



## City Council

### Update on the Olympia Downtown Strategy

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#### **Title**

Update on the Olympia Downtown Strategy

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Receive the update on the downtown strategy. Briefing only; no action requested.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

The process to form Olympia's Downtown Strategy began in Fall 2015. This is an update to review the first public workshop held on November 21, and next steps in the process.

##### **Staff Contact:**

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##### **Presenter(s):**

Amy Buckler, Senior Planner

John Owen, MAKERS architecture and urban design (lead consultant for the City)

##### **Background and Analysis:**

On May 19, 2015, the City Council adopted a scope to guide formation of Olympia's Downtown Strategy. On October 6, following an extensive selection process, the City Council approved a contract with MAKERS architecture and urban design for their assistance in leading formation of the strategy.

For this update, John Owen from MAKERS will present the following:

- Brief overview of the steps that will be taken to form Olympia's Downtown Strategy over the next year (**attachment 1**), including how the City Council will be kept up-to-date and able to provide direction as needed.

- Review of the public workshop held on November 21; some general patterns arising from the input gathered; and how this input will be used to help shape three alternative land use and urban design alternatives to be presented at the next public workshop. In addition to public input, the alternatives will be shaped by technical analysis to be completed by staff and consultants. This analysis will ensure alternatives are realistic, and identify impacts to various downtown goals, such as retail, housing and good urban design.
- Description of the next steps and outcomes in the process, including a viewshed analysis.

#### VIEWSHED ANALYSIS:

MAKERS will conduct a viewshed analysis of up to 10 prioritized options identified through the public process. Using 3D graphics, MAKERS will illustrate how views can be protected with different land use and urban form alternatives, as well as analyze the impacts of protecting these views on economic, housing and other goals.

A preliminary exercise to identify priorities for viewshed protection was included as part of the first workshop. More work needs to be done to identify up to 10 prioritized options for analysis, including a review of prior work by Mithun consultants as well as potential viewsheds from public observation points outside the downtown boundary to landmark views through the downtown.

#### **Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

The public has provided input into the Downtown Strategy via [Olyspeaks.org](https://olyspeaks.org) [\(<http://olyspeaks.org/discussions>](http://olyspeaks.org/discussions) (link in attachment 3), under a discussion about downtown safety: realities and perceptions, as well as at the public workshop held on November 21, 2015. Input is still being synthesized for further analysis and reflection. Materials and raw input from the workshop can be found on the [Downtown Strategy website](http://olympiawa.gov/community/downtown-olympia/downtown-strategy.aspx) [\(<http://olympiawa.gov/community/downtown-olympia/downtown-strategy.aspx>](http://olympiawa.gov/community/downtown-olympia/downtown-strategy.aspx) (link in attachment 2), under “Developing the Downtown Strategy / Step 1.Gather Information.”

#### **Financial Impact:**

Included in the City’s \$250,000 budget for formation of a Downtown Strategy. There may be additional costs in the future to implement recommendations that emerge from a completed Downtown Strategy.