



Planning Commission

Neighborhood Centers - Continued Discussion of Public Outreach Plan

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Title

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Report

Issue:

At the September 21, 2015, Commission meeting, a work group of the Commission presented a draft slide-show to be used during public meetings related to Neighborhood Centers. This agenda item will provide the Commission with an additional opportunity to discuss the general goals and purposes of this upcoming public outreach effort.

Presenter:

Discussion to be facilitated by Amy Buckler, Senior Planner

Background and Analysis:

Neighborhood Centers are small walk- and transit-friendly business clusters within residential neighborhoods that serve the day-to-day retail and service needs of local residents and foster community interaction. These centers are important to community-wide goals of increasing walkability, reducing our 'carbon footprint,' improving human health, and fostering neighborhood connections and resiliency.

The City has had a policy of encouraging neighborhood centers for over 20 years, but with some exceptions these have not developed as described in the Comprehensive Plan. A recent policy update would also allow for medium density residential uses in or around centers. The Plan identifies 17 sites for neighborhood scale retail and mixed uses. Most of the 17 sites are located where the primary surrounding land use is single-family residential. The conditions of these sites vary from thriving mixed-use areas to vacant lands.

To implement the Plan, the Olympia Planning Commission and staff are working to identify appropriate revisions of Olympia's 'neighborhood center' and 'neighborhood retail' development codes. On September 21 the Commission viewed a draft slide-show to be used as part of public outreach regarding neighborhood center possibilities. On October 5 the Commission will continue discussion of this topic. Please see the September 21 staff report for more information.