



## City Council

### Comprehensive Plan Policy Related to Safety of Newly Connected Streets

**Agenda Date:** 4/22/2014  
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#### **Title**

Comprehensive Plan Policy Related to Safety of Newly Connected Streets

#### **Recommended Action**

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

Not referred to a committee.

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

Receive and discuss policy language related to the safety of newly connected streets. Provide guidance on next steps.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether or not to include policy language related to safety of newly connected streets in the Public Hearing Draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The City Council is expected to hold a public hearing on the draft plan in 2014.

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

Sophie Stimson, Senior Planner, Public Works Transportation, 360.753.8497  
Mark Russell, P.E., Director of Transportation, Public Works, 360.753.8762

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

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

Olympia has not achieved all street connections planned and documented in the Comprehensive

Plan and required through code regulations. There is a cumulative impact on the transportation system when these connections are not made. The reasons street connections are not made include objections from adjacent neighborhoods, objections from the property developer, or a topographic or environmental constraint. One of the primary reasons a neighborhood objects to a street connection relates to the safety of the connected streets.

When a street connection is made, a mechanism is needed to ensure that bicycle, pedestrian and motor vehicle safety are addressed at the time of the connection. Typically, a new development will make a street connection and build some street frontage, but the remainder of the street may be substandard and create safety concerns, particularly for pedestrians.

Since the Planning Commission's recommended draft of the Comprehensive Plan was issued, staff proposes a new policy related to the safety concerns resulting from new street connections. The new policy would require safety improvements be built, as needed, on newly connected streets at the time when connections are made. Some of these improvements may be built by private development where applicable, however it is likely the City will need to fund some of these improvements. Staff proposes the following policy language for Council consideration:

*New Policy: Address safety concerns on newly connected streets and build any needed improvements at the time when street connections are made. Define what constitutes safety improvements in the Engineering Design and Development Standards.*

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

During the OPC's deliberations on the Draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update, residents from the Park Drive and southwest Olympia areas expressed concerns about street connections.

**Options:**

Option A. Receive and discuss policy language related to the safety of newly connected streets. Provide guidance on next steps.

Option B. Do not add a new policy addressing the safety of connected streets at this time.

**Financial Impact:**

This policy would likely result in a new Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) program to fund these improvements. If funding is not identified, street connections may not be made in a timely manner. Prior to implementation of this policy, discussions about how to fund these improvements would need to occur with Council.