



City Council

Comprehensive Plan Policy Related to the Proposed Park Drive Street Connection

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Title

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Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive and discuss information related to the proposed connection of Park Drive to Kaiser Road.
Provide guidance on next steps.

Report

Issue:

On February 25, Planning Commission and City Manager recommendations were presented to Council on the proposed connection of Park Drive to Kaiser Road. This topic was forwarded to a Council Study Session for further consideration. Direction is needed on language to be included in the Public Hearing Draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update. City Council is expected to hold a public hearing on the draft plan later in 2014.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Sophie Stimson, Senior Planner, Public Works
The Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) was notified of this meeting.

Background and Analysis:

Street connectivity is a major policy area of the Comprehensive Plan and the Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy. Street connectivity policies help to achieve safety and efficiency and increase travel mode choices in our transportation system. Street connections are important because they allow for short trips and direct route options for walking, biking, driving and to access transit. A connected street grid also provides better access for emergency and commercial vehicles.

Street connections are primarily built as a requirement of new development. Guidance about the location and classification (size) of new street connections is provided in the Comprehensive Plan and in the Engineering Design and Development Standards, part of the City's code.

The current Comprehensive Plan Transportation Map 6.3 shows street connections of Park Drive to Kaiser Road, and Kaiser Road to Black Lake Boulevard. Park Drive is shown as a future neighborhood collector street and Kaiser Road is shown as a major collector street.

In the draft Comprehensive Plan Update, Appendix A of the Transportation Chapter discusses the context and unique needs related to some street connections. Park Drive is one of the street connections discussed in this appendix. Park Drive is also shown on the proposed *Transportation 2030 Map - Westside and Downtown*. (See attached map).

In past years, residents in the Park Drive area have raised concerns in response to new development proposals and the street connections that would be required. Specifically, residents object to making a street connection from Park Drive to Kaiser Road. For this reason, staff is recommending language in Appendix A that states both streets should be constructed together, or Kaiser Road, the larger major collector street, should be completed first so that higher volume traffic is not directed to Park Drive.

During the OPC's deliberations on the draft Comprehensive Plan Update, residents from the Park Drive area testified against making a full street connection from Park Drive to Kaiser Road. In response to these comments, the OPC recommends the future connection of Park Drive as a bike, pedestrian and emergency access connection only.

Staff does not recommend eliminating vehicle access at Park Drive because it will result in longer routes for motor vehicle drivers in the vicinity of Park Drive. It will also result in fewer route options for drivers when construction or emergencies occur.

Park Drive currently does not have a sidewalk or shoulder for walking. A walking facility, traffic calming devices or other safety improvements may help to alleviate some residents' concerns should a full street connection be made. These additional improvements could be made by private development or the City. Staff has proposed an additional comprehensive plan policy related to safety of newly connected streets to address these types of concerns.

See attached table comparing Park Drive language for Appendix A.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

During the OPC's deliberations on the draft Comprehensive Plan Update, residents from the Park Drive area testified against making a full street connection from Park Drive to Kaiser Road.

Options:

Option A. Receive and discuss information related to the proposed connection of Park Drive to Kaiser Road. Provide guidance on next steps.

Financial Impact:

Any Park Drive connection would be constructed by private development.

Safety improvements on Park Drive may be constructed by private development, or by the City.

Attachments:

- Table comparing Park Drive language for Appendix A
- Section of the Proposed *Transportation 2030 Map, Westside and Downtown*