envisioned density has not occurred. That 1994 version of the Plan called for master planning of “focus areas”

with the greatest potential for intensive mixed use development. See current Policies LU17.10, 17.12 and 17.14, for example. Only one such focus area was designated in that Plan – that area bounded by Pacific Avenue, Lilly Road, I-5 and the city limits. See current Goal LU17A and related text and policies. Although preliminary designs were included in that Comprehensive Plan, to date a master plan has not been prepared for this area.

In 2009, the Thurston Regional Planning Council convened an Urban Corridors Task Force to study how to remove barriers to development of the urban corridors of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater. That study concluded in December of 2011 with “An Urban Corridors Task Force Proposal to Stimulate Transit Corridor Investments.” Among the Task Force’s recommendations was to, “Select a very small number of corridor districts in which urban infill and redevelopment is of highest priority for targeted, coordinated investment efforts.” To make this selection in Olympia, and to further the 1994 Plan’s vision of selecting “focus areas” within the corridors, three are proposed as shown on the Transportation Corridors map of the proposed Comprehensive Plan. These are the Pacific-Lilly area expanded to encompass the area west of Lilly Road, a new Lilly-Martin area including the nearby hospital area, and an area surrounding the Capital Mall. (Note that the boundaries of these areas are intentionally indefinite and would be further refined when the area was studied.) In particular, see proposed Policies PL15.1, 15.3 and 15.4. Because planning for these focus areas must conform to the Comprehensive Plan and the Urban Corridors element of the plan is little changed since 1994, no new environmental impacts are expected from designation of these areas.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To limit confusion, remove details of Port plan from Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan; to ensure consistency with Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan adopt policy of cooperation with State for planning of Capitol Campus; to improve planning for Urban Corridors identify Capital Mall area, Lilly-Martin area, and Pacific-Lilly area as “focus areas” and to provide predictability adopt policy providing for other Campus plans.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. with added emphasis on high-density housing.  
(See High Density Neighborhood option below.)

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## 29. Cottages and Townhouses

### Proposal

Expand policy of allowing cottages and townhouses in high-density residential areas to include all residential areas; specifically,

- *Policy L16.9. "In all residential areas, allow small cottages and townhouses, and one accessory housing unit per home—all subject to siting, design and parking requirements that ensure neighborhood character is maintained."*

### Background

Olympia's current Plan is to allow for a variety of housing forms, such as townhouses, small cottages, and apartment buildings in "higher density residential and commercial districts." See, e.g., current Policy LU4.6. The City's development regulations allow cottages not exceeding 800 square feet on small lots and townhouses (homes sharing a common wall on a property line) in all except some of the lowest density zones. For example, a few years ago Habitat for Humanity built a cottage development in a single-family district on Fairview Street in northeast Olympia. And, townhouses, although rare in Olympia prior to 1990, have now been built in almost every neighborhood.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Expand policy to allow cottages and townhouses in all residential areas.

Option 2. No action: Policy would continue to be only to allow such housing in high-density areas.

### Analysis

The proposed policy would support existing practices and could lead to small increases in residential in-fill and thus greater densities with commensurate less environmental impacts than those associated with lower density urban areas – for example, less traffic and associated pollution, less conversion of rural and resource lands to urbanization. Resulting increases in density could lead to localized increases in traffic and other activities associated with housing, such as noise and light pollution. Due to smaller lot sizes, such housing generally is lower in cost and requires less public infrastructure per unit than standard detached single-family homes.

### Original Staff Proposal

Option 1. Amendment would support existing practice and provision of more alternative housing locations with slightly higher densities than standard single-family housing.

## Planning Commission Recommendation

Option 1.

## 30. Large Multifamily Housing Projects

### Proposal

Revise policy to require mix of housing in apartment projects exceeding five acres instead of current ten-acre threshold, i.e., be more restrictive; specifically, adopt proposed

- *Policy L16.12. "Require a mix of single-family and multifamily structures in villages, mixed residential density districts, and apartment projects exceeding five acres; and utilize a variety of housing types and setbacks to transition to adjacent single-family areas."*

### Background

Large apartment projects composed of similar building and housing units are efficient to construct. However such uniformity detracts from the City's goals of diverse and attractive neighborhoods. Thus, the current policy is to, "Establish development requirements which prohibit large expanses of uniform multifamily structures." In particular, the policy requires projects on sites exceeding ten acres to provide more than one housing type and density and if exceeding five acres to vary from the density and building type or style of any adjoining multifamily project. See Policy LU8.3(b). (This policy is implemented by OMC 18.04.06(N)(1).)

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Lower ten-acre threshold to five acres for requiring variety of housing.

Option 2. No action: Relevant threshold would stay at ten acres.

### Analysis

Large apartment projects with similar structures and housing units are efficient to construct and thus generally of lower cost than projects with a variety of housing types. Large multifamily projects in Olympia generally range from 12 to 24 units per acre, thus a five-acre project may have about 100 units while a 10-acre project might have 200 units or more. See for example the Woodlands Apartments project now under construction at 800 Yauger Way SW with 224 units on 12 acres – and note that the development regulations did not require a mix for this RM-24 zoned property. The City's current 'mix of dwelling types' rule requires that no more than 70% of the units in a project be of any one type of housing, and imposes an 80% limit for 5-acre projects if adjacent to other multifamily housing. Generally the predominant type is apartment buildings with four or more units, resulting in a requirement that a small percentage be triplexes, townhouses and other forms of smaller buildings.

Large homogenous housing projects are contrary to Olympia's goals of variety and attractive neighborhoods, and have been controversial when in the vicinity of existing single-family housing. Most



of the remaining multifamily sites in Olympia are of less than ten acres. If implemented, the proposed policy could lead to a greater variety of housing types. However, this requirement would also slightly increase the cost of such housing. And, designers sometimes have found it difficult to provide smaller structures and still meet minimum density requirements without including structured parking. A stricter rule has the potential for a more compatible mix of housing types, and slightly reduced traffic and other environmental impacts as a result of slightly lower density. However, secondary impacts could result from the resulting less efficient use of land.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Amend policy threshold from ten to five acres to further goals of greater variety and mix of housing types.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 31. Private Use of Public Property

### Proposal

Expand existing policy of allowing private use of public right-of-way to include other public land; specifically proposed

- Policy L18.4. *“Design streets with landscaping, wide sidewalks, underground utilities and a coordinated pattern of unifying details; and provide for private use of public lands and rights-of-way when in the best interest of the community.”*

### Background

When and why public property may be used for private purposes is regulated by State and local laws. See, for example, Olympia Municipal Code Chapter 12.72 regarding festivals. Olympia often allows its streets to be temporarily closed for private functions such as parades, downtown events, and block parties. However, except for leasing or renting rooms within buildings, such as at the Community Center, Farmer’s Market, and Performing Arts Center, other public spaces have generally not been made available for private use.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Expand policy regarding private use of public property to encompass all types of public land. (Compare current Policy DT1.4, “It shall be the policy of the City of Olympia to allow, in some instances, through written agreement, the use of City rights-of-way for private purposes. Private use of the right-of-way may include air rights leases and ground leases .... [criteria deleted]”

Option 2. No action: Retain policy just referencing public rights-of-way (streets).

### Analysis

Much of the land in Olympia is controlled by the public sector, and the City of Olympia in particular. These lands include the many street rights-of-way, schools, the Port and Capitol Campus, City parks, and downtown parking lots, plus the many government-owned and leased buildings. Private use of public property provides an alternative location for events and other private activities, such as flea markets, political rallies, festivals and performances, meetings and other gatherings. However, such events also convert public property, at least temporarily, into a form of private property where the general public may be excluded. Such conversions are regulated by general standards, such as free-speech rights, and specific standards, such as Olympia’s festivals code referenced above.

The proposed Policy PL18.4 differs from the existing policy by adding “public lands” to the areas that may be provided for private use “when in the best interest of the community.” Such areas might include

parking lots, parks or other lands. Specific environmental impacts of this policy change are difficult to anticipate, but would likely include traffic congestion in the vicinity of any well-attended events and some risk of additional noise or light pollution – which could be mitigated by regulatory standards.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To further downtown goals adopt a policy expanding private use to include public lands.  
(Note: The resulting policy includes two topics – they may be separated for clarity.)

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 32. Urban Agriculture

### Proposal

Add a goal supporting production of food and other agricultural products within the Urban Growth Area; specifically, Land Use and Urban Design Goal 25, *“Local Thurston County food production is encouraged and supported to increase self-sufficiency, reduce environmental impact, promote health, the humane treatment of animals, and to support our local economy.”*

### Background

Olympia has permitted agricultural activities within the City. For example, gardening is common and “agricultural uses” are permitted in most residential zoning districts. However, the Comprehensive Plan is generally silent on this topic. Recently members of the public have expressed an interest in seeing the subject addressed in the Plan.

### Options

Option 1. Goal as quoted above, plus the eleven associated policies.

Option 2. Adopt a more succinct policy: *“Support local food production including urban agriculture, and provide for a food store with a transit stop within one-half mile of all residents.”*

Option 3. No action: Do not expressly address the topic.

### Analysis

Production of food, fiber, feed, and other agricultural products in urban areas is a complex topic raising issues such as pollution, land use conflicts, access to healthy food, sustainability and economic efficiency. This topic was not included in the scope of this Plan update. The proposed policy would establish a basic policy consistent with past practices and development regulations. The City may elect to pursue this topic in more detail.

The related half-mile food store element of this policy is drawn from the neighborhood centers and ten-minute neighborhood variation of the existing plan. Many studies indicate that one-quarter mile is a ‘reasonable’ walking distance from housing to transit stops, neighborhoods businesses, parks and similar destinations. Other studies suggest that a minimum of 1,000 to 1,500 nearby households is needed to support a ‘corner grocery.’ (See, for example, *Creating Walkable Neighborhood Districts*, Gregory Easton and John Owen, June 2009.) Given Olympia’s relatively low residential densities ranging from five to ten unit households per acre, few locations will achieve these minimums within one-quarter mile in the near-term. Thus the policy proposes to disperse food stores throughout the City consistent

with business needs, and if not always within walking distance, at least within comfortable bicycling and short bus-ride and driving distances.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Approve proposed policy or a variation consistent with existing practices of the City and community.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. A more expansive and detailed version of Option 2.

## 33. Plan for Healthy Lifestyles

### Proposal

Add new policy 'encouraging' development consistent with healthy and active lifestyles, and providing discretion to require such. Specifically,

- *Policy L20.4 Encourage or require development and public improvements consistent with healthy and active lifestyles.*

### Background

In 2005, Washington's Growth Management Act was amended to provide that, "Wherever possible, the land use element should consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity." In addition to relationships between public health and City planning, such as pollution control and provision of clean water, numerous studies have shown that physical health of members of a community is linked to urban form, and especially to whether that form is conducive to an active lifestyle such as walking, bicycling and other forms of active transportation. (See, in general, Urban Planning and Public Health at CDC, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report December 22, 2006.) Although Olympia has long planned for sidewalks, parks, bike paths and other physical improvements that support such lifestyles, the Comprehensive Plan lacks a specific policy on this topic.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Add policy to the Comprehensive Plan addressing relationship between land use pattern and physical activity.

Option 2. No action: Continue planning for an urban form that supports physical activity, but do not expressly address the topic.

### Analysis

There is a strong consensus that there is a correlation between the average health of member of a community and the physical form of that community. In particular, access to healthy food and safe, convenient and pleasant locations for walking, bicycling, recreation, and other activities have been linked to health and longer life expectancies. See, for example, *Urban Sprawl and Public Health*, by Howard Frumkin, Lawrence Frank, and Richard Jackson, Island Press, 2004. Although Olympia's planning has often addressed this topic, adding a specific policy would affirm that public health is one of the many reasons Olympia is pursuing a healthy urban form and that the local government may choose to require such developments. Such an affirmation would not be expected to have any specific or general environmental impacts.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. To conform to the Growth Management Act, and recognize Olympia's long-standing practices supportive of active lifestyles, add an express policy such as PL17.5. (Note: City Council may elect to choose between policies of 'encouraging' and 'requiring.')

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 34. Secure Designs

### Proposal

Add a Plan policy expressly discouraging designs incorporating physical security measures that isolate developments and neighborhoods, specifically, Policy L20.5. *“Prevent physical barriers from isolating and separating the integration and compatibility of new developments and existing neighborhoods.”*

### Background

Police Services and other active elements of security and crime prevention are addressed in the Public Services Chapter of the proposed Plan. However, secure design, also known as ‘crime prevention through environmental design’ or CPTED (pronounced “sep ted”), is also a common consideration when designing the built form of individual projects and communities in general. CPTED measures include elements such as good lighting and avoiding ‘hiding places’ by creating sites with public and common spaces visible from private spaces and private exterior spaces, such as front yards, that are readily visible from public spaces.

Olympia generally supports secure design, but also has adopted regulations discouraging practices that would isolate individual projects or neighborhoods. For example, special approval is required for private streets, and barbed wire and similar features are generally prohibited along public streets; OMC 18.170.050 requires that multifamily developments, “Minimize the use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement or separate the project from the neighborhood. Front yards shall be visually open to the street. Where fencing is used, provide gates or openings at frequent intervals. Provide variation in fencing to avoid blank walls.”

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt a policy discouraging isolating forms of secure design.

Option 2. No action: Do not address directly in Comprehensive Plan.

### Analysis

Minimizing crime and maximizing the security of people and property is a one of the basic goals of many civilizations. However, in some cases, measures intended for this purpose can lead to isolation of individual developments from surrounding properties, an incorrect impression that crime rates are excessive, and undue reliance on these measures or private security instead of community-wide action. Moving the balance too far toward individual security can create reliance on private security measures and break down support for public-policing.



Although Olympia’s crime rate is slightly higher than the statewide average, it is not significantly different than comparable communities. See *Crime in Washington 2011 Annual Report*, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chief, [www.waspc.org](http://www.waspc.org). Nonetheless, many developers believe that isolating a private property from other parts of a community helps sell or lease space by creating a sense of security and protection from ‘prying eyes’ and from criminal activity by using what is sometimes referred to as ‘fortress’ designs. In contrast, Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan generally favors integrating all members and parts of the community into the larger whole. Accordingly, development regulations of the City and other measures, such as public events, seek to avoid isolation of people and exterior spaces. To date only a handful of developments have been built in Olympia with gates, walls and other measures to discourage public entry. At issue is how to strike a balance between community goals for security and physical integration.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Adopt new policy discouraging overly secure designs.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 35. Residential Clustering

### Proposal

Under certain circumstances, require or encourage clustering of development on portions of development sites. “Clustering” refers to the practice of developing a portion of a site while temporarily or permanently preserving a remainder as open space, i.e., contiguous areas generally free of buildings, other structures and pavement. Proposed are:

- *Policy L16.3 Allow ‘clustering’ of housing compatible with the adjacent neighborhood to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas.*

*Land Use Category Description: Low-Density Neighborhoods. This designation provides for low-density residential development, primarily single-family detached housing and low rise multi-family housing, in densities ranging from twelve units per acre to one unit per five acres depending on environmental sensitivity of the area. Where environmental constraints are significant, to achieve minimum densities extraordinary clustering may be allowed when combined with environmental protection. Barring environmental constraints, densities of at least four units per acre should be achieved. Supportive land uses and other types of housing, including accessory dwelling units, townhomes and small apartment buildings, may be permitted. Specific zoning and densities are to be based on the unique characteristics of each area with special attention to stormwater drainage and aquatic habitat. Clustered development to provide future urbanization opportunities will be required where urban utilities are not readily available. [Emphasis added.]*

### Background

Clustering of development on a portion of a property while preserving the remainder is a common practice. Development may be clustered to limit the cost of infrastructure, to protect environmentally sensitive areas and features, to provide shared open space in residential developments, or to reserve areas for future development. Among the statements in Olympia’s current Comprehensive Plan is Land Use Policy 6.4,

*“LU6.4. Require clustering of development to promote ground and surface water protection, conservation of environmentally sensitive and critical areas; protect aquatic habitat and related species; provide buffers, trail corridors, protection of areas with difficult topography, windfirm stands of trees appropriate for retention, and other open space. Encourage developers to locate structures in such clustered developments on the portion of the site with the least environmental and aesthetic value, consistent with other applicable policies and regulations. Provide for flexibility in lot sizes and setback requirements to facilitate clustered development.”*

This policy has been implemented through environmentally sensitive regulations that generally allow developers to propose clustering to preserve open space by increasing the density on the developed

portion of a property by 20%. In certain circumstances, the Community Planning Director may require such clustering. However, these regulations do not allow more substantial or 'extraordinary' clustering, such as constructing multi-family housing in single-family zoning districts.

## **Options**

Option 1. Policy and land use category allowing and sometimes requiring clustering of development.

Option 2. No action: Retain policies as stated in current Comprehensive Plan.

## **Analysis**

The proposed policies do not differ substantially from current practices. However, they may lead to regulations that would allow or even require more use of this type of development design. For example, if a residential developer volunteers or is required to preserve open space, under current regulations the overall density of the development will decline if the area to be preserved are more than 20% of the site. Subject to the compatibility provisions, the proposed policies may lead to regulations that would allow greater densities and different building forms where larger areas are to be preserved. Such actions would likely result in better environmental protection, but could also result in greater impacts upon properties immediately adjacent to the 'clustered' development.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Provide additional opportunities for clustering to preserve sensitive environmental areas.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 36. Green Space

### Proposal

Supplement the Natural Environment and Parks and Open Space goals and policies of the Plan with a Land Use goal and related policies as set forth below. These policies are generally more specific and call for more open space than the provisions in other chapters.

### Background

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan and implementing practices and regulations address open space by a variety of means. (Note: The terms 'open space' and 'green space' have no specific definitions. As used here they are roughly interchangeable and refer to land not occupied by buildings, storage areas or parking lots. However, 'green space' may include a greater emphasis on public use of open space.) Among these are establishing building setback and separation requirements, requiring open space buffers adjacent to streams, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas, requiring creation of permanent tree tracts and stormwater facilities, acquiring public open space and parks, incorporating planted areas into public rights, and requiring that private development includes landscaped open spaces. Although the specific acreages and types of areas set aside have varied over time and by location and development project, so far these activities and regulations have resulted in nearly 4,000 acres, almost 25% of the Olympia urban area, being permanently set aside as parks, tree tracts and other forms of open space.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt Land Use Goal 7 and related policies as recommended by the Planning Commission:

- *GL7 Urban green space is available to the public and located throughout the community and incorporates natural environments into the urban setting, which are easily accessible and viewable so that people can experience nature daily and nearby.*
- *PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, green walls and roofs and seating.*
- *PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people's immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.*
- *PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for all community members.*
- *PL7.4 Increase the area per capita of urban green space and the tree canopy- to- area ratio within each neighborhood.*

- *PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.*

Option 2. No action: Do not add the above provisions to Comprehensive Plan; instead continue the open space approaches set forth elsewhere in the Plan.

## **Analysis**

The goal and in particular the related policies set forth above would establish a new focus on open space as part of the urban landscape of Olympia. It could differ from current policies and practices in four respects:

- Providing urban green space in the “immediate” vicinity of people would be a shorter distance than the City’s ‘one mile of all residences’ policy for neighborhood parks. If a maximum distance of less than one mile were established, new actions would be needed to provide a more dispersed distribution of urban green spaces.
- Increasing the acreage of urban green space per capita – if taken literally, is probably not viable as it would require reducing the existing acreage of buildings and parking lots as the population grows. But, if interpreted as providing for more urban green space associated with development than in the past, it would imply either requiring more open space in association with development (possibly including landscaped rooftops) or acquiring such open space. If overall development densities are not to be reduced, these approaches would require increasing the development density of the built portion of each or most sites.
- Increasing the tree canopy within each neighborhood would also require new actions. In general the City has sought to ensure that as development occurs about 10% of the community is planted with trees. Today over 30% of the urban growth area is canopied with trees. Increasing the canopy would require planting of open spaces that now lack trees.
- Establishing urban green spaces between transportation corridors and adjacent areas could require a change in either the City’s street standards or building setbacks. Although planter strips and street trees are standard features of many streets and landscaped building setbacks are required in most locations, in the more intensively used area such as downtown and along commercial arterials only street trees are generally required. Commercial land users may object to further separation of commercial land uses from streets if it would reduce the visibility of business from the ‘stream of traffic.’

## **Original Staff Proposal**

No Recommendation.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. As described above.

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## 37. Gateways to Downtown

### Proposal

Establish eight specific gateways and associated entry/exit corridors to downtown and the capitol campus. These would be tree-lined civic boulevards presenting a unified streetscape. See specific policy below. The eight proposed gateways and corridors are illustrated on the Future Land Use map. In general they would be located at:

GATEWAY LOCATION	CORRIDOR CIVIC BOULEVARDS
Priest Point Park (north entrance)	East Bay Drive and Plum Street
State, Fourth, & Pacific Avenue intersections	Fourth Avenue and State Avenue
Plum Street, Henderson Blvd., and I-5 ramp intersection	Plum Street, Union Avenue, and the Woodland and Downtown Railroad trails
Eskridge and Henderson Boulevards intersection	Henderson Boulevard -- northerly from intersection
Capitol Boulevard at Olympia city limits	Capitol Boulevard and Capitol Way
Deschutes Parkway at Olympia city limits	Deschutes Parkway
Harrison Avenue and Division Street intersection	Harrison Avenue easterly of Division Street, Olympic Way, and 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenues east of Olympic Way to Capitol Way
Schneider Hill Road and West Bay Drive intersection	West Bay Drive

### Background

For over twenty years Olympia’s planning efforts have included enhancing the experience of approaching the center of the City along the major streets. These efforts have included adopting building design criteria for these corridors, special landscaping such as the Plum Street median, and entry features such as ‘welcome to’ signs and plantings. This general approach is reflected in other aspects of the proposed Plan, including proposed Policy PL6.7, “Create attractive entry corridors to the community and neighborhoods, especially downtown and along urban corridors; to include adopting design standards and installing significant special landscaping along community entry corridors.”



## **Options**

Option 1. Adopt policy and details recommended by Planning Commission, “PL14.1: Establish eight gateways with civic boulevards that are entry/exit pathways along major streets to downtown Olympia and our Capitol.”

Option 2. Adopt only the less specific policy PL 6.7, quoted above.

Option 3. No action: Retain general gateways policy, “LU 2.7 Establish gateways to Olympia with significant, special landscaping. Establish design standards for the landscaping and buildings along Olympia's entrance and exit corridors that reinforce the streets' role as the gateways to the Capitol.”

## **Analysis**

Designation of these specific gateways and corridors is not expected to have any significant environmental impact. Because each would probably be custom-designed based on their unique features, estimating the cost of enhancing the landscaping and design of these locations and routes is difficult. Depending on specific designs, acquisition of additional land could be an aspect of creating the gateway or the ‘tree-lined civic boulevard’ or both. Although there may be economies of scale, comparable planning for street forms has cost the City about \$30,000 per mile. Thus, although specific improvement costs are difficult to estimate, the public design process alone for these eight gateways and over fifteen miles of ‘pathways’ is likely to cost more than \$500,000.

Note that, at minimum, the term “boulevard” as used in the proposed policy is not intended to mean a street with a landscaped median (as in the City’s transportation standards) but instead would be more generally a ‘grand’ street. Adding medians to all of these entry/exit streets would be much more costly than the more general approach of enhancing their appearance.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Continuation of general enhanced gateways and entrance/exit corridors policy.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Specific policy with specific description of gateways and associated ‘civic boulevards.’

## 38. High-Density Neighborhoods

### Proposal

New policy designating the Downtown area and expanded portions of Urban Corridors near Capital Mall and near Martin Way and Pacific Avenue west of Lilly Road as areas where housing is concentrated and commercial uses directly serve those residents. See the 'High-Density Neighborhoods' overlay on the proposed Future Land Use map. Minimum residential densities of 25 units per acre would be pursued in these areas. Specifically,

*High-density Neighborhoods are multi-family residential, commercial and mixed use neighborhoods with densities of at least 25 dwelling units per acre. Specific zoning may provide for densities higher than 25 units per acre. The height in these neighborhoods will be determined by zoning and based on the "Height and View Protection Goals and Policies."*

Also see specific proposed policies below.

### Background

Urban Corridors are a combined land use and transportation system approach to development included in the Thurston Regional Transportation Plan and first added to Olympia's Comprehensive Plan in 1994. (In those documents these areas are called "High-Density Corridors." This term is also used to a set of four of Olympia's zoning districts with a more limited geography. The term 'Urban Corridors' is now in use to avoid confusing the Plan's land use designation with the zoning regulations.) That same Plan designated Olympia's downtown area as one of three 'city centers' of the region. Generally the corridors were to be areas within one-quarter mile (walking distance) of major bus-served arterial streets. They were to become areas mixing commercial development (about 25 jobs per acre) with housing (ranging from 7 to 15 units per acre). The most intensive uses are anticipated within 400 feet of the major streets, with a gradual transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The two primary Urban Corridor areas are on the westside along Harrison Avenue and the vicinity of the Capital Mall and a combination of the areas along Fourth Avenue, State Street, Pacific Avenue and Martin Way east of downtown. Downtown Olympia is planned for similar uses with slightly taller buildings. The two outer portions of the corridors are described in proposed Policy L13.7:

- The area along Harrison Avenue west from the vicinity of Division Street to Cooper Point Road -- and the portions of Martin Way and Pacific Avenues from Lilly Road to the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific Avenue -- will transition away from cars being the primary transportation mode to a more walkable environment, where bicycling and transit are also encouraged. Redevelopment of the area will create more density and new buildings that gradually create a continuous street edge and more pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

- The outer portions of the Urban Corridors west of the vicinity of the Capital Mall and east of Lilly Road will primarily be accessed by motor vehicles with provisions for pedestrian and bicycle travel; gradual transition from existing suburban character is to form continuous pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, but more regulatory flexibility will be provided to acknowledge the existing suburban nature of these areas.

In contrast with the two primary Urban Corridor areas described above, portions of the Urban Corridor in older neighborhoods, such as along Capitol Boulevard, Harrison Avenue east of Division, and along Fourth and State Avenues east of downtown, are targeted for less intensive mixed use development not exceeding three stories and for lesser housing densities. (See related proposal below regarding limiting commercial development in these sections of the Corridor.)

The last twenty years have seen repeated studies and regulatory adjustments of these corridors. In July of 2012 an Urban Corridors Task Force convened by the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) completed a three-year study of these areas. The Task Force's report led directly into an ongoing joint City of Olympia/TRPC study of the development potential of the portion of the Corridor along Martin Way west of Lilly Road. (Copies of the task force's report are available on request and on TRPC's website, TRPC.org.)

## **Options**

Option 1. Adopt land use descriptions above and proposed Policy L14.2, "High-density Neighborhoods concentrate housing into three designated sites: Downtown Olympia; Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall. Commercial uses serve high-density neighborhoods and allow people to meet their daily needs without traveling outside their neighborhood. High-density neighborhoods are highly walkable. At least one-quarter of the forecasted growth is planned for downtown Olympia." And expand this area west of Division Street along Harrison south to encompass the area bounded by Cooper Point Road and Black Lake Boulevard (including Capital Mall), and expand the eastside area easterly from Phoenix Street to Lilly Street. (See proposed Future Land Use map.)

Option 2. No action: The described areas Downtown and within outer portions of the Urban Corridors would be designated primarily for commercial uses plus a minimum of about 15 housing units per acre.

## **Analysis**

The Urban Corridors concept as proposed in Policy L14.2 differs from the current Plan and other portions of the proposed update. Proposed Policy L14.2 would shift the emphasis to concentrating housing in these areas, and toward commercial uses that serve residents of these areas, rather than the more auto-oriented vision described in the current Comprehensive Plan. This shift in emphasis is not likely to have any significant adverse impacts; rather it may reduce development pressures in more suburban parts of the region.

However, as described in the Urban Corridor Task Force report mentioned above, even a gradual transition from the suburban form of development along these former state highways has been difficult to achieve. Successfully promoting 'high-density neighborhoods' would likely require a long-term community-wide commitment to new land use regulations for these areas combined with funding of supportive public infrastructure such as parks and transportation systems.

In contrast, successfully promoting the downtown areas as such a high-density neighborhood is more consistent with other elements of the Plan. For example, Policy L17.3 urges, "Through aggressive marketing and height bonuses, encourage intensive downtown residential and commercial development (at least 15 units and 25 employees per acre) sufficient to support frequent transit service." However, Policy L14.2 does emphasize commercial land uses serving downtown residents rather than the regional perspective of Policy 17.4, "Encourage development that caters to a regional market." Note that zoning of the downtown area is sufficient to 'accommodate' one-quarter of Olympia's growth for the next twenty years; however, ensuring that one-quarter of new residents and employees will locate in the downtown area is likely to be a difficult challenge.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

None. The Commission's recommendation presents a substantial policy question.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Adopt 'urban neighborhoods' policy for downtown and outer portions of urban corridors as proposed.

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## 39. Reduced Urban Corridors

### Proposal

Elimination of an Urban Corridor along Capitol Boulevard, substantial reduction in size of Urban Corridors along Harrison Avenue east of Division Street and along Fourth and State Avenues east of downtown, along with merger of two classes of corridor in these areas, remaining Urban Corridor area along these streets would be about one lot (instead of one-quarter mile) deep. These:

*Areas nearest downtown along Harrison Avenue east of Division Street and the upper portions of the State Street/Fourth Avenue corridor to the intersection of Martin Way and Pacific Avenue should blend travel modes with priority for pedestrian, bicycle and transit systems. These areas should provide for a mix of low-intensity professional offices, commercial uses and multi-family buildings forming a continuous and pedestrian-oriented edge along the arterial streets. There shall be a three-story height limit if any portion of the building is within 100' from a single-family residential zone, provided that the City may establish an additional height bonus for residential development.*

### Background

Urban Corridors are a combined land use and transportation system approach to development included in the Thurston Regional Transportation Plan and first added to Olympia's Comprehensive Plan in 1994. Generally the corridors were to be areas within one-quarter mile (walking distance) of major bus-served arterial streets. They are to become areas mixing commercial development with housing. The most intensive uses were anticipated within 400 feet of the major streets, with a gradual transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

In contrast with the primary urban corridor areas, portions of the Urban Corridor in older neighborhoods, such as along Capitol Boulevard, Harrison Avenue east of Division, and along Fourth and State Avenues east of downtown, are targeted for less intensive mixed use development generally not exceeding three stories and about seven housing units per acre. The version adopted by Olympia in the City's Comprehensive Plan in 1994 provided that, "Where existing lower density residential abut the main road, average may be 7 units per acre or more." The areas described in this proposal generally fall within this category.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt proposed inner corridor description and Future Land Use map with Urban Corridor in these areas approximating areas currently zoned for commercial and multi-family uses.

Option 2. Adopt 'standard' width Urban Corridor in these areas, i.e., one-quarter mile from major street along with residential density limitations in current Plan.

Option 3. Do not merge two categories of corridor in these areas. (Current Plan provides that upper portion of these areas is to have greater range of land uses.)

Option 4. Continue to designate area east of Capitol Boulevard (south of I-5) as an Urban Corridor.

## **Analysis**

The concept of transit-oriented corridors with sufficient intensity of land uses to support that transit service is a key component of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan. However, how to implement this concept where the corridors pass thru well-established neighborhoods has been a continuing issue for the community.

The Plan adopted in 1994, along with the implementing zoning, addressed this challenge by generally only designating those properties adjacent to the corridor streets for commercial and multi-family uses, and by designating the remainder of the half-mile wide corridor for somewhat higher residential densities – ranging from 5 to 12 units per acre with some limited to 8 units per acre – rather than the 15 units per acre minimum target of the outer portion of the corridor. In addition, the Plan emphasized the importance of a gradual transition from the existing neighborhoods to the new more intense uses along the major street.

Olympia implemented this Plan by applying five different zoning districts in to these portions of the Urban Corridor. For example, in the Capitol Boulevard area only the existing Wildwood Center was designated for commercial use and it was limited to 'Neighborhood Retail.'

The proposal would remove the Urban Corridor designation from the Wildwood area along Capitol Boulevard but would retain a Neighborhood Center designation. This area borders the City of Tumwater, which has a similar Urban Corridor designation along this street. Given that this area of Olympia is nearly fully developed, this change is unlikely to have any significant impact. Rather, it may lead to increased property values by removing the perceived threat of more intense development – at least on the Olympia side of the city limits.

The proposal to narrow the Urban Corridor designation in the other 'older' neighborhoods is likely to reduce the prospect of future expansion of the more intense development beyond those lots bordering the corridor street. Accordingly, it is likely to limit expansion of employment in these areas and may result in not achieving the 25 employees per acre target envisioned in the original plan. This in turn may minimize the growth of mid-day transit use in these areas between downtown and the outer portion of the Urban Corridors. However, the overall effect on the transit system is difficult to predict and likely would depend upon how intensely the remaining portion of the Urban Corridor is developed.

The areas to be removed from the Urban Corridor designation are proposed to be placed in a 'low density neighborhood' category allowing up to 12 dwelling units per acre. Thus no substantial change in the residential development in these areas is to be expected if this proposal is adopted.

Merger of the two urban categories of these areas – which differed only with regard to the intensity of use – may lead to some additional prospect for development near downtown. In particular, it is likely to lead to merging the City’s High Density Corridor ‘1’ and ‘2’ zones as the Plan would no longer provide a foundation for drawing a distinction between these two categories of land use zoning.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Options 2 & 3. Generally consistent with current Comprehensive Plan.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Reduce width of Urban Corridor in older neighborhoods, merge two Urban Corridor categories in remainder, and remove Capitol Boulevard area from Urban Corridor designation.



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## 40. Low-Density Neighborhoods

### Proposal

New Policy, PL14.3, “Preserve and enhance the character of existing established Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium- or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.” And, increase potential residential density in these areas and describe as:

*This designation provides for low-density residential development, primarily single-family detached housing and low rise multi-family housing, in densities ranging from twelve units per acre to one unit per five acres depending on environmental sensitivity of the area. Where environmental constraints are significant, to achieve minimum densities extraordinary clustering may be allowed when combined with environmental protection. Barring environmental constraints, densities of at least four units per acre should be achieved. Supportive land uses and other types of housing, including accessory dwelling units, townhomes and small apartment buildings, may be permitted. Specific zoning and densities are to be based on the unique characteristics of each area with special attention to stormwater drainage and aquatic habitat. Medium-Density Neighborhoods Centers are allowed within Low-Density Neighborhoods. Clustered development to provide future urbanization opportunities will be required where urban utilities are not readily available. [Emphasis added.]*

### Background

Olympia has a long-standing practice of seeking to ensure that new development is compatible with existing residential uses. Land Use Goal 8 of the current Comprehensive Plan is, “To ensure that new development maintains or improves neighborhood character and livability.” This goal is rephrased in the proposed Plan update as, “GL20. Development maintains and improves neighborhood character and livability.” Among the policies related to Goal 20 is, “Require development in established neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.”

These Plan goals and policies have been implemented through zoning, neighborhood programs, architectural design requirements, and other means. For example, about 1500 acres are now in R6-12 zoning, a transitional zoning district that allows both detached single-family homes and small shared-wall housing such as duplexes and townhomes. In addition, neighborhood retail uses are allowed at designated sites in both the current and proposed Plan update.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt Policy and Low-Density Neighborhood description as proposed; including associated rezone criteria.

Option 2. Do not adopt new policy; retain existing eight units per acre maximum density for these areas and place areas now designated for 6 to 12 units per acre (R6-12) in ‘medium-density’ instead of ‘low-density’ category.

Option 3. No action: do not adopt, but retain other ‘neighborhood protection’ provisions of Plan.

## **Analysis**

The Future Land Use map of the plan identifies most of the City and urban growth areas for “Low-Density Neighborhoods.” Other portions of the plan refer to ‘maintaining and improving’ such neighborhoods. At minimum this added policy might shift the emphasis in the Plan from ensuring that development ‘maintains and improves’ the character of low-density neighborhoods toward a policy of ‘preservation.’ In general this phrasing may be interpreted as more limiting of future development. In particular, a policy of preserving the character of these areas could be inconsistent with goals and policies of the Plan that envision changes in some currently somewhat rural areas. However, it is associated with a proposal to increase the potential residential density in these areas which would suggest a ‘balancing approach’ when new development is proposed.

To help guide any proposal to increase zoning densities in these areas, a set of ‘rezone criteria’ is proposed, including:

- Proposed rezones will clearly implement applicable policies in all elements of the Comprehensive Plan. If there are clear inconsistencies between the proposed rezone and specific, applicable policies in the Comprehensive Plan, the rezone should not be approved.
- The proposed zoning shall be identical to an existing zoning district that is adjacent to the subject property. The proposed zoning may also be approved if it clearly fulfills the specific purpose statement of an adjacent zoning district that is not identical.
- Clear evidence that the maximum density of development permitted in the proposed zoning district can be adequately served by infrastructure systems as described in the City’s adopted master plans for sanitary sewer, potable water, transportation, parks and recreation, stormwater and public safety services; and in the applicable facilities and services plans of the Olympia School District, Intercity Transit, and other required public service providers.

These would generally limit most multi-family housing in this designation to locations adjacent to previously approved higher-density zoning, such as the R6-12 zones. Such changes might result in a few hundred more homes being constructed in parts of the City – such as undeveloped portions of the northwest or southeast – than previously anticipated. These changes are within a scale that would probably not require significant changes in the municipal infrastructure planned to support development. However, it might result in individual developments being required to build more improvements than anticipated; such as an additional turn lane or an additional water main connection.

In general, this proposal is likely to lead to some gradual increase in the number of housing units in areas now composed primarily of single-family homes. But whether this combination of land uses and policies will lead to a reduction in environmental impacts of growth in these areas along with an increase in density and associated impacts such as traffic and stormwater runoff is difficult to predict.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 41. Medium-Density Neighborhood Centers

### Proposal

“Allow medium-density Neighborhood Centers in low- and medium-density neighborhoods to include both civic and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Neighborhood centers emerge from a neighborhood public process.” (Land Use and Urban Design policy 14.4)

### Background

One of the goals in the proposed Comprehensive Plan update is, “Neighborhood centers are focal points of neighborhoods and villages.” (Land Use Goal 21) These centers are to be located along major streets and within 600 feet of a bus stop. These are to be mixed use locations within otherwise residential areas and are intended to serve and complement the surrounding residential uses. They are to include housing, a food store, and a neighborhood park or “civic green” and to allow businesses that cater primarily to neighborhood residents and places of assembly such as churches and schools. Sites are to be accessible from other than the major street and designs are to be compatible with adjoining land uses. The proposed Plan update includes seventeen such centers; five of these are in larger “village” projects where the Master Plans have already been approved, ten are at locations where some neighborhood retail businesses are already present, and two are ‘floating’ locations awaiting a development proposal. For more information see the proposed Plan’s Future Land Use map and Goal 21 and related policies of the Land Use and Design chapter.

Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan has long included provisions for such neighborhood centers. Current regulations require extensive public review and “Master Plan” approval for the entire center before development. These regulations impose special architectural design standards, and require that each center be between two and ten acres and include a “food store,” a transit stop, and at least one acre of open space. Commercial uses are limited to between 5,000 and 30,000 square feet of floor area and no one business may exceed 5,000 square feet. Housing densities are to generally range from 7 to 12 units per acre. (For comparison, an ordinary single-family development has between 5 to 7 units per acre.)

### Options

Option 1. Adopt Land Use Policy 14.4 as quoted above.

Option 2. Adopt only the Neighborhood Center policies and other provisions associated with Land Use Goal 21, “Neighborhood centers are the focal point of neighborhoods and villages.”

## **Analysis**

Proposed Land Use Policy 14.4 is part of the Planning Commission's Urban Neighborhoods proposal. It reaffirms and potentially expands upon the development potential of neighborhood centers as described elsewhere in the Plan. No substantial adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from this proposal. However, specific development proposals may meet with neighborhood concerns or objections. Thus appropriate mitigation of local impacts would be considered as part of the review of any Master Plan.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Neighborhood Center locations as shown on Future Land Use map and Land Use Goal 21 and associated policies.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 42. Street Connectivity

### Proposal

Add a policy to evaluate all street connections. (See specific text below.)

### Background

Street connectivity is a major policy area of the Comprehensive Plan and the *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*. Street connectivity policies help to achieve safety and efficiency and increase mode choice in our transportation system. Street connections are important because they allow for short trips and direct route options for walking, biking and driving and to access transit. A connected street grid also provides better access for emergency and commercial vehicles.

National studies have shown that cities with greater intersection density per square mile, and a greater street density per square mile have fewer crashes because these street network characteristics result in safer speeds. A similar study showed that cities with connected, dense street networks have higher walk, bike and transit mode-shares. (Wesley Marshall and Norman Garrick, 2001, 2009)

The current Comprehensive Plan has strong language about the value and need for connections. Policies describe the placement of streets in the network, and design of streets. When a street connection is proposed, staff prepares an analysis of the circumstances and potential implications of a street connection. Current policy 3.20f is used to guide this analysis:

*T3.20 f: Require that streets and trails connect with other streets and trails whenever practical; dead-ends and cul-de-sacs should be avoided. Use "stubbed out" streets and trails to provide linkages with future neighborhoods. In determining where it is practical to connect new streets with existing ones, the City or County, as appropriate, will determine whether the merits outweigh the demerits of the whole package, and whether the connection would be in the best interests of both the community at large and the neighborhood. In discussions with the existing neighborhood, the following will be considered:*

- (1) Neighborhood development plans,*
- (2) Pedestrian safety,*
- (3) Availability or feasibility of sidewalks,*
- (4) Width of roadway,*
- (5) Topography and environmental constraints,*
- (6) Sight distance,*
- (7) Likelihood of diverting significant cross-town arterial traffic onto local neighborhood streets,*
- (8) Whether pedestrian/ bicycle connections, rather than streets, would accomplish the desired goals, and*



9) *Effectiveness of proposed traffic-calming measures.*

Olympia has not achieved all street connections planned and documented in the Comprehensive Plan or required through code regulations. The reasons street connections are not made include objections from adjacent neighborhoods, objections from the property developer, or a topographic or environmental constraint. There is a cumulative impact on the transportation system when these connections are not made.

## **Options**

Option 1. The proposal: Add new policy to evaluate all street connections.

*Policy T4.21 Pursue all street connections. When a street connection is proposed, the developer, City, or County will analyze how not making the street connection will impact the street network. This information will be shared with the neighborhood and other stakeholders before any final decision is made. At a minimum, this evaluation will include:*

- *Impacts on directness of travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists*
- *Impacts on directness of travel for emergency-, public-, and commercial-service vehicles*
- *An assessment of travel patterns of the larger neighborhood area*
- *An assessment of traffic volumes at the connection and at major intersections in the larger neighborhood area*
- *Identification of major topographical barriers or environmental constraints that make a connection infeasible*
- *Involve the neighborhood and other stakeholders in the identification of potential mitigation measures for the new connection*
- *Bicycle and pedestrian safety*
- *Noise impacts and air pollution*
- *Likelihood of diverting significant cross-town arterial traffic onto local neighborhood streets*
- *Effectiveness of proposed traffic-calming measures*

Option 2. Add a policy to require an analysis when a street connection is opposed.

*PT4.21 Pursue all street connections. If a street connection is opposed, the developer or the City will analyze how the street connection will impact the street network. This information will be shared with stakeholders before any final decision is made. At a minimum, this evaluation will include:*

- *Impacts on directness of travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists*
- *Impacts on directness of travel for emergency-, public-, and commercial-service vehicles*
- *An assessment of travel patterns of the larger neighborhood area*
- *An assessment of traffic volumes at the connection and at major intersections in the larger neighborhood area*

- *Identification of major topographical barriers or environmental constraints that make a connection infeasible*
- *Identification of potential mitigation measures for the new connection, with the involvement of the neighborhood*

Option 3. Retain policy 3.20(f) above.

### **Analysis**

Option 1 provides staff and the public a thorough review of every street connection, regardless of opposition. An evaluation of all street connections will require a great deal of City staff resources relative to current practice. Staff estimates this analysis will take 60 to 100 hours of staff time per street connection. Outside of economic recessionary periods, there are approximately 15 to 25 connections proposed in any given year.

The intent of Option 2 is to employ a general premise that all street connections have value instead of analyzing every potential street connection. This option only evaluates street connections when they are opposed. This analysis is intended to provide guidance about when to make exceptions to the street connectivity practice. The goal is to make fewer exceptions and to base the decision on objective measures that measure the impact of not making the connection on the transportation system.

Option 2, in comparison to Option 1, does not include the measures “bicycle and pedestrian safety” and “noise impacts and air pollution.” If it is decided that a street connection would be built, residents and stakeholders would be involved in addressing bicycle and pedestrian safety through street design. As part of the project mitigation process, environmental concerns such as air quality and noise impacts can be addressed.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Add a policy to require an analysis when a street connection is opposed.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. The proposal: Add a policy to evaluate all street connections.

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## 43. Transportation System Capacity

### Proposal

Add new goals and policies related to relieving traffic congestion and increasing capacity on major corridors by adding bicycle and pedestrian facilities and improving transit services, specifically,

- *Goal T9. In designated Strategy Corridors, when road widening is not an option, mobility and system capacity is increased through the addition of walking, biking and transit facilities, supportive land use, and elimination of system inefficiencies.*
- *Goal T10. System capacity improvements focus on moving people and goods more efficiently, minimizing congestion by replacing car trips with walking, biking and transit trips, and by increasing system operational efficiency and reliability.*

### Background

The concept of concurrency means that as our community grows, the level of service (lack of traffic congestion) that we consider appropriate for a specific street is attained. To achieve this requires that we add capacity to the street. Traditionally, the community has added capacity to the transportation system for moving cars, such as adding more lanes to a street. A broader understanding of capacity looks beyond just moving vehicles and instead looks at moving people and freight.

The street system can move more people when trips are made by walking, biking, or riding the bus. On streets that have unacceptable levels of service for motor vehicles, capacity can be gained by building facilities to support all modes of transportation.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt new goals and associated policies leading to revising concurrency programs and increasing street system capacity through bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and improving transit services.

Option 2. Adopt more succinct versions of proposed goals:

- Goal T9. In designated Strategy Corridors, when road widening is not an option, system capacity added through increasing walking, biking and transit trips.
- Goal T10. System capacity improvements move people, and congestion is minimized by replacing car trips with walking, biking and transit trips.

Option 3. Continue with a program that focuses on moving cars and requires street improvements for motor vehicle capacity.

### **Analysis**

Building capacity to support all modes of transportation is especially needed in the densest parts of our community where roads are expensive to widen. These streets are considered “Strategy Corridors.” This concept was introduced in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan as ‘high-density corridors,’ and is expanded in more detail in the proposed Plan update based on guidance of the *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*.

The ‘strategy corridor’ concept, introduced in the *Thurston Regional Transportation Plan*, identifies streets where land-use densification is envisioned, and a new approach to accommodating more trips on the street system is needed. On these streets, widening is not an option because the street is already at the planned maximum five-lane width, there are environmental constraints, or the adjacent land uses are fully built out.

Actions to reduce auto trips, such as adding bike lanes and sidewalks, and improving transit services would be used to relieve traffic congestion and increase capacity on all major streets, but especially on strategy corridors. The concurrency program would be revised to count person-trips rather than vehicle trips, and multimodal infrastructure will serve as concurrency mitigation for new development.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Adopt new goals and policies that relate to relieving traffic congestion and increasing capacity on major corridors by adding bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and improving transit services.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. More extensive version of Option 2.

## 44. Bus Corridors

### Proposal

Adopt new goals and policies describing Olympia’s vision for a system of bus corridors that correspond to intense land uses along major streets, specifically, Goal T16, “*Bus corridors have high-quality transit service allowing people to ride the bus spontaneously, and easily replace car trips with trips by bus.*” See proposed plan for corridors map and associated policies.

### Background

The bus corridors concept was recommended in the *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*, accepted by City Council in 2009, and supported by Intercity Transit. Building bus corridors is a major new commitment to direct more trips to transit. The City and Intercity Transit are to partner and invest in these corridors. Intercity Transit would provide fast, frequent and reliable bus service along these corridors. The City would provide operational improvements, such as longer green-time at traffic signals, so that buses are not stuck in traffic.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Develop a system of bus corridors along selected major streets with high-quality transit service and supportive land uses.

Option 2. No action: The City and Intercity Transit will not focus on bus corridor development. Rather than making bus corridors a priority, such corridors will be treated like any other part of the system.

Option 3. Alternative to the proposal: Spread investments in transit service evenly throughout the service area, including low-density areas not served today. Allow low land-use densities along urban corridors.

### Analysis

Land use and transit-system integration is emphasized in the *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*, and the *Thurston Regional Transportation Plan*, and is an important topic to the public for the Comprehensive Plan update. Over time, Olympia’s land use and transportation strategy is to create dense urban corridors that are served by high-quality transit service and are inviting places to walk and bike. In order for Olympia to remain economically competitive, we will need to reduce reliance on automobiles in dense areas, minimize long-term environmental impacts, and create more livable urban areas. Bus corridors allow people more spontaneous use of transit. Along these corridors, people need fewer vehicles per household. Businesses and public agencies can expect more employees and patrons to arrive by bus.

As dense, mixed land uses develop future transit service capacity and quality is an incentive to locating along these corridors for residents, businesses, and major employers. Transit services will be prepared to absorb these new trips and support mobility while minimizing growth in congestion. Bus corridor development works hand-in-hand with Olympia's strategy to encourage a mix of dense land uses along urban corridors. Attractive streetscapes would be built, along with pedestrian crossings and sidewalks to enhance people's access to transit.

Some bus corridors correspond with strategy corridors. The strategy corridor concept, introduced in the *Thurston Regional Transportation Plan*, identifies streets where land use densification is envisioned, and a new approach to accommodating more trips on the street system is needed. On strategy corridors, congestion is expected to increase and street widening may not be appropriate. Transit can efficiently provide mobility, allow development to continue to occur, and reduce the growth in congestion on strategy corridors. In addition to minimizing traffic congestion increases and supporting more intense development patterns, bus corridors would reduce pollutants associated with individual vehicle use.

Option 3 would probably result in greater traffic congestion increases along these corridors. While there would be complete transit system coverage in Olympia, transit system efficiency would not be achieved.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Develop bus corridors along selected major streets with high-quality transit service and supportive land uses.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 45. Alleys

Modify current policies regarding alleys to:

- *PT3.4 Require alleys and retain alleys as public right-of-way.*
- *PT3.5 Require alleys behind lots fronting on arterials and collectors, so that houses or businesses can face the street, sidewalks are continuous, and vehicles can access properties from behind.*

### Background

Current policy T3.22 encourages alleys and makes them options for new development. Alleys provide increased access to residential and commercial properties. They allow services such as recycling and waste collection to occur behind homes and businesses. Alleys can facilitate deliveries more easily. Alleys can provide more route options for bicyclists and pedestrians and to a lesser degree for drivers. Alleys are narrow and limit vehicle speeds, so they are not intended to be route options for drivers except to access individual properties.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Require alleys in new development.

- *PT3.4 Require alleys and retain alleys as public right-of-way.*
- *PT3.5 Require alleys behind lots fronting on arterials and collectors, so that houses or businesses can face the street, sidewalks are continuous, and vehicles can access properties from behind.*

Option 2. Adopt policy language that continues to allow alleys to be an option for new development:

- *PT3.4 Encourage alleys and retain alleys as public right-of-way.*
- *PT3.5 Encourage alleys behind lots fronting on arterials and collectors, so that houses or businesses can face the street, sidewalks are continuous, and vehicles can access properties from behind.*

### Analysis

Requiring alleys will result in more alleys as part of new development, which will increase mobility and improve access for services. However, more alleys will reduce flexibility in the design of the development of a property and more property must be dedicated to alleys. Because alleys are typically paved or compacted gravel, more alleys may result in more impervious surfaces. With more impervious surfaces there will be more rainwater runoff that must be treated and or conveyed offsite.

### Original Staff Proposal

Option 2. Allow alleys to be an option for new development. Encourage but do not require alleys.



## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. The proposal: Require alleys in new development.

## 46. Design Standards for Streets

### Proposal

Add or modify various policies related to the design standards for streets. See accompanying table for details.

### Background

Comprehensive Plan policies guide the contents of Olympia’s Engineering Design and Development Standards (EDDS). The EDDS are adopted by the City Council and define the standards for new public infrastructure.

A series of polices are proposed related to street design which differ from current practice and the requirements defined in the EDDS. The table below lists the policies, each of which should be treated as a separate proposal. An option can be selected for each policy.

### Options

Option 1. The proposals: Add or modify policies related to design standards for streets, as shown in Option 1 in the table below.

Option 2. Adopt policy language related to the design standards for streets, as shown in Option 2 of the table below.

Option 3. For each policy topic, language from Option 1 or 2 in the table below can be selected. Specify which option for each topic.

### Analysis

Street Design Policy Topic	Proposed Policies (Option 1)	Alternative (Option 2)	Analysis
Traffic Calming	PT2.6 Install or allow traffic-calming devices on local access, neighborhood collector, and some major collector streets, where speeds, volumes and other conditions indicate a need. Consider pedestrian, bicyclist and transit bus safety and access when installing traffic calming devices.	PT2.6 Allow traffic-calming devices on local access, neighborhood collector, and some major collector streets, where speeds, volumes and other conditions indicate a need. Consider pedestrian, bicyclist and transit bus safety and access when installing traffic calming devices.	Current policy allows installation of traffic calming devices as needed.  The word “install” may be interpreted as requiring the City or a private property developer to install these devices. This could be a significant increase in cost to the City or a developer.

Street Design Policy Topic	Proposed Policies (Option 1)	Alternative (Option 2)	Analysis
On-Street Parking	PT2.7 Allow on-street parking on local access and neighborhood collector streets to provide direct access to properties.	PT2.7 Add on-street parking to local access and neighborhood collector streets, to serve as a pedestrian buffer and to provide direct access to properties.	<p>Current policy requires on street parking on local access and neighborhood collector streets.</p> <p>On-street parking provides many benefits on local access and neighborhood collector streets. The term “add” conveys the importance of this feature. “Allow” suggests on-street parking would be optional.</p>
Commercial Driveways and Parking Lots	PT1.11 Require consolidation of driveways and parking lot connectivity for adjacent commercial areas to facilitate access from one site to another without having to access the roadway.	Do not adopt.	<p>Currently, driveways may be required to be consolidated for commercial properties.</p> <p>The proposed policy could result in a new requirement affecting the design of commercial parking lots. Parking lots designed to connect to existing neighboring parking lots, or to allow future connections to adjacent parking lots, could be inconsistent with private use of property.</p>
Block Sizes	PT4.1 Connect streets in a grid-like pattern of smaller blocks. Block sizes should range from 250 feet to 350 feet in residential areas and up to a maximum of 500 feet along arterials.	PT4.1 Connect streets in a grid-like pattern of smaller blocks. Ideal block sizes should range from 250 feet to a maximum of 550 feet.	Current Plan policies call for 300-foot commercial blocks and “small” residential blocks, with longer blocks along major streets. Option 2 would be less prescriptive than Option 1. Details of block sizes are and would continue to be specified in City standards.
5-lane maximum	PT7.5 No street will exceed the width of five general purpose auto lanes (two in each direction and a center turn lane) mid-block when adding capacity to the street system. Turn lanes may be	PT7.5 No street will exceed the width of five general purpose auto lanes (such as two lanes in each direction and a center turn lane) mid-block when adding capacity to the street system. Turn	<p>This policy reflects a regionally-adopted policy that is intended to support pedestrian-scale urban form.</p> <p>Many lane configurations</p>

Street Design Policy Topic	Proposed Policies (Option 1)	Alternative (Option 2)	Analysis
	added as appropriate, with careful consideration of pedestrian and bicyclist safety.	lanes may be added at intersections as appropriate, with careful consideration of pedestrian and bicyclist safety.	are possible within this 5-lane maximum concept. Option 1 has the potential of being too prescriptive and limiting. Use of “such as” in Option 2 could allow more configurations.
Size of Pedestrian Crossing Islands	PT24.5 Ensure that pedestrian crossing islands provide adequate refuge space for family cycling.	PT24.5 Where space allows, build pedestrian crossing islands with internal width to accommodate bikes with trailers.	The proposal could be interpreted to mean space within the island for bicycles with trailers for children. This would result in larger islands. Using only larger crossing islands limits the circumstances in which islands can be built.

In some cases, new or modified policies as proposed in Option 1 would probably result in changes to the City’s Engineering Design and Development Standards. The proposals in Option 2 are consistent with the City’s current Standards.

**Original Staff Proposal:**

Option 2. Adopt alternative policy language related to the design standards for streets.

**Planning Commission Recommendation:**

Option 1. The proposal: Add or modify policies related to design standards for streets, as shown in Option 1 in the table above.

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## 47. Park Drive

### Proposal

Add language to the Appendix of the Transportation Chapter to only allow a future connection of Park Drive for bicycle and pedestrian and emergency vehicle access. Specifically, Appendix A Text: *“If at some future time, Kaiser Road is extended to Black Lake Boulevard, extension of Park Drive to Kaiser Road may be considered in order to provide access for bicycles, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles.”*

### Background

Street connectivity is a major policy area of the Comprehensive Plan and the *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*. Street connectivity policies help to achieve safety and efficiency and increase mode choice in our transportation system. Street connections are important because they allow for short trips and direct route options for walking, biking and driving and to access transit. A connected street grid also provides better access for emergency and commercial vehicles.

Future street connections of arterials and major collectors are identified in the Comprehensive Plan’s Transportation Chapter project list. Future connections on arterials, major collectors and neighborhood collectors are shown on the Transportation Map. The context and unique needs related to some street connections are discussed in the text of the Comprehensive Plan.

Street connections are primarily built as a requirement of new development. Guidance about the location and size of new street connections is provided in the Comprehensive Plan and in the Engineering Design and Development Standards adopted by the City Council.

The current Comprehensive Plan Transportation Map 6.3 shows street connections of Park Drive to Kaiser Road, and Kaiser Road to Black Lake Boulevard. Park Drive is shown as a future neighborhood collector street and Kaiser Road is shown as a major collector street.

Concerns have been raised by residents in this area in response to new development proposals and the street connections that would be required. Specifically, there are objections by residents to making a street connection from Park Drive to Kaiser Road. So that regional higher volume traffic is not directed to Park Drive, the Comprehensive Plan update includes a proposal for the extension of Kaiser Road (the larger major collector street) to Black Lake Boulevard to be constructed before or concurrently with the Park Drive connection.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Describe the future connection of Park Drive as a bike, pedestrian and emergency access connection only.

Note that the proposal to limit the Park Drive connection to bike, pedestrian and emergency vehicle access is not reflected in the Plan’s project list nor the Transportation 2030–Westside map.

Option 2. Describe the future connection at Park Drive as a full street connection, which would include walking, biking, driving, and emergency vehicles. Add language to Appendix A:

*“A neighborhood collector street connection is also planned between Kaiser Road and Park Drive. Both connections add needed connectivity to the area, serving different functions in the street network. The neighborhood collector connection between Kaiser Road to Park Drive will not be a substitute for the major collector connection between Kaiser Road and Black Lake Boulevard. The Park Drive connection should not be built until the Kaiser Road connection is in place.”*

## **Analysis**

The elimination of Park Drive for motor vehicle access would be inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan policy to build a connected grid and inconsistent with design standards that seek to establish neighborhood collectors at an interval of every 1000 to 1500 feet.

Eliminating vehicle access at Park Drive will result in:

- More traffic on the Kaiser Road connection
- More vehicles using the adjacent intersections such as Kaiser Road and Black Lake Boulevard and Kaiser Road and Capital Mall Drive and potentially more delay at those intersections
- Fewer route options for drivers in the area when construction or emergencies occur
- Longer routes for motor vehicle drivers in the vicinity of Park Drive
- Fewer route options for public and commercial services
- More vehicle miles travelled in this subarea

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Describe the future connection at Park Drive as a full street connection providing access for walking, biking, and motor vehicles.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Describe the future connection of Park Drive as a bike, pedestrian and emergency access connection only.

## 48. Bus Corridor Parking

### Proposal

Add a policy to not require private parking on bus corridors, specifically:

- Policy T 16.7 Eliminate minimum parking requirements along bus corridors.

### Background

The Bus Corridor concept was introduced in the 2009 *Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy*, and is a new concept in the proposed update of the Comprehensive Plan. Bus Corridors are selected major streets with the most frequent bus service. Bus Corridors correspond with Strategy Corridors and Urban Corridors. Transit is expected to help improve mobility and capacity on Strategy Corridors, where widening for vehicle capacity is not an option. Along with street improvements to support transit, a mix of dense land uses so many people have access to transit for a wide range of trips is important to the success of Bus Corridors. Bus Corridors are consistent with but more expansive than the region's Urban Corridors.

Parking standards apply to all new development in Olympia. These standards define the number of parking stalls needed for different types of uses. Olympia's parking requirements establish a 'target' – a number from which the amount can be increased or decreased based on the unique circumstances of the site, or because measures are employed at the site to reduce auto trips. In the core of the downtown, land uses are built out with minimal room for additional parking, and people can more easily walk, bike or take the bus to these destinations, so there sometimes is no parking requirement.

The current Comprehensive Plan supports the notion of minimizing the parking built along these Urban Corridors:

*T1.12 In the downtown and along High-Density Corridors, manage parking to get the minimum needed to meet demand.*

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Eliminate minimum parking requirements along Bus Corridors.

Option 2. Alternative policy: Reduce minimum parking requirements along Bus Corridors.

Option 3. Retain current policy, above, of only reducing parking requirement downtown and along Urban Corridors.



## **Analysis**

Because of the anticipated dense, mixed land uses expected on Bus Corridors, it is reasonable to expect there will be a reduced parking demand at sites along these Corridors; people will use transit more than they will drive. However, this vision will be achieved incrementally over time. If the parking requirement is removed before the intensity of development occurs on these Bus Corridors, there could be parked cars “spilling over” to adjacent properties or into adjacent residential neighborhoods. If the parking requirement does not change along Bus Corridors, new development could be built with what becomes excessive parking in the future. As redevelopment occurs along these Corridors, incremental reductions to the parking requirements would minimize the impact of spillover parking while providing adequate parking to meet the changing demand.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Add a policy: Reduce minimum parking requirements along Bus Corridors.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Add a policy: Eliminate minimum parking requirements along Bus Corridors.

## 49. Sidewalk Construction

### Proposal

Add a policy specifying sidewalks must be provided to all transit stops.

*Policy T2.5 Provide transit stops and service accommodations based on Intercity Transit's criteria. Include sidewalk access to all designated stops and consider pedestrian crossing improvements to facilitate access, including mid-block crossing islands on high volume streets.*

### Background

Sidewalks are built by the City based on the criteria described in the *2003 Sidewalk Program*. In this program, access to transit stops is one of many criteria for prioritizing sidewalk construction. Sidewalks are also built as part of the frontage improvements associated with all new development – from subdivisions, to commercial buildings, to the frontage of a single house. Sidewalks are typically only required off-site (a place other than the property frontage) when required by the State's Safe Routes to School legislation or when increased traffic will result in an extraordinary pedestrian safety risk. In this case, a developer may have to build safer crossings, or sidewalks from the new housing to a nearby school or school bus stop, or both.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Add a policy that specifies sidewalks must be provided to all transit stops.

*PT2.5 Provide transit stops and service accommodations, based on Intercity Transit's criteria. Include sidewalk access to all designated stops and consider pedestrian crossing improvements to facilitate access, including mid-block crossing islands on high volume streets.*

Option 2. Add a policy that places high priority on sidewalk connections to transit stops.

*PT2.5 Provide transit stops and service accommodations, based on Intercity Transit's criteria.*

Option 3. Add to Option 2: *and add sidewalk access and pedestrian crossing improvements to transit stops on high volume streets.*

### Analysis

Currently developers are not required to construct sidewalks to transit stops that fall outside of the frontage of the property being developed, unless necessary to provide a safewalking route to a school bus stop. The language in Option 1 could be interpreted to mean the City or a developer of private property would be required to provide a sidewalk to nearby bus stops. This would be a change in the requirements for sidewalk construction.

The current priorities for City sidewalk construction are based on the size of the street, proximity to destinations such as schools, as well as proximity to transit. Thus transit is not the only or primary

criteria when gauging the relative need for a new sidewalk. Option 1 could be interpreted to mean transit is the primary criteria guiding City sidewalk construction. Option 2 provides more flexibility in determining the need to construct sidewalks to transit stops, relative to other needs.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Add a policy that places high priority on sidewalks connections to transit stops.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. The proposal: Add a policy that specifies sidewalks must be provided to all transit stops.

## 50. Speed Limits

### Proposal

Add a policy related to speed limits on local streets, specifically,

*Policy T1.3 Establish speed limits to create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining motor vehicle traffic flow. Speed limits shall not exceed 35 miles per hour (mph) on arterial and major collector streets, 25mph on neighborhood collectors, and 20 mph on local access streets, and in the City Center.*

### Background

Current Comprehensive Plan policy T5.12 states that speed limits on all streets within the City shall be 35 mph or less. State law allows cities to initially set a speed limit of 25 mph on city streets. The posting of higher or lower speed limits is allowed by law, and is determined through individual traffic investigations. Prevailing speeds studies, accident history, and roadway conditions are considered in the investigations. Olympia has established that speed limits on local access streets are 25 mph, and on certain streets in school zones and near playgrounds, 20 mph can be posted after a traffic investigation is done.

Washington State Legislation enacted in 2013 allows cities to post 20 mph on local access streets within a defined neighborhood or business district. The law says a city can change speed limits to 20 mph within a particular neighborhood or district if the city has developed procedures or criteria for supporting and guiding this reduction in speed limit.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Lower speed limits to 20 mph on local access streets.

Option 2. Continue with a 25 mph speed limit on local access streets and specify this in policy language:

*PT1.3 Establish speed limits to create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining motor vehicle traffic flow. Speed limits shall not exceed 35 mph on arterial and major collector streets, and 25 mph on neighborhood collectors and local access streets, and in the City Center.*

Option 3. Add to Option 2: *Establish lower speed limits for select conditions, such as near playgrounds, schools, or through the formation of districts where needed, as allowed by state law.*

### Analysis

Local access streets are the lowest classification of streets in the City's street system. Local access streets are typically small neighborhood streets, providing direct access to properties. These streets compose about half of the City's street system. Local access streets are two vehicle lanes wide, often

with parking, and typically have low vehicle volumes. Some local access streets have sidewalks. Local access streets do not have bike lanes. It is unusual for transit to operate on local access streets, but some transit routes may travel on local access streets for a short distance.

A reduced speed limit on local access streets may result in slower motor vehicles. Slower motor vehicle speeds on local access streets can make those streets more safe and inviting for walking and biking and has the potential to improve overall roadway safety. While a 20 mph speed limit may influence some people to drive slower, if dependent on enforcement, it is unrealistic that these speeds will be achieved. Street design and “friction,” influence speeds more than speed limits; the physical features along the sides of the street make slower speeds feel appropriate to drivers.

Currently, the speed limit of 20 mph is used for schools, playgrounds and other specific circumstances. A traffic investigation is done before a change is made. This lower speed limit is used in a limited fashion for unique conditions, and is intended to draw a driver’s attention to a special circumstance.

Lowering the speed limits on all local access streets as proposed to 20 mph would be done through individual traffic investigations on those streets. Or, as defined by the new legislation, the reduction to 20 mph could be done through establishing a district with guidelines and procedures for making the speed limit change.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Continue with a 25 mph speed limit on local access streets and clarify this in new policy language. Allow provisions to establish 20 mph speed limits for select conditions, such as near playgrounds, schools, or through the formation of districts where needed, as allowed by state law.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. The proposal: Lower speed limits to 20 mph on all local access streets. (To be consistent with state law, this reduction in speed limits could only be done by establishing a citywide district consistent with state law.)

## 51. Adopt Engineering Standards

### Proposal

Add a policy to guide the City's implementation of standards for the construction of public infrastructure, specifically,

- Policy U1.5 "Ensure that public utility and transportation-related facilities constructed in Olympia and its Growth Area meet appropriate standards for safety, constructability, durability and maintainability through Olympia's [Engineering Design and Development Standards](#) (EDDS) which are regularly updated."

### Background

Since soon after incorporation, the City has adopted various 'public works standards' establishing infrastructure standards. Since the 1980s, Olympia and Thurston County have agreed to employ similar standards for such infrastructure. However, the Comprehensive Plan does not specifically note these standards nor describe their purpose.

### Options

Option 1. Adopt a Comprehensive Plan policy to support and guide implementation of public works standards, specifically to be named the "Engineering Design and Development Standards."

Option 2. Do not include a policy with specific guidance regarding these Standards.

### Analysis

This proposed policy would identify the need to have a set of specific standards in place for the construction of public infrastructure, such as streets and utility lines, and provide broad guidance for regularly updating these standards. Comprehensive Plan policies should outline where guidance is needed on issues such as development and updating of the EDDS, so staff and community members see this as an important component of ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Growth Management Act. The policy identifies the EDDS as the primary tool for outlining these engineering requirements. This change would ensure internal consistency between the plan and key technical and engineering guidance documents like the EDDS. No significant environmental impacts are expected as a result of this policy change.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Include specific policy guidance related to the EDDS.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 52. Undergrounding of Utilities

### Proposal

Revise Utility Goal 16 and policies regarding undergrounding utilities to include aesthetics within the list of considerations, apply them to public as well as private providers, and require the City to develop management plans with all private utility providers. Specifically,

- *Goal U16. “Public and private utilities are located underground to protect public health, safety and welfare, create a more reliable utility system, and improve community aesthetics.”*
- *Policy U16.1: Place new public and private utility distribution lines underground wherever practicable. This should be based on sound engineering judgment, on consideration of health and safety, aesthetics, and in accordance with the regulations and tariffs of the Washington Utilities [Transportation](#) Commission and the City’s Engineering Development and Design Standards.*
- *Policy U16.2: Encourage placing existing public and private utility distribution lines underground, in accordance with the regulations and tariffs of the Washington Utilities [Transportation](#) Commission and the City’s Engineering Development and Design Standards.*
- *Policy U16.3: Coordinate the undergrounding of both new and existing public and private utility lines consistent with policies PU3.1 and PU3.2.*
- *Policy U16.4: Apply utility undergrounding requirements to all public and private development projects.*
- *Policy U16.5: Develop and maintain a management plan, consistent with the [Olympia Municipal Code](#) and the Engineering Development and Design Standards, for underground and overhead utilities as part of the City’s franchise agreements. The management plan will also address undergrounding of the City’s aerial facilities as well as other franchise utilities.*

### Background

City-owned public utilities in Olympia include drinking water, wastewater, storm and surface water, and waste resources (garbage, organics and recycling). Whenever it is practical to do so, public utility infrastructure is located underground. Concerns about overhead distribution lines are primarily focused on infrastructure associated with private utilities.

Privately-owned utilities in Olympia include: natural gas and electricity (Puget Sound Energy), cable services (Comcast), standard telephone service (Century Link) and telecommunication and cellular services (many providers). In addition to being regulated by local laws, franchise and other agreements, some private utilities are also regulated by federal or state law. In particular, the State of Washington



requires providers of electricity to provide service on demand; to fulfill this public service obligation, Puget Sound Energy maintains a special management plan with the City of Olympia to ensure they can extend or add to facilities when needed.

In the past, communication and power lines were located above ground, but now the City requires all new private utility distribution lines be placed underground whenever practical. Accordingly, the City's Municipal Code and Engineering Design and Development Standards (EDDS) include undergrounding requirements for new and existing overhead utilities.

In the current Plan, Goal U3 and Policy U3.1 state the City should *promote* undergrounding of new lines "in order to minimize visual clutter and the obstruction of views ... based on sound engineering judgment, consideration of health and safety, and in accordance with the regulations and tariffs of the [State]." In current practice, the City *requires* undergrounding of new private utility lines whenever practical and based on the same criteria. The primary purpose of *requiring* undergrounding is to protect public health and safety, not aesthetics.

In the proposal, Policy PU16.4 states private and public *projects* are required to comply with undergrounding requirements. This is consistent with current practice.

## Options

Option 1. The proposal above.

Option 2. Adopt a goal and policies regarding undergrounding of utilities to reflect the primary purpose: to protect public health and safety, not aesthetics. Remove the term "public" from the goal and policies, with the exception of Policy 16.4 where the term "public" would be retained. Add language to clarify that PU16.5 refers specifically to the City's franchise agreement with Puget Sound Energy.

Option 3. Retain current policies regarding the undergrounding of utilities, which identify aesthetics as a key reason for undergrounding.

## Analysis

While the options are very similar, there are distinct implications which should be considered.

**Aesthetics:** It is important to underground utilities to reduce risk of human injury; for example, overhead lines can be very dangerous when weather or other incidents result in dislocation or damage. The courts have traditionally viewed risk to human health and safety as a legitimate reason to require underground infrastructure, which can be more expensive than overhead. Option 1 implies that aesthetics can be a primary basis for undergrounding. While aesthetic benefits may be realized as a result of undergrounding, aesthetics alone may not be a compelling reason to require it.

**Public and Private:** Option 1 includes public utilities in addition to private utilities. However, this set of goal and policies are contained within a section of the Utility chapter regarding privately-owned utilities; therefore, it may be out of place to address all utility requirements here. Secondly, there are currently no public utilities that present a problem in regard to overhead distribution lines; therefore, the concept of requiring undergrounding of City utilities has no real application at this time. (Note the distinction in PU16.4, which addresses *projects* rather than utility ownership; both public and private projects are subject to applicable undergrounding requirements in both options.)

**Management Plans:** Lastly, the City's franchise agreement with Puget Sound Energy requires a management plan. The overall purpose of the management plan is for the energy company to coordinate with the City in regards to population growth to ensure it can meet its mandate to provide energy on demand. While other private utilities may have franchise or other agreements with the City, staff does not anticipate the need to enter into additional management plans with these. Therefore, Option 2 may be a more practical policy.

Since undergrounding usually occurs in conjunction with street improvements, when the land surface is already disrupted, no new adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from these goal and policies. More detailed environmental review could be conducted at a project design stage.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

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## 53. Art Space

### Proposal

Add new policy, PR8.2 to the Public Health, Parks, Arts & Recreation Chapter, specifically:

*“Pursue affordable housing and studio/rehearsal space for artists, including support for, or participation in, establishing or constructing buildings or sections of buildings that provide living, work and gallery space exclusively for artists.”*

### Background

In 2009 Artspace Projects, Inc., was invited by the City of Olympia to develop a pre-feasibility report for Olympia regarding development of live/work housing for artists. That visit, and subsequent report, was step number 1 in the path of an Artspace Project:

**Step 1 - A Preliminary Feasibility Study** was completed at a cost of \$12,500 and accepted by the City Council in November 2009. Artspace estimates that the remaining 5 Steps in the path of an Artspace Project could take 3 – 5 years and include:

- This step was funded by City of Olympia

**Step 2 - Conduct a formal Artist Market Survey** of artists, arts organizations and creative businesses in Olympia, Washington, and within a 50-mile radius; takes approximately 4-6 months at a cost of \$42,500. The survey will assess specific market demand for space for artists live/work and Art Center space for artists, nonprofit and for-profit, arts/creative organizations doing business in the region. The final report provides statistically reliable information on individual artists interested in relocating to the proposed project.

- This step is being undertaken by the Olympia Artspace Alliance, [www.olympiaartspace.org](http://www.olympiaartspace.org) \$35,000 was raised by the organization – another \$10,000 was provided in match by City of Olympia. The report is expected at the end of 2013.

(The following steps have not been acted on, and there is no identified funding source).

**Step 3 - “Predevelopment 1”** determines project location and size; taking approximately 3-6 months at a cost of \$150,000.

**Step 4 - “Predevelopment 2”** includes project architectural design, cost estimating and financial modeling; taking approximately 10-13 months at a cost of \$350,000.

**Step 5 - “Predevelopment 3”** negotiates and secures all construction and permanent loan financing commitments; taking approximately 4-6 months at a cost of \$200,000.

**Step 6 - “Construction”** includes lease-up resulting in a completed project; taking approximately 6-10 months at a cost to be determined above.

## **Options**

Option 1. See above.

Option 2. Pursue affordable housing and studio/rehearsal space for artists.

Option 3. Do not adopt proposed policy.

## **Analysis**

Artist live/work projects have been used in other communities to decrease blight, diversify low income housing stock, catalyze revitalization and increase creative vitality.

([http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/1001176\\_asd\\_case.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/1001176_asd_case.pdf)) Artist live/work developments also help artists to stay in the very areas they help make desirable, even if the property value rises beyond their reach.

Securing an Artspace project is not the only way to achieve the policy outlined in PR8.2. It could be a project for a private developer or a project managed by the City. The benefits to working with Artspace include their track record for producing a solid product that meets the specific needs of artists, running a network of 33 affordable arts facilities in 13 states. Most of their projects are affordable housing with mixed use ground floor retail and office space, but some projects include market-rate unit and/or studios without living space. One project in Everett involved a partnership with a non-profit arts organization to make a community arts center on the first two floors. Their experienced use of low income housing tax credits and other programs for development also help to ensure that access to units remains affordable.

A typical Artspace mixed use project with 30-40 live/work units costs between \$12 and \$15 million. The pre-development expenses, “soft costs” seldom less than \$700,000 (in 2009) need to be met by the community (can be a combination of CDBG and HOME funds, or the equivalent, sometimes from philanthropic sources). In addition Artspace typically receives the property as part of the City’s contribution to the project. For the remainder of the costs,

Artspace looks to a variety of federal programs, such as low-income housing tax credits, to generate revenue for construction.

**Original Staff Proposal**

Option 2. Pursue affordable space for artists.

**Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Specify details of pursuit of artist space.

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## 54. Contaminated Land

### Proposal

Add a new policy regarding contaminated lots in downtown Olympia; specifically,

*Policy E4.6. "Acknowledge that uncertainty associated with contamination can be a barrier to development in downtown; identify potential tools, partnerships and resources that can be used to create more certainty for developments in the downtown that fulfill public purposes."*

### Background

Legacy land uses in downtown Olympia, including major manufacturing, petroleum storage, auto repair and dry cleaning, have caused soil and groundwater contamination. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) currently lists about 40 sites in downtown that are known or suspected to be contaminated<sup>2</sup>. Due to uncertain costs and liability associated with contamination, these properties are often difficult to redevelop.

At the 2010 Downtown Focus meetings<sup>3</sup> and August 2011 Urban Corridors Task Force panel<sup>4</sup>, staff and the Planning Commission heard the public and developers suggest the City should continue, perhaps enhance, its role in spurring development. Ideas included sharing risk with developers, cleaning contaminated land and marketing it, and providing more information about contamination.

Complex federal and state laws govern environmental remediation. ('Remediation' refers to the approved remedy for the contamination; this could include excavating and cleaning soil, capping the site, or other approved methods.) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) manages and funds remediation of federally listed "Superfund" sites, of which Olympia has none. Ecology regulates remediation under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). In general, contaminated sites are reported, listed and prioritized by Ecology for remediation; contamination associated with a site must be

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<sup>2</sup> This information generated from Department of Ecology's Integrated Site Information System: Washington Department of Ecology, "ISIS Web Reporting," <http://www.fortress.wa.gov/ecy/tcpwebreporting>, accessed on November 1, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> This information is available online at [www.imagineolympia.com](http://www.imagineolympia.com), Focus Meetings page: City of Olympia, "Focus Meeting Data & Methods Report," <http://olympiawa.gov/documents/IO%20Focus%20Mtg%20Final%20Data%20Methods%20Report%20Oct2010-Mar2011/Focus.mtgs.FINAL.DATA.METHODS.Report.Oct2010-Mar2011.pdf>, accessed November 1, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> This information is available online at [www.trpc.org](http://www.trpc.org), UTCF page: Thurston Regional Planning, "Urban Corridors Task Force, August 30, 2011 Work Session Record," <http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/landuse/Pages/UCTF-Aug30,2011PresentationMaterials.aspx>, accessed on November 1, 2011.



addressed, even if the contamination crosses property lines. Thurston County Public Health and Social Services provides some hazard assessment and enforcement services.

The City has cleaned numerous contaminated sites in association with public developments. Some recent examples include: \$7.5 million to remediate contamination on the site of new City Hall; \$750,000 to remediate contamination on the site of new Hands on Children's Museum, and \$1.4 million to remediate contamination on the site of West Bay Park. Comprehensive Plan goals related to parks, economic development and downtown revitalization supported the City in remediating the contamination at these sites. In some cases, Ecology provided grant funds.

There is a growing array of State grants and tools available to help local governments spur economic development through site remediation. For example, the City is exploring feasibility of creating a Community Renewal Area (CRA), which can be used for land assembly and revitalization in areas influenced by blight. Guided by a Community Renewal Plan, cities may purchase, assemble, remediate, and sell land to private developers. The City is researching whether there are areas in downtown that may benefit from a CRA (more information is available online, see endnote.)<sup>5</sup>

Another example is the Integrated Planning Grant (IPG), a pilot program of Ecology. Cities can receive IPGs for up to \$200,000. It is not a matching grant, and the City does not have to own the property. Potentially, a city could use the IPG to assess a site that has been identified by the public for redevelopment, and share the information with developers. Eligible activities include: redevelopment planning, environmental site characterization, land use and regulatory analysis, and economic and fiscal analysis.

At this time, the City has no explicit policy to encourage development downtown by reducing uncertainty or costs associated with contamination. However, in 2007 the City did attempt to mitigate contamination costs for a downtown housing project. The City selected Colpitts Development Company to redevelop a City-owned parking lot into a 7-story retail/housing development with structured parking. The City sold the land to Colpitts and provided approximately \$270,000 to be used for site remediation. The project is on hold due to the economic recession.

Traditionally, the City has played a proactive role in revitalizing downtown and in protecting the environment. The City does not typically remediate sites *solely* for environmental or public health purposes. The City does, however, take a proactive role in protecting the environment from new sources of contamination through other policies, programs and regulations.

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<sup>5</sup> More information is available online at [www.olympiawa.gov](http://www.olympiawa.gov), City Council Agendas page: City of Olympia, "Request for Qualification Process to Establish a Community Renewal Area (CRA) in Downtown Olympia," staff report to City Council on August 2, 2011, [http://olympiawa.gov/documents/CouncilPackets/20110801/OB\\_CommRenewalSTF.pdf](http://olympiawa.gov/documents/CouncilPackets/20110801/OB_CommRenewalSTF.pdf), accessed on November 2, 2011.

## Options

Option 1. The proposal: Add a new policy that guides the City to identify potential tools, partnerships and resources to help reduce the uncertainty of risk associated with contaminated lots in downtown.

Option 2. No action: Continue to clean-up sites associated with public developments when possible, but do not expressly address the topic of contamination in the Comprehensive Plan.

## Analysis

Real or perceived contamination can hinder revitalization and environmental goals. Depending on the type and extent of contamination, there may be a risk to human health and the environment, including the Puget Sound ecosystem.

Liability for remediation is complicated. In general, responsible parties, including property owners, must participate. Remediation costs vary according to the type and extent of contamination and intended new use. In addition, obtaining financing to redevelop contaminated sites can be a challenge. To avoid becoming a potentially liable party, banks often will not finance a project until the site is remediated. Property owners may find it more advantageous to leave the property undeveloped since development or sale may be difficult or expensive. Uncertain liability and cost contribute to the 'barrier to development' issue.

The City's ability to remediate and market land is limited by Washington State Constitution restrictions on gifts of public funds and lending of state credit limit. Thus, the City cannot simply clean contaminated lots for private interest. However, the City can help to remediate contamination if there is a clear public purpose. It is often easier for local governments than private interests to obtain grants and loans to redevelop contaminated properties.

The State, local agencies and experienced cities provide information to local governments about best practices for revitalizing contaminated areas. Having a vision and plan for redevelopment that is supported by the community, partners, and strong coordination with other government agencies are all keys to success. In many cases, the local government must acquire the property in order to take advantage of grants and other tools. The level of risk is site-specific, so local governments need flexibility to perform careful risk assessment before purchasing and assuming responsibility for remediation.

In the past, Olympia has remediated contamination associated with public developments and will likely continue this practice. The City is unlikely to have future funds to pursue remediation *solely* for environmental or public health purposes; however, the City can encourage Ecology and Thurston County Public Health in their efforts to enforce remediation under the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The City can also continue a proactive role in protecting the environment from new sources of contamination.

If the City is to encourage continued revitalization of downtown, it may need to create specific opportunities to attract private investment. The City may want to consider ways to help reduce uncertainty associated with contaminated sites. In doing so, the City must be careful to act within complex remediation laws, and mindful of its limited influence upon the market. Since the City cannot use public money to fund private interests, such action would only be justified if the development would fulfill a clear public purpose.

### **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1. Add a new policy that guides the City to identify potential tools, partnerships and resources to help reduce the uncertainty of risk associated with contaminated lots in downtown. This would enable the City to take more advantage of state grants and tools that enable local governments to spur economic development through site remediation.

### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 55. Home-Based Businesses

### Proposal

Revise policy to allow for 'more home-based businesses,' specifically:

*Economy policy E11.2, "Provide support for start-up businesses. Develop local awareness of the need for business incubator facilities, and allow for more home-based businesses."*

### Background

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of small and new businesses and a core piece of the local economy. The current Plan states that "... most new jobs in the private sector come from new, small businesses." The Land Use chapter of the Plan states, in part, that the City will, "Allow home occupations which would not create parking problems, degrade the livability or appearance of the neighborhood, or pose significant environmental hazards." (Land Use Policy 8.11) In the proposed Plan update, this policy is rephrased as, "... allow home occupations (except convalescent care) that do not degrade neighborhood appearance or livability, create traffic, noise or pollution problems." (Proposed Land Use and Urban Design Policy 20.2.) Although addressed in the Land Use chapter, the current Economy chapter of the Plan is silent as to the role of such home-based business, also known as home occupations, in the local economy. The proposed new policy would address this issue by establishing a policy of allowing more home-based businesses, particularly as a form of small or incubator business.

For many years Olympia has allowed small businesses at home sites. The City's home business limitations, such as residential character, 500 square foot maximum, non-family employee and retailing prohibitions, sign and parking limits, etc., result in these being small businesses. Staff's contact with prospective operators suggests that many are also new businesses. Permit and business license activity suggests that depending on economic conditions from 50 to 200 or more new such businesses are established each year. Business license records indicate that, at the moment, there are nearly 700 such businesses active in Olympia.

### Options

Option 1. See above.

Option 2. Adopt proposed policy without "more," i.e., "... allow home based businesses."

Option 3. No action: Adopt policy without last clause, "Provide support for start-up businesses. Develop local awareness of the need for business incubator facilities."

## **Analysis**

Although occasional land use conflicts do arise, some of which lead to code enforcement actions, generally Olympia's in-home businesses operate without posing any significant problems. In many cases neighbors are not even aware that a business is being operated from a residence. The proposed policy of allowing more such businesses would suggest that the City should not only continue to allow home occupations, but should pursue relaxing the current regulations. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the rule change that would be most likely enable substantially more such businesses would be removing the ban on non-household employees, a limitation that was adopted in 1999 (and which isn't applicable along West Bay Drive).

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 1.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1.

## 56. Code Enforcement

### Proposal

Add Plan section related to Code Enforcement as set forth in the Public Services chapter in association with Goals PS10 through PS12:

*GPS10. Compliance is reached with rare recourse to citations or appeals.*

*GPS11. Neighborhoods are involved in effective and efficient Code Enforcement.*

*GPS12. Tracking and reporting is consistent.*

### Background

The City has maintained a Code Enforcement program for many years however it has not been a component of the Comprehensive Plan. Code Enforcement staff are responsible for enforcing various sections of the City's Municipal Code that address public health, safety and welfare as it relates to use of private property in the City.

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Include section in the updated Comprehensive Plan specific to Code Enforcement.

Option 2. No action: If Code Enforcement is not referenced in the Plan, Code Enforcement programs will be determined on an annual basis as part of staff work programs.

### Analysis

Code Enforcement becomes ever more important to maintaining a community's high quality of life particularly as a community grows, densities increase, neighborhoods age and transitions occur. The City staff have worked extensively with neighborhood association representatives to craft an enforcement program that best meets resident's needs. The goals and policies proposed in the Plan reflect this collaboration.

### Original Staff Proposal

Option 1. Approve inclusion of Code Enforcement as proposed.

## Planning Commission Recommendation

Option 1.

## 57. Earthquake Preparation

### Proposal

Adopt a new set of policies addressing the risk of a ‘Cascadia subduction zone earthquake,’ specifically,

*Public Service Policy S13.9: Educate citizens about the possibility, and potential impacts, of a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and actions they can take to prepare for such an event.*

*Policy S13.10: Address the severe and extended impacts of a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake in the City’s emergency response plans and preparations.*

*Policy S13.11: Continue to gather best available information on the impacts of a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake, including the potential magnitude and impacts of vertical movements and tsunamis.*

### Background

The City of Olympia coordinates with neighboring jurisdictions in preparing and updating ‘a ‘Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region’ and the City’s own ‘Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.’ These two plans address all manner of hazards, such as fires, floods and earthquakes, and form the foundation for the City’s efforts to minimize and respond to damage resulting from such events. The State of Washington provides direction to all local jurisdictions regarding certain development standards, such as seismic-related elements of the building code. The State has directed that each city is to plan in an all-hazards format consistent with standard practice. (See also, ‘Resilient Washington State – A Framework for Minimizing Loss and Improving Statewide Recovery after an Earthquake,’ a November, 2012, report from the Washington State Emergency Management Council’s Seismic Safety Committee.)

### Options

Option 1. The proposal: Adopt specific policies related to risks associated with a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake.

Option 2. Adopt alternative new policy, “*Continue to gather best available information on the impacts of earthquakes, including the potential magnitude and impacts of vertical movements.*”

Option 2. No action: Do not adopt these policies; instead continue policy of coordinating City’s efforts consistent with standard all-hazards practice in cooperation with the region’s other Emergency Management programs.



## **Analysis**

The nature of a subduction zone earthquake including the potential to generate a tsunami (tidal wave), if occurring in the vicinity of Olympia, leads some to a conclusion that it would result in catastrophic damage both in Olympia and a much wider region. Projected effects on Olympia differ depending on models used and the inclusion of tsunami damage is highly speculative. A subduction zone earthquake by definition would have to occur along the subduction zone that is off the Washington Coast. Although such an earthquake may cause a tsunami, such a wave would be in the Pacific Ocean and have to travel around the northwest corner of the state and down the Puget Sound before reaching Olympia. This travel around significant landforms would significantly dissipate the destructive energy of a wave. Like all earthquakes, the timing and scale of such an earthquake is unpredictable. However, research indicates that there is about a .2% (one in five hundred) chance of such an earthquake in the western Washington area in any given year.

The possibility of a subduction zone earthquake is just one of the many types of natural hazards addressed by federal, state, and local emergency and disaster planning. While additional focus on this specific risk could lead to reduction in damage and better response were such an event to occur, it could also result in diverting attention and resources away from preparation for other more likely hazards. Further, given the scale of this particular type of disaster it is unlikely that the City of Olympia working alone could make a significant difference. Instead, Olympia's experience has demonstrated that multi-jurisdictional coordinated all-hazard emergency management, including education and preparation for all types of hazards, is more effective than localized focus on a single risk.

## **Original Staff Proposal**

Option 3. No specific policies regarding Cascadia subduction zone earthquake risk.

## **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Option 1. Policies above.

**From:** [JacobsOly@aol.com](mailto:JacobsOly@aol.com)  
**To:** [ImagineOlympia](#)  
**Subject:** SEIS Comment  
**Date:** Sunday, July 22, 2012 10:42:49 AM

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Olympia SEPA Official:

I have reviewed the Comp Plan SEIS and wish to make a formal comment.

I noted that two types of natural threats are listed -- flooding and sea level rise.

Please add a third -- Earthquakes and resulting soil liquefaction. As everyone who reads the news knows, our area experiences very large subduction zone earthquakes from time to time. The exact timing of the next one is not known, but it will occur.

Responsible planning must deal forthrightly with all potential threats. The potential damage from a subduction zone earthquake far exceeds that from both flooding and sea level rise, so its inclusion seems appropriate.

Olympia has special problems in this regard because much of the downtown area is loose fill that is especially susceptible to liquefaction during these events.

Please contact me if this suggestion is unclear in any way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Jacobs

352-1346

720 Governor Stevens Ave. SE  
Olympia 98501

[jacobsoly@aol.com](mailto:jacobsoly@aol.com)

**From:** [Larry Leveen](#)  
**To:** [ImagineOlympia](#)  
**Subject:** Attn: SEPA Official -- comments on Comprehensive Plan Draft SEIS  
**Date:** Sunday, August 19, 2012 7:46:47 PM

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My questions and comments are as follows. Thank you for your attention:

SEIS 38 What/where is Policy GE4?

The following goal was not included in the SEIS following a title that included it. It was unclear whether this was an existing or new policy. If existing, why was it included in the title on that page of the SEIS? If new, why wasn't it included in the discussion?

GE4 The City achieves maximum economic, environmental and social benefit from public infrastructure.

PO1.1: Editing suggestion: do we "compare and *prioritize*" relative costs and benefits? Or do we prioritize by comparing costs and benefits? Also, how is the Sustainable Action Map *actually used* by the City?

SEIS 40 Implies porous sidewalk increases greenhouse gases. Explain.

SEIS 41 Should we have a policy that calls for accountability for staff in implementing the Comp Plan and Design Regulations? PP3.1 & 3.3 seem laudable but fluffy. How with they actually help participation and implementation?

SEIS 44-45 If subarea plans *are* used, will Neighborhood Associations still be utilized? The SEIS didn't specify. The analysis was pretty short on specificity of process for the subarea plans. Would one-half staff position be sufficient for an initial flood of requests for subarea planning?

SEIS 48 What would be the result of coordination of ordinances and requirements regionally? Could Olympia's standards be weakened to bring them into alignment with neighboring jurisdictions? Is this mostly a policy proposal for drinking water and stormwater? Is the coordination needed mostly between Olympia and the County?

SEIS 50 Analysis of Option 2 is over simplistic. It should include mention of externalized costs caused by maximizing density by having no/low grading requirements. The staff recommendation of Option 1 doesn't recognize that Option 3 also allows grading (for the building, streets and sidewalks). The main difference seems to be that Option 3 "really means it" when it comes to preserving topography.

SEIS 53 This seems to imply that we know that we should *require* low-impact development, but are timidly "supporting future progress toward sustainable building practices becoming the 'norm' in Olympia." Why wait for some future date to do what we know is right? How can we strengthen the proposed language in P1.8, 1.9 & 1.11?

SEIS 55 What is meant in PN2.1 by "a shared set of priorities"? This seems vague. Is the intent to make acquisition and preservation actually follow the Comp Plan instead of political winds or the latest project promoted by a group of citizens? That seems sound.

SEIS 57 How will PN2.3 actually improve upon the "piecemeal approach" being used today?

SEIS 61 Is there anything lacking in the Comp Plan that prevents or discourages rooftop greenery/forestry? PN 3.2 should include periodic review of tree retention and landscaping codes. Language in PN 3.4 seems like useless fluff language – evaluating something we all know is a benefit. PN 3.5 should require use of native tree species whenever possible. The SEIS mentions the American Elm, which isn't a native species from what I can tell. This seems inappropriate, even as an example.

SEIS 65 The SEIS should have citations/links to the recommendations and management considerations mentioned in the analysis. The Comp Plan should have at least the City's recommendations.

SEIS 66 Why were most of the new Sea Level Rise policies not listed in the SEIS? Seems pretty relevant to include them all.

SEIS 71 What is the problem with making building in a known flood area prohibited and the existing buildings non-conforming? Isn't there a variance process by which a non-conforming structure may be altered/remodeled, while doing what we know is truly correct – preventing future construction in flood-prone areas?

SEIS 72 The general direction of Option 1 is good, however, the proposed goal/policy language is insufficient. A proper response to global warming necessitates that individuals generate less carbon in their daily activities. This is significantly the domain of land-use/transportation and home/business energy use (lighting, heating, cooling) — something the City has great influence upon. Therefore proposed language should (more clearly) recognize that changes to align land use/transportation planning as well as development/building codes are needed. Policy PN 8.3 might have been trying to get at this, but it was not sufficiently clear. Additionally, that policy's reference to renewable sources of energy should be moved to an entirely different policy — I.e. separation of (carbon-generating) “supply and demand” would improve overall readability.

SEIS 78 While bringing the Comp Plan in line with a specific Council resolution is appropriate, it is questionable whether the Comp Plan should only “be led around” by resolutions. That is, this might not be a comprehensive enough treatment of the issue in the Plan update. The Plan is the proper place for a vision of “where we want to go” and not only a reflection of where we are at. Option 3 could be more appropriate except that there is no detail in the SEIS by which to assess it.

SEIS 80 By moving the oversight of a rezone away from the Planning Commission, I am concerned that the public will have less access to express their views about specific proposals. This may be due to unfamiliarity what the process would be at the Hearings Examiner. Also, it is not clear what if any role the City Council would have in a non-mirrored process.

If the rezone process is more streamlined, the concern is that developers will use it to achieve lowest-cost development opportunities without adequate linkage to the City goals and policies. More specificity is needed.

SEIS 85 The general direction of Option 1 is good, but does not go far enough. An additional policy is warranted that speaks to auditing *how well* code is being applied/regulated, as well as accountability and other corrective action when there are shortfalls. For example, several years ago, planning staff were made aware of a near-zero compliance with bicycle parking code for new construction and significant redevelopment. It would be reasonable to expect that corrective action would have taken place in The Department. A more recent check of the development that has occurred since revealed a situation that is almost as dismal. Without adequate commitment to enforcement, the Code and the Comp Plan as a whole are diminished in their importance and effectiveness, which does not support the underlying idea of the GMA. Updates without assurance are merely wastes of time and energy. It seems entirely appropriate that the Comp Plan itself would include language to guide implementation, and not just be a repository of good intentions.

SEIS 87 The policy should include multi-family housing as well – the Code does.

Furthermore, it should be specific in requiring *both* short-term parking for visitors *and* long-term parking for employees/residents.

SEIS 91 This was perhaps the most difficult proposed change in the entire document due to lack of visualization tools. The public cannot know the effect of the proposal just from the text provided, even though the proposal might be sound. Option 3 references a table that was not provided in the document.

SEIS 92 Option 3 is the best course to pursue, especially in light of the consideration "L7. Light Industry in Commercial Areas" (SEIS p. 94). Our community deserves to have attractive development of all types along public streets. Additionally, the text could be simplified to say:

**~~"PL6.1 Require highly visible development – such as commercial development adjacent to freeways and public streets, in urban corridors, downtown, and at the Port, and all housing except detached homes on conventionally sized lots (5,000 square feet or larger) outside areas developed before WWII – to be designed to maintain or improve the character and livability of each area or neighborhood."~~**

SEIS 106 It isn't clear what was meant by "Note: the resulting policy includes two topics — the Commission may recommend division of the proposed policy." What are the two topics?

SEIS 107 The proposed language is weak — little is likely to result from it. The first part seems more like goal-language (that requires several underlying policies in order to be effective). Additionally, the latter part of the policy, which speaks to public access to food stores should be it's own policy. It was disappointing that there was no discussion or acknowledgement of the change from a one-quarter mile distance to one-half mile, which suggests that we are accepting a lower "level of service". Given that, significant support for urban agriculture is all the more important to help ensure citizens have access to healthy food through a variety means. Additionally, it isn't entirely clear if the proposed text means "provide (the zoning) for a food store with transit stop near where people live" or "make sure there is transit service within one-half mile of residents that also serves a food store". Please clarify.

SEIS 115 This is perhaps the most progressive change proposed in the Comp Plan update. A broader definition of capacity is definitely needed. There is a social justice aspect to this as well, not just in providing *for* non-motorized modes, but in potentially influencing spending on projects that benefit *all levels* of economic

standing.

SEIS 117 It is isn't clear what the *actual benefit* of the proposal is, though it seems consistent with the direction of the Transportation Mobility Strategy. Intercity Transit does a good job of assessing route needs and service, so how will this change help either them or Olympia? Also, although we are far from investment in other-than-bus service, might it be wise to use the term "Transit Corridors" instead of "Bus Corridors"? It could result in preventing a future amendment to change a perhaps overly-restrictive term.

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Larry Leveen

OlyBikes  
124 State Avenue NE  
Olympia, WA 98502  
360-753-7525  
[www.olybikes.com](http://www.olybikes.com)

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO DRAFT SEIS COMMENTS

Comment	Subject or Topic	Summary response
Jacobs	Earthquakes and liquefaction	A substantive change in the Plan is not proposed regarding this topic, so the requested analysis has not been added to the SEIS. The comment has been forwarded to the Planning Commission for consideration. Should decision-makers propose an action on this topic the resulting analysis of this issue may be added as an addendum to the SEIS.
Leveen Draft SEIS (dSEIS ) p.38	Sustainability: Environmental Goal 4 not addressed in text	The text included only proposed new goals and policies. Analysis has been expanded and reorganized for clarity; and Environmental Goal 4 has been added to the SEIS with indication it is a proposed revision to an existing goal to be consistent with new policies.
Leveen dSEIS p.40	Porous sidewalks and 'greenhouse gases'	The SEIS has been edited to clarify the intent of this example of an action with a potential for short-term adverse environmental impact and long-term benefits.
Leveen dSEIS p.41	Staff role in implementation	Comment is regarding merits of proposal and suggests a policy not included in the proposal and thus not analyzed in the SEIS. The comment will be forwarded to decision-makers for consideration.
Leveen dSEIS p.44	Relationship of subarea planning to neighborhood associations	Neighborhood associations are self-defining organizations recognized by the City for purposes of receiving public notices and other information, and being eligible for certain financial grants. As such they are independent of but may participate in subarea planning processes. Although the staff anticipates focusing on one or two subareas each year, specific subarea planning activities will depend upon annual budgets approved by the City Council.
Leveen dSEIS p.48	Regional environmental standards	Intent is to clarify that coordination would occur between Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and Thurston County, and that consistency would include "level of protection." The focus of this policy is on critical area and stormwater drainage manual regulations. It is possible that based on best available science Olympia's standards could change to bring them into alignment with other jurisdictions.
Leveen dSEIS p.50	Topography preservation	Additional content was added to the analysis of Option 2 in the SEIS to note potential impacts of increased density on adjacent property owners. Analysis of Option 3 was modified to clarify that grading would still be necessary for certain site improvements.
Leveen dSEIS p.53	Low impact development	Comment is regarding the merits of the proposed policies and will be forwarded to decision-makers.



<b>Leveen dSEIS p.55</b>	Land conservation priority	Proposed policy PN2.1 is intended to clarify that a set of common priorities for land acquisition would guide City land-acquisition decisions.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.57</b>	Invasive plants and wildlife	Additional analysis has been added to the SEIS to address implications of proposed policy PN2.3; including how pursuing Option 1 may affect the existing 'piece-meal' approach to the identification, removal, and prevention of invasive species.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.61</b>	Forestry policies	Rooftop gardens would be a form of implementation of low impact or green building practices. See policies PN1.10 and PN1.11. Development regulations would be reviewed for consistency with the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. PN3.4 is also related to implementation; it gives direction to evaluate and understand the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the urban forest. Tree species native to Olympia are rarely appropriate for long-term establishment in urban conditions; tree selection would be addressed through implementation of PN3.5. The American elm is provided as an example for the amount of healthy soil needed to support a mature tree in an urban area. See PN2.4, PN6.1, and PN11.5 for additional policies regarding native species. Note, SEIS not revised.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.65</b>	Capitol Lake	The documents mentioned in the SEIS analysis are cited on pages 35-37 of the SEIS. Copies of these documents can be provided on request.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.66</b>	Sea-level rise	The SEIS includes only the new and substantially revised text of the Plan directly related to substantive amendments. Almost all of the content in the proposed Plan is related to one or more of these substantive changes, thus the two documents should be read in tandem.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.71</b>	Flood hazard areas	Although development is already restricted in many flood hazard areas as a result of shoreline, stream and wetland protection rules, prohibiting new buildings in all flood hazard areas would impose additional significant development limitations on hundreds of acres of the City, including a few downtown blocks. Floodplain variance regulations generally do not allow otherwise prohibited development to occur.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.72</b>	Greenhouse gases	Comment is regarding the merits and organization of the proposal and will be forwarded to decision-makers for consideration. For related policies, see PN1.10 & 1.11 (low impact development and green building) , PN8.5 (climate change and transportation), GT25 (fewer drive-alone trips), GL1 (land use patterns that decrease

		automobile reliance), and GL2 (energy efficiency by design).
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.78</b>	Environmental toxins	Comments are regarding merits of the proposal not content of the SEIS and will be forwarded to decision-makers.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.80</b>	Future Land Use Map & rezones	City codes now provide that when a change in zoning is proposed which does not require a Comprehensive Plan amendment the Hearing Examiner shall hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to City Council; while changes in zoning that do require a Plan amendment are subject to hearing and recommendation by the Planning Commission. In both cases the City Council makes the final decision. These procedures are determined and established by the Council through the code and are independent of the Plan itself.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.85</b>	Development codes	The scope of the Comprehensive Plan update adopted by the City Council provides that an implementing Action Plan including performance measures is also to be prepared. These performance measures could include an "audit" for gauging whether the Plan is being successfully implemented by regulations.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.87</b>	Bike parking	As noted in the comment, the City's regulations are broader and more specific than the proposed policy. The comment will be forwarded to decision-makers for consideration.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.91</b>	Scenic views	The referenced table has been added to the final SEIS. The text of the SEIS has been modified to clarify that analysis of possible impacts of selection of specific viewpoints would be a part of the process of selecting those viewpoints; either at a subsequent planning stage, or as part of adoption of regulations implementing the proposed policy.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.92</b>	Design review	This comment relates to the merits of the proposal and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for consideration.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.106</b>	Private use of public land	The current policy addresses the design of public streets and potential private use of those streets; the proposed amendment would expand the policy to address private use of other public lands thus mixing street-design and public-lands-use issues in one policy, i.e., these topics could be divided into two or more policies.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.107</b>	Urban agriculture	As drafted, the intent of the proposed policy was that a food store with an associated transit stop should be within one-half mile of all residents. The analysis in the SEIS has been revised to address the issue of one-quarter mile versus one-half mile food store radiuses.

<b>Leveen dSEIS p.115</b>	Street capacity	Comment is regarding merits of the proposal and will be forwarded to decision-makers.
<b>Leveen dSEIS p.117</b>	Bus corridors	The SEIS notes Intercity Transit’s support for the bus corridor approach. Comprehensive plan policies about bus corridors would guide City and Intercity Transit joint efforts regarding future land uses, infrastructure investments, and operational and service improvements. Term “Bus Corridors” is used instead of “Transit Corridors” for clarity. The term “transit” is broader and “bus” more specific. Buses are likely to be primary transit in Olympia for at least the next 20 years.

**EXHIBIT B**

**Olympia's SEPA DNS  
for  
2015 Shoreline Master Program Update (dated January 4, 2013)**



**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY ACT  
DETERMINATION OF  
NON-SIGNIFICANCE  
(SEPA DNS)**

**Community Planning & Development**  
601 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue E. – PO Box 1967  
Olympia WA 98501-1967  
Phone: 360.753.8314  
Fax: 360.753.8087  
[cpdinfo@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:cpdinfo@ci.olympia.wa.us)  
[www.olympiawa.gov](http://www.olympiawa.gov)

## **Shoreline Master Program Comprehensive Update**

**Description of Proposal:** An update of all of the Olympia Shoreline Master Program setting forth policies, regulations and procedures regarding uses and activities within the city limits for those areas within the shoreline jurisdiction of Budd Inlet, Bigelow Lake, Capitol Lake, Chambers Lake, Grass Lake, Ken Lake, Ward Lake, Percival Creek and Black Lake Ditch. Preliminary drafts of the proposal are available on request. The final draft of the Shoreline Master Program under consideration, which will be the subject of a City Council public hearing on January 22, 2013, will be available on or before Tuesday, January 8, at city hall and on-line at:

<http://www.olympiawa.gov/city-services/planning-and-zoning/long-range-planning/shoreline-master-pgm>

**Location of Proposal:** City-wide

**Proponent:** City of Olympia  
Community Planning and Development Dept.  
601 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue E  
Olympia, WA 98501

**Representative:** Todd Stamm, Planning Manager  
Phone: (360) 753-8597  
E-Mail: [tstamm@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:tstamm@ci.olympia.wa.us)

**Lead Agency:** City of Olympia

**SEPA Official:** Steve Friddle, Community Services Manager  
Phone: (360) 753-8591  
E-Mail: [sfriddle@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:sfriddle@ci.olympia.wa.us)

**Date of Issue:** January 4, 2013

**Threshold Determination:** Consistent with Washington Administrative Code 173-26-186(8)(b), which requires that this program includes policies and regulations designed to achieve no net loss of ecological functions, the City of Olympia has determined that the

proposed Shoreline Master Program probably will **not** have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. **Therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).**

The environmental review and SEPA threshold determination of this proposed action are based upon the Environmental Checklist and associated information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request. This Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). The City of Olympia will not act upon this proposal prior to the appeal deadline.

**Comments** regarding this DNS should be directed to the SEPA Official at the address above.

**APPEAL PROCEDURE:** Threshold determinations may be appealed pursuant to RCW 43.21C.075 (3) and Olympia City Code 14.04.160(A). Any appeal must be filed with the Community Planning and Development Department at the address above within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date of issue. Any appeal must be accompanied by a \$1,000.00 administrative appeal fee.

**APPEAL DEADLINE: 5:00 p.m., January 18, 2013**

Issued by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Friddle', is written over a horizontal line.

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**STEVE FRIDDLE,  
SEPA OFFICIAL**

**EXHIBIT C**

**Olympia's SEPA Checklist  
for  
2015 Shoreline Master Program Update (dated January 4, 2013)**



## **ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST [Non-Project Actions]**

**THIS CHECKLIST FORM HAS BEEN MODIFIED FOR USE IN CASES SUCH AS NON-PROJECT ACTIONS WHERE MOST OF THE QUESTIONS DO NOT APPLY.**

**WHERE ANSWERS ARE OPTIONAL, A NOT APPLICABLE@ HAS BEEN INSERTED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.**

**PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THIS CHECKLIST IT IS YOUR (THE PREPARER'S) RESPONSIBILITY TO REVIEW EACH QUESTION AND INSERT AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE IF THE QUESTION IN FACT IS APPLICABLE.**



# ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

## CHECKLIST PURPOSE

Chapter 43.21C of the Revised Code of Washington, otherwise known as the State Environmental Policy Act or "SEPA," requires the City of Olympia to consider the potential environmental impacts of a proposal before making any final decisions. The purpose of the attached checklist is to identify impacts of your proposal, to describe means of reducing or avoiding those impacts, and to evaluate whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. An EIS must be prepared for any proposal which, unless modified, may result in a significant adverse impact on the environment.

After reviewing this checklist and attachments, the City's SEPA official will issue a threshold determination, which may be:

- A Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS), if no significant adverse impacts are identified;
- A Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS), if compliance with appropriate conditions will prevent those impacts identified; or
- A Determination of Significance, if significant impacts may result; an EIS will be required to identify and evaluate alternatives.

## CHECKLIST INSTRUCTIONS

The Environmental Checklist asks you to provide some basic information about your proposal. The City staff will use this checklist to evaluate your proposal. Answer the questions briefly, but with the most accurate information available to you.

You must answer each question carefully, completely, and accurately to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the question from your own observation or project plans without expert assistance. If you do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, please so state. Some questions ask about regulations, such as zoning. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the City staff will assist you. If necessary, you may attach additional pages. Be sure to sign and date the checklist.

**This checklist must be accompanied by one or more applications for project approval.** The checklist answers should relate to all parts of your proposal even if you plan to do them over time or on separate parcels. Please attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental impact. If necessary, the City staff may ask you to provide additional information or studies, such as a traffic impact analysis.

## REQUIRED CHECKLIST ATTACHMENTS

- Title company-certified list of adjacent property owners within 300 feet. (See accompanying form.)
- All fees, including supplemental review fees.
- Reproducible site plans and vicinity map (11"x17" or smaller).
- Five copies of all supplemental reports.

### NON-PROJECT AND PROGRAM PROPOSALS

Non-project proposals are not developments and include plans, policies, or ordinances. Complete this checklist for non-project proposals, but feel free to simply write "N/A" whenever a question is not applicable. In addition, please request and submit a completed "Part D," the Supplemental Sheet for Non-Project Actions. For non-project actions, the checklist words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area."

*Applicants are required to post the project site with a sign provided by the City within seven days of this application being deemed complete. Please contact City staff for more information.*



# City of Olympia | Capital of Washington State

601 4th Avenue E. | P.O. Box 1967, Olympia, WA 98507-1967

1. **Applicant:** City of Olympia, Community Planning & Development Department  
 Address: 601 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. E, Olympia, WA 98507  
 E-mail Address: cpdinfo@ci.olympia.wa.us  
 Phone: 360-753-8314
2. **Representative:** Todd Stamm, Planning Manager  
 Address: 601 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. E., Olympia, WA 98507  
 E-mail Address: stammt@ci.olympia.wa.us  
 Phone: 360-753-8597
3. Property Address or Location: City-wide – all lands located within the shoreline jurisdiction.
4. Section/Township/Range: City-wide – all lands located within the shoreline jurisdiction.
5. Tax Parcel Nos: City-wide – all lands located within the shoreline jurisdiction.
6. Total Acres: Unknown
7. Initial Permit Type(s): Council Adoption by Ordinance.
8. Zoning: Multiple zoning districts
9. Shoreline Designation (if any): Multiple proposed new designations.
10. Water Body (if any nearby): Budd Inlet, Ward Lake, Chambers Lake, Capitol Lake, Bigelow Lake, Percival Creek & Ken Lake.

**\*\*\* OFFICIAL USE ONLY \*\*\***

MASTER FILE # \_\_\_\_\_

SEPA # \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSAL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

RELATED CASES: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED CITY ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FEE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11. Project name and brief description of the proposal: **“City of Olympia Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update.” This nonproject proposal substantially revises the City of Olympia’s Shoreline Master Program. This revision is required by – and has been completed to comply with the standards of - Chapter 90.58 RCW and Chapter 173-26 WAC.**
12. Proposed timing or phasing, and estimated completion date: **A final draft SMP is expected to be adopted by the Olympia City Council March 2013.**
13. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain:  
**There are no immediate plans for further activity once the SMP is adopted. However, it is anticipated that minor revisions, amendments or updates to the SMP could be required by the Department of Ecology or in the future.**
14. Do you know of any plans by others that may affect this site? If yes, explain?  
**No, however, future shoreline developments will be required to comply with the proposed SMP regulations and all other applicable regulations.**

15. List other federal, state, or local permits, licenses, or approvals required for the proposal:  
**Following adoption by the Olympia City Council the SMP must be approved by the Washington State Department of Ecology before it can become effective.**
16. List any environmental information that has been prepared or will be prepared regarding this proposal.  
**Shoreline Inventory and Characterization evaluates the natural features, the uses and the ecological conditions of the shorelines. A Shoreline Restoration Plan, as required by Chapter 173-26 WAC.**

I swear or affirm under penalty of perjury that the information provided in this checklist is true and correct.

17. Checklist Prepared By:  Date Prepared: 01/04/2013

To Be Completed by Applicant

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. **General description of the site (circle one):**

flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other

The SMP would regulate shoreline areas that includes all the types of terrain listed above with the exception of mountainous.

b. **What is the steepest slope on this site (approximate percent slope)?**

From flat to 100 percent.

c. **What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.**

According to the Soil Survey of Thurston County, Washington, the soils within the SMP jurisdiction vary widely, ranging from Hoogdal soils along Budd Inlet to Everetts, Yelms, and Mukilteos adjacent to various lakes in the City.

d. **Are there surface indicators or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**

Yes, in particular shorelines along Budd Inlet and Capitol Lake have been modified with the placement of dredge spoils fill material. This material has a history of instability in certain locations. For example, during the earthquake of 2001, the filled area of Deschutes Parkway on the west side of Capitol Lake experienced liquefaction.

e. **Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

The SMP does not propose any filling or grading. Should any filling or grading proposals be presented to the City in the future, the SMP – in addition to a variety of other permitting requirements – would regulate the handling and placement of any fill materials within the shoreline jurisdiction.

f. **Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.**

Construction projects within the City's shoreline jurisdiction could result in clearing and erosion, particularly during the construction process.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

Impervious surface coverage along the shorelines will be regulated using the impervious surface coverage standards contained within the zoning regulations.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:**

Mitigation sequencing will apply to all construction, beginning with avoidance of any impacts altogether. For proposals that cannot avoid impacts, erosion control would be required throughout all phases of any construction project. In addition, the SMP contains vegetation management and conservation requirements that would both limit the amount of clearing on a site and reduce the potential for erosion.

**2. Air**

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**

Any proposed construction within the shoreline jurisdiction would be required to comply with best management practices designed to minimize impacts from dust and other airborne particulates.

To Be Completed by Applicant

**3. Water**

**a. Surface**

- (1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

The SMP would apply to all marine shorelines, all rivers with a minimum mean annual flow of 20 cubic feet per second, and all lakes greater than 20 acres in size. In the City of Olympia this includes Budd Inlet, Capitol Lake, Chambers Lake, Ward Lake, Grass Lake, Ken Lake, Black Lake Ditch and Percival Creek.

- (2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

The SMP applies exclusively to all lands within 200 feet of shorelines within its jurisdiction.

- (3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- (4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversion? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No

- (5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year flood plain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

Various waterbodies within SMP jurisdiction, including the Deschutes River, have floodplains. The SMP jurisdiction extends to all floodplains that are associated with SMP-regulated shorelines.

- (6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

No

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**b. Ground**

- (1) **Will groundwater be withdrawn or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No

- (2) **Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example, domestic sewage; industrial containing the following chemicals, agricultural, etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

None with the adoption of the codes. However, numerous septic systems are present along the shorelines of the City. All septic systems are regulated by the Thurston County Environmental Health Department.

**c. Water Runoff (including stormwater)**

- (1) **Describe the source of runoff (including stormwater and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other water? If so, describe.**

Stormwater collection, treatment and discharge within the shoreline jurisdiction will be regulated according to the City of Olympia's Stormwater Design Manual to ensure that stormwater is treated and released downstream at predevelopment rates.

- (2) **Could waste materials enter ground or surface water? If so, generally describe.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**4. Plants**

**a. Circle types of vegetation found on the site:**

Deciduous tree: **alder, maple, aspen**, other \_\_\_\_\_

Evergreen tree: **fir, cedar, pine**, other \_\_\_\_\_

Shrubs; Grass; Pasture; Crop or grain

Wet soil plants: **cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk cabbage**

Water plants: **water lily, eelgrass, milfoil**, other \_\_\_\_\_

Other types of vegetation \_\_\_\_\_

**b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

None as a result of adopting the code. While it is not known what kind and amount of vegetation is likely to be removed in the future, there is a possibility that as various shoreline properties develop along SMP regulated shorelines that some impacts to vegetation will occur.

**c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

No known threatened or endangered plant species are known at this time. However, any future proposals within the areas regulated by this SMP will be reviewed for the existence of sensitive, threatened or endangered plant species.

**d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.**

The SMP requires a vegetation conservation area for most of the shoreline designations. In addition, vegetation management plans are a key component of any future developments that could impact shoreline vegetation. Vegetation restoration plans will favor the use of native plants.

**5. Animals**

**a. Circle any birds and animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:**

Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other \_\_\_\_\_

Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other \_\_\_\_\_

Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other \_\_\_\_\_

All of the above.



**To Be Completed by Applicant**

- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

The shoreline inventory and characterization identifies State and Federally listed species in the Puget Sound region at page 24.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.**

Migrating waterfowl frequent the waterbodies within the region.

- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:**

The SMP contains vegetation conservation and management requirements to maintain vegetation and habitat adjacent to the shoreline. The SMP adopts the City's Critical Areas Ordinance by reference, which will further protect plant and animal species within the shoreline jurisdiction.

**6. Energy and Natural Resources**

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.**

Potential for impacts to the use of solar energy is small. Building heights within the SMP jurisdiction will be the same as the underlying zoning. Most building heights will be limited to between 20-42 feet, with the exception of the Port Marine Industrial Designation, which allows for buildings up to 65 feet.

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:**

NOT APPLICABLE

**7. Environmental Health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.**

None known.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

- (1) **Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

N/A

- (2) **Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any.**

Development within the shoreline jurisdiction must fully comply with all environmental regulations, including environmental health regulations for septic tanks and regulations for the management of stormwater.

**b. Noise**

- (1) **What types of noise exist in the area that may affect your project (for example, traffic, equipment, operation, other)?**

Equipment operation and traffic as well as industrial uses related to the operations of the Port of Olympia.

- (2) **What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example, traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.**

Construction from short-term projects.

- (3) **Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any.**

Noise impacts are mitigated by limiting the hours of operation for construction sites and through other measures as specified in the City's Noise Ordinance.

**8. Land and Shore Use**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.**

None of the areas within the City's shoreline jurisdiction have been used for agriculture in living memory.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?**

NOT APPLICABLE

**e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?**

Zoning districts vary among the shorelines. Shorelines along Budd Inlet are primarily zoned Urban Waterfront or Industrial. A portion of Capitol Lake is also zoned Urban Waterfront. The remaining shorelines of lakes and streams within SMP jurisdiction are zoned for medium density residential.

**f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?**

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use designations for the area mirror current zoning, with most of the shorelines along Budd Inlet being either Urban Waterfront or Industrial, a portion of Capitol Lake being Urban Waterfront, and the remainder of the lakes and streams being medium density residential.

**g. If applicable, what is the current Shoreline Master Program designation of the site?**

Designations vary by reach for specific geographic locations please consult Table 6.2 of the proposed SMP:

**Aquatic:** All submerged lands lying waterward of SMP designated shorelines

**Natural:** Priest Point Park

**Urban Conservancy:** Capitol Lake, Chambers Lake, Black Lake Ditch, Percival Creek

**Waterfront Recreation:** West Bay Drive of Budd Inlet, Capitol Lake

**Shoreline Residential:** Ward Lake, Ken Lake, East Bay Drive of Budd Inlet

**Marine Recreation:** East Port Peninsula of Budd Inlet

**Urban Intensity:** Upper West Bay Drive of Budd Inlet, Percival Landing area of Budd Inlet

**Port Marine Industrial:** Upper West Port Peninsula of Budd Inlet

**h. Has any part of the site been classified an “environmentally sensitive” area? If so, specify.**

Numerous areas within the shoreline jurisdiction have been classified as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs). All aquatic designations are ESAs, and many of the shorelines contain wetlands, steep slopes, etc.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any.**

The proposed SMP has been drafted to be consistent with existing land use regulations and plans. In particular, this shoreline designations, allowed uses and development standards of this proposed SMP reflect – and are consistent with - the City’s existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning. This SMP will improve consistency for implementing environmental regulations by adopting the City’s Critical Areas Ordinance into the SMP by reference.

**9. Housing**

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high-, middle-, or low-income housing.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high-, middle-, or low-income housing.**

NOT APPLICABLE

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any.**

Required building setbacks, vegetation conservation areas and height limits on buildings will reduce the impacts of housing on the natural and built environment.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**10. Aesthetics**

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas. What is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

The tallest allowable structure would be 65 feet in the Port Marine Industrial shoreline designation. The maximum height for the majority of other shorelines designations ranges from 35-42 feet.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

The SMP has been drafted with height limits that are intended to preserve existing views of the water from the shoreline. Views of the shoreline across Budd Inlet may be altered over time - particularly the Port Peninsula – as new development occurs.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:**

Building height limits, setbacks, and vegetation conservation areas are all intended to both protect the environment as well as reduce aesthetic impacts along the shoreline.

**11. Light and Glare**

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

NOT APPLICABLE

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any.**

Light and glare from any proposed projects within the shoreline designation will be addressed as part of a thorough project review at the time of development. In particular, potential impacts from light and glare will be reviewed and mitigated through the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review process.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**12. Recreation**

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

Many areas along the shorelines provide recreational opportunities, including on the water activities such as boating and kayaking that occur in all the marine and lake aquatic designations (with the exception of Capitol Lake). The Waterfront Recreation designations along West Bay Drive and Capitol Lake are proposed specifically to recognize the recreational aspects of those shoreline reaches.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**

It is not anticipated that any existing allowed recreational uses will be displaced.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any.**

A primary purpose of the proposed SMP is to provide access to the shoreline to allow for both active and passive forms of recreation, ranging from walking and running to boating and fishing, to taking advantage of scenic vistas and bird watching.

**13. Historic and Cultural Preservation**

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on or proposed for national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**

None known.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.**

Priest Point Park is a site of cultural and historic (and possibly archaeological) significance.

The City is aware that it is likely that along its shorelines there are likely areas with archaeological, scientific or cultural importance, but they have not as of yet been identified.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:**

The Natural Shoreline designation for Priest Point Park allows for very little disturbance in the shoreline management area. If at some time in the future a specific project is proposed along the shoreline that could impact these resources this would be identified and addressed through the SEPA process and mitigated accordingly.

**14. Transportation**

**a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

Various SMP regulated areas are adjacent to public transit. In particular, all the shorelines along Budd Inlet and the Deschutes Parkway side of Capitol Lake – the areas most likely to attract the general public - have bus service.

**c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?**

NOT APPLICABLE

**d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

NOT APPLICABLE

**e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:**

Transportation impacts to various shorelines will be reduced or controlled by the suite of regulations that govern the shoreline reach in question, including zoning regulations, the shoreline designation, and development standards.

**15. Public Services**

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example, fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

No it should not.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**16. Utilities**

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:**

electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other

All of the above.

- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity that might be needed.**

It is possible that all the kinds of utilities listed in this section could be proposed for various future developments along the shorelines. In addition to commercial and residential projects, it is possible that utility providers, such as the City of Olympia or LOTT, may need to repair or construct utilities within a shoreline management area.

**SIGNATURE**

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make this decision.

Signature:  Date: 01/04/2013

**NOTE:** An additional "Supplemental Sheet for Non-Project Actions" must be attached if this checklist is for adoption of a proposed regulation, policy, standard, plan, or similar non-construction action.



SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NON-PROJECT ACTIONS

(do **NOT** use this sheet for project actions)

Non-project proposals are those that are not tied to a specific site, such as adoption of plans, policies, or ordinances.

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware of the extent of the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, and how they would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances or production to noise?**

This proposal will not have any impact in the areas referenced in this question. The regulations in the SMP do not promote or facilitate any increase in water discharge, air or noise emissions, or the storage or release of hazardous substances.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

The proposed SMP contains a variety of regulatory standards to avoid or reduce the negative environmental impacts listed above. In addition to vegetation buffer and vegetation management requirements, the SMP includes appropriate setbacks for structures. Also, the SMP will adopt by reference the City of Olympia Critical Areas Ordinance.

**2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?**

The SMP allows for construction and development along shorelines. Vegetation along the shorelines – and associated habitat - may be temporarily or permanently removed as part of the development process on a particular site.

The SMP also allows for the construction or placement of docks, floats and buoys, all of which can have impacts on fish and marine life.

While bulkheads and other types of armoring are generally prohibited, the SMP does allow for the placement of these structures in cases of emergency. Armored shorelines have impacts of fish and marine life.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:**

The proposed SMP will not contain development standards that are less restrictive than what is allowed under the current SMP or zoning ordinances, so this proposal is not expected to have an impact from the standpoint of allowing more intensive or more impacting development than what is allowed under current regulations.

The SMP has been drafted in accordance with a “No Net Loss” of ecological function principle per WAC 173-26-186(8). Section 5.7 of the SMP, titled “Shoreline Ecological Protection and Mitigation,” establishes goals, policies and regulations to ensure that shoreline uses and development will minimize impacts to plant and animal species and preserve (at a minimum) existing levels of ecological function.

The foundation for development of the SMP, including conservation of plants, animals, fish and marine life, is the Shoreline Inventory and Characterization of the City of Olympia’s shorelines. Information obtained from the shoreline inventory and characterization has been used to establish a baseline of existing uses and environmental conditions, and the land and aquatic use standards contained within the proposed SMP are tailored to specific shoreline reaches to ensure no net loss.

The SMP requires a range of building setbacks, depending on the shoreline reach. Some areas are already fully developed with commercial or industrial uses - such as the Maritime Industrial Designation on the Port Peninsula – and these areas do not require building setbacks. However, the majority of the shorelines in this SMP require setbacks ranging from 30’-200’, depending on the natural and built environmental characteristics of the shoreline reach.

**3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?**

Amending the SMP, in and of itself, will not result in the depletion of energy or natural resources.

**Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:**

The proposed shoreline designations, building setbacks, vegetation conservation and management standards, and the required compliance with all related environmental regulations, are all measures that will help protect and conserve natural resources if the proposed SMP is adopted.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection, such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, flood plains, or prime farmlands?**

The SMP areas do not contain wilderness or wild and scenic rivers.

The Shoreline Inventory and Characterization identified State and Federally listed species in the Puget Sound region (p.24 of Characterization), and this information was part of the baseline as the proposed SMP was drafted. No specific impacts to threatened or endangered species have been identified as likely to occur should the proposed SMP be adopted.

Some areas within the City's Priest Point Park may contain archaeological or culturally significant sites within the shoreline jurisdiction. The City is also aware that along the length of all the SMP regulated shorelines there are likely to be other cultural or archaeological sites. However, at this time there is not a detailed survey to indicate where these sites are located.

While the areas to be regulated by the SMP contain parks and a variety of environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, steep slopes and floodplains, the proposed SMP is not expected to negatively impact these areas.

**Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:**

The SMP contains regulations designed to avoid or minimize impacts to the natural environment as well as cultural and historic sites. Sections 1.7 and 5.7.4 of the proposed SMP adopt the City of Olympia's Critical Areas Ordinance, which regulates activities that could impact wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes and a variety of other critical habitats and species.

Chapter 5 of the proposed SMP contains policies and regulations to prevent impacts to archaeological, historic resources. In addition, Chapter 5 establishes a baseline standard requiring No Net Loss and Mitigation (5.7.3), including the application of mitigation sequencing for all proposals within the shoreline environment.

Any proposed projects within areas regulated by the SMP will most likely also be required to complete SEPA review, and during the SEPA review process all potential impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, cultural and archaeological sites, etc., will be reviewed and, if necessary, mitigated.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?**

The proposed SMP will establish the allowed uses and development standards for all shorelines of the state within the City of Olympia's jurisdiction. This encompasses all lands within 200 feet of 1) marine waters, 2) lakes greater than 20 acres in size, and 3) streams and rivers with 20 cubic feet per second or greater mean annual flow.

The SMP establishes new Shoreline Designations for each of the shoreline reaches within the City's jurisdiction, and each of these designations will establish a unique combination of buffers, setbacks, allowed uses and development standards, all of which will affect the shoreline use for that reach.

The primary affect that the proposed SMP will have on particular shorelines will be to allow existing impacting uses and development standards to continue, which may result in decreased opportunities for a shoreline to be restored in the future. For example, the proposed Port Marine Industrial Designation has a zero setback in recognition of the fact that Port operations require structures located immediately adjacent to the water. Although the existing required setback is also zero, allowing this standard to continue with the adoption of the new SMP decreases the likelihood that the shoreline ecology for the reaches in this designation will see improvement over time.

The proposed SMP is designed to meet multiple mandates, including public use and enjoyment of the shorelines. Because the SMP encourages public access to the shorelines, in some cases the development and provision of access could result in some impacts to the shoreline environment.

The proposed SMP would be compatible with the City's Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations. The proposed SMP would prohibit most development over the water. The 1993 Urban Waterfront Plan, which provides for over-water development, will be rescinded and replaced by a new Aquatic designation when the new SMP is adopted.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:**

Shoreline designations – as well as the designation's allowed uses, and required vegetative buffers and building setbacks - have been developed using the Shoreline Inventory and Characterization as the baseline, combined with the No Net Loss standard, to ensure to the greatest extent possible that the proposed SMP will not result in a degradation of the existing shoreline ecology.

The proposed SMP will adopt the City's Critical Areas Ordinance by reference and thus will provide a regulatory framework for the protection of shorelines and critical areas.

**To Be Completed by Applicant**

**6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands of transportation or public services and utilities?**

The proposed SMP is not expected to increase demand for public services, transportation, or utilities.

**Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:**

N/A

**7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.**

The SMP will not conflict with any local, state or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make this decision.

Signature: Todd Sta Date: 01/04/2013