



Design Review Board

Discussion of Downtown Design Guidelines Update

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Title

Discussion of Downtown Design Guidelines Update

Recommended Action

Hear the briefing and provide any feedback on the proposed changes

Report

Issue:

Discussion and feedback from the Board about proposed changes to design guidelines for Downtown

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development, (360) 570-5847

Presenter(s):

John Owen, consultant from MAKERS architecture and urban design
Amy Buckler

Background and Analysis:

One of the first recommended actions to implement the Downtown Strategy (DTS) is an update to the downtown design guidelines (see scope below.) With help from a Technical Work Group that including architects, developers, citizens, members of the Design Review Board and Heritage Commission and planning staff, the consultant has prepared a working draft of the new design guidelines (**attachment 1**).

At the meeting, Mr. Owen will review major changes and other highlights. The Board is encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback. As it may be useful to the Board, draft crosswalks comparing the current downtown guidelines and the proposals are also attached (**attachments 2-5**). A major changes document plus additional materials for the general public are being prepared.

A public open house is tentatively scheduled for April 18, followed by an open comment period. Targeted outreach is also being directed at relevant neighborhood and business groups, developers, the Port of Olympia, the Design Review Board, Heritage Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and TWG. All comments received through April will be considered when preparing the public hearing draft.

Scope of Update

The scope for the design guideline update includes:

- Organize into one section so that applicants can access all relevant guidelines in one place
- Allow for flexibility, but be focused and clear; not onerous
- Discuss and update the existing use and definitions of “shall” and “should” to help better meet objectives
- Reinforce unique character areas, considering: the location and size of parking, entries, service areas, and other site features; pedestrian and vehicular circulation; architectural character and site landscaping. While basic standards should apply throughout Downtown, some variation should be applied to enhance character areas.
- Craft new mixed use guidelines
- Improve historic guidelines, including incorporate Secretary of the Interior standards that apply to alterations of existing historic structures
- Update requirements for nonresidential storefronts, considering essential locations where these should be required and design to promote active streetscapes
- Consider doing away with, or simplifying ratios (as currently in Pedestrian Street Overlay) as these are difficult to apply on smaller sites
- Update view protection guidelines to include moderate measures to protect and enhance three important views, from: West Bay Park to Mt. Rainier, Deschutes Parkway to Mt. Rainier, and East Bay Overlook to the Capitol Dome
- Incorporate more Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (C-TED) measures
- Various updates to address site planning and design, pedestrian access, amenities, open space, and building design
- Illustrate with photos, sketches, and diagrams, as necessary to visually explain the provisions and provide examples. Where used as good examples, make sure they are exemplary development examples consistent with the desired character for Downtown. Make sure the graphics are internally consistent. Use photos or graphics to show a variety of ways to meet the standards.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

A summary of preliminary input into the design guideline update from various stakeholders is **attachment 6**.

Options:

To prepare, please review the staff report and attachments.

Financial Impact:

Included as part of the \$50,000 budget for updating Downtown design guidelines

Attachments:

1. Draft design guidelines, *combines*
 - *Site Planning*
 - *Site Elements*
 - *Building Design*
2. Site Planning Crosswalk
3. Site Elements Crosswalk
4. Building Design Crosswalk
5. Street Front Comparison
 - *Compares proposed designated streets with current Pedestrian Overlay*
6. Public Comment Summary