

Redevelopment of the City of Olympia's Triangle Subarea

A Westside Perspective

We, the undersigned, are residents of the Westside of Olympia. We intend to be part of the "robust analysis and public engagement" that Mayor Selby indicated will be part of the City of Olympia's Subarea planning effort. The City is scheduled to begin this effort in March, 2022.

We appreciate the efforts of Amy Buckler, the City's Strategic Project Manager, to clarify the intent of the \$250,000 grant from Commerce in support of this planning effort and to understand the shape of the Triangle subarea itself.

We agree that the northern boundary of the Subarea needs to be clarified. We also need to understand why parcels on the eastside of Division between Garfield and 4th Avenues were included in the Subarea's boundary.

We also requesting to review a draft of the RFP that the City intends to use to recruit a consultant for this planning effort and, to the extent possible, be part of the selection process. We wish to ensure that the term "blighted" is not used to describe portions of our Westside neighborhood. This term has been inappropriately used by previous City consultants. We want to ensure the selection of a consultant who understands and respects the Westside of Olympia.

Preparation for Engagement

Since November, 2021, we have taken several steps to prepare ourselves for this task of envisioning what a beneficial redevelopment could look like.

We developed a "Land Ownership Map" of the Triangle Area and met to share this with the leadership of the three Westside neighborhood associations (SWONA, NWONA & Burbank/Elliott Association).

We informed the un-represented homeowners on Bush and Jackson Avenues and many of the local businesses on Division and Harrison about the City's proposed Subarea planning.

We have sent City-generated information about this proposed planning effort to well over 200 households on the Westside.

We have discussed this planning effort with Westside neighbors in three separate Zoom discussions in January, 2022.

Our Preliminary Principles and Vision

A Public Orientation. Triangle Redevelopment must prioritize public space and community-oriented activity.

The current Triangle area south of Harrison is a private land mass of impervious parking lots dominated by big box stores owned by five out of state companies: Capital Mall Land, Capital Mall Company, WIG Properties, Cafaro NW Partnership and MGP Properties.

Whether through the use of eminent domain, easements or mandatory regulations, publicly owned land such as pocket parks, bike paths, pedestrian pathways, must be accessible to all residents.

The plan must preserve Sunrise Park, a public park off of Bush Avenue NW.

Expand the use of building space for services such as the existing Public Health (vaccination) Clinic and Thurston Regional Library. In addition, create more community services such as a community bike repair shop.

The Westside is in need of a Westside Community Center. One building on the periphery of the Triangle, the permanently closed 24 Hour Fitness Center, should be purchased by the City for a Westside Community Center. It should partner with SPSCC and Evergreen to create art and environmental learning opportunities for neighborhood residents. It could also be the site for community acupuncture, yoga and other health related services.

Housing.

Existing housing must be preserved and future housing must be affordable at below market rates.

There are approximately 60 single family homes on Bush and Jackson Avenues NW and three homes on 4th avenue SW. Preserving this housing would be in line with one of the goals of the subarea plan to "reduce pressure on single family housing."

The low-income housing complex, Evergreen Villages, must remain intact. Portions of this complex are on the northern border of the Triangle Subarea.

Future housing must be affordable to those people with incomes at 40% or less of the Area Median Income currently \$90,200. This means a maximum annual income of \$43,080 and a rent of \$900 or less.

The Thurston Housing Land Trust, the Housing Authority of Thurston County and the Low Income Housing Institute must be given top priority for any new housing in the Triangle and included in the planning process.

This is especially the case if there is new housing at the sites identified as "redevelopment sites" in the Regional Planning Council's Buildable Lands Report. These sites are currently owned by Cafaro NW Properties and WIG Properties and are between Kenyon and Cooper Point Rd south of Harrison.

The City should gift the two lots it owns on 4th Avenue to one of the above listed low income housing organizations to meet our current housing needs.

It may be possible to re-purpose office buildings for neighborhood housing. If the Department of Licensing no longer needs these buildings for office space, it may be possible to re-purpose the two buildings on 4th and Black Lake Boulevard for neighborhood housing.

There is no reason to utilize eight year property tax exemptions to meet housing needs. These exemptions only benefit the building owner, as documented by the JLARC report.

Climate Crisis Recognition.

Re-development must recognize that global warming is caused by the burning of fossil fuels. Redevelopment must be guided by climate resilience.

The preservation and planting of trees must be a part of redevelopment. The stand of trees just west of Kenyon must be preserved. It is one of the few stands of trees in the Triangle south of Harrison.

Green design elements like living roofs, all electric buildings, solar energy, rain water containment, public parks, playgrounds and community gardens and food hub need to be integrated into planning and development.

Electric vehicle charging stations need to be constructed in the Triangle.

Much of the estimated 60% to 70% of the impervious parking lots need to be repurposed and replaced with stacked parking facilities to reduce the wasteful use of land for often vacant parking space.

Transportation.

Prioritize travel by public bus, public bike lanes and walkability. Safe and convenient walkability requires a dense network of pedestrian walkways and social trails.

Connect the Grass Lake pedestrian trail to the Westside neighborhoods.

Connect the east and west borders of the Triangle to the SW neighborhood between 9th and 4th avenues and to Yauger Park over Cooper Point Rd via pedestrian bridges.

Create spaces for short term electric car and bike rentals and covered bike parking throughout the Triangle.

Establish an Intercity Transit shuttle service from the Triangle area to Sea-Tac and the Amtrak station on Yelm Highway.

Preservation and expansion of locally owned small businesses.

The uptown Westside has a vibrant core of small, locally owned businesses, many of which have been around for decades. There are viable and community oriented small businesses both outside and inside the Triangle boundary. These businesses and services are directly connected to the livability of the Westside and its neighborhood. We want to preserve all of them.

Outside of the Triangle boundary there are small businesses like the Hash House, Westside

Tavern, Westside Hair and Nail Salon and Tony's convenience store, Eagan's, Olympia Framemakers and many others.

Inside the Triangle Boundary near the corner of Harrison and Division alone, there are small businesses like Terry's Automotive and Alignment, the food and service businesses in the Westside Mini Mall and the Westgate Center building, as well as California Taco truck. On the north side of Harrison, we have Vic's Pizza on Division and the Grocery Outlet in the Westside Mall, the Olympia Furniture Company, the Mediterranean Breeze Turkish Restaurant and many others.

We also support the presence and expansion of locally-owned businesses inside the existing Capital Mall area south of Harrison.

Conclusion

We look forward to the beginning of the City's planning and receiving a draft of the Consultant RFP.

Please put our names and emails on the official "parties of record" list and keep us informed of your progress.

If you have any initial responses to this statement, please address it and all future City correspondence to all of our below-listed email addresses.

Sincerely (SIGNED),

<i>Olivia Archibald</i>	<i>Robin Healy</i>	<i>Thomas Parnell</i>
<i>Karma Arslanian</i>	<i>Ann Heitkemper</i>	<i>Ann Margaret Phelps</i>
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<i>Elizabeth Baldo, RN</i>	<i>Ryan Hollander</i>	<i>Talauna Reed</i>
<i>Judy Bardin</i>	<i>Jill Ivie</i>	<i>Janis Rich</i>
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<i>Chris Ciancetta</i>	<i>Helen Lee</i>	<i>George Sullivan</i>
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<i>Gilman Jim & Jennifer Grant</i>	<i>Nelson John Newman</i>	<i>Kyle Witmer</i>
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<i>Joan Harlow</i>	<i>Tyler Nugent</i>	<i>Nancy Young</i>
<i>Kathy Harrigan</i>	<i>Judy Olmstead</i>	<i>Barbara Young</i>
<i>Dave Harris</i>	<i>Jennifer Olson</i>	<i>Annie Youngblood</i>
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