



Design Review Board

Downtown Design Guidelines Overview

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Title

Downtown Design Guidelines Overview

Recommended Action

Information only. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Discussion on the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

In April of 2017 the City adopted the Downtown Strategy, a plan to help make the community vision for the Downtown into reality. The purpose of the strategy is to:

- Identify community priorities for Downtown,
- Outline realistic and effective actions for the next five years,
- Guide City budgets and work plans,
- Build community partnerships,
- Help market Downtown, and
- Move our vision for Downtown forward.

One of the first actions to implement the Downtown Strategy was to update the Downtown Design Guidelines to align with the character areas and to put all design standards for the Downtown into one chapter of the municipal code.

Background

The design guidelines address functional as well as aesthetic issues. They influence site design, building orientation, massing, architecture and other building details, as well as historic preservation. They intend for development to be compatible with neighbors; promote safety, security and livability;

be environmentally responsible; promote health and pedestrian activity; and upgrade the physical attractiveness of a development.

The City retained MAKERS consultants to assist with updating Downtown design guidelines. The consultant reviewed all comments received on the working draft of the update and a final draft was prepared for a final round of internal review by city planning staff. Based on staff comments, and to address public comments that had been received on the first public draft, revisions were made, and a second public draft was issued. City staff reviewed the second draft with the Planning Commission, Heritage Commission, Design Review Board, and held an Open House to solicit comments. A final round of revisions were made to address the comments received and the public hearing draft was issued.

Along with the proposed downtown design guideline update, staff proposed view protection measures guided by the Downtown Strategy, which included amendments to Title 18, Unified Development Code, of the Olympia Municipal Code. Other chapters in Title 18 required revisions to ensure consistency with the new design guidelines for downtown.

The new guidelines are divided into four distinct sections, as follows:

- 18.120.100s - Introduction
- 18.120.200s - Site Planning
- 18.120.300s - Site Elements and Design
- 18.120.400s - Building Design

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Community participation has been a large part of the development of the draft guidelines. Staff from the City and MAKERS Consulting worked with a Technical Work Group and held public meetings to gather input and draft guidelines. Additional outreach was completed to ensure revisions to earlier drafts met the expectations and needs of those who provided comments.

Options:

None, information only.

Financial Impact:

None, this is an overview of adopted standards.

Attachments:

Downtown Design Guidelines