



General Government Committee
Discussion with Heritage Commission
Representatives about a Potential Study
Session with City Council

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Title

Discussion with Heritage Commission Representatives about a Potential Study Session with City Council

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Discussion

City Manager Recommendation:

Discuss recent topics related to historic preservation and develop a plan for a future Study Session with the full City Council.

Report

Issue:

Whether to have a discussion with Heritage Commission representatives.

Staff Contact:

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Steve Hall, City Manager 360.753.8370

Presenter(s):

Representatives of the Heritage Commission

Background and Analysis:

The Heritage Commission is one of several citizen boards in the City whose main mission is to support and advise the Olympia City Council.

Recent actions of the City related to property acquisitions, use of City properties with historic significance, and the City's response to private property redevelopment have raised questions about the role of the Heritage Commission and whether it can be more helpful to the City Council. These questions include the processes and communications channels used to consider a balance of historic preservation goals with the other goals of the City including affordable, economic development and

relationships with other local governments such as Thurston County, among others

In addition, new staffing and added staff resources for historic preservation and cultural activities provide an opportunity to more completely integrate these values into the City's work efforts.

Staffing for the Commission has been variable over the past many months, which has added to communication issues. Recently City staff and Heritage Commission reps met with General Government Committee chair to discuss some internal administrative issues that can be addressed at the staff level. These are not the purpose of the meeting with General Government.

Instead, the purpose is to scope a study session with the full City Council to ensure that the Commission is doing everything it can to support the City Council in its deliberations. In addition, to share highlights of the Heritage Commission's 2019-draft work plan.

Elements of an upcoming study session could include:

- Review of work plan highlights.
- Discussion of Comprehensive Plan goals and City code provisions related to historic preservation.
- Discussion of the role and mission of the Commission and how it can add value.
- Discussion of how the Commission might better support City Council deliberations and decisions.
- Success stories of recent historic preservation work.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Historic preservation is a very important element of the City's vision for the community.

Options:

1. Hold a discussion
2. Do not hold a discussion

Financial Impact:

None

Attachments:

None