



## City Council

### Briefing on the Downtown Strategy

**Agenda Date:** 4/26/2016  
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#### **Title**

Briefing on the Downtown Strategy

#### **Recommended Action**

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

Not referred to a committee.

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

Receive the briefing and provide staff feedback.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to review and discuss the draft guiding framework for the Downtown Strategy. This framework summarizes priorities that have evolved out of the public process and technical analysis thus far.

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

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

Amy Buckler, Senior Planner  
John Owen, MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design, consultant for the Downtown Strategy  
Keith Stahley, Director, CP&D

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

Last fall, the City kicked off the public process to form a Downtown Strategy, and hired MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design as consultants. The Downtown Strategy aims to forward our community's vision for downtown. It will establish priority actions for the next 5-6 years; illustrate desired design elements and future conditions; and guide City budgets, work plans and partnerships.

We have just completed step 2 of the process (**attachment: Step 2 Report**), and a framework to guide future steps has taken shape (**attachments: Character Areas and Guiding Framework**). The guiding framework reflects priorities that have evolved out of the public process and technical analysis thus far. It communicates what tasks are yet to be completed in 2016 and some potential

actions for future years that have arisen from the process. The character areas have been well vetted with the community and provide a picture of the unique function and character people would like to see created or enhanced in various areas of downtown - a backdrop that will help us be more objective in our approach to implementation.

Development of the guiding framework marks a major milestone in the process, as we have begun to transition from identifying strategic priorities to identifying specific implementation steps. The Study Session is an opportunity to review our progress and next steps before the process moves further along.

Most of the changes that will occur in downtown over the next 6 years will happen through private sector investment. In terms of implementation, the City's role will include: making strategic investments to enhance streets and sidewalks; ensuring our development and design standards align with community vision and are clear and realistic; forming partnerships and/or programmatic actions, development or business incentives needed in order to help achieve goals.

In accordance with the scope and timeline for the Downtown Strategy, some of the work to form implementation steps has already begun. In particular, the MAKERS team has met with Public Works transportation team and the Stakeholder Work Group to analyze the existing downtown transportation network and identify potential public investment options to enhance streets and sidewalks in downtown. Although more work is still needed to narrow down priority steps and investments for the next six years, a draft street investment map is **attached** which reflects our progress.

Next steps following the study session include:

- **April 28 - Business and Development Forum.** Hosted in conjunction with the Economic Development Council, about 40 members of the business and development community have been invited to participate in a roundtable discussion that will help to inform implementation steps (6 p.m., City Hall - open to the public, however there will not be opportunity for public comment)
- **May** - Release of the Downtown Market Analysis, and feasibility analysis of various development types begins
- **May 10 - City Council Briefing.** Any needed clarification based on the study session will be provided
- **May 23 - Urban Design Discussion.** Public meeting to present and discuss building, site and street design concepts (6 p.m., The Olympia Center)
- **June 6 - Workshop #3.** Public meeting to present 3D viewshed analysis and other elements of the strategy
- **Summer 2016** - Public outreach will slow down in order to provide staff and consultants time to concentrate on analysis and preparation of a draft strategy
- **Fall 2016** - Public Open House to present the draft strategy; review and recommendation by Planning Commission, leading to final adoption by City Council

#### **Neighborhood/Community Interests:**

There has been extensive public engagement as part of the Downtown Strategy. A Step 2 Summary Report is **attached**, which details the results of Workshop #2 (February 20) and subsequent online

survey. A list of 36 additional presentations or meetings with community groups within the first half of 2016 is attached (**attachment: Outreach Meetings**).

Learn more about the Downtown Strategy at [olympiawa.gov/DTS](http://olympiawa.gov/DTS)  
<<http://olympiawa.gov/community/downtown-olympia/downtown-strategy.aspx>>

**Options:**

- 1. Receive the briefing and provide feedback.**
- 2. Do**

Following a brief overview from staff and the consultant team is an opportunity for the Council to have discussion and ask any questions about the progress of the Downtown Strategy.

**Financial Impact:**

Briefing is included in the City's \$250,000 budget for formation of a Downtown Strategy. There will be additional costs for implementation steps that emerge.

**Attachments:**

- 1. Guiding Framework chart**
- 2. Character Area Map**
- 3. Draft Street Investment Map**
- 4. Step 2 Summary Report**
- 5. Additional Outreach**
- 6. Public Participation Timeline**