

Thurston County and City of Olympia Joint Plan



**An Element of the Thurston County
Comprehensive Plan and
The City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan**

2023 Update

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Maya Teeple, Senior Planner
Leah Davis, Associate Planner

City of Olympia Staff

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Debbie Sullivan, Assistant City Manager
Leonard Bauer, FAICP, Director
Tim Smith, AICP, Deputy Director
Joyce Phillips, AICP, Principal Planner
Cari Hornbein, AICP, Senior Planner

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Foreword

Thurston County, with the Cities of Tumwater, Olympia, and Lacey initially agreed upon the process of joint planning in the 1988 *Memorandum of Understanding: An Urban Growth Management Agreement*. This agreement established short- and long-term urban growth areas for the Cities of Tumwater, Olympia, and Lacey and outlined a process for Thurston County to jointly plan for these areas with each City.

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act. The Act requires Thurston County and each of its Cities to adopt a Comprehensive Plan and to establish a 20-year urban growth boundary jointly for each urban area. To guide this planning effort, the Act mandated Thurston County to create County-Wide Planning Policies.

Thurston County adopted County-Wide Planning Policies in 1992 in collaboration with its cities and towns. The Policies reaffirmed joint planning would be used to plan for each City's urban growth area. In 1993 representatives of Thurston County and its cities and towns met to clarify the intent of the County-Wide Planning Policies and affirm the long- and short-term urban growth boundaries established in the 1988 *Memorandum of Understanding: An Urban Growth Management*. The Policies state that changes to these boundaries may be proposed through the joint planning process.

This Joint Plan reflects a major update to the City of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan which was completed in 2014. It accommodates changes since the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was adopted and the changes projected over the next 20 years. Over 1,500 community members participated. Under the GMA the City may amend the Plan annually, and must review the entire Plan and amend it as necessary every 8 years.

Introduction to the Joint Plan



View of the Capitol Building from Heritage Park Fountain

The Joint Plan builds upon our community's values and our vision for the future. The goals and policies in this document provide high-level direction for actions the City, County, and other community members may take to realize these values and vision. Goals and policies (including maps) also guide budgets, master plans, development regulations and other decisions.

As many as 20,000 additional people are expected to join our community over the next two decades. This Plan is our strategy for maintaining and enhancing our high quality of life and environment while accommodating expected growth. Most readily-buildable parcels in the City and Urban Growth Area are already developed to some degree. Thus, over the next 20 years, we expect to see more infill and redevelopment of existing developed areas. This presents our community with opportunities to restore degraded environments, create vibrant pockets of social and economic activity, and target investments to make more efficient use of and improve existing infrastructure.

How to Use this Document

The Olympia Joint Plan has been created to outline a shared vision of Thurston County and the City of Olympia for the Urban Growth Area. The Joint Plan outlines goals and supportive policies to achieve the shared vision as the city expands.

Until areas of the Urban Growth Area are incorporated into the City, some of the regulations adopted by each jurisdiction will naturally differ. As a unique geographic area with differing population, land uses and densities, Thurston County will maintain separate Capital Facilities Plan, Critical Areas Ordinance, Shoreline Master Program, as well as other regulatory documents.

Chapters

1. Introduction to the Joint Plan
2. Community Values & Vision
3. Public Participation and Partners
4. Natural Environment
5. Land Use and Urban Design
6. Transportation
7. Utilities
8. Economy
9. Public Health, Arts, Parks and Recreation
10. Public Services

There are many issues that connect these chapters. For example:

- The Land Use Chapter, in conjunction with Public Participation & Partners, Natural Environment, Transportation, Parks, Utilities, and Economy and chapters, all provide basic policy guidance for land use regulations outlined in codes. They describe generally where various types of land uses should occur, how intense they may be and how designed; types and locations of environmentally sensitive areas to be protected; and the general types of transportation, utility and park facilities that are planned, including locations for major facilities. More specifically:
 - Policies related to trees exist in the Natural Environment chapter as well as under Land Use and Urban Design, Transportation, Utilities and even Economy. Policies related to walk-ability are included under both Land Use and Urban Design and Transportation.
 - Policies related to walk-ability are included under both Land Use and Urban Design and Transportation.
- Various chapters include policies that influence County and City services, including fire, police, affordable housing, arts, recreation, volunteer services and overall public engagement in civic affairs.

If viewing an electronic version, use the 'search' function to find all of the policies related to specific topics.

Goals and Policies

The goals in this Plan identify what we hope to achieve as a community. Some goals will take longer than others to realize. Policies describe how the County and City will act in a broad sense to achieve these goals.

While some policies take a prescriptive approach by outlining what the County or City will specifically 'require' to achieve a goal, other policies present a more flexible approach whereby the City or County will 'encourage' or 'support' an action. Each type of approach has inherent trade-offs. Overall, the policy approach within the Plan aims to balance these trade-offs while meeting community goals.

Sometimes a more flexible policy approach improves the capability of achieving certain goals. Having some flexibility over the 20-year planning period enables the County or City to respond more quickly when environmental or market conditions change. It also allows for tailoring implementation to geographic or land use type conditions at the zoning level. For example, a policy in the Plan states the City will require development to incorporate measures that reduce risks associated with rising sea levels. The policy includes, as an example, higher finished floor elevations, but does not specify what that particular measure will be. In order to respond appropriately to sea level rise, the City will need an adaptive strategy based on new information. The same adaptive methodology applies to policies regarding infill development. In order to meet our vision of a more vibrant and pedestrian-friendly downtown, the City will need flexibility to respond to changing market conditions over the 20-year planning period.

Where the County or City does not establish requirements, it may 'encourage' or 'support' actions. For example, one policy encourages the use of fruit and nut trees to support food self-sufficiency. This policy demonstrates the City's recognition of community support for trees that provide food, while also allowing flexibility for implementation through incentives or partnerships rather than regulation. To require fruit trees at the broad Plan level could hamper other goals during the implementation phase that call for providing a variety of tree species throughout neighborhoods and planting the right tree in the right place.

At times, goals or policies may seem to be in conflict with each other. For example, a goal to increase density may seem to be in conflict with a goal to preserve open space. Or a goal to increase tree canopy may seem to be in conflict with a goal to increase solar energy access. Over the next 20 years, the complex challenges and opportunities we face as a community will often require

us to strike a balance between different goals and policies to provide the best outcome for the community as a whole. Thus, individual goals and policies should always be considered within the context of the entire Plan.

Throughout each and every year, County and City officials, along with the public, make a range of decisions about how community resources will be used and managed, and how both public and private development will occur. Community plans and programs often result from conscientious balancing among divergent interests based on the facts and context of a particular situation and on the entire set of Comprehensive Plan goals. Balancing these goals in a way that provides the best overall community benefit requires careful consideration, based on an understanding of multiple community objectives, the specific context and potential impacts.

This type of strategic decision-making can often lead to a selection of options that realize multiple goals. For example, when we protect the quality of our air and water, we improve our health and attract long-term investment in our community.

This Joint Plan will often refer to “Olympia”, “Olympians”, and our community. It is important to note that in the context of this plan we are most often referring to the City of Olympia (city limits and residents) **and** the unincorporated lands and people in the Urban Growth Area.



Beautiful sunshine display at Procession of the Species.

The Local Planning & Development Process

Local planning depends heavily on community involvement. Public engagement is essential for many reasons, including that it provides for more holistic perspectives on decisions that affect the entire community and it protects peoples' rights to influence public policy. In fact, the Growth Management Act calls for broad public involvement in creating and amending Comprehensive Plans and implementing development regulations.

Local planning is a phased process that also operates within a framework of federal, state, county and city laws. Our local codes and other decisions must be consistent with these laws, in addition to Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. For example, both the U.S. and Washington State Constitutions include private property rights that must be respected by local government agencies.

Development codes to implement the Joint Plan may be amended at any time during the year, but only following a public process guided by both state and local standards. The Board of County Commissioners makes final decisions on plan and code amendments for lands outside of municipal city limits. Typically, the Planning Commission holds a public hearing and makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Joint Plan or implementing development codes. There may be times when

Thurston County and the City of Olympia hold joint meetings in order to address issues that impact both entities.

There are further opportunities for the public to provide input and influence site-specific permitting decisions; however public influence may be more constrained at this stage. This is because site specific permit decisions are largely based on whether or not proposals are consistent with established local codes and other laws. This gives predictability to both community members and developers, consistent with the intent of the Growth Management Act.


See the Public Participation & Partners Chapter for more information on how to get involved.

Context for the Joint Plan

In the early 1990s, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) was passed in response to rapid and sprawling growth in many parts of the state that was causing a decrease in quality of life, negative effects on the environment, and increased costs for municipal infrastructure and maintenance. Revision of our Comprehensive Plan was a requirement under GMA and Thurston County and the City of Olympia adopted a revised Comprehensive Plan under the Act in 1994, which applied to both the city limits and the unincorporated lands in the Olympia Urban Growth Area (UGA).

This Joint Plan is based largely on the City of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan and applies to the unincorporated lands in the UGA. The purpose of the Joint Plan is to provide consistent policy direction for both the city limits and the UGA regarding how the greater Olympia community will grow over the next twenty years.

The GMA requires most urban counties and cities in the state to prepare comprehensive plans to address how they will manage expected growth. It directs urban areas, like Olympia, to absorb more of the state's population growth than rural areas, thereby preserving forests, animal habitat, farmland, and other important lands. Focusing growth in urban areas also reduces traffic, pollution, and the costs of providing city services that protect the health, safety and quality of life of community members.

The GMA defines [13 goals](#)  to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans. These focus on "smart growth" principles that maximize use of land and existing utilities, protect historic and natural resources, and lower traffic and housing costs. Fortunately, Olympia has been taking this approach for a long time.

In many ways, our earlier plans created the community we have today. For example, during community outreach for the 1994 plan, residents expressed a desire for Olympia to become a “City of Trees.” In response, the community developed several goals and policies to guide a new Olympia Urban Forestry Program. Since then, we’ve planted thousands of street trees, and been consistently recognized by the National Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA.



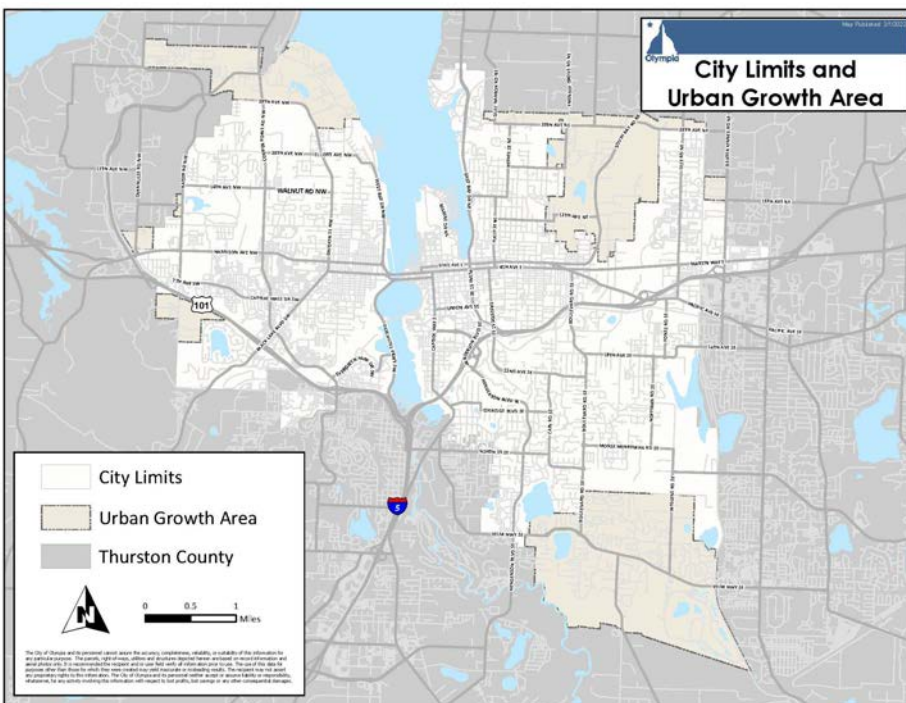
Community members planting trees at the 1000 Trees in One Day event on March 28, 2008.

A Changing Community

Since the 1970s, the population and economy of the Puget Sound region has been growing. The county’s population more than doubled between 1980 and 2010. Forecasters expect Olympia’s population and employment will continue to increase over the next 20 years. In 2010, the estimated population of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area was 58,310 residents. Forecasters expect our population will increase to 84,400 by 2035, a rate of approximately 3% per year. A majority of this increase will be due to in-migration. People are attracted to living here because we have a relatively stable economy, a beautiful environment, friendly and safe neighborhoods, good schools and lower living


costs than our neighbors to the north. Many of these new residents will work within the current City limits and the unincorporated Urban Growth Area.

Olympia and its Urban Growth Boundaries



Map of Olympia and its Urban Growth Boundaries

In 2012, Olympia's urban area was about 16,000 acres. This includes about 12,000 acres within City limits and 4,000 acres in the unincorporated area, which may eventually be annexed into the City. In cooperation with Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater, Thurston County has established and periodically reviews Urban Growth Areas. In these areas, urban growth is encouraged; outside of them, rural densities and services will be maintained.

Much of the land in the City is already developed, but there is still adequate room to accommodate our expected population and employment growth. This land capacity analysis can be found in the Thurston County [Buildable Lands Report](#) .

Preserving our Sense of Place and Connections

As we grow and face change, Olympians want to preserve the unique qualities and familiarity of our community. We draw a sense of place from the special features of our city: walk-able neighborhoods, historic buildings, views of the mountains, Capitol and Puget Sound, and our connected social fabric. These features help us identify with our community, enrich us, and make us want to invest here socially, economically and emotionally.

During development of the City's Plan, many people expressed a desire to maintain a "small town feel." Olympians want to feel connected to each other and to our built and natural environment. They want to live in a friendly and safe community where they know their neighbors and shopkeepers, and run into friends along the sidewalk. They value harmony with nature, thriving small businesses, places to gather and celebrate, and an inclusive local government.

Olympians expressed that they are willing to accept growth as long as our environment and sense of place is preserved. That means protecting the places and culture that we recognize as "Olympia," even if those things are a little different for each of us. It also means focusing on our community values and vision as we grow.

Sea Level Rise

Over the next twenty years, sea level rise will continue to be a key challenge facing Olympia, and therefore a key priority. A portion of the Olympia Urban Growth Area abuts Budd Inlet on the Puget Sound.

Olympia has recognized its vulnerability and has been preparing for sea level rise since 1990, long before many recognized it as a major threat to waterfront communities. The City has consistently made it a priority to track the continuing evolution of science in this arena, and apply those findings to Olympia. Our ongoing response to the threat encompasses both long-term strategic and near-term tactical investments. The City of Olympia is and will continue to be a recognized leader in climate change and sea level rise response.

Scientific information regarding climate change and sea level rise is incomplete and will probably remain so for some time. Regardless, we must prepare and respond. Forecast models for the timing and height of sea level rise vary, but the models agree that sea level rise is inevitable on a global scale. We will continue to work with regional and State experts to understand the potential magnitude of South Puget Sound sea changes.

Current science indicates that sea levels may rise between 11 and 39 inches by 2100. These sea level increases will affect our shorelines during the peaks of high tides. Residents can anticipate higher high tides during the extreme tidal cycles that occur several times a year as well as during major low-pressure weather systems. A combination of extreme high tides and low atmospheric pressure can currently result in downtown flooding. City staff monitors and manages these events and will continue to do so.

The need for heightened community awareness, education and response regarding sea rise will only increase in the years to come. The wide range of potential sea rise necessitates a portfolio of response strategies. The implementation of a particular strategy will hinge upon both the timing and the extent of future sea rise. Strategies will build upon previous approaches as climate change and sea level rise evolve. Responses will be technically vigilant but not overly reactive. Processing and sharing emerging information will be vital to the successful response.

Sea level rise is a regional challenge. Many of us rely upon our regionally important downtown, its services and associated shorelines. Actions taken to adapt to sea level rise will require close coordination with the State of Washington and Port of Olympia, key shoreline property owners, downtown business owners and the LOTT Clean Water Alliance, operator of the regional wastewater treatment plant. Partnerships in our governments and communities will become increasingly important as we seek to implement strategies and responses.

As a waterfront city, sea level rise response will be a key priority for Olympia over the next two decades and beyond. In order to make timely long-term decisions, our community needs to understand the dynamics of climate change and sea level rise. Thurston County and the City of Olympia will develop, communicate, and implement strong yet adaptable responses. We will work together.

Technical and planning information regarding Olympia's response to climate change and sea level rise is available on the City webpage.

Other Key Challenges

In addition to sea level rise, there are other major global, national and local influences that present both challenges and opportunities for our local

community. Implementation of the vision and goals in this Plan will require creative solutions so that Olympia and its Urban Growth Area can:

Become a More Sustainable City: As the capital of the State of Washington, Olympia has a unique opportunity to show leadership on key issues in the State, such as sustainability. The City needs to make investments based on an integrated framework that compares lifecycle costs and benefits of all City investments and to encourage sustainable practices by individuals and organizations through education, technical assistance, and incentives.

Accommodate Growth: Increased growth in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area is anticipated. Community members need to integrate the: quality of new residences, demographics, likely places of residence, housing typology, and prevention of rural and city sprawl. In addition, community members need to identify housing and service programs for increased populations of seniors and homeless.

Conserve and Protect Limited Natural Resources: As we grow and become a higher density city, our land and water supplies will need to support more people. We can take advantage of growth as a tool to reshape our community into a more sustainable form; to do so we must balance growth, use our resources wisely, and consider the carrying capacity of the land. The Urban Growth Area was created as a transitional zone from urban to rural density. It is also the area where more intensive development should be targeted. In order to increase the density in a more sustainable way, urban utility services will need to extend into the Urban Growth Area as uses intensify.

Address Climate Change: The impetus of the sea level rise challenge described above is climate change. Rising global greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to the melting of the polar ice caps, rising sea levels and more frequent extreme weather events. Thurston County and the City of Olympia are committed to working with the public and other regional partners to take actions that will reduce our community's overall greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for changing climate.

Fund a Long-term Vision: The economy fluctuates and funding circumstances change. This affects our ability to carry out planned actions over the years. Present resources are already stretched thin, and there is little ability to take on new programs without new revenue sources. We must identify funding strategies, explore operating efficiencies and develop partnerships to provide the diversity and flexibility to fund our vision.



Young Olympians working together to plant a tree.

For More Information

- The [Washington State Growth Management Act](#) establishes rules to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations that shape growth over a 20-year horizon.
- The [Buildable Lands Report](#) prepared for Thurston County by the staff of the Thurston Regional Planning Council helps Thurston County and the City of Olympia to determine the quantity of land to provide for population and employment growth.
- Learn more about how the [City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan](#) guides City actions.
- The [City's Action Plan](#) includes a collaborative public process for selecting specific actions to carry out the Comprehensive Plan, and includes timeframes, partnerships and performance measures.

Current and past technical analyses and reports regarding sea level rise in Olympia can be reviewed on the [City's Sea Level Rise](#) webpage.

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Community Values & Vision

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that Olympia resides within the traditional lands of the Steh-Chass band of indigenous people of the Squaxin Island Tribe, who were removed from their land for the settlement that became Olympia. The Tribe has offered these words for acknowledgement:

"The Squaxin Island Tribe's habitation of what is now Olympia spans thousands of years. The ancestral families who lived and thrived here named it Steh-Chass, and occupied prosperous villages along the shores. Archeological findings of ancestral artifacts in the area suggest habitation by Squaxin ancestors since the retreat of the glaciers during the last Ice Age. Today, the Squaxin people continue stewardship of these ancestral lands, from the Deschutes watershed and what is now Budd Inlet. The Steh-Chass (Squaxin) continue to call themselves 'People of the Water' because of the bounty of the region's waterways and artesian waters, which have sustained the people for millennia."

Thurston County and the City of Olympia will continue to strengthen our government-to-government relationship with the Squaxin Island Tribe to support our shared environmental, economic, and community goals.

We acknowledge our history of racially restrictive covenants, redlining, and displacement of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). We acknowledge that our historic population of Chinese Olympians, who built much of Olympia's original infrastructure, were actively excluded through anti-Chinese sentiment and restrictive immigration laws, resulting in the loss of Olympia's once thriving Chinatown and a dwindling Chinese population. These institutional and systemic barriers are still prevalent and have resulted in a lack of equitable access to resources and opportunities. We are dedicated to rebuilding trust through reconciliation and making ongoing efforts to remove these barriers.

Our Vision for the Future:

We envision a future where this is a diverse and inclusive community, a robust and resilient local economy, and a strong multicultural arts and heritage presence for all to enjoy.

To build a truly livable and vibrant community, we understand that we must provide equitable access to the necessities of life, including housing, mobility, food, services, education, and meaningful work. We must consider the diverse needs of our residents in planning long-term growth and development, considering both quantitative and qualitative data from our community to drive decision making. Giving everyone an opportunity to participate in the civic, economic, and cultural life of the city will lead to greater quality of life and sustainable local economy.

We recognize that equity is essential to all areas of the Joint Plan and are committed to working to eliminate inequity in our community.

Public Participation and Partners

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value their right to participate in government, and to engage in meaningful, open and respectful community dialogue regarding decisions that affect our community.

Our Vision for the Future:

Through collaborative and open discussions, Olympians embrace a shared responsibility to make our community a better place.

Thurston County and the City of Olympia place a high priority on engaging community members early and often and regularly demonstrates how the voices of the community are heard. We engage the public in major decisions through a variety of methods, including community conversations, public forums, and interest-based negotiation, and makes sure these community members know how their input was used

Our Natural Environment

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value our role as stewards of the water, air, land, vegetation, and animals around us, and believe it is our responsibility to our children and grandchildren to restore, protect, and enhance the exceptional natural environment that surrounds us.

Our Vision for the Future:

A beautiful, natural setting that is preserved and enhanced.

Our unique natural setting will continue to make Washington State's capital great. By working closely with surrounding governments, we can successfully preserve, protect and restore the natural heritage we share.

As a result, we will enjoy a dense tree canopy that will beautify our neighborhoods, and improve our health, environmental quality and economy.. Though our population will increase, our air and water will be cleaner and wildlife habitat will be preserved to maintain a biologically healthy diversity of species. Salmon will return and spawn in the streams where they were born. Seals, sea lions, orcas, and otters will roam the waters of southern Puget Sound.

Land Use and Urban Design

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value neighborhoods with distinct identities; historic buildings and places; a walkable and comfortable downtown; increased urban green space; locally produced food; and public spaces for community members in neighborhoods, downtown, and along our shorelines.

Our Vision for the Future:

A vibrant community.

Olympia will work to create "nodes" of higher density and mixed-use development in specific locations along our urban corridor. We will encourage infill projects and remodeling of older structures; in turn we will begin to create a more walkable community, where historic buildings and neighborhoods are valued, preserved, and adapted to new uses.

Well-implemented neighborhood sub-area planning will help us determine unique neighborhood assets to protect and enhance; where and how to increase density and retain green space; and develop safe and convenient access to everything from grocery stores, to schools, neighborhood parks, community gardens and neighborhood gathering places.

Transportation

What Olympia Values:

Olympians want a transportation system that can move people and goods through the community safely while conserving energy and with minimal environmental impacts. We want it to connect to our homes, businesses and gathering spaces and promote healthy neighborhoods.

Our Vision for the Future:

Complete streets that move people, not just cars.

Biking & Walking: Olympians, both young and old, will be able to walk or bike to work, school, shopping, and recreation. Bike lanes and sidewalks will be safely integrated and often buffered from traffic along arterials and collectors throughout the city. Pedestrians and bicyclists will use trails and pathways built through open areas, between neighborhoods, and along shorelines. Sidewalks, both in compact, mixed-use neighborhoods and downtown, will encourage walkers to stop at shops and squares in lively centers near their homes. Trees and storefront awnings will line the streets.

Commuting: We envision a future in which nearly all residents will live within walking distance of a bus stop, and most people will commute by foot, bicycle, transit or carpool. Drivers will use small vehicles fueled by renewable resources. Electric buses will arrive every ten minutes at bus stops along all major arterials.

Parking: Parking lots for car commuters will be located on the edges of downtown, hidden from view by offices and storefronts. Variable pricing of street meters and off-street lots will ensure that parking is available for workers, shoppers and visitors. Short and long-term bike parking will be conveniently located. Throughout town, streets will provide room for both bike lanes and parking, and will be designed to slow traffic.

ADA Compliance: Our transportation system will be accessible to people of all abilities and aligned with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Safety: Because slower speeds will be encouraged, and crosswalks and intersections will be safer, deaths and injuries from collisions will be nearly eliminated.

Utilities

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value a drinking water supply that is owned and controlled by the City. We want wastewater and stormwater treated effectively before it is reclaimed or discharged into Puget Sound. We understand and value the role that 'reuse, reduction and recycling' plays in our effort to conserve energy and materials.

Our Vision for the Future:

Clean, plentiful water and significant reduction of waste.

Through careful planning, improved efficiency of our drinking water use and rates that encourage conservation, we will be able to meet the water needs of our future population. Our improved water treatment and reduced wastewater and storm water discharge will support abundant aquatic life in Budd Inlet and our local streams.

We will place less pressure on our local landfills, thanks to state and national packaging standards, local solid waste incentives, and the voluntary actions of our community members. A majority of Olympia households will be using urban organic compost on their landscapes. Artificial fertilizers no longer contaminate local water bodies.

Public Health, Parks, Arts and Recreation

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value the role parks, open space, recreation and art play in our lives; as these contribute to our sense of community, and to our physical, spiritual and emotional well-being.

Our Vision for the Future:

A healthy, fun and enriching place to live.

Places where we can move: The many parks and open spaces throughout our community will be key to maintaining the health of our children, and all Olympians. The Olympia School District will work with the City and County to allow maximum feasible public use of School District gyms and playgrounds.

A biking city: Olympia will be continually expanding and upgrading its bicycle facility network and will see major increases in bike use, for both commuting and recreation. In selected areas where cyclists tend to concentrate, the City will provide separated bike facilities.

Olympians walk – everywhere: We envision a city in which all neighborhoods have sidewalks on at least one side of major collector streets. This, along with more pedestrian crossing improvements and neighborhood pathways, traffic calming devices, and enforcement of traffic laws, will contribute to a dramatic increase of walking in Olympia.

An arts magnet: The City will continue to sponsor and support music and art events and festivals, which attract residents and visitors from throughout the area. The City will take advantage of provisions in state law to fund art throughout the Olympia area.

Economy

What Olympia Values:

Olympians recognize the importance of our quality of life to a healthy economy. We value our status as Washington State's capital, as well as our community businesses as a source of family wage jobs, goods and services, and various other contributions that help us meet community goals.

Our Vision for the Future:

Olympia's economy is healthy due to a diverse mix of new and existing employment sectors, in addition to being the center of state government.

Because of our careful planning our economy will remain stable, especially when compared to similar cities throughout the state and region. Our work to strengthen regional shopping nodes, such as the area around Capital Mall, will provide high-density housing, transit, pedestrian and bicycle access, making our state capital a popular destination to live, work, play and study.

Entrepreneurs, attracted to an urban environment with an open and accepting culture, will create new start-ups that diversify our job market and economy, making us less vulnerable to downturns in state government.

Meanwhile, on the city's outskirts, small farms will continue to expand. Local food producers will further diversify local employment opportunities and help local residents and businesses be less vulnerable to the rising cost of imported food.

Public Services

What Olympia Values:

Olympia residents value the protection our law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services provide. They also support codes that enforce efforts to maintain neighborhood quality, adequate and affordable housing for all residents, community gathering places, and recreational centers.

Our Vision for the Future:

Responsive services and affordable housing for all.

Adopting "affordable" housing program criteria will help assure all residents can meet their basic housing needs. We believe this will contribute to a regional goal to end homelessness. In turn, this would contribute to reducing the cost of policing and social services and make Olympia more attractive for businesses and visitors.

The strong code enforcement programs that will emerge from community involvement in every neighborhood will help protect the safety and distinct identity of all neighborhoods.

Public Participation and Partners



Community members talk about their priorities at an Imagine Olympia event

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value their right to participate in city government, and to engage in meaningful, open and respectful community dialogue regarding decisions that affect our community.

Our Vision for the Future:

Through collaborative and open discussions, Olympians embrace a shared responsibility to make our community a better place.

Introduction

Successful communities face their challenges collectively and harness the energy of different stakeholders. Without diverse participation in community decision-making, it is all too easy to descend into political gridlock over difficult problems.

The voices of residents, local business owners and organizations provide the perspective and information that are absolutely essential to effective planning and decision-making regarding issues that will shape our community for generations to come. For this reason, the City has a strong, ongoing program to reach out and partner with all sectors of the community.

Thurston County and the City have found cooperative relationships between members of the community and policy-makers that will continue to be essential if we are to achieve the collective vision and goals described in this Plan. It understands and makes use of effective and tested methods for encouraging community members to engage at multiple levels as we continue to look for creative solutions to the challenges we all share.



A young person enjoys a beautiful day in Olympia.

Public Participation is Essential

Active participation in civic affairs is an important part of life, and the County and City have a long history of providing a forum for community members to get involved. Our open government policies are essential to ensure residents, business owners, employees and other community members are able to effectively participate in any number of issues.



Young people having fun at a community event.

There are several ways to participate in local government planning and decision-making in Olympia and Thurston County:

- Serve on an advisory board. There are several volunteer advisory boards that study critical issues and provide careful advice to the County Commissioners and City Council.
- Testify at a public hearing, share your opinion in a letter, or participate in a community workshop or meeting. The County and City keep calendars and post online agendas of such events.
- Volunteer in one of many programs aimed at helping the community help itself, such as Stream Team, Volunteers in Police Services and Volunteers in Parks. Participate in planning for a “sub-area” that could include your own neighborhood. As Olympia grows and changes, the County and City will be collaborating with local residents and business owners to make key planning decisions on roads, walkways, bike paths, housing densities, and transit – to name a few.
Join the [Thurston County Planning Commission](#).
- Vote.

Public outreach is essential, but also challenging. Some key challenges include:

- Our population is more diverse than ever, but our outreach resources are limited.
- Our desire to be responsive to community concerns must be balanced with very real legal and fiscal constraints, finite resources, and with our responsibility to make decisions for the overall public good, rather than for the benefit of individuals.
- Residents, business owners, and local organizations need to understand the land-use development process so they can be involved in a meaningful way.

To address these challenges, the County and City are always looking for new and creative ways to engage the community, including using new technologies, such as social media, online discussion portals and high-quality visual maps. We strive to create clear, concise and jargon-free information so that people from all walks of life can easily and quickly understand the issues and provide input. We hope this will inspire partnerships that will help the community to pool its resources so that needed changes can be made more quickly and efficiently.



A community member discusses neighborhood issues with staff at a public meeting.

Goals and Policies

GP1 The County, City, individual community members, other agencies and organizations all have a role in helping accomplish the vision and goals of the Joint Plan.

GP2 People of all ages, backgrounds and physical abilities can access public meetings and information.

PP2.1 Make information and outreach materials available through a variety of means.

PP2.2 Use and consistently evaluate new technologies to improve ways for community members to receive information and provide input.

PP2.3 Evaluate and pursue creative methods to inform and engage community members and under-represented groups who may not ordinarily get involved in civic affairs.

GP3 County and City decision processes are transparent and enable effective participation of the public.

PP3.1 Support and encourage County and City staff and other community leaders to strengthen their capacity to design and implement effective public involvement strategies.

PP3.2 Help the general public understand the structure of local government, how decisions are made, and how they can become involved.

PP3.3 Give community members, neighborhoods, and other interested parties opportunities to get involved early in land use decision-making processes. Encourage or require applicants to meet with affected community members and organizations.

PP3.4 Create structured opportunities for people to learn about local issues, share their experiences and motivations, and discuss public issues productively.

PP3.5 Develop public participation plans when amending or updating the Joint Plan, subarea plans, or master plans. Develop public participation or communication plans for other major projects.

PP3.6 Amend County and City Comprehensive Plans each year to incorporate the updated Capital Improvement Program's Capital Facilities Elements and act upon other proposed changes to the Plans. Adopt these amendments only after notifying the public and providing opportunities for public comment.

PP3.7 Seek input from the community, including neighborhood associations and other groups, before final decisions are made to site public and private utility facilities, especially when they may have a significant impact.

PP3.8 Respect property owners’ legal rights when implementing this plan. Regulations should provide for compensation for the property owner or waivers from requirements if the implementation of the regulation would otherwise constitute a legally defined “taking.”

GP4 Community members and other key stakeholders feel their opinions and ideas are heard, valued, and used by policy makers, advisory committees, and staff.

PP4.1 Build trust among all segments of the community through collaborative and inclusive decision making.

PP4.2 Replace or complement the three-minute, one-way testimony format with an approach that allows meaningful dialogue between and among community members, stakeholders, City Council members, advisory boards, and staff.


PP4.3 Clearly define public participation goals and choose strategies specifically designed to meet those goals.

PP4.4 Evaluate public participation strategies to measure their effectiveness in meeting desired goals.

PP4.5 Select strategies from the full spectrum of public participation tools and techniques.

Our Partners:

Strong Interjurisdictional Partnerships Help Our Region Thrive

The County and City have strong planning partnerships with other area jurisdictions, and these have helped our region thrive. [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)  (TRPC), plays an important role in fostering this collaboration. TRPC consists of decision makers from numerous jurisdictions and organizations in Thurston County who meet regularly to discuss important regional issues. They also prepare a variety of plans and studies on environmental quality, land use and transportation, demographic trends, and other issues – all of which provide a framework for making informed decisions. Its work has influenced many parts of this Plan.

Because the County and City recognize that our community is affected by forces outside our jurisdictional borders, we regularly coordinate with other cities. We share [County-Wide Planning Policies](#), which ensure our comprehensive plans are coordinated and consistent. These policies express shared regional goals to:

- Improve livability
- Preserve and enhance the quality of our environment
- Preserve open spaces
- Offer varied and affordable housing
- Provide high-quality urban services at the lowest possible cost
- Plan for development in the urban growth area so that upon annexation, these areas transition from the county to cities (from rural to urban) in an organized way



Kids plant a tree sapling at a local park.

In addition to our County-Wide Planning Policies, the cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater work with Thurston County to establish and periodically review Urban Growth Areas, where high density, urban growth is encouraged (See Land Use and Design chapter.)

Olympia's Urban Growth Area includes areas in unincorporated Thurston County the City expects to eventually annex. For this reason, it's important for the City of Olympia and Thurston County to establish common zoning and development regulations for these areas and avoid annexations that create illogical boundaries, which increase the cost of city services. The City and County periodically review the Urban Growth Boundary to get an accurate picture of future urban development.

Because this Plan applies to unincorporated Thurston County lands, it guides Thurston County decisions within Olympia Urban Growth Areas. This Plan applies to these overlapping areas and is referred to as the "Joint Plan" for Olympia's Urban Growth Area and are also part of the [Thurston County Comprehensive Plan](#).

The County and City work closely with policy-makers from the State of Washington, Port of Olympia, Olympia School District and other jurisdictions to share information and collaborate when public resources can be pooled.

The goals and policies below relate to partnerships focused on growth management.

Goals and Policies

GP6 Accommodate growth in a way consistent with the regional goals expressed in [County-Wide Planning Policies](#).

PP6.1 Cooperate with other municipalities to ensure comprehensive plans are coordinated and consistent.

PP6.2 Cooperate with the cities of Lacey and Tumwater to ensure our Urban Growth Boundaries are consistent with [County-Wide Planning Policies](#).

PP6.3 Work together on land-use designations for unincorporated county areas within the city's Urban Growth Boundary so they will be compatible with the City's policies and development standards when they are annexed.

PP6.4 Coordinate the hearings and actions of the Olympia and Thurston County planning commissions when amendments are proposed to the City's Comprehensive Plan that could affect unincorporated growth areas.

PP6.5 Participate in a County-wide "transfer of development rights" program in which some portion of the density range within low-density residential districts is achievable through purchase of transferred development rights.

PP6.6 Periodically compare housing densities to establish density targets, update population forecasts, and adjust zoning requirements and incentives if needed.

GP7 Logical boundaries and reasonable service areas are created when areas within the Urban Growth Area are annexed.

PP7.1 All property within the Urban Growth Boundary may be annexed into the City.

PP7.2 Provide urban utilities (sewer/water) to annexed properties and encourage them to connect.

PP7.3 Evaluate the Urban Growth Boundary and consider removing properties unlikely to develop at urban densities in the future.

PP7.4 Before annexing areas, evaluate the City's capacity to provide services efficiently and effectively.

PP7.5 Avoid annexations that create "islands" of unincorporated land within city limits.

PP7.6 Evaluate all proposed annexations on the basis of their short- and long-term community impacts and how they adhere to the City Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies. If a proposed annexation includes proposed development, analyze its short- and long-term impacts on the neighborhood and city, including all required water, sewer, roads, schools, open spaces, police and fire protection, garbage collection and other services.

PP7.7 Confer and assess the potential impacts and boundary issues of proposed annexations with special districts and other jurisdictions. Resolve boundary issues with affected jurisdictions before taking any final action on a formal annexation petition.

PP7.8 Use readily identifiable boundaries, such as lakes, rivers, streams, railroads, and highways, for annexation boundaries wherever practical.

PP7.9 County and City staff should work together to make sure the standards for utilities, roads, and services in the urban growth areas are compatible.

PP7.10 Provide that applicants for annexation pay their fair share for any utility and service extension and development, as well as for capital facilities needed to provide these services.

PP7.11 Require that all fees and charges be paid or payment arrangements be made prior to annexation. Property owners within an annexing area may be required to assume a share of the city's bonded indebtedness.

PP7.12 Discourage annexations for the sole purpose of obtaining approval of uses not allowed by County regulations unless the proposal is consistent with an adopted joint plan and with City standards and policies.

PP7.13 Decisions on requests to increase the size of a proposed annexation must be made by the City Council on a case-by-case basis. It may expand proposed boundaries if:

- The expanded annexation would create logical boundaries and service areas; or
- Without the proposed annexation, the additional area was unlikely to be annexed in the foreseeable future; or

For More Information

- State and local laws establish minimum requirements for public participation. Such laws include: parts of the [Growth Management Act](#) (GMA) and [State Environmental Policy Act](#) (SEPA), the [Open Public Meetings Act](#), [Public Records Act](#), and Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code.
- The Washington State [Growth Management Act](#) establishes rules to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations that shape growth over a 20-year horizon.
- [County-Wide Planning Policies](#) establish how Thurston County and the cities and towns within will work together to achieve our regional goals.
- The [Buildable Lands Report](#) prepared for Thurston County by the staff of the [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#) helps Olympia to determine the quantity of land to provide for population and employment growth.
- The parts of this Plan that apply within unincorporated Thurston County are part of the [Thurston County Comprehensive Plan](#).
- The City of Olympia [Advisory Committees web pages](#) have information about the role and work of advisory committees.
- The City of Olympia [Intergovernmental Boards and Committees](#) web pages have information about the City’s partnerships with other jurisdictions.
- The [Centennial Accord between the Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Washington State and the State of Washington](#) and [Millennium Agreement](#) outline the City’s government-to-government relationship with federally recognized Indian tribes. [Municipal Resource Services Center](#) (MRSC) provides information about issues and laws that shape local government.

Natural Environment



Two children skipping on the rocks at Yauger Park

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value our role as stewards of the water, air, land, vegetation, and animals around us, and believe it is our responsibility to our children and grandchildren to restore, protect, and enhance the exceptional natural environment that surrounds us.

Our Vision for the Future:

A beautiful, natural setting that is preserved and enhanced.

Introduction

Opportunities abound to experience and take part in the stewardship of the natural environment. Olympians plant trees, remove invasive plants, raise chickens, count salmon, recycle, drive hybrid-electric cars, and walk to their neighborhood store. Our parks and natural areas are home to rare birds, native salmon, and the tallest of native evergreen trees. Connecting with the environment and protecting it for future generations is a strongly held value for Olympians. We recognize our role as land stewards and our responsibility to protect water quality and clean air.

The City and County are committed to creating sustainable communities dedicated to the conservation, protection, and restoration of the natural environment. Both entities will continue this work -- through leadership, education, and planning -- as we address emerging environmental

challenges. We recognize that natural resources are precious and limited, and that our growing population will test those limits. Our ability to meet several key challenges will define how well we manage our natural environment in the coming decades.

Key challenges:

- **A growing population** will put more pressure on these resources; to remove trees, to replace natural land surfaces with roads, buildings, and parking lots, encroach on environmentally sensitive areas, and place increased demands on limited resources, such as productive agricultural lands.
- **Climate change** is likely to bring sea-level rise, unpredictable rainfall, increased stormwater runoff, changes in food supply, and increased stress on habitats and wildlife
- **Increased waste and toxins** through the products we purchase, which may contain artificial ingredients or toxins, or create unnecessary waste

All of these challenges have the potential to impact the quality of our natural water resources. We hope this community vision will define a path for change for us to follow as we continue to face these challenges in the next 20 years.

As Olympia and its Urban Growth Area continue to grow, it will be essential to reach a careful balance between planning for growth and maintaining our natural environment.



A young tree planter in Kettle View Park.

As key land stewards, the County's and City's role is to encourage and regulate new development and land management practices in a way that minimizes negative environmental impacts by:

- Carrying out the state's Growth Management Act requirement that cities plan for anticipated population growth by accepting the need for denser development so that larger expanses of rural land can be preserved
- Encouraging low impact development and green building methods that include using renewable or recycled materials
- Constructing developments that have a low impact on soil and site conditions
- Treating stormwater runoff on-site
- Using building materials that require less energy, which public and private groups are now working closely with the City to explore new and reliable methods
- Ensuring that public land is preserved and cared for
- Protecting local food supplies by discouraging development in active agricultural areas

- Identifying land at greatest risk for preservation, enhancement, and stewardship to support a diversity of wildlife habitat and species
- Continuing the role as caretaker of the urban forest, a diverse mix of native and ornamental trees that line our streets, shade our homes, and beautify our natural areas.

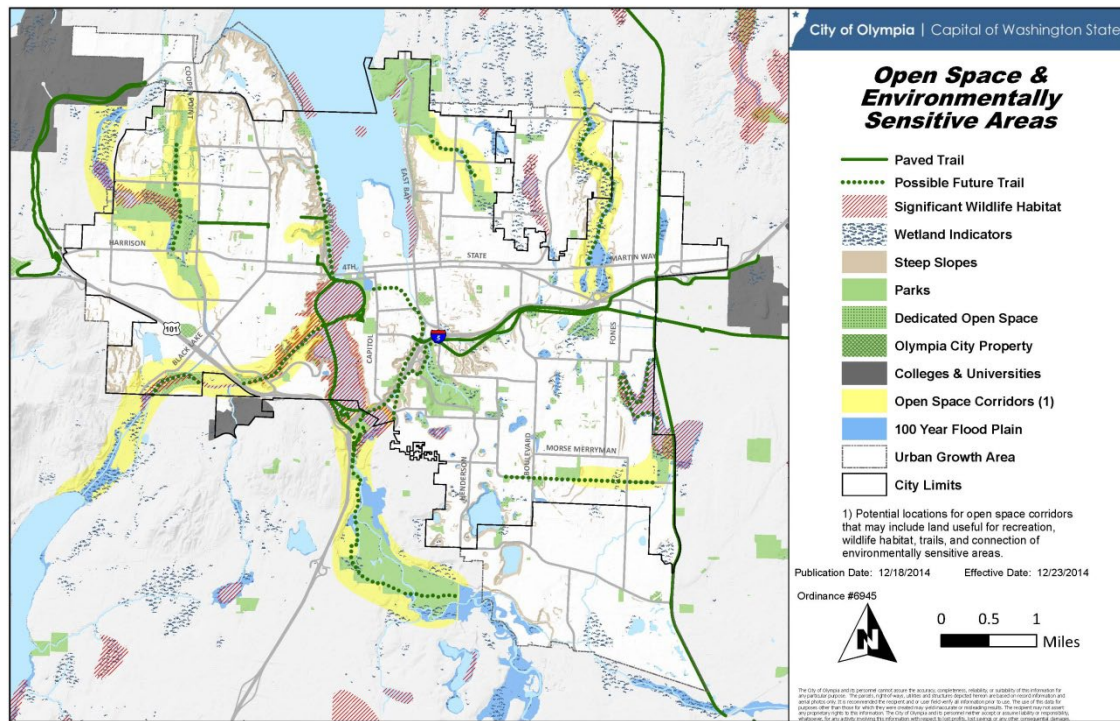
The Open Space and Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map reflects those areas in the City and UGA that are already preserved as open space, or that may be good opportunities for future preservation as open space.

Shown on the map are environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands, and significant wildlife habitat. Many of these areas are protected by Critical Areas regulations so the map serves to highlight those areas for further evaluation prior to any new development project.

The map also reflects locations where there may be a greater potential for creating or enhancing existing open space corridors for recreation or wildlife habitat. These areas may still be undeveloped, owned or managed by the County or City, connected to other nearby open space areas, or have environmentally sensitive areas present.



Kettle View Park bike rider.



View Map – Open Space Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Goals and Policies

GN1 Natural resources and processes are conserved and protected by planning, regulatory, and management activities.

PN1.1 Administer development regulations which protect environmentally sensitive areas, drainage basins, and drinking water wellhead protection areas.

PN1.2 Limit development in areas that are environmentally sensitive, such as steep slopes and wetlands. Direct development and redevelopment to less-sensitive areas.

PN1.3 Conserve and restore natural systems, such as wetlands and stands of mature trees, to contribute to solving environmental issues.

PN1.4 Preserve the existing topography on a portion of a new development site; integrate existing site contours into the project design and minimize the use of grading and other large-scale land disturbances.

PN1.5 Establish regulations and design standards for new developments that will minimize impacts to stormwater runoff, environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife habitat, and trees.

PN1.6 Limit hillside development to site designs that incorporate and conform to the existing topography, and minimize their effect on existing hydrology.

PN1.7 Limit the negative impacts of development on public lands and environmental resources, and require full mitigation of impacts when they are unavoidable.

PN1.8 Foster partnerships with public, private, and non-profit agencies and groups and encourage them to help identify and evaluate new low impact development and green building approaches.

PN1.9 Increase the use of low impact and green building development methods through education, technical assistance, incentives, regulations, and grants.

PN1.10 Design, build, and encourage retrofitting public projects using sustainable design and green building methods that require minimal maintenance and fit naturally into the surrounding environment.

PN1.11 Require development to mitigate impacts and avoid future costs, by incorporating timely measures, such as the clean-up of prior contamination as new development and redevelopment occurs.

GN2 Land is preserved and sustainably managed.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as agriculture, stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN2.2 Preserve land when there are opportunities to make connections between healthy systems; for example, land parcels in a stream corridor.

PN2.3 The County and City should work together to identify strategies to mitigate for loss of working farms in the Urban Growth Area.

PN2.4 Explore innovative strategies to conserve agriculture within the Urban Growth Area, such as an agriculture protection overlay or public farmland initiative, like Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), to encourage conservation of agriculture.

PN2.5 Expand the use of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs to support compact growth in urbanizing areas while conserving long-term agriculture of commercial significance in rural areas.

PN2.6 The County and City should work together to identify tools and review regulations to better support small agriculture within the Urban Growth Area.

PN2.7 In future updates to the Working Lands Strategic Plan, the County and City should work together to track acres of agriculture lost due to conversion, so mitigation strategies can be implemented to offset the acres lost.

PN2.8 Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs should be utilized as incentives for farmers.

PN2.9 Identify, remove, and prevent the use and spread of invasive plants and wildlife.

PN2.10 Preserve and restore native plants by including restoration efforts and volunteer partnerships in all land management.

PN2.11 Design improvements to public land using existing and new vegetation that is attractive, adapted to our climate, supports a variety of wildlife, and requires minimal, long-term maintenance.

PN2.12 Practice sustainable maintenance and operations activities that reduce the County's and City's environmental impact.

PN2.13 Evaluate, monitor, and measure environmental conditions, and use this data to develop short- and long-term management strategies.

GN3 A healthy and diverse urban forest is protected, expanded, and valued for its contribution to the environment and community.

PN3.1 Manage the urban forest to professional standards, and establish program goals and practices based on the best scientific information available.

PN3.2 Preserve existing mature, healthy, and safe trees first to meet site design requirements on new development, redevelopment and improvement projects.

PN3.3 Provide new trees with the necessary soil, water, space, and nutrients to grow to maturity, and plant the right size tree where there are conflicts, such as overhead utility wires or sidewalks.

PN3.4 Protect the natural structure and growing condition of trees to minimize necessary maintenance and preserve the long-term health and safety of the urban forest.



Cherry trees in bloom in the parking lot of the Briggs YMCA.

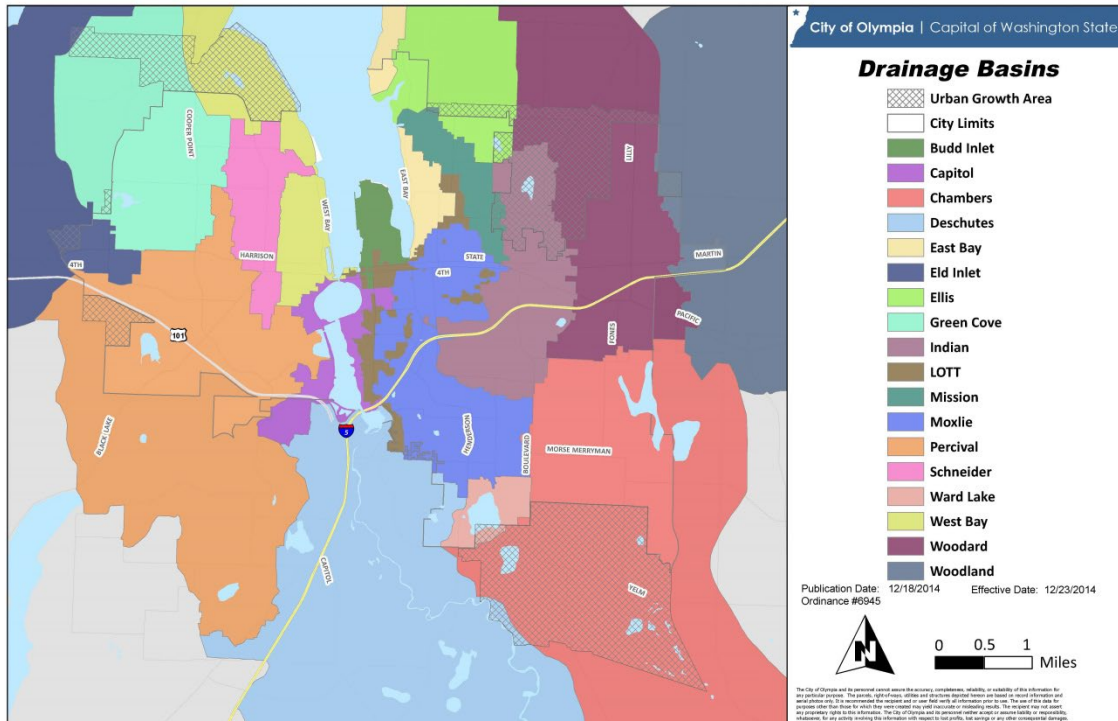
Protecting Our Water Resources

We are fortunate to be surrounded by water and have abundant fresh water resources. The deep, underground aquifers provide our drinking water. The many protected streams and wetlands are valuable habitat for native wildlife. We kayak the waters of Budd Inlet, hop over rain puddles on the way to school, and enjoy Ellis Creek as we hike through nearby Priest Point Park.



Moxlie Creek flowing through Watershed Park.

Within Olympia's 24-square-mile area, there are nine major streams, four lakes, four large wetlands, and six miles of marine shoreline. As water moves down from Olympia's higher elevations to the Sound, it filters through the ground into a number of separate drainage basins or watersheds.



View Map - Olympia Area Drainage Basins

Protecting water resources is critical. We recognize that many of our water resources have been damaged by pollution. The natural processes that would normally protect these resources, such as undeveloped land and wetlands, which filter stormwater pollutants and reduce runoff, must be protected and restored. If we take steps to restore these natural processes, we'll be ensuring clean water and abundant aquatic life in Budd Inlet for us, and for future generations.



A new wetland constructed in Yaeger Park.

Goals and Policies

GN4 The waters and natural processes of Budd Inlet and other marine waters are protected from degrading impacts and significantly improved through upland and shoreline preservation and restoration.

PN4.1 Plan for the health and recovery of Budd Inlet on a regional scale and in collaboration with local tribes and all potentially affected agencies and stakeholders.

PN4.2 Prioritize and implement restoration efforts based on the best scientific information available to restore natural processes and improve the health and condition of Budd Inlet and its tributaries.

PN4.3 Restore and protect the health of Puget Sound as a local food source.

GN5 Ground and surface waters are protected from land uses and activities that harm water quality and quantity.

PN5.1 Reduce the rate of expansion of impervious surface in the community.

PN5.2 Encourage the increased use of permeable materials and environmentally-beneficial vegetation in construction projects.

PN5.3 Encourage retrofitting existing infrastructure for stormwater treatment in areas with little or no treatment.

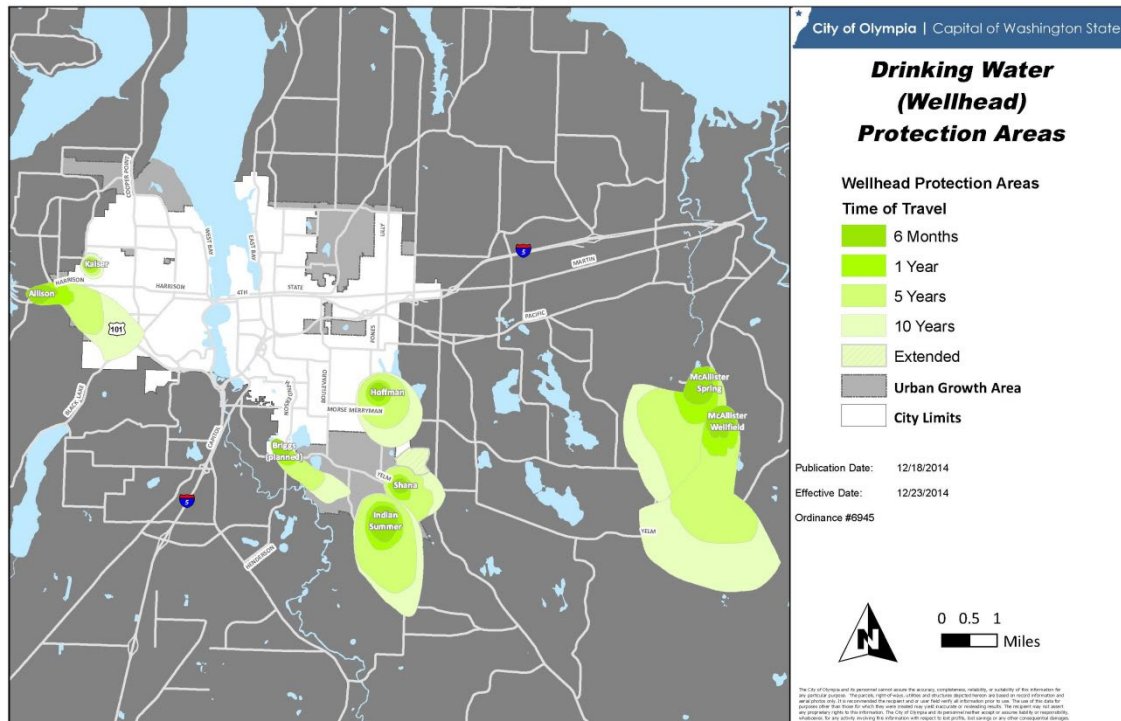
PN5.4 Require prevention and treatment practices for businesses and land uses that have the potential to contaminate stormwater.

PN5.5 Improve programs and management strategies designed to prevent and reduce contamination of street runoff and other sources of stormwater

PN5.6 Limit or prohibit uses that pose a risk to water supplies in Drinking Water (Wellhead) protection areas based on the best scientific information available and the level of risk. Where legally allowed, require restoration of any such areas that have been degraded.

PN5.7 Encourage more active inspection and maintenance programs for septic systems.

PN5.8 In conformance with adopted Sewerage General Plans, and when available, encourage existing septic systems to connect to sewer and limit the number of new septic systems.



View Map: Olympia Wellhead Protection Areas

GN6 Healthy aquatic habitat is protected and restored.

PN6.1 Restore and manage vegetation next to streams, with an emphasis on native vegetation, to greatly improve or provide new fish and wildlife habitat.

PN6.2 Maintain or improve healthy stream flows that support a diverse population of aquatic life.

PN6.3 Establish and monitor water quality and aquatic habitat health indicators based on the best scientific information available.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

PN6.5 Retain and restore floodways in a natural condition.

PN6.6 Preserve and restore the aquatic habitat of Budd Inlet and other local marine waters.

PN6.7 Partner with other regional agencies and community groups to restore aquatic habitat through coordinated planning, funding, and implementation.

PN6.8 Evaluate expanding low impact development approaches countywide, such as those used in the Green Cove Basin.



A healthy stream.

Clean Air and Cool Climate

Overall, our air quality is often better than what federal standards require. We rarely experience days in which older residents and others with health issues are told to stay indoors due to polluted air. Stars are still visible in our night sky.

However, if we do not rein in local sources of carbon dioxide and other

greenhouse gas emissions and limit nighttime light, we will jeopardize the quality of this invisible but critical resource.

As a community, we can commit to developing and adopting new and renewable solutions for commuting, heating our homes, powering our economy, fueling our vehicles, and lighting our streets, sidewalks, and businesses.



Solar panels on a commercial building.

Goals and Policies

GN7 Local air quality meets or exceeds state and federal minimum standards.

PN7.1 Partner with other state and local agencies to monitor, reduce and eliminate sources of air pollution that can be replaced with more efficient or clean methods and technologies.

PN7.2 Partner with other state and local agencies to offset anticipated negative impacts on air quality by taking further steps to reduce air pollution, such as commute reduction programming and tree planting.

GN8 Community sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and other climate-changing greenhouse gases are identified, monitored and reduced.

PN8.1 Participate with local and state partners in the development of a regional climate action plan aimed at reducing greenhouse gases. The Board of County Commissioners has set targets to reduce emissions 45 percent below 2015 levels by 2030 and 85 percent below 2015 levels by 2050.

PN8.2 Reduce the use of fossil fuels and creation of greenhouse gases through planning, education, conservation, and development and implementation of renewable sources of energy (see also GL2).

PN8.3 Encourage the conservation and reuse of existing natural resources and building materials.

PN8.4 Reduce the pollution and energy consumption of transportation by promoting the use of electric vehicles and expanding accessible and inviting alternatives that reduce vehicle miles traveled, including transit, walking and cycling (see also GT23).

PN8.5 Support the City's efforts to plan to adapt, mitigate, and maintain resiliency for changing environmental conditions due to climate change, such as longer periods of drought and increased flooding related to changing weather patterns and sea level rise (see also GU9).

PN8.6 Reduce energy use and the environmental impact of our food system by encouraging local food production (see also GL17).

GN9 Artificial sources of nighttime light are minimized to protect wildlife, vegetation and the health of the public, and preserve views of the night sky.

PN9.1 Design nighttime lighting that is safe and efficient by directing it

only to the areas where it is needed. Allow and encourage reduction or elimination of nighttime light sources where safety is not impacted.

PN9.2 Eliminate or reduce lighting near streams, lakes, wetlands, and shorelines to avoid disrupting the natural development and life processes of wildlife.



Residential light post.

Connect with the Natural World

Planting trees, observing birds in a nest, or lying on a sunny patch of grass are some of the ways we bring quiet into our lives and reconnect with the natural world. Researchers are now learning that having a connection to the natural world isn't just a luxury, but a necessity for a healthy, safe, and engaged community.



A young child with a balloon explores Kettle Park.

We interact with the natural world in a variety of ways -- from eating healthy food, to commuting by bike, to learning a new outdoor activity, to stopping to chat with a neighbor under the shade of a tree. These activities all foster a strong connection to our community and an interest in stewarding our natural environment.

Goals and Policies

GN10 Risk to human health and damage to wildlife and wildlife habitat due to harmful toxins, pollution, or other emerging threats is tracked by appropriate agencies and significantly reduced or eliminated.

PN10.1 Minimize the City's and County's purchase and use of products that contribute to toxic chemical pollution when they are manufactured, used, or disposed.

PN10.2 Identify products that should be phased out by the community, and provide education on their negative impacts and the best available alternatives.

PN10.3 Maintain City and County land and properties using non-chemical methods whenever possible; use standard *Integrated Pest Management* practices and other accepted, natural approaches to managing vegetation and pests.

GN11 All members of the community can experience the natural environment through meaningful volunteer experiences, active recreation, and interactive learning opportunities.

PN11.1 Ensure that all members of the community have access to a nearby natural space that gives them opportunities to see, touch, and connect with the natural environment.

PN11.2 Give all members of our community opportunities to experience, appreciate, and participate in volunteer stewardship of the natural environment.

PN11.3 Support environmental education programs, classes, and tours that teach outdoor recreation skills and foster an understanding and appreciation for the natural environment.




PN11.4 Provide education and support to local community groups and neighborhoods who want to monitor and care for their local park or natural area.

PN11.5 Foster a sense of place and community pride by carefully stewarding the trees, plants, and wildlife unique to Puget Sound.



A trail leads into Priest Point Park

For More Information

- [County Shoreline Master Program](#) 
- City Shoreline Master Program  Master Street Tree Plan 
- [City of Olympia Habitat and Stewardship Strategy \(2013\)](#)
- [Parks, Arts, and Recreation Plan \(2010\)](#)
- [Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan \(2021\)](#) [Thurston Regional Trails Plan \(2007\)](#)
- [Sustainable Thurston](#)
- [City of Olympia Response to Sea Level Rise](#)

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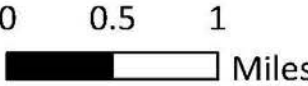
Open Space & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

- Paved Trail
- Possible Future Trail
- Significant Wildlife Habitat
- Wetland Indicators
- Steep Slopes
- Parks
- Dedicated Open Space
- Olympia City Property
- Colleges & Universities
- Open Space Corridors (1)
- 100 Year Flood Plain
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

1) Potential locations for open space corridors that may include land useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of environmentally sensitive areas.

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



The City of Olympia and its personnel cannot assure the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of this information for any particular purpose. The parcels, rights-of-way, utilities, and structures depicted herein are based on record information and aerial photos only. It is recommended the recipient and/or user field verify all information prior to use. The use of this data for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The recipient may not assert any proprietary rights to this information. The City of Olympia and its personnel neither accept or assume liability or responsibility, whatsoever, for any activity involving this information with respect to lost profits, lost savings or any other consequential damages.

Drainage Basins

- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits
- Budd Inlet
- Capitol
- Chambers
- Deschutes
- East Bay
- Eld Inlet
- Ellis
- Green Cove
- Indian
- LOTT
- Mission
- Moxlie
- Percival
- Schneider
- Ward Lake
- West Bay
- Woodard
- Woodland

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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Miles

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Drinking Water (Wellhead) Protection Areas

Wellhead Protection Areas

Time of Travel

- 6 Months
- 1 Year
- 5 Years
- 10 Years
- Extended
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014
Effective Date: 12/23/2014
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Land Use and Urban Design



A blending of old and new land uses.

What Olympia Values:



Olympians value neighborhoods with distinct identities; historic buildings and places; a walkable and comfortable downtown; increased urban green space; locally produced food; and public spaces for community members in neighborhoods, downtown, and along our shorelines.

Our Vision for the Future:

A walkable, accessible, vibrant city.

Introduction

How we choose to live within, and how we alter, our landscape is critical to our quality of life, and to whether that quality of life can be sustained and improved.

The State's 1990 [Growth Management Act](#)  called for jurisdictions to establish land use designations and densities sufficient for at least 20 years. The [County-Wide Planning Policies](#)  adopted by Thurston County and its seven cities in 1993 describe a common goal of concentrating

growth in the urban areas "in ways that ensure livability, preservation of environmental quality and open space, varied and affordable housing, high quality urban services at least cost, and orderly transition of land from County to City." We can choose to isolate land uses and neighborhoods, or blend them into a single vital community. We can create spaces separated by long travel distances, or provide for a variety of experiences in each part of the city. We can choose to use land efficiently for recreation, housing, and business while setting aside selected areas for open space and communing with nature, or we can create homogenous subdivisions and isolated commercial areas. We can employ architecture and landscaping reflecting the area's unique and historic character, or we can build places with little regard to the local landscape and climate. These choices will determine Olympia and the Urban Growth Area's form for many generations.

This chapter of the Joint Plan presents a 20-year vision for land use and address all areas within Olympia and its Urban Growth Area.

The Future Land Use Map included in this plan, represents the general future land use patterns that are desired over the next 20 years. It demonstrates the goals, policies and actions in this chapter. Together, the future land use map, goals and policies provide a framework to guide future land use decisions. The Future Land Use for the Olympia Urban Growth Area is implemented through the "Official Zoning Map for Thurston County, Washington, North County Urban Growth Areas". To see the official zoning maps visit [Thurston County Geodata](#).

Description of Joint Plan Area

The Olympia Joint Plan area consists of approximately 3,900 acres in total, and is roughly divided into three areas: the northeast, southeast and west.

Generally, the future land use of the Olympia Urban Growth Area is low density neighborhoods with urban densities of 4 units per acre. Low density neighborhoods with higher densities up to 8 units per acre are expected closer to the city limits or on major corridors. Some sensitive

areas within the urban growth area have rural densities of 1 unit per 5 acres due to environmental constraints, drainage concerns, or for habitat protection.

The northeast area is approximately 923 acres, which extends from north of Martin Way to just north of 26th Avenue. The vision for this area over the next twenty years, as demonstrated by the Future Land Use Map on page 97 is for low density neighborhoods. All of the northeast area is zoned residential—the vast majority is low density residential (R4 or R4-8). There are two very small areas that abut the city limits that are a higher density, zoned R6-12. Many of the parcels in the northeast area are larger leaving room for future development. However, this area contains some extensive wetland systems and much of the area has challenges in sewer service, which might make development difficult in the future.

The southeast area, at 1,881 acres, is predominantly envisioned as low-density neighborhoods over the next twenty years, with some areas that have a future land use of planned development, mixed residential, and medium density around the Yelm Highway corridor. The zoning implementing the future land use is mostly low density residential (R 4-8) with small patches of medium density residential (R 6-12) and high density residential (RM 18 and MR 7-13) around the Yelm Highway corridor. One area that abuts the city limits is zoned as residential 1 unit per 5 acres (R 1/5) that was implemented in 2013 to protect the Chambers area due to its sensitive drainage and increased flooding risk. There are small pockets of Neighborhood Retail and Community Oriented Shopping Center (COSC) to serve the residential areas. There is one five-acre area of Light Industrial Commercial (LI-C) along the Union Pacific Railroad. This subarea is fairly well developed with one potential wetland south of the old Spooner Farm property, east of Rich Road.

The west area is about 1,112 spread across the north and west side of Olympia. The vision of this area as illustrated in the future land use map is primarily low density residential with pockets of industrial.

One of the sections in the west area is just northwest of the Ken Lake development and south of Highway 101 and is approximately 125 acres.

This area is primarily zoned for Residential Low Impact (RLI) with about half developed to density. West of Kaiser Road there are about 20 acres zoned Light Industrial Commercial (LI-C).

Further north along the west side of Kaiser Road is an area of about 11 acres zoned Rural 1/5 that is mostly developed with smaller lots. North of Harrison and east of Evergreen Parkway there are about 44 acres, most of which is Low Density Residential (R 4-8), with a small section reserved for a Neighborhood village (NV).

At the far north edge of the city limits, along Cooper Point Road there are approximately 731 acres that are zoned Low Density Residential (R 1-5 and R4). Another area between Kaiser Road and Overhulse Road is zoned Residential Low Impact (RLI), and is already fairly developed. This subarea has a portion along Budd Inlet waterfront that is substantially developed to its current zoning of R 1-5.

Our community seeks to:

- Encourage development in urban growth areas where public services and facilities are already present while keeping lower density development in areas without public services and facilities.
- Phase urban development and facility extension outward from the downtown area.
- Establish land use patterns that ensure residential densities sufficient to accommodate 20-years of population growth.
- Focus higher residential densities downtown, along urban corridors, and near neighborhood centers.
- Employ innovative development techniques that create a better community.



A new pair of townhomes reflects Olympia's historic character.

Neighborhood character is made up of a variety of elements that give a neighborhood its distinct identity. Neighborhood characteristics are not stagnant and will change over time. Consideration of neighborhood character will vary by the unique features of a neighborhood and includes its physical attributes that contribute to its sense of place and identity. These elements may include, but are not limited to, a neighborhood's land use, urban design, visual resources, and/or historic resources. This includes design elements of buildings (mass, scale, materials, setting, and setbacks), parks and open space, provision of City utilities, street grids and connections, and street trees.

Our community considers it essential that all neighborhoods become accessible, sustainable, and culturally inclusive

- Accessible: Includes ADA compliancy, multimodal mobility, and housing affordability.
- Sustainable: Promotes a healthy environment, a diverse and resilient local economy, and historic preservation, including, reuse, and adaptability of existing buildings.

- Culturally inclusive: Recognizes, supports and promotes diverse housing types, strong arts and historic preservation, and the various contributions of diverse Olympians, past and present.

Neighborhood character will be balanced with other plan goals and policies, such as increasing the variety of housing types and providing people-oriented places, and implemented through the City's development regulations.

The "Urban Design Vision and Strategy," appreciation of the area's history and sustainable community philosophy all provide additional context for this chapter. In particular, the sustainability policies call for us to consider the long-range implications of our land use decisions and to provide for a pattern of development that can be sustained and enjoyed by future generations.

For example, mixed-use 'villages' and opportunities for residential development in commercial areas provide for increasing residential densities by blending land uses. By enabling less reliance on automobiles, by providing for compact development that requires less land, by efficiently providing streets, utilities, and services, and by establishing development densities and site designs that protect environmentally sensitive areas and reflect the capacity of natural systems, we can provide a quality community for coming generations.

We envision:

- Spaces that are safe and pedestrian-friendly
- Development that minimizes harm to the environment
- Densities and land use types consistent with many types of transportation
- Places for quiet residential uses, and places where economic activity is emphasized
- Walkable and accessible neighborhoods with unique centers and identities
- Development that complements the historic character of the community
- Recognition of the importance of lands near water
- A process for exploring the unique possibilities of each area with

special attention given to Downtown, the Westside core area, the eleven planning 'subareas,' and other special geographic areas within the community

The focus here is on 'built' land uses such as housing and commercial structures and development patterns. Complementary parks, open spaces and natural areas are addressed in the [Public Health, Parks, Arts and Recreation](#) and [Natural Environment](#) chapters. These land uses cannot be isolated from economic topics, and employment in particular, addressed by the [Economy](#) chapter. Facilities and services to support this urban development pattern, including the critical transportation system, are described in the [Transportation](#), [Utilities](#), and Public Services chapters. In many cases the special area plans described in this chapter will touch on all of those topics and more.

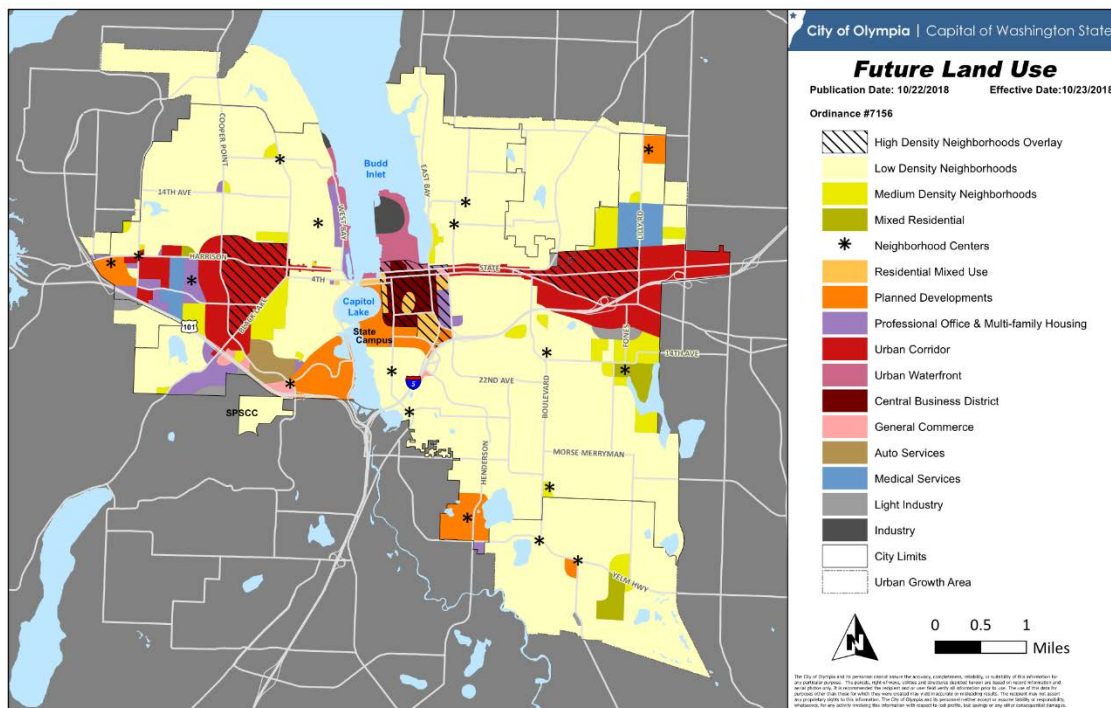
Thurston County, in cooperation with the City of Olympia, plays a major role in determining the location, intensity, and form of land uses in the community. This chapter addresses the proposed uses of land in Olympia's Urban Growth Area and the design and locations of buildings and other structures within that landscape. It includes:

- The location and quantity of those land uses and their relation to each other
- The functional design of those land uses including buildings and surrounding spaces
- Opportunities for historic preservation
- The aesthetic form of the built environment

The [Future Land Use Map](#) shows the approximate locations for a variety of land uses in Olympia's **Urban Growth Area**. This map is not a zoning map. Rather it provides guidance for zoning and other regulations to ensure uses of land and development consistent with this Plan. Although these map lines are approximate, all future land uses should be consistent with the intent of this map and the land use category descriptions in Appendix A as well as the goals and policies of this Plan. In general, zoning and land uses should not deviate from the [Future Land Use Map](#) boundaries by more than about 200 feet. Compatible and supporting land uses, such as parks, schools, places of worship, public facilities and utilities, streets and similar features, are expected within these areas.

Proposed rezones shall meet criteria to be adopted into Thurston County Code Title 23 that address:

1. Consistency with the Joint Plan.
2. Consistency with the County's Olympia Urban Growth Area development regulations that implement the Joint Plan.
3. Compatibility with adjoining zoning districts and transitioning where appropriate to ensure compatibility.
4. Adequacy of infrastructure in light of development potential of the proposed zoning.



The community employs regulations, such as zoning, design review, stormwater, engineering, building, and subdivision standards, to ensure that new development conforms to the goals and policies described in this chapter. Regulations within the Urban Growth Area are governed by Thurston County, while regulations within the City limits are administered by City staff. Equally important to this land use and design vision is capital facility planning and construction by Thurston County, the City of Olympia

and other public agencies of the area. Continuing cooperation between the State and the City, among the local governments, and with special purpose governments such as the Port of Olympia and the school districts is critical. And, as envisioned, substantial resources and the support of everyone in the community will be needed to focus more detailed efforts in neighborhoods and other special places.

General Land Use and Design

To achieve our vision of Olympia while accommodating our share of the region's population, we need to plan for quantity at the same time as we pursue quality. Such a community is one in which pattern and mix of land uses supports healthy lifestyles, such as walking to nearby services instead of driving. We need to consider the implications of climate change, and how we can minimize our community's contribution. We must be prepared to adapt our built environment as resources change, while preserving key elements of Thurston County's architectural and cultural heritage. At the same time, we need to consider the character of Olympians today, and those of the future. The needs and interests of a more diverse, more urban, and generally older population will differ from those of today.

Thurston Regional Planning Council's 2021 [Buildable Lands Report](#) indicates that Olympia's urban area (city plus the Urban Growth Area) contains sufficient land to accommodate the projected population growth to the year 2040. The projected capacity considers residential, commercial and industrial development.

Although new jobs will locate in all parts of the county, most of them will locate in urban areas, eighty percent of which are expected to locate in areas zoned for commercial uses. These include shopping, medical offices and other professional offices. Most state and local government employment is also in commercial zones.

Olympia was once a port-oriented community with a central business district and compact single-family neighborhoods. Now, its land-use pattern is more suburban, with commercial development taking place outside of downtown, and lower-density neighborhoods with fewer street connections. Over the next 20 years, as Olympia becomes a more urban

place, the pattern of land use and design of urban areas will change as we accommodate an expanding population while retaining our community's character and heritage.

This Joint Plan envisions gradually increasing densities in Olympia's Urban Growth Area accompanied by attractive streets and buildings arranged for the convenience of pedestrians. The location, mix and relationship of land uses to each other and to our streets will be crucial as will be the character of commercial and residential areas, parks, and open spaces. The Plan envisions new development that will reinforce the community's identity, urban design preferences, and historic form. Selected major streets will gradually transform into attractive, higher density, mixed residential and commercial "urban corridors" with frequent transit service.

Housing will be available within and near shopping and employment areas. Development will be carefully designed to integrate with the adjacent transportation system, and with key features such as downtown and the hospitals. Neighborhoods and commercial areas will gradually be woven together into a cohesive urban fabric. These "ten-minute" neighborhoods will provide ready-access from homes to supporting businesses, and to parks, schools and other gathering places.

The relationship between the transportation system and other land uses plays a key role in urban life. The Transportation chapter addresses the specific design of streets, such as the number of travel lanes, the presence of bike lanes, transit pull-outs, pedestrian amenities, street trees, and sidewalks. The relationship of these street features to adjacent land uses, the location and supply of parking, and the proximity of buildings to the street is critical to the experience and choices of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists. Thus, to integrate the streets and trails with adjacent uses, development must be carefully designed in combination with the adjacent transportation system. Details must be suited to all users and to the form of the street. For example, major building entrances should face or be conveniently reached from streets, rather than parking lots.

In addition to private activities, such as homes, businesses and industry,

some of the lands within the City and Urban Growth Area will be used for public purposes and facilities. Although some of those lands are identified in this Plan, such as the locations of future streets, other specific needs are identified in more detailed planning documents of the City and County, such as the Water System Plan which identifies this utility's need for new water tank sites. Thurston County works with other local agencies to identify areas of shared need for public facilities.

The purpose of the goals and policies below is to direct land use patterns, densities, and design standards which:

- Reflect the community's urban design vision
- Maintain or improve the character of neighborhoods
- Preserve the historic features of Olympia and Thurston County
- Provide for a variety of transportation alternatives
- Provide people with opportunities to live close to work
- Create desirable neighborhoods with a variety of housing opportunities, different lifestyles and income levels, and a sense of community
- Provide for a compact growth pattern
- Promote energy efficiency
- Reflect the land's physical and environmental capability
- Provide space for parks, open spaces, and other community facilities
- Protect views and features of the community's landscape valued by the public

GL1 Land use patterns, densities and site designs are sustainable and support decreasing automobile reliance.

PL1.1 Ensure that new development is built at urban densities for areas with access to public services and utilities and that lower density areas without access to public services and utilities can be readily modified to achieve those densities; and whenever possible, require that development lacking municipal utility service be designed to cost-effectively transform when services become available.

PL1.2 Focus development in locations that will enhance the community

and have capacity and efficient supporting services, and where adverse environmental impacts can be avoided or minimized.

PL1.3 Require functional and efficient development by adopting and periodically updating zoning consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

PL1.4 Require new development to meet appropriate minimum standards, such as landscaping and design guidelines, stormwater and other engineering standards, and buildings codes, and address risks, such as geologically hazardous areas; and encourage existing development to be gradually improved to such standards.

PL1.5 Provide for a compatible mix of housing and commercial uses in commercial districts and village sites that enables people to walk to work and shopping, supports transit, and includes convenience businesses for residents. Integrate adjacent uses with walkways and bike paths leading from residential areas to commercial districts and neighborhood-oriented businesses.

PL1.6 Buffer incompatible industrial, commercial and residential uses by requiring landscaped buffers or transitional uses, such as plazas, offices, or heavily landscaped parking; use natural buffers where possible and require clustering where warranted.

PL1.7 Require direct and convenient pedestrian access to commercial and public buildings from streets, bus stops and parking lots, and encourage sheltered seating and other uses of vacant sections of the street edge.

PL1.8 Require businesses along transit routes to accommodate transit use by including building entrances near bus stops or other features such as transit shelters or on-site bus access.

PL1.9 Encourage major commercial projects to include display windows, small shops with separate entrances, and plazas with seating and other well-landscaped gathering spaces.

PL1.10 Encourage existing businesses to provide bicycle parking.

Land Use Patterns and Building Forms

Determine Whether Energy is Used Efficiently

Land use patterns and development influence energy use. Blending of residential units with work places promotes energy efficiency. Higher densities contribute to the success of bus systems. Higher densities close to offices and commercial districts help reduce fuel consumption by reducing overall commuter and shopper mileage. In contrast, suburban densities and sprawl result in spending a lot of time and energy on transportation.

With a more compact development pattern and other transportation improvements, Thurston County's percentage of drive-alone commuters can be reduced. Park-and-ride lots, vanpooling, ridesharing and flexible work schedules can help reduce vehicle miles and congestion. Both the public and private sectors can encourage transit use by offering incentives to employees. A well-laid-out transportation system will also aid in conserving energy. Smoother traffic flows can increase vehicle. Provisions for pedestrian and bicycle traffic can promote use of the energy saving means of commuting. By these means we could achieve transportation energy savings within a decade or two.

The primary residential use of energy is for space-heating. Thus, strengthening building code requirements for energy efficiency is an effective way to reduce energy consumption. When combined with appropriate insulation levels, solar energy can meet half the heating needs of a home in Olympia. Effective layout of subdivisions that allow for solar access and protection from winter winds can help, as can public education on energy conservation.

The competitive environment can stimulate energy efficiency by reducing production costs. Thus, the combined industrial and commercial sectors do not use as much energy as either the transportation or residential sectors. Local governments can further influence industrial and commercial energy use through education and incentives.

The government sector is a very visible part of the energy picture and can set an example for efficient and conscientious energy use. Education in

this sector includes both educating users, such as employees, and informing the public. Government buildings and equipment can be models of efficiency in the use of construction methods and materials, as well as utilizing efficient pumps, heating systems, and lighting. Government operations can also be models of use of alternative fuel sources and non-motorized travel.

GL2 Buildings, commercial and industrial processes, and site designs use energy efficiently.

PL2.1 Pursue partnerships to promote energy efficient construction and lighting, low-energy designs, and weatherization in both new and existing buildings. Encourage material subsidies for low-income community members.

PL2.2 Promote public education and provide energy conservation and solar and other renewable energy information in cooperation with local utilities and others.

PL2.3 Encourage local 'cogeneration' of energy when environmentally sound and not in conflict with other land uses.

PL2.4 Encourage buildings and site designs that result in energy efficiency and use of solar and other renewable energy.

PL2.5 Support efforts to protect solar access in existing structures and to incorporate solar access provisions into new development projects.

Urban Design, Historic Structures and Built Form

Much of our community is already built. Many of the neighborhoods are more than 50 years old and the downtown is older still. These established neighborhoods provide a 'sense of place' and character. To preserve this character, new buildings incorporated into the existing fabric must reflect both their own time-period and what's come before. We will acknowledge the importance of historic preservation by protecting buildings, and celebrating the people and events that shaped our community. We will conserve natural resources by keeping historic buildings properly

maintained and in continuous use, thereby avoiding decay and demolition which would waste resources used to create these structures. Some types of structures like duplexes, triplexes and other multi-unit structures, even when not located within the design review district, are still subject to design review. Some of these types of developments are permitted within other zones within the UGA.



The Bigelow House, Olympia's oldest residence.

However, our heritage extends beyond buildings and back in time before European settlement. Artifacts, photographs, structures, sites and stories of our collective past were entrusted to us and so should be preserved for future generations. Tribes, such as the Squaxin Island Tribe, play a major role in this task. Private property owners shoulder much of the responsibility of protecting historic buildings. With community support we can ensure that our heritage is preserved for everyone to appreciate today and always.



Many of our older homes are a source of pride for young families.

Studies reveal that including open space and appropriate landscaping within site designs improves developments by providing places for relaxing, restoration and outdoor activities in general. In particular, trees provide a valuable public resource, enhance the quality of the environment, provide visual buffers and natural beauty, preserve the natural character of an area, and soften the impact of buildings and streets. Trees and other landscaping help reduce air pollution, noise and glare, provide cooling in summer and wind protection in winter, and in some cases provide materials and food for wildlife and humans. The goals and policies below encompass all of these elements of good design.

GL3 Historic resources are a key element in the overall design and establishment of a sense of place in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area.

PL3.1 Protect and evaluate historic and archaeological sites.

PL3.2 Safeguard and promote sites, buildings, districts, structures and objects which reflect significant elements of the area's history.

PL3.3 Encourage development that is compatible with historic buildings and neighborhood character.

PL3.4 Plan for land uses that are compatible with and conducive to continued preservation of historic properties; and promote and provide for the early identification and resolution of conflicts between the preservation of historic resources and competing land uses.

PL3.5 Identify, protect and maintain historic trees and landscapes that have significance to the community or a neighborhood, including species or placement of trees and other plants.

PL3.6 Encourage preservation and discourage demolitions or partial demolitions of intact historic structures.

GL4 Neighborhoods take pride in their historic identity.

PL4.1 Encourage the community to discover their social and economic origins and appreciate their historic features.

PL4.2 Facilitate the preservation of historic properties, historic neighborhood identity and important historic resources.

GL5 Historic preservation is achieved in cooperation with all members of the community and is integrated into decision-making processes.

PL5.1 Work with the State archeologist to protect archeological resources.

PL5.2 Coordinate with adjacent governments; particularly to provide public information about the area's history and development.

PL5.3 Recognize the contributions of minorities, workers, women and other cultures to the area's history.

PL5.4 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.5 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL5.6 Recognize the value of historic preservation as part of the effort to maintain an affordable housing stock.

PL5.7 Promote economic vitality through historic preservation.

GL6 Community beauty is combined with unique neighborhood identities.

PL6.1 Require commercial and residential buildings to face the street or a courtyard or other common area.

PL6.2 Encourage multi-family housing to incorporate architectural forms and features common to nearby housing; to include porches, balconies, bay windows and similar details; to have entries oriented to streets or a courtyard, and include accessible open space; and to be reduced in size near lower density residential districts.

PL6.3 Ensure that parking areas do not dominate street frontages or interrupt pedestrian routes, and that they are screened from low-density housing.

PL6.4 Prohibit fences and walls that inhibit walking or isolate neighborhoods from streets, except to reduce noise, provide buffers, or create private rear yards.

PL6.5 Enhance neighborhood identity by encouraging interested groups to beautify open spaces, streets and private property.

PL6.6 Require that buildings complement and enhance their surroundings, appeal to and support pedestrian activities, and facilitate transit use.

PL6.7 Preserve and enhance water vistas by retaining public rights-of-way that abut or are within one block of water bodies and by not siting public buildings within associated view corridors.

PL6.8 Plant and protect trees that contribute to the area's visual identity and sense of place.

PL6.9 Separate incompatible land uses and activities with treed areas, including buffering residential areas from major streets and freeways.

GL7 Support the City's efforts to ensure urban green space is available to the public and located throughout the community and incorporates natural environments into the urban setting, which are easily accessible and viewable so that people can experience nature daily and nearby.

PL7.1 Support the City's efforts to provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, "green" walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Support the City's efforts to provide urban green spaces that are in people's immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Support the City's efforts to increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.4 Support the City's efforts to establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.



Percival Landing with the Olympics in the distance.

GL8 Built and natural environmental designs discourage criminal behavior.

PL8.1 Modify public facilities and properties to enhance crime prevention.

Industry

Industrial uses represent a relatively small but key component of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area's jobs. The waterfront has supported forest-related industries and maritime shipping for decades. The area also contains a few scattered, relatively small, light-industrial districts which support a variety of uses. Industrial districts in Tumwater, Lacey, and in the County will likely absorb most of the area's new, non-waterfront-dependent industrial uses.

GL9 Industry and related development with low environmental impact is well-located to help diversify the local economy.

PL9.1 Encourage industry that is compatible with surrounding land uses and diversifies and strengthens the local economy.

PL9.2 Designate and preserve sufficient land for industrial uses consistent with the regional strategy for 'build out' of the community and competitive land prices.

PL9.3 Encourage full, intensive use of industrial areas while safeguarding the environment. Ensure land-use compatibility by buffering, height limits, landscaping, traffic routing, building design, and operation and maintenance standards.

PL9.4 Limit non-industrial uses in industrial areas to those which do not conflict with industry; and eliminate or reduce the size of industrial areas only if not expected to be needed or not suitable for industry.

PL9.5 Focus major industries in locations with good freeway access, adequate utilities, minimal environmental constraints, sufficient space and minimal land-use conflicts.

PL9.6 Design industrial areas for convenient freight access.

Commercial Uses and Urban Corridors

More intensive development in commercial areas will increase their vitality and make better use of transit and street systems. For this reason, major new commercial areas are not to be created. Any new commercial areas will be limited to allowing neighborhood-oriented businesses and services in the neighborhood centers of residential areas that reduce the need for residents to travel far to shop.

Over time, we envision our existing commercial areas becoming more attractive to pedestrians and customers, to the point where they can attract a more balanced and attractive mix of commercial, residential, and

recreational uses. Significant changes will need to occur for some of our commercial areas to increase their appeal as places to shop, live, work, and visit and to become more inviting higher-density, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use areas for pedestrian and transit users.

GL10 Adequate commercial land conveniently serves local and regional trade areas.

PL10.1 Locate and size commercial areas to decrease reliance on cars, improve community life, and maintain the tax base.

PL10.2 Encourage new commercial uses adjacent to the arterial street edge and in mixed-use projects.

PL10.3 Provide convenient pedestrian access to and between businesses.

PL10.4 Prohibit new and expanded commercial 'strips;' and allow conversion of such existing uses to a multi-use development with greater depth and integration of residential units.

PL10.5 Outside urban corridors provide for low-intensity commerce that depends on automobile access and allow wholesale businesses near major customers or where resulting traffic will not impact retail areas.

GL11 Commercial areas are attractive, functional and appealing.

PL11.1 Work with businesses and residents to help make commercial areas functional and attractive.

PL11.2 Establish maximum building heights that are proportional to streets, retain scenic views and result in compatibility with adjoining development.

PL11.3 Ensure that commercial uses are compatible with adjoining residential districts. This might include prohibiting reflective surfaces,

screening solid waste and parking areas, regulating emissions, building size reductions and increased setbacks near residential districts, screening parking areas, and requiring facades with architectural features that reduce the appearance of a commercial building's size, such as stepbacks and tiering above three stories.

PL11.4 Require site designs for commercial and public buildings that will complement nearby development and either maintain or improve the appearance of the area. This may include building designs with a defined bottom, middle, and top; appealing architectural elements such as windows, wall detailing; fountains, vendor stations; and the use of balconies, stepped back stories and pitched roofs that reduce the perceived size of the building.


PL11.5 Require screening of unattractive site features such as mechanical equipment and large solid waste receptacles, while maintaining good access for collection and maintenance.

PL11.6 Use design standards to ensure pedestrians and bicyclists have direct, convenient access to commercial and public buildings.

PL11.7 Require a form of parking that retains aesthetics and minimizes pedestrian barriers and inconvenience by including screening along streets and residential areas; limits parking lots to one contiguous acre; and locates them at the rear of buildings, or, if the rear is not possible, then on the side, but with minimal street frontage.

PL11.8 Ensure that business signs identify the business but do not create visual clutter or dominate the character of the area; require the use of low or façade-mounted signs where possible.

Housing

Adequate and affordable housing is critical to a healthy community. The [Growth Management Act](#)  directs each community to plan for it by:

- Encouraging affordable housing for all economic segments of the population
- Promoting a variety of residential densities and housing types
- Encouraging preservation of existing housing stock
- Identifying sufficient land for housing, including government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, group homes, and foster-care facilities


The strategies of this chapter depend on well-formulated design standards to promote flexibility and stimulate innovation while preserving and enhancing the character of neighborhoods. We seek to establish and encourage diversity in housing opportunities and link diverse neighborhoods. With a strong foundation in preserving our heritage, our community can incorporate new housing and other developments in a manner that continues our legacy of well-planned neighborhoods. The housing goals and policies below provide a framework for residential land uses in Olympia's area. See the related programs for supporting affordable housing in the Public Services chapter.



An apartment building is added to the housing stock.

Many factors contribute to the need for more and varied housing:

- Olympia and its Urban Growth Area's growing residential population
- Varying household incomes
- The capitol's legislative session creates a demand for short-term housing
- College students seek affordable housing near transportation corridors and services
- Households are getting smaller
- The proportion of seniors is increasing

The Olympia area is part of a larger housing market extending throughout Thurston County and beyond. Thus, planning for housing is done based on anticipated shares of this larger area. The Thurston Regional Planning Council's 2020 Buildable Lands Report indicates that Olympia and its urban growth area included over 30,500 housing units. The [Buildable Lands Report](#)  also estimates that about 12,350 new housing units will be needed by 2040 to accommodate population growth in Olympia's urban growth area.

Based on existing zoning and development patterns, the Buildable Lands Report indicated the area could accommodate about 14,490 new housing units. In addition to large areas zoned for single-family development, almost 400 acres of vacant multi-family-and duplex zoned land were available. And, an additional 500 acres of vacant and partially-used commercial land could be redeveloped for new housing.

Generally, small group homes and manufactured housing is allowed wherever single-family homes are permitted, this allows larger group homes by special approval, and does not discriminate with regard to government-assisted housing, foster-care, or low-income housing, the area is expected to be adequate to accommodate all types of housing.

Similarly, the 2008 Thurston County Consolidated Plan for housing indicates that there is no shortage of land for affordable housing. However, there is a "mismatch" between the availability of affordable housing and the need for such housing, both at the lowest end of the income scale and the upper end of the moderate-income bracket. That

Plan and the Public Services Chapter of this Plan describe efforts to close these gaps and make adequate provisions for all economic segments of the community.

To meet all housing needs, we must keep growth compact, so it can preserve space for future residents and reduce the cost of public services. To ensure this happens, we will need to allocate enough land that will be suitable for a variety of housing types and costs including detached homes, duplexes, group homes, small cottages, apartments, special needs housing, manufactured housing, and accessory dwellings. This approach can provide both variety and affordable options. For example, factory-built manufactured housing governed by federal standards and modular housing built to state standards are often less expensive than site-built housing. This Plan provides for these types of units and more luxurious and higher-priced shared-wall housing, including condominiums and townhouses.

Housing costs in Thurston County (including the Olympia UGA) have steadily increased following the 2008 recession. Between 2012 and 2021, the median home price rose 83 percent. Average rents increased 31 percent between 2012 and 2022.

In general, the cost of owner-occupied housing rose more rapidly than income. Rents used to roughly correspond to income changes, but more recently, has risen more rapidly than income. Those changing costs and availability of land for development with limited environmental constraints, combined with public preferences, resulted in gradual changes in the area's ownership.

County-wide owner-occupancy rates rose from 65 percent to 68 percent between 1990 and 2010 but decreased to a 66 percent average for the 2016-2020 time period. Owner-occupancy in the city declined from 52% in 1990 to an average of 45 percent for the 2016-2020 time period. The type of housing structures being added to the housing stock has varied as a result of similar factors. As a result, multi-family housing county-wide decreased gradually from about 35 percent in 1990 to 33 percent in 2010, then increased to an average of 34 percent for the 2016-2020 time period

In the Olympia city limits the percentage of multi-family structures has gradually increased from 48 percent in 1990 to 50 percent for the 2016-2020 time period.

GL12 Our neighborhoods provide housing choices that fit the diversity of local income levels and lifestyles. They are shaped by thorough public planning processes that involve community members, neighborhoods, and county and city officials.

PL12.1 Preserve and enhance the character of existing established low-density neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing low-density neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL12.2 In low-density neighborhoods, allow medium-density Neighborhood Centers that include civic and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Neighborhood centers emerge from a neighborhood public process.

GL13 The range of housing types and densities are consistent with the community's changing population needs and preferences.

PL13.1 Support increasing housing densities through the well-designed, efficient, and cost-effective use of buildable land, consistent with environmental constraints and affordability, when public services and utilities exist. Use both incentives and regulations, such as minimum and maximum density limits, to achieve such efficient use.

PL13.2 Promote zoning that allows a wide variety of compatible housing types and densities.

PL13.3 Allow 'clustering' of housing compatible with the adjacent

neighborhood to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

PL13.4 Disperse low and moderate-income and special needs housing throughout the urban area.

PL13.5 Support affordable housing throughout the community by minimizing regulatory review risks, time and costs and removing unnecessary barriers to housing, by permitting small dwelling units accessory to single-family housing, and by allowing a mix of housing types.

PL13.6 Promote home ownership, including by allowing manufactured homes on individual lots, promoting preservation of manufactured home parks and allowing these parks in multi-family and commercial areas, all subject to design standards ensuring compatibility with surrounding housing and land uses.

PL13.7 Allow single-family housing on small lots, but prohibit reduced setbacks abutting conventional lots.

PL13.8 Encourage and provide incentives for residences above businesses.

PL13.9 In all residential areas, allow small cottages and townhouses, and one accessory housing unit per home -- all subject to siting, design and parking requirements that contribute to neighborhood character.

PL13.10 Blend multi-family building designs and landscaping into neighborhoods.

PL13.11 Require a mix of single-family and multi-family structures in villages, mixed residential density districts, and apartment projects when these exceed five acres; and use a variety of housing types and setbacks to transition to adjacent low-density areas.

PL13.12 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

Downtown and other Neighborhoods

Our community is composed of many neighborhoods. Some, like the

downtown area, are composed of commercial, cultural and residential activities and land uses that are accessed by residents of the city, the urban growth areas, and beyond. Other neighborhoods are primarily residential, with nearby parks and schools. This section of the Plan addresses these varied and unique places that together form Olympia and its Urban Growth Area.

Downtown Olympia

A community needs a "heart." For our community, the downtown area performs this role, not just for our city and urban growth area, but for the larger region. It is the social, cultural, and economic center of the area.

Downtown will continue to be an attractive place to live, work and play. Future office, retail and residential development will support downtown's role as a regional center and home of state government, commerce, and industry. Given its history, physical location and identity, downtown Olympia will continue to be the heart of Olympia and the region.

Neighborhoods

This section contains the goals and policies that will protect and improve the character and livability of our established neighborhoods and shape our new neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are envisioned as places where many features are available within a ten-minute walk. A variety of housing types located along pleasant, pedestrian-oriented streets will provide quality living opportunities. Most housing will be single-family detached homes, but higher-density housing will be available near major streets and commercial areas to take advantage of transit, other services, and employment opportunities. Housing types and densities will be dispersed throughout the city and urban growth area to minimize social problems sometimes associated with isolating people of similar means and lifestyles.



One of Olympia's many attractive neighborhoods.

Each neighborhood should have:

- Narrow, tree-lined streets that are easy and interesting to use for walking, bicycling, and travel by transit
- A system of open space and trails with a neighborhood park
- A readily-accessible elementary school or other place of public assembly
- Diverse housing types that accommodate varying income levels, household sizes, and lifestyles
- Sufficient housing densities to support frequent transit service and sustain neighborhood businesses
- A 'neighborhood center' with businesses serving area residents



A neighborhood grocery near the Capitol.

A large portion of Olympia’s residents are to live within a quarter-mile of a neighborhood center. These centers will be focal points of neighborhoods. Although they will vary by location, they generally should contain small-scale convenience and service businesses, a transit stop and a neighborhood park and be bounded by moderate or high-density housing. These neighborhood centers will serve as activity hubs or small-scale town squares that foster social interaction and a sense of community and accommodate nearby residents’ routine shopping needs.

Where possible, a network of walking and biking routes that provide both recreational and commuting opportunities will connect these neighborhood centers to parks, schools, and downtown. To minimize traffic impacts and provide for transit service, these centers will be near major streets. Approximate locations for these centers are shown on the [Future Land Use Map](#).

Although neighborhoods will have some common features, each is unique. Recognizing this, the City envisions a public process where the needs of specific neighborhoods can be individually addressed. This process is described in the Public Participation Chapter and will focus on twelve planning areas. And, as described below, site-specific plans will be prepared for a few select other areas of the community. Managing these

areas well will be critical to the success of this Joint Plan and the City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan and deserves extraordinary attention.



Shady sidewalks provide neighborhood character.

GL14 Development maintains and improves neighborhood character and livability.

PL14.1 Require development in established neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL14.2 Unless necessary for historic preservation, prohibit conversion of housing in residential areas to commercial use; instead, support redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods to bolster stability and allow home occupations (except convalescent care) that do not degrade neighborhood appearance or livability, nor create traffic, noise or pollution problems.

PL14.3 Allow elder care homes and seniors-only housing and encourage child care services everywhere except industrial areas; but limit hospice care to multi-family and commercial districts.

PL14.4 Support development and public improvements consistent with healthy and active lifestyles.

PL14.5 Prevent physical barriers from isolating and separating new developments from existing neighborhoods.

GL15 Neighborhood centers are the focal point of neighborhoods and villages.

PL15.1 Establish a neighborhood center at each village site, encourage development of the neighborhood centers shown on Future Land Use Map. and add additional centers when compatible with existing land uses and where they are more than one-half mile from other commercial areas.

PL15.2 Locate neighborhood centers along collector or arterial streets.

PL15.3 Support housing, a food store, a café or bakery, and a neighborhood park or civic green at all neighborhood centers. Allow churches, schools, and convenience businesses and services that cater primarily to neighborhood residents. Prohibit auto-oriented uses. Vary the specific size and composition of such centers for balance with surrounding uses. Where practical, focus commercial uses on civic greens or parks. Limit the size of commercial uses. (Note: A larger urban center is permitted in the Briggs Urban Village.)

PL15.4 Allow neighborhood center designs that are innovative and provide variety, but that ensure compatibility with adjoining uses. Consider appropriate phasing, scale, design and exterior materials, as well as glare, noise and traffic impacts when evaluating compatibility. Require that buildings primary access directly from street sidewalks and be oriented toward the neighborhood and any adjacent park or green. Require that signage be consistent with neighborhood character.

PL15.5 Locate streets and trails for non-arterial access to the neighborhood center.

GL16 Trees help maintain strong and healthy neighborhoods.

PL16.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL16.2 Support the City's efforts to identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL16.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

GL17 Local Thurston County food production is encouraged and supported to increase self-sufficiency, reduce environmental impact, promote health, and the humane treatment of animals, and support the local economy.

PL17.1 Actively partner with community organizations to provide education and information about the importance of local food systems.

PL17.2 Encourage home gardens as an alternative to maintaining a lawn.

PL17.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL17.4 Encourage for-profit gardening and farming in the community.

PL17.5 Encourage the purchase of locally grown food when possible.

PL17.6 Allow food-producing gardens on rooftops, and offer incentives to include greenhouses for year-round food production.

PL17.7 Recognize the value of open space and other green spaces as areas of potential food production.

PL17.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL17.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PL17.10 Partner with community organizations to help educate community members who are interested in raising animals for food in the urban growth area. This might include information about protecting animals from predators, maintaining sanitary conditions, and treating animals humanely.

PL17.11 Educate and encourage community members to purchase from local farms and small producers as an alternative to factory farms that may engage in inhumane treatment of animals.

GL18 The Urban Growth Area is appropriately sized and includes land that can be developed to higher intensities.

PL18.1 The County and the City regularly review official population forecasts to ensure there is enough buildable land to meet future demand, and, if needed, adjust the boundaries accordingly.

PL18.2 At appropriate intervals, the County and City assess the ability of the existing Urban Growth Area to be developed to the planned densities, and add or remove areas to meet those goals.

PL18.3 In future Joint Plan updates, consider developing sub-area plans for the northeast, southeast and west areas within the Olympia UGA to provide place-specific planning information and, if applicable, policies.

Appendix A - Future Land Use Map Designations

The land use designations of the Future Land Use Map that are within the Urban Growth Area of Olympia are described below and summarized in the Future Land Use Designations Table. Additional land use designations that are within the City of Olympia limits are also noted, and more detail can be found within the [City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan](#). Note that those indicated as symbols on the Future Land Use Map generally are not to exceed ten acres each.

Low-Density Neighborhoods. This designation provides for low-density residential development, primarily single-family detached housing and low-rise multi-family housing, in densities ranging from twelve units per acre to one unit per five acres depending on environmental sensitivity of the area. Where environmental constraints are significant, to achieve minimum densities extraordinary clustering may be allowed when combined with environmental protection. Barring environmental constraints, densities of at least four units per acre should be achieved. Supportive land uses and other types of housing, including accessory dwelling units, townhomes and small apartment buildings, may be permitted. Specific zoning and densities are to be based on the unique characteristics of each area with special attention to stormwater drainage and aquatic habitat. Medium Density Neighborhood Centers are allowed within Low Density Neighborhoods. Clustered development to provide future urbanization opportunities will be required where urban utilities are not readily available.

Medium-Density Neighborhoods. This designation provides for townhouses and multi-family residential densities ranging from thirteen to twenty-four units per acre. Specific zoning is to be based on proximity to bus routes and major streets, land use compatibility, and environmental constraints. Specific zoning will include minimum and maximum densities to ensure efficient use of developable land and to ensure provision of an

adequate variety of types of housing to serve the community. Higher densities should be located close to major employment or commercial areas. Clustering may be permitted.

Mixed Residential. This designation requires a mixture of single and multifamily housing at densities ranging from seven to eighteen units per acre. Specific density ranges and mandatory mixes should be based on land use compatibility and proximity to bus routes and major streets, while also ensuring availability of a variety and blending of housing types and choices.

Neighborhood Centers. This designation provides for neighborhood-oriented convenience businesses and a small park or other public space. Although the locations shown on the Future Land Use Map are approximate, these centers should be along major streets and generally near areas of higher residential densities. The exact location and mix of uses of the centers in these areas will be established at the time of development approval. In general, they should be focused on serving nearby residents, be well integrated with adjacent land uses, and have excellent pedestrian and bicyclist access with minimal car parking.

Residential Mixed Use. To provide opportunities for people to live close to work, shopping, and services, this designation provides for high-density multifamily housing in multistory structures combined with limited commercial uses in parts of downtown, near the State Capitol Campus, and near urban corridors and other activity centers. This designation helps to achieve density goals, to create or maintain a desirable urban living environment for residents of these areas, and to ensure that new urban residential buildings incorporate features which encourage walking and add interest to the urban environment. The commercial uses are intended to help support the residential use of the area by providing retail and personal services within walking distance of the housing. Housing in these high amenity areas will contribute to community vitality, include well-designed buildings on continuous street edges, link one area with another, encourage pedestrian activity, and include visible public spaces that increase safety and decrease vandalism.

Planned Developments. This designation includes areas of mixed uses where specific 'master plans' are required prior to development. These master plans are prepared and proposed by one or a few parties and subject to review and approval by the Thurston County Hearing Examiner. This designation is intended to achieve more innovative designs than in conventional developments but which are also compatible with existing uses in the area. Innovative designs may include offering a wider variety of compatible housing types and densities, neighborhood convenience businesses, recreational uses, open space, trails and other amenities. Generally residential densities should range from seven to thirteen units per acre, but the specific mix of land uses will vary with the zoning, environment, and master plan of each site. In addition to a variety of housing types, these areas may include neighborhood centers as described below. Each of the two planned developments along Yelm Highway may include a larger neighborhood-oriented shopping center with a supermarket. The planned development designation also includes retaining certain existing, and potentially new, manufactured housing parks in locations suitable for such developments. Two unique planned developments include substantial government office buildings and related uses - these are the Capitol Campus; and Evergreen Park, which includes the site of the Thurston County courthouse.

Professional Offices & Multifamily Housing. This designation accommodates a wide range of offices, services, limited retail uses specifically authorized by the applicable zoning district, and moderate-to-high density multifamily housing in structures as large as four stories.

Urban Corridors. This designation applies to certain areas in the vicinity of major arterial streets. Generally, more intense commercial uses and larger structures should be located near the street edge with less intensive uses and smaller structures farther from the street to transition to adjacent designations. Particular 'nodes' or intersections may be more intensely developed. Opportunities to live, work, shop and recreate will be located within walking distance of these areas.

Light Industry. This designation provides for light industrial uses, such as assembly of products and warehousing, and compatible, complementary commercial uses.

High-Density Neighborhoods Overlay: Multi-family residential, commercial and mixed-use neighborhoods with densities of at least 25 dwelling units per acre for residential uses that are not re-using or redeveloping existing structures. New mixed-use developments include a combination of commercial floor area ratio and residential densities that are compatible with a high-density residential neighborhood. The height in these neighborhoods will be determined by zoning and based on the "Height and View Protection Goals and Policies."

Details on the other land use designations located within the City of Olympia, but not within the Urban Growth Area, are within the [City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan](#) and include:

- Residential Mixed Use
- Urban Waterfront
- Central Business District
- General Commerce
- Auto Services
- Medical Services
- Industry

Table: Future Land Use Designations⁶

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION	PRIMARY USE¹	RESIDENTIAL DENSITY²	BUILDING HEIGHTS³	ESTIMATED ACREAGE⁴	PERCENTAGE OF UGA⁵
Low-Density Neighborhoods (LDN)	Single-family Residential	Up to 12 units per acre	2 to 3 stories	11,495 ac.	68%
Medium-Density Neighborhoods (MDN)	Multi-family Residential	13 to 24 units per acre	Up to 3 stories	615 ac.	4%
Mixed Residential	Single & Multi-family	7 to 18 units per acre	Up to 4 stories	200 ac.	1%
Residential Mixed Use	Multi-family	Not limited	3 to 5 stories	100 ac.	≤1%

	Residential				
Planned Developments	Mixed Use	Residential areas: 7 to 13 units per acre	Varies by site and land use	875 ac.	5%
Professional Offices & Multifamily Housing	Mixed Use	Minimum 7 units per acre	3 to 4 stories	405 ac.	2%
Urban Corridors	Commercial	Minimum 15 units per acre	3 to 6 stories	1,500 ac.	10%
Light Industry	Industry & Wholesaling	Not applicable	5 stories	110 ac.	≤1%

¹Primary Use is the anticipated use of the majority of building floor area in each category. Substantial other uses are likely.

²Residential Density is a general range for planning purposes and subject to variation based on site suitability. Specific allowed ranges should be established by development regulations.

³Building Heights is the approximate size of the taller buildings anticipated in each category. Specific height or stories limits should be established by development regulations.

⁴Estimated Acreage is a rough approximation based on the Future Land Use Map with recognition of the indistinct nature of the category boundaries.

⁵Percentage of UGA is a rounded number provided for convenience based on the 'estimated acreage' and an assumption of approximately 24 square miles of land in the **Urban Growth Area**.

⁶To see the entirety of the FLUM, refer to City's comprehensive plan.

For More Information

- The [Buildable Lands Report](#)  prepared for Thurston County by the staff of the [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)  helps Olympia to determine the quantity of land to provide for population and employment growth
- The [Port of Olympia's Planning documents](#)  describe the Port's vision for the future of its lands within Olympia, as well as its role within Thurston County in general
-
- The [Urban Corridors Task Force Recommendations](#), adopted by [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)  in 2012, describes challenges

and opportunities for the urban corridors of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater

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Future Land Use

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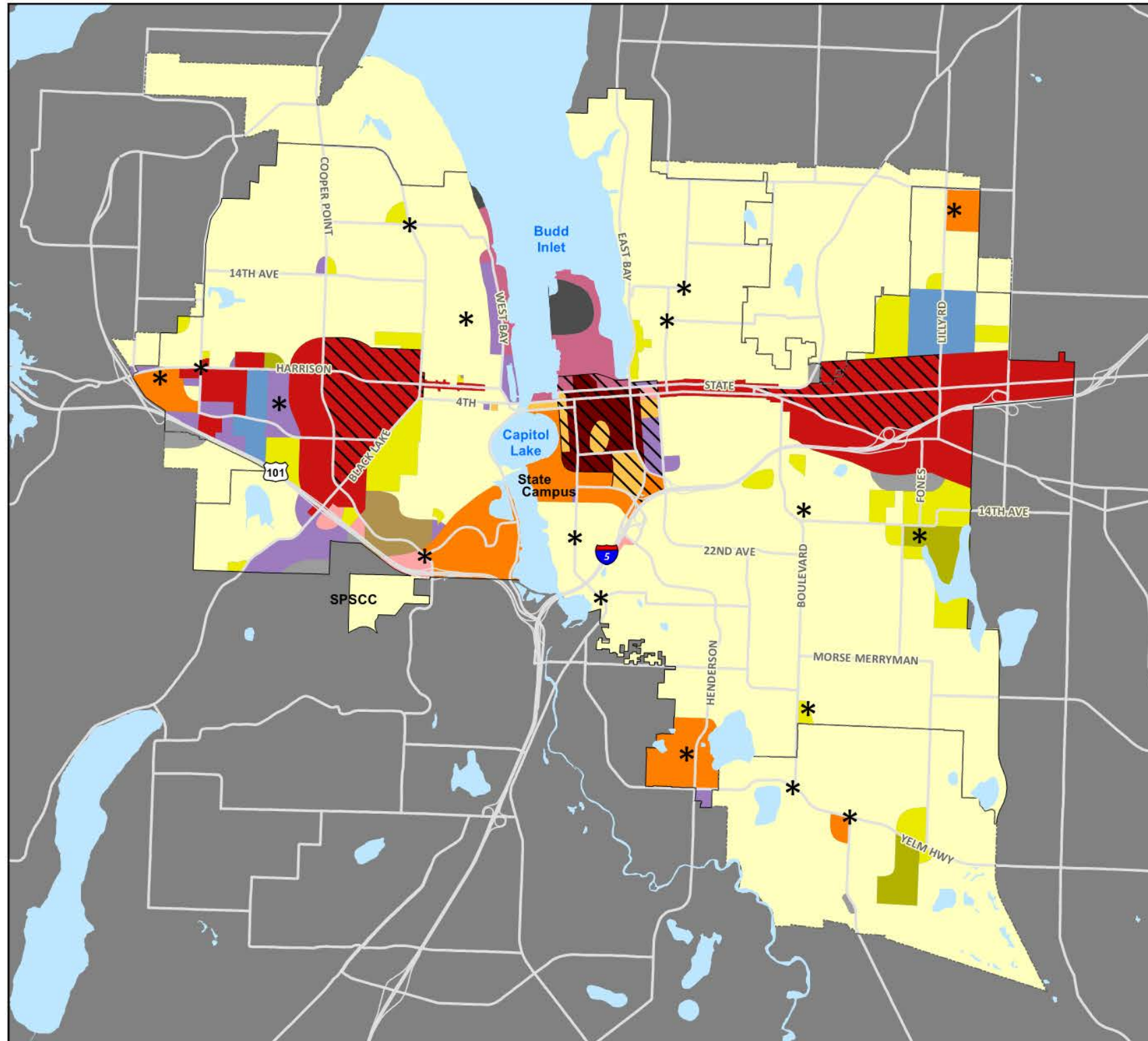
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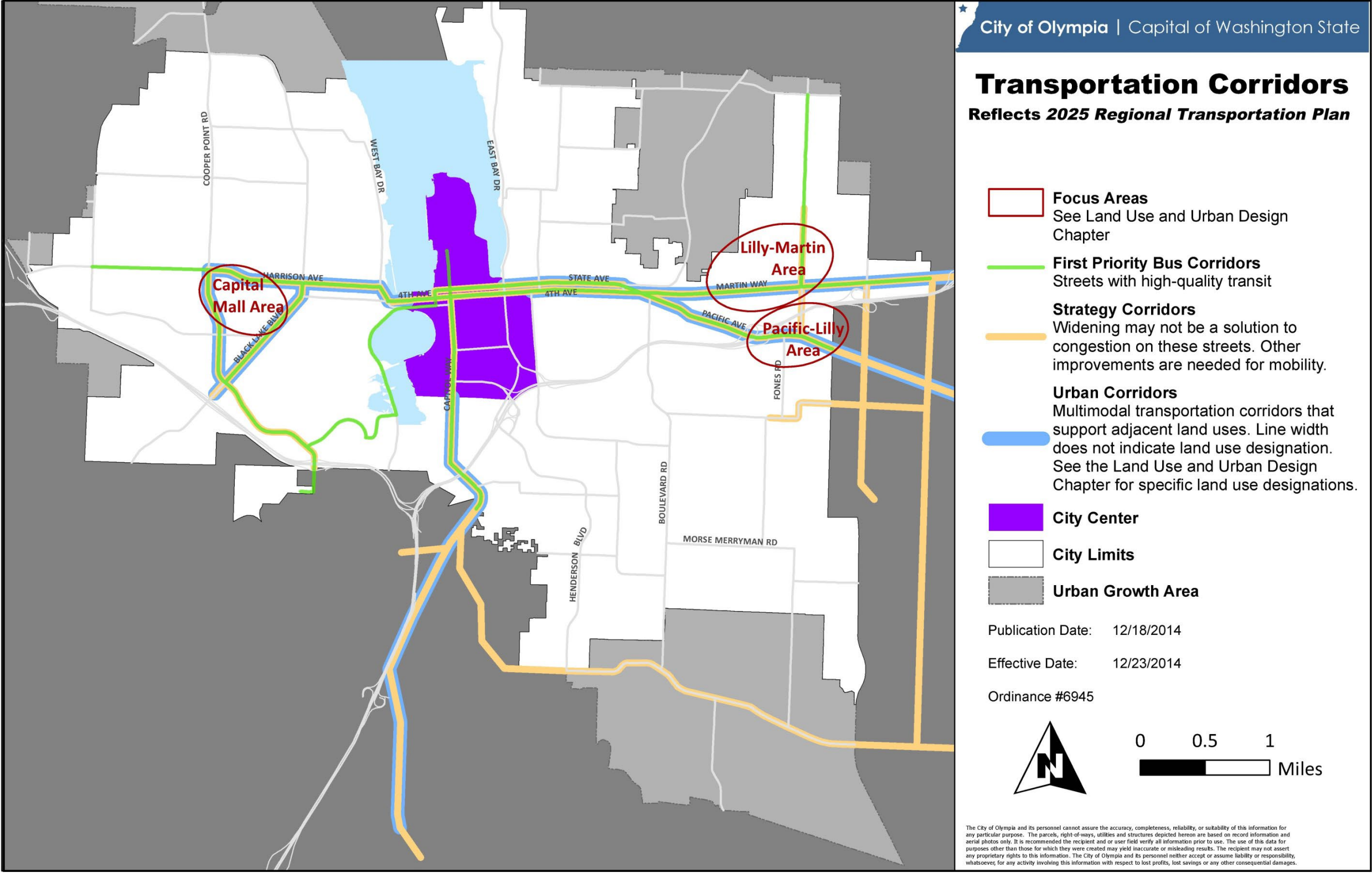
-  High Density Neighborhoods Overlay
-  Low Density Neighborhoods
-  Medium Density Neighborhoods
-  Mixed Residential
-  Neighborhood Centers
-  Residential Mixed Use
-  Planned Developments
-  Professional Office & Multi-family Housing
-  Urban Corridor
-  Urban Waterfront
-  Central Business District
-  General Commerce
-  Auto Services
-  Medical Services
-  Light Industry
-  Industry
-  City Limits
-  Urban Growth Area



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The City of Olympia and its personnel cannot assure the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of this information for any particular purpose. The parcels, right-of-ways, utilities and structures depicted hereon are based on record information and aerial photos only. It is recommended the recipient and/or user field verify all information prior to use. The use of this data for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The recipient may not assert any proprietary rights to this information. The City of Olympia and its personnel neither accept or assume liability or responsibility, whatsoever, for any activity involving this information with respect to lost profits, lost savings or any other consequential damages.





Transportation



Bicyclists and an Intercity Transit bus share the road along Olympia's 4th Avenue Bridge.

What Olympia Values:

Olympians want a transportation system that can move people and goods through the community safely while conserving energy and with minimal environmental impacts. We want it to connect to our homes, businesses and gathering spaces and promote healthy neighborhoods.

Our Vision for the Future:

Complete streets that move people, not just cars.

Introduction

Olympia's future transportation system will focus on moving people, not just cars. The ability to create vibrant urban areas, reduce our environmental impact, and conserve our financial and energy resources will depend on an increase in walking, biking and transit.

Future streets will work for all modes of transportation - thanks to our investment in sidewalks, bike lanes, trees, and safe crossings. We will build streets that are human scale, for people, as well as cars. A more connected grid of smaller streets will shorten trips for people walking, biking and driving, and




allow trucks, buses and emergency vehicles to have direct and efficient routes.

As Olympia and its Urban Growth Area grows, we are learning to use a range of tools that will help us to both respond to growth and provide people with more choices. It won't eliminate congestion, but with the help of involved community members, our future system will provide safe and inviting ways for us to walk, bike, and use public transit.




Olympia's Gateway Corridor.

This Transportation chapter takes direction from a number of state, regional and local plans, policies, and guidelines:

- The Washington State [Growth Management Act](#)  guides cities to link transportation and land-use planning. This means that *as* growth occurs, the City will provide adequate public facilities and a transportation system that supports walking, biking, and public transit, as well as vehicles.
- The [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#)  describes how the region will work together on regional problems and priorities. The plan encourages us to develop high-density, mixed-use urban form in our cities, make new street connections, and find ways to reduce drive-alone commuting.
- [Olympia's Transportation Master Plan](#)  provides overall guidance on how

we can build a multimodal transportation system. It looks strategically at system capacity, complete streets, bus corridors, connectivity, transportation demand management, and funding.

- The City has relied on a number of studies in the past to help it make decisions on capacity, street connectivity, and street design, and these decisions have had a long-term impact on our local transportation system. They also have helped to shape the transportation goals and policies in this plan. See Appendix A, Transportation Planning History for study descriptions.
- This plan is consistent with the [Washington Transportation Plan](#) , which establishes a 20-year vision for the state's transportation system and recommends statewide transportation policies and strategies to the legislature and Governor.



Bicyclists travel over Olympia's 4th Avenue Bridge.

Complete Streets

Streets with wide sidewalks and trees invite us to walk to the store or a friend's house. Bike lanes make biking to work more appealing and convenient. The way we design our streets will create new opportunities for how we travel within our city, and how we interact with one another.

"Complete streets" are built for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders, as well as cars, trucks and buses. They increase the number of people walking, biking and using transit, and are also safe for motor vehicles. Complete street policies complement other goals, such as boosting our economy, reducing congestion, increasing land-use density, minimizing environmental impacts, and giving people more opportunities to be physically active.



4th Avenue near City Hall redesigned with bike lanes and wider sidewalks.

Goals and Policies

GT1 All streets are safe and inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists. Streets are designed to be human scale, but also can accommodate motor vehicles, and encourage safe driving.

PT1.1 Retrofit major streets to be human scale and include features to make walking, biking and transit use safe and inviting.

PT1.2 Build streets with individual lanes that are as narrow as safely possible to discourage speeding, while making sure larger vehicles are able to enter areas where they are needed.

PT1.3 Establish speed limits to create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, while maintaining motor vehicle traffic flow. Speed limits shall not exceed 35 miles-per-hour on arterial and major collector streets, and 25 miles-per-hour on neighborhood collectors and local access streets, and in the City Center. Provisions are allowed to establish 20 miles-per-hour speed limits for select conditions and as allowed by state law.

PT1.4 Reduce the impact of traffic on pedestrians by creating buffers such as on-street parking, trees, planter strips, wide sidewalks, and creating interest along the street with amenities and building design.

PT1.5 Create attractive streetscapes with sidewalks, trees, planter strips, and pedestrian-scale streetlights. In denser areas, provide benches, building awnings, and attractive and functional transit stops and shelters.

PT1.6 Build intersections that are safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles. Use minimum dimensions (narrow lanes and crossings) for a human-scale environment, while maintaining vehicle access and safety.

PT1.7 Use medians for access control and to keep the number of motor vehicle lanes to a minimum.

PT1.8 Use medians for pedestrian crossing islands, and to enhance the beauty of the street.

PT1.9 Build streets in a grid pattern of small blocks to allow streets to be narrow and low-volume, encourage walking, and provide travelers with a choice of routes.

PT1.10 Minimize driveways along major streets to reduce conflicts between vehicles and bicyclists and pedestrians. Encourage shared driveways or provide access off side streets and alleys.

PT1.11 Require consolidation of driveways and parking lot connectivity for adjacent commercial areas to facilitate access from one site to another without having to access the roadway.

PT1.12 Recognize the value of street trees for buffering pedestrians from motor vehicle traffic, to capture vehicle emissions, shade sidewalks, and protect asphalt from heat. Proper selection, care and placement are critical to long-term

maintenance of trees along streets, street pavement and sidewalks.

PT1.13 Consider modified street design to enhance the function of a street for a particular mode, such as bicycling, or to support the unique identity of a street, such as an historic district.

PT1.14 Provide adequate and safe street and pathway lighting, in a way that reduces light pollution.



Bicyclist on 5th Avenue.

GT2 As new streets are built and existing streets are reconstructed, add multimodal features as specified by applicable engineering design and development standards.

PT2.1 Build arterial streets to serve as primary routes connecting urban centers and the regional transportation network. Include bike lanes, sidewalks, planter strips, pedestrian-crossing features, and other amenities that support pedestrian comfort and safety.

PT2.2 Build major collector streets to connect arterials to residential and commercial areas. Include bike lanes, sidewalks, planter strips and pedestrian-crossing features.

PT2.3 Build neighborhood collectors to provide circulation within and between residential and commercial areas. These streets should include sidewalks and planter strips, and may include pedestrian-crossing features. Some neighborhood collectors include bike lanes, or signs and markings to designate a bike route. (See Appendix D: Bike Network Map and List.)

PT2.4 Build local access streets to provide direct connections to properties within neighborhoods. All new local access streets should include sidewalks and planter strips and may include wayfinding signs to direct cyclists to the larger bicycle network.

PT2.5 Provide transit stops and service accommodations, in consultation with Intercity Transit. Encourage sidewalk access to all designated stops and consider pedestrian crossing improvements to facilitate access, including mid-block crossing islands on high-volume streets.

PT2.6 Install or allow traffic-calming devices on local access, neighborhood collector, and some major collector streets where speeds, volumes and other conditions indicate a need. Consider pedestrian, bicyclist and transit bus safety and access when installing traffic-calming devices.

PT2.7 Allow on-street parking on local access and neighborhood collector streets.

PT2.8 Make it a priority to add bulb-outs for shorter pedestrian crossings and to slow traffic on existing arterials and major collectors with on-street parking. Consider building bulb-outs on neighborhood collector streets with on-street parking where overall narrowing of the street is not possible.

PT2.9 Allow the City to modify street standards in environmentally sensitive areas based on planning work, and specify these changes in the code.

PT2.10 Use innovative designs to reduce or eliminate stormwater run-off.

PT2.11 Use Olympia's regularly updated Engineering Design and Development Standards to ensure that transportation-related facilities constructed in Olympia

and its Growth Area are safe, well-constructed, durable, and can be maintained.

PT2.12 Regularly revise the development regulations that apply in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) to be consistent with the Olympia Municipal Code and Engineering Design and Development Standards to give detailed guidance on how transportation services should be paid for and delivered in the UGA in accordance with the principles established in this Comprehensive Plan.

GT3 Streets allow the efficient delivery of goods and services.

PT3.1 Design streets so that goods and services can be delivered safely and efficiently. This means buses, commercial trucks, emergency and other public service vehicles have an appropriate level of access.

PT3.2 Designate and enforce appropriate linear curb space so that commercial vehicles can load and unload in urban areas.

PT3.3 Consider large-vehicle movement in the design of arterial and major collector streets, particularly at intersections, on streets in industrial- zoned areas, and in mixed-use areas.

PT3.4 Encourage alleys where feasible and practical and retain alleys as public right-of-way.

PT3.5 Encourage alleys where feasible and practical behind lots fronting on arterials and collectors, so that houses or businesses can face the street, sidewalks are continuous, and vehicles can access properties from behind.

PT3.6 Maintain alleyways for delivery and service vehicles by ensuring they are not blocked by trash receptacles, cars, or other obstructions.

Connectivity

A city with a well-connected network of smaller streets helps create a better city for walking, biking, riding the bus and driving. This “connectivity” creates a human-scale environment. Whether people are walking, biking, or driving, their

routes are shorter. Transit riders can get to their stops more easily. A well-connected street grid provides direct and efficient access for all types of service vehicles including transit buses, delivery trucks, and emergency vehicles.



A street connection extends Olympia Avenue to the downtown.

A 1994 planning study conducted by the City led to the fully-connected street network we are now building. The study determined that instead of continuing to widen our major roads, we should build a connected grid of smaller streets. This study became the basis for our vision of a modified street grid and planned street connections. (See maps in Appendix B and the Transportation Planning History in Appendix A for additional information.)

Because well-connected streets create more direct routes, fewer miles are driven, saving fuel and reducing pollution. During emergencies and major construction, the grid provides options: if one route is blocked, other direct routes are available. A grid also provides more opportunities to turn left, reducing traffic back-ups.

There can be challenges with making street connections. Topography and environmentally sensitive areas can make certain street connections infeasible. Some street connections and the resulting changes to traffic patterns have the

potential to affect neighborhood character or disproportionately impact some residents. The County will balance decisions about the value of a street connection with potential impacts to the unique geography, character or historical context of a residential neighborhood. In these cases, policies help guide the analysis of a street connection. When street connections are not made for motor vehicle access, priority will be given to making a connection for bicyclists, pedestrians, emergency vehicles and transit.

Pathways and trails provide connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians. Pathways are shortcuts in neighborhoods that provide connections to parks, schools, trails and streets. Trails allow travel off the street system, benefitting bicyclists and pedestrians for transportation and recreation.



The gridded street network in an older neighborhood.

Goals and Policies

GT4 The street network is a well-connected system of small blocks, allowing short, direct trips for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and service vehicles.

PT4.1 Connect streets in a grid-like pattern of smaller blocks. Block sizes should range from 250 feet to 350 feet in residential areas and up to a maximum of 500 feet along arterials.

PT4.2 Build new street connections to reduce travel time and distances for all users of the street system.

PT4.3 Build new street and pathway connections so that people walking, biking, or accessing bus stops have direct route options, making these modes more inviting.

PT4.4 Build new street connections so that motor-vehicle trips are shorter, to save fuel, cut travel time, and reduce pollution.

PT4.5 Build new street connections so the grid provides other routes if an emergency or major construction blocks travel.

PT4.6 Build new street connections so that emergency vehicles, transit, and other service vehicles have direct and efficient access.

PT4.7 Build a human-scale street grid of small blocks by defining required dimensions in the Thurston County Engineering Design and Development Standards. Use street-spacing criteria to define the frequency of different types of streets in the grid, and define block sizes, where applicable, on each type of street to keep blocks small.

PT4.8 Build new arterials, major collectors and neighborhood collectors based on the general location defined on the Transportation Maps in Appendix B. Require the use of the Thurston County Engineering Design and Development Standards.

PT4.9 Seek public and private funding to construct street connections in the network.

PT4.10 Encourage new developments to connect to the existing street network and provide for future street connections to ensure the gridded street system is built concurrent with development.

PT4.11 Build bike and pedestrian pathways for safe and direct non-motorized access. Where street connections are not possible, build pathways based on the Thurston County Engineering Design and Development Standards.

PT4.12 Build an adequate network of arterials and collectors to discourage heavy traffic volumes on local access streets. (See maps and lists in Appendix B.)

PT4.13 Build a dense grid of local access and collector streets to provide motorists with multiple ways to enter and exit neighborhoods instead of using arterial streets for trips within the neighborhood.

PT4.14 Allow cul-de-sacs only when topographic and environmental constraints permit no other option. Cul-de-sacs that are built should have a maximum length of 300 feet and be built with pedestrian and bike connections to adjacent streets, or to destinations such as schools, parks and trails wherever possible.

PT4.15 Use signs to identify planned but still unbuilt street connections or "stub outs" and to indicate the type of street that is planned. This information should also be shown on maps of newly platted areas.

PT4.16 Create public bicycle and pedestrian connections for interim use when street connections are not completed with new development.

PT4.17 Plan and identify street connections in undeveloped areas to ensure they are eventually connected.

PT4.18 Plan for adequate rights-of-way for future streets.

PT4.19 Use traffic-calming devices to slow vehicles, where necessary, especially when new streets are connected to existing neighborhoods.

PT4.20 Develop measures to demonstrate the connectedness of an area and to help explain the value of new street or pathway connections. Measures may include intersection density, centerline miles per square mile, and a route directness index.

GT5 Street connections to existing residential areas and in environmentally sensitive areas will be carefully examined before a decision is made to create a connection for motor vehicle traffic.

PT5.1 Seek to avoid street connections through wetlands or other critical areas by examining alternative street alignments. Fully mitigate impacts when a street connection in an environmentally sensitive area is determined to be the preferred option.

PT5.2 Carefully examine proposed street connections to existing residential neighborhoods. The developer, City, or County will analyze the street connection with the involvement of affected neighborhoods and stakeholders. Consideration will be given to the unique neighborhood character and context, particularly any direct impacts of a street connection on established neighborhoods. This analysis will determine whether or not to construct the street connection for motor vehicle traffic. Affected neighborhoods and other stakeholders will be consulted before a final decision is made and be involved in identification of any potential mitigation measures. As appropriate, this evaluation will include:

- Effects on the overall transportation system
- Effects on reduced vehicle miles travelled and associated greenhouse gases
- Opportunities for making additional connections that would reduce neighborhood impacts of the connection being evaluated
- Impacts on directness of travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists
- Impacts on directness of travel for emergency-, public-, and commercial-service vehicles
- An assessment of travel patterns of the larger neighborhood area and volumes at nearby major intersections
- An assessment of traffic volumes at the connection and whether projected volumes are expected to exceed the typical range for that classification of street
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Noise impacts and air pollution
- Social justice issues and any impacts on the unique character of a

- neighborhood or effects on affordability of housing
- Likelihood of diverting significant cross-town arterial traffic on to local neighborhood streets
- Effectiveness of proposed traffic-calming measures
- The cost of a street connection and the cost of any alternative approach to meeting transportation needs if a street connection is not made
- Consideration of the information in Appendix A of this chapter

PT5.3 In the event that a street connection is not made for motor vehicles, priority will be given to pedestrian, bicycle, transit and emergency vehicle access.

PT5.4 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 development regulations.


GT6 Pathways enhance the transportation network by providing direct and formal off-street routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.

PT6.1 Establish and improve pathways in existing built areas.

PT6.2 Require new developments to provide direct bicycle and pedestrian pathways that connect to adjacent, developed properties. These will be at the same interval spacing as street spacing requirements or at closer intervals.

PT6.3 Install signs at pathways to indicate they are open to the public and an official part of the transportation network.

GT7 A network of regional and local trails enhances mobility for bicycles and pedestrians.

PT7.1 Work with regional jurisdictions to develop the on- and off-street trails network, as identified in the [Thurston Regional Trails Plan](#). 

PT7.2 Increase access to trails by requiring or acquiring pathways, easements, or dedicated rights-of-way from new developments adjacent to current and future trails.

PT7.3 Install signs that identify the trails network, public destinations, nearby streets, and transit routes.

System Capacity

One of the ways we gauge the quality of a community is how easily we get around. No one likes getting stuck in traffic. In Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, we are looking for new ways to add capacity - ways that retain the human-scale character of our streets - instead of adding more lanes.



Traffic and a cyclist move through downtown.

The concept of concurrency means that as our community grows, we add “capacity” to the street.

The capacity of a transportation system is traditionally thought of as the space

needed on our streets to move cars. In Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, we look at capacity more broadly and see it as our ability to move *people*.

The street system can move more people when more trips are made by walking, biking, or riding the bus. We will increase capacity on our streets by building facilities to support walking, biking, and transit. In many cases, adding roundabouts will be a key part of this approach.

Efforts to reduce auto trips, such as adding bike lanes and sidewalks and improving transit services will increase capacity on all major streets, but especially on strategy corridors (See Appendix H, the Corridor Map, for strategy corridors.)

The project list and maps in Appendix B include system capacity improvements for vehicles likely to be needed over the next 20 years.


Appendix I shows Traffic Forecast Maps of current and future traffic volumes.

Goals and Policies

GT8 Impacts of new development on the transportation system are addressed by establishing network completeness standards that ensure that adequate transportation infrastructure is provided in concert with growth.

PT8.1 Implement a system completeness framework for transportation concurrency in which the supply of new transportation infrastructure that supports growth shall exceed the travel demand of new growth.*

- Supply is defined by the transportation concurrency project list identified in the Capital Facilities Plan
- Demand is measured by PM peak hour person trip generation

*The City of Olympia maintains a different approach for concurrency and can be found in their [Transportation Master Plan](#).

PT8.2 Consider signal upgrades and signal timing as standard ways to reduce congestion.

PT8.3 No street will exceed the width of five general purpose auto lanes (such as two in each direction and a center turn lane) mid-block when adding capacity to the street system. Turn lanes may be added as appropriate, with careful consideration of pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

PT8.4 Consider roundabouts instead of signals at intersections to maintain traffic flow.

PT8.5 Exempt transportation facilities and services of statewide significance from concurrency requirements per RCW [36.70A.070](#) (6). Proposed improvements to state-owned facilities will be consistent with the [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#) and the State Highway System Plan within Washington's Transportation Plan.

GT9 The impacts of new land-use development on the transportation system are mitigated appropriately.

PT9.1 Require mitigation for new developments so that transportation level of service does not fall below adopted standards, except where policies allow.

PT9.2 Require new development to construct improvements or contribute funds towards measures that will improve the function and safety of the streets, such as installing bike and pedestrian improvements, turn pockets or special lanes for buses, or roundabouts, or modifying traffic signals.



A bus stops on Capitol Way.

PT9.3 Ensure a fair distribution of new transportation-related costs to new developments through imposition of impact fees.

PT9.4 Use the [State Environmental Policy Act](#)  to determine mitigation requirements for the impacts of new development on the transportation system.

PT9.5 Construct complete streets and maintain an urban form that is human scale, when widening is necessary.

GT10 On designated strategy corridors facilitate increased land use density, and eliminate transportation system inefficiencies.

PT10.1 Add bike lanes and sidewalks, improve transit services, and use demand management measures to ensure that transit, walking and biking are attractive and easy to use during peak travel periods on all streets, especially strategy corridors.

PT10.2 Expand the City's network of street connections, pathways and trails to help relieve congestion.

Land Use

The land use and transportation goals and policies of this plan are interconnected. When attractive housing is close to jobs, services and stores, trips are short and easy to make without a car. Transit stops can be close by and convenient for longer trips outside the neighborhood. In compact, mixed-use areas, it is easier for people to walk, bike and ride the bus than it is to drive, reducing our dependency on our cars.

The dense, mixed areas we are trying to achieve are made more attractive, comfortable and functional when streets have wide sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, and the bus is convenient. We can optimize our investments in the transit system by locating a mixture of dense land uses along our major bus routes. Without the coordination of land use and transportation, we will continue to rely on our cars, congestion will worsen, streets will be wider and unfriendly, and more parking will be needed.



An attractive sidewalk along a major bus route.

Goals and Policies

GT11 The transportation system provides attractive walking, biking and transit options, so that land use densities can increase without creating more traffic congestion.

PT11.1 Build a system that encourages walking, biking and transit to reduce car trips and help achieve our land-use density goals.

GT12 A mix of strategies is used to concentrate growth in the city and Urban Growth Area, which both supports and is supported by walking, biking, and transit.

PT12.1 Consider increasing allowed densities along parts of the urban corridors, while maintaining lower densities in the periphery of the City and urban growth area.

PT12.2 Promote infill in close-in neighborhoods and increased land-use density in activity centers to reduce sprawl, car trips, and to make the best use of the existing transportation network.

PT12.3 Allow housing in commercial and employment areas to reduce commute and errand distances, and encourage alternatives to driving.

PT12.4 Allow neighborhood centers in residential areas to reduce commute and errand distances and encourage alternatives to driving.

GT13 Streets are public space, where people want to be.

PT13.1 Design streets to preserve or enhance the unique qualities and “sense of place” of a neighborhood or district.

PT13.2 Design streets as gathering spaces and destinations, and highlight their cultural and natural features.

PT13.3 Look for opportunities to create multi-use, public spaces along streets and encourage public and private efforts to make these places unique and memorable.

Transit

We can use bus service for many of the routine trips we make, and significantly reduce congestion. As traffic increases, transit will be an efficient way to move more people on the same streets.

Intercity Transit is the primary public transit operator for Thurston County, and its strong partnership with the City will be critical to meeting community transportation needs.




People board a bus at the downtown Olympia Transit Center.

In the near-term, Olympia envisions a distinct system of “bus corridors:” major streets with high-quality, frequent service that will allow people to use transit

more spontaneously. The first priority for bus corridor development will be along strategy corridors. See the Corridor Map in Appendix H for bus corridors and strategy corridors.

Building bus corridors is a major new commitment in which the City and Intercity Transit will jointly invest, and that the County supports. Intercity Transit will provide fast, frequent and reliable bus service along these corridors and the City will provide operational improvements, such as longer green time at traffic signals to prevent bus delays in congestion. Attractive streetscapes, pedestrian crossings and sidewalks will enhance people's access to transit. The City will also encourage a mix of land uses and increased densities along these corridors to increase ridership.

Bus corridors will be planned as regional connectors between Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater. To sustain the level of service for transit in these corridors, increased residential and commercial density of development is needed. They will ideally connect with similar corridors in Lacey and Tumwater.

Over the long term, Intercity Transit and the communities it serves will together carry out the most current long-range transit plan and the [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#) .



A bus travels over the 4th Avenue Bridge.

Goals and Policies

GT14 Bus corridors have high-quality transit service allowing people to ride the bus spontaneously, and easily replace car trips with trips by bus.

PT14.1 Support the future system of bus corridors with fast, frequent, and predictable service. Transit service should operate at least every 15 minutes on weekdays where surrounding land uses call for it.

PT14.2 Achieve density and mix of land uses along bus corridors to support increased ridership and frequent service.

PT14.3 Formalize bus corridors through a joint agreement between Intercity Transit and the City of Olympia, with efforts to include Thurston County, Lacey, and Tumwater.

PT14.4 Coordinate with Intercity Transit and the City of Olympia to give traffic signal priority to buses, build bypass or exclusive transit lanes, and take other measures designed to speed bus service.

PT14.5 Ensure street, site, and building designs are well-planned for pedestrian use along bus corridors.

PT14.6 Integrate transit and bicycle network planning and require bicycle end-of-trip facilities, such as bike parking, along bus corridors.

PT14.7 Eliminate minimum parking requirements along bus corridors.

PT14.8 Give priority to sidewalks and mid-block pedestrian crossings that enhance access and safety on high frequency bus corridors.

GT15 Intercity Transit's short- and long-range plans are supported.

PT15.1 Support Intercity Transit's existing and planned services and facilities by

ensuring that street standards, system operational efficiencies, land uses, and site design support transit along current and future routes.

PT15.2 Coordinate with Intercity Transit on bus stop locations so they are safe, accessible and inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists.

PT15.3 Consult with Intercity Transit when new developments are being reviewed so that current and future bus routes can be accessed by transit vehicles.

PT15.4 Make transit more inviting by designing transit access at major destinations such as worksites, schools, medical facilities and shopping complexes in a manner that allows efficient access for buses, while placing bus stops in locations that are more convenient than parking areas.

PT15.5 Coordinate with Intercity Transit in requiring developers to provide facilities that help transit riders easily walk or bike to and from stops, such as shelters, awnings, bike parking, walkways, benches, and lighting.


PT15.6 Encourage Intercity Transit to provide service to passenger rail stations or other intermodal facilities.

PT15.7 Explore opportunities for circulator transit routes to enhance connectivity between urban corridors, their adjacent neighborhoods, and the city center.

GT16 The region is prepared to advance high-capacity transportation.

PT16.1 Preserve significant rail corridors threatened with abandonment as identified in the Regional Transportation Plan.

PT16.2 Integrate land use and high-capacity transportation planning so that dense urban centers are developed around multi-modal transit stations, and coordinate this regionally.

PT16.3 Encourage the Washington State Department of Transportation and the [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)  to identify and address deficiencies in regional commuter services.

PT16.4 Achieve the land-use densities and mixed uses necessary to build ridership needed for high-capacity transportation.

GT17 The rail system can move materials over long distances efficiently and inexpensively.

PT17.1 Work with regional partners and the Washington State Department of Transportation to support and expand freight rail in the region.

Walking

This plan aims to make streets safe and inviting for walking for more people. This can be accomplished over time by designing streets that are “human scale,” places where people can enjoy walking, sitting and interacting with others. Building and retrofitting streets by planting trees, creating landscaped strips and installing decorative lighting can encourage people to walk and create an active street life.

When streets are designed for people, rather than dominated by cars, neighbors interact, businesses thrive, and people feel more engaged in their community. All of this can stimulate activity, attract development, and improve the quality of life, even as the population increases.



A new sidewalk is buffered by a planter strip and street trees on San Francisco Avenue.

Well-designed sidewalks are integral to a community's transportation network because they separate pedestrians from motor vehicles, and provide a flat and predictable surface for walking. For those with walking aids, sidewalks significantly enhance access. Sidewalks invite people to gather and interact in public space right outside their front door. Sidewalks provide safe places for children to walk, run, skate, and play.



A flashing beacon at a crosswalk on Olympic Way will alert motorists to pedestrians.

Another important safety factor for walkers is to ensure that streets are easy to cross. Pedestrian crossing improvements shorten the crossing distance, increase visibility of walkers to motorists, increase crosswalk law compliance, and enhance the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

Goals and Policies

GT18 Walking is safe and inviting, and more people walk for transportation.

PT18.1 Encourage walking and educate people about walking safety and the benefits of walking.

PT18.2 Ensure street standards reflect the importance of walking for transportation and recreation.

PT18.3 Build new streets and retrofit existing streets to be more inviting for walking with sidewalks, crossing improvements and streetscape enhancements.

PT18.4 Consider the needs of people walking in all aspects of street operations

and maintenance.

PT18.5 Use construction practices that provide safe access for pedestrians. When roadway closures are necessary for construction, provide a reasonably direct route through or around the construction area for people walking.

PT18.6 Require direct, safe, and convenient pedestrian access to commercial and public buildings from sidewalks, parking lots, bus stops, and adjacent buildings.

GT19 Sidewalks make streets safe and inviting for walking.

PT19.1 Build all new streets with inviting sidewalks on both sides of the street.

PT19.2 Focus sidewalk construction on major streets, where heavy traffic volumes and speeds make it difficult for walkers to share space with motor vehicles. Prioritize sidewalk construction projects based on street conditions, transit routes, and the proximity to destinations such as schools.

PT19.3 Retrofit selected smaller local access streets within neighborhoods with sidewalks to address unique conditions, such as: limited sight distance; the need for access to bus stops, schools and parks; or, because no other parallel street exists nearby to provide a safe walking route.

GT20 Pedestrian crossing improvements remove barriers for walkers on major streets, especially wide streets with high vehicle volumes.

PT20.1 Build new streets and retrofit existing streets with crossing islands and “bulb outs” to increase pedestrian safety.

PT20.2 Raise driver awareness of pedestrians at crosswalks on wide, high-volume streets using blinking lights, flags, signs, markings, and other techniques.

PT20.3 Add safe, mid-block crossings for pedestrians to new and existing

streets. This is especially important on major streets that have long distances between stop lights, and those with high-frequency transit service.

PT20.4 Design intersections to make pedestrian crossing safety a priority: minimize the crossing width, make pedestrians more visible with bulb outs and lighting, and minimize “curb radii” (sharper corners instead of sweeping curves).

PT20.5 Consider the use of pavers or colored, patterned concrete on crosswalks in commercial or mixed-use areas to increase motorist awareness of pedestrians and to improve the appearance of an area, without negatively affecting cyclists or pedestrians.

PT20.6 Consider the needs of the elderly and disabled in all crosswalk design and signal timing.



Streetscape enhancements include awnings, trees, and wide sidewalks.

GT21 Streetscapes buffer walkers from motor vehicle traffic, enhance the experience of walking, and increase the attractiveness of an area.

PT21.1 Separate sidewalks from motor-vehicle traffic with buffers of trees and landscaping.

PT21.2 Allow on-street parking as a buffer, where appropriate, between walkers and motor-vehicle traffic.

PT21.3 Provide sidewalks wide enough to include the “streetscape” elements and space needed to support active street life. In busy pedestrian areas, install benches, artwork and other features to make streets interesting and inviting, while maintaining safe walking surfaces and adequate space for those in wheelchairs.

PT21.4 Encourage continuous awnings over the sidewalk along building frontages to protect pedestrians from weather.

PT21.5 Use pedestrian-scale lighting to make sidewalks feel safe and inviting at night.

PT21.6 Develop streetscape plans for commercial and mixed-use areas.

PT21.7 Integrate inviting bus stops and shelters into streetscape design.

Bicycling

Bicycling is clean, economical, efficient, and ideal for trips within our community. As with walking, the vision of this plan is to consider biking as a valuable mode of transportation, and to make the safety of bicyclists a high priority. Because bicyclists have access to the same streets as drivers, they must have both the same rights and responsibilities.



A bicyclist approaches the 4th Avenue Bridge.

A well-connected network of facilities for bicyclists is the key to increasing the use of bicycles for regular transportation. A bicycle network includes bike lanes, signs and markings, trails, pathways, and bicycle parking. An effective network is supported by maintenance and operations practices that remove barriers to bicycling.

Providing bike lanes on existing streets is a cost-effective way to create separate, safe spaces for bicycling, especially where vehicle volumes are high and motorists and bicyclists need a predictable system for sharing the street.

Education, enforcement and encouragement can both improve bicycle safety and encourage more people to bike. Programs are needed to raise awareness of the benefits of bicycling, teach urban-cycling skills to adults, teach children to be safe riders, and let all roadway users know what their responsibilities are.



A bicyclist adds a red light to her bike to be more visible by motorists.

Goals and Policies

GT22 Bicycling is safe and inviting, and many people use their bikes to both travel and stay active.

PT22.1 Retrofit streets to provide safe and inviting bicycle facilities when possible. Look for other opportunities to provide bicycle facilities where possible.

PT22.2 Build bike lanes on new major streets when possible: arterials, major collectors and selected neighborhood collectors.

PT22.3 Use signs and markings to alert drivers to the presence of bicyclists, to guide bicyclist and motorist behavior, and to guide bicyclists to destinations.

PT22.4 Explore the use of bicycle boulevards to support novice and family bicycling - streets with low volumes and special accommodations for bicycling.

PT22.5 Make pedestrian crossing islands large enough for families cycling together.

PT22.6 Consider the needs of bicyclists in all aspects of street operations and maintenance including signal system operations.

PT22.7 Use construction and maintenance practices that provide safe access for bicycle travel. When roadway closures are necessary, provide for a reasonably direct bicycle route through or around the construction area.

PT22.8 Encourage new commercial developments, public facilities, schools, and multi-family housing to provide end-of-trip facilities for bicyclists, including covered bike racks and lockers.

PT22.9 Use education, encouragement and enforcement programs to improve the safety of and promote bicycling.

PT22.10 Partner with businesses, schools, developers, and employers to support bicycling through site and building design, end-of-trip facilities and programs to promote bike use.

PT22.11 Educate people about biking and walking in order to reduce motorized travel and make the best use of the investments in infrastructure.

PT22.12 Educate drivers about and enforce regulations that protect the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.

PT22.13 Educate bicyclists and walkers about their responsibilities as users of the street system.

Transportation and Demand Management

When more people ride the bus, carpool, walk, and bike for their daily commute, traffic congestion, pollution, and energy consumption are reduced. We also save money and get more exercise.


Many current community efforts focus on helping both workers and students find alternatives to driving alone. Ridematch programs link carpoolers and help set up long-distance vanpools. Frequent bus service to major work sites makes the bus more inviting. Bike lanes, bike parking and networks of trails, sidewalks and safe crossings encourage people to walk and bike.

Commute trip reduction efforts focus on employee and student commute trips because these trips are predictable and are made by large numbers of people. A successful change in these travel habits can have a positive impact on our streets.

We need school programs - as well as bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly streets -- to encourage students to walk, bike, carpool, or take the bus to school. Large numbers of students and parents driving to and from school can create congestion and safety issues for students.




State employees cross Capitol Way at the Tivoli Fountain.


Washington state's 1991 [Commute Trip Reduction Law](#)  called on workers to reduce their drive-alone commuting. Since then, commute trip reduction programs have focused on large worksites in the most congested areas of the state.

When we reduce drive-alone commuting, we make the best use of existing streets and reduce the need for costly new lanes. And, when more people walk, bike, carpool and ride the bus, we can increase land-use density without increasing traffic.

Goals and Policies

GT23 Walking, biking, riding the bus, and carpooling are convenient for trips to work or school. Fewer drive-alone trips will reduce pollution, energy consumption, and the growth in traffic congestion.

PT23.1 Help affected employers in the region meet the goals of the State's [Commute Trip Reduction Law](#) .

PT23.2 Support the State's [Commute Trip Reduction Law](#)  with policies and programs that encourage ridesharing, transit, walking and biking.

PT23.3 Work with the State to locate new worksites in locations where frequent transit is possible, and where employees can easily walk and bike.

PT23.4 Provide infrastructure to support walking, biking, transit, and ridesharing for commuting.

PT23.5 Encourage areas, such as malls, with high concentrations of employees, to develop coordinated commuter programs to reduce drive-alone commuting.

PT23.6 Work with community partners to provide programs, services and incentives that will promote transit, ridesharing, walking, and biking.

PT23.7 Encourage employers and schools to stagger start times to reduce peak-hour traffic volumes. Encourage employers to allow flexible work schedules, so employees can more easily take advantage of transit and ridesharing opportunities.

PT23.8 Encourage employers to allow telecommuting and compressed work weeks to eliminate commute trips.

PT23.9 Encourage end-of-trip facilities, such as clothes lockers, showers and bike parking for walking, biking and transit users at schools and worksites.



Students participate in a Walk and Roll event.

PT23.10 Encourage students to walk, bike and rideshare to reduce congestion near schools, to introduce them to transportation options, to encourage more exercise, and, at high schools, reduce the need for parking.

PT23.11 Support City and school district policies to site new schools in locations where students can easily walk or bike to school, and where school employees and students can commute on public transit. Consider multi-story buildings on smaller lots to accommodate capacity needs closer to the urban core and to reduce disruption to the street grid.

PT23.12 Provide sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, pathways, and crossing facilities near schools to encourage students to walk and bike.

PT23.13 Educate the public about travel options and how these choices benefit them, the community, and the environment.

GT24 Parking is provided in a way that reduces the number of employees who commute alone by car.

PT24.1 Discourage drive-alone commutes by managing the cost and supply of public parking, but give priority to parking for business patrons.

PT24.2 Establish parking standards that meet the needs of business patrons, but do not result in cheap and readily-available parking for employees.

PT24.3 Support the City of Olympia's work with adjacent cities and the State of Washington on consistent parking strategies to help meet the commute trip reduction goals of the region. This will also ensure that parking standards do not act as a deterrent to the location of development.

PT24.4 Collaborate to establish more park-and-ride lots in the region.

Funding

The funding sources we'll need to realize our transportation vision must be developed over time. As the economy changes, our population fluctuates, and funding circumstances change, the County and City will need to be flexible and resourceful about funding opportunities, while keeping the vision of this plan in mind.

Funding for transportation comes from federal, state and local sources. Information on how the City spends transportation dollars is defined in the annual operating budget and the respective Capital Facilities Plans. County transportation funds come from grants, developers, real estate excise tax, and impact fees. The transportation budget can be found in Chapter 6 and Appendix G of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The City's operating budget allocates funds for maintenance of streets, signals and other aspects of the transportation system. The City's General Fund pays for operations; this fund is made up of taxes and fees. The County primarily uses property and fuel tax to fund operations and maintenance.

The Capital Facilities Plan defines City construction projects for a six-year period

and identifies funding sources. Capital projects are paid for with a combination of grants, fees such as impact fees, General Fund dollars, gas tax revenues, stormwater utility rates, and private utility taxes. The County's Capital Improvement Plan, as part of the Comprehensive Plan, identifies funding for roads and transportation projects through grants, property taxes, fees and licenses, fuel tax and transportation impact fees.



A resident learns about transportation funding at a public workshop

It will be important for the County and City to evaluate potential new funding sources such as:

- A commercial parking tax
- Local improvement districts
- Motor fuel taxes (levied County-wide)
- Transportation benefit districts.

However, each potential source must be carefully weighed for its legality, stability, fairness, and administrative complexity.

The projects shown in lists and maps in Appendix B, C and D reflect the vision of this plan, but may not be achievable within the 20-year horizon of this plan. The

full network needs are described to provide a comprehensive view of the system we envision, and to be prepared for funding or other opportunities that would allow us to complete this work.

Goals and Policies

GT25 Transportation facilities and services are funded to advance the goals of the City and the region.

PT25.1 Enhance the operational efficiency of the transportation system in the Urban Growth Area, while also considering transportation needs countywide.

PT25.2 Plan and prioritize projects so they are consistent with available and projected funding to advance the community's transportation vision.

PT25.3 Use master plans, sub-area plans and facilities programs to identify improvements to our transportation system and how to fund them.

PT25.4 Continue to be innovative with the use of existing funds and explore new funding sources for transportation.

PT25.5 Support and partner with other agencies to obtain funding to improve public transportation services.

PT25.6 Use public and private funds to advance transportation priorities and meet the needs of new trips in the system.

PT25.7 Partner with community organizations to help complete projects.


PT25.8 Encourage action at the federal and state level to address transportation funding needs for cities.



RW Johnson Boulevard is rebuilt.

Regional Planning

Many long-term transportation issues require regional coordination to be resolved. Regional issues that will require attention include trails, transit, capacity and safety of regional corridors, highway access, passenger and freight rail, commuter services and park-and-ride lots. Funding strategies will also require regional coordination.

The [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#)  is the blueprint for the region's transportation system, and it identifies projects and issues for regional attention. It is based on land-use forecasts and regionally established priorities, and places heavy emphasis on the connections between land-use and transportation planning. The County and City are responsible for addressing the individual projects that emerge from the Regional Transportation Plan.



A bus waits for passengers at the Olympia Transit Center.

Goals and Policies

GT26 Thurston County and Olympia engage with neighboring jurisdictions to advance common goals and solve regional problems.

PT26.1 Use this Joint Plan and the [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#)  to guide regional transportation decisions.

PT26.2 Establish and maintain compatible street standards with the City of Olympia.

PT26.3 Work with the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater to develop bus corridors.


PT26.4 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to develop trails.

PT26.5 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to improve freight, rail, and truck mobility.

PT26.6 Coordinate with the Port of Olympia on truck access routes, freight rail,

and, as needed, on air and water transportation needs.

PT26.7 Work with regional jurisdictions to develop a funding strategy for the regional transportation network.

PT26.8 Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and the [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)  on regional transportation and land-use goals.

PT26.9 Work with Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater to promote dense commercial and residential development in urban centers and along urban corridors.

PT26.10 Work with the region to support the infrastructure needs of electric vehicles or other alternative fuel vehicles.

Appendix A: Transportation Planning History

The distinction between urban and rural operating conditions is a critical policy issue. What may be an acceptable level of congestion on urban streets, may exceed design capacity on rural roads. Transportation policy in Urban Growth Areas can be a balancing act. Urban corridors that connect downtown Olympia with Urban Growth Areas feature a wide range of services—from hospitals, to shopping centers, to industrial warehouses—with corresponding traffic volumes and congestion. Development on corridors may impact those residents living in the Urban Growth Areas, as these are the primary routes taken to access commercial amenities. How these corridors continue to develop in the future may be consequential to people living beyond the city limits.

The policies and goals in this plan reflect a number of plans and studies the County or City has used in the past to identify and explore specific transportation problems, evaluate issues in more detail, and identify actions or system improvements. For example, the Boulevard Road Corridor Study recommended the use of roundabouts to address safety and congestion issues on this street. These plans have guided us on decisions affecting congestion and capacity, street connectivity, bicycle and pedestrian needs, and street design. This Appendix reviews findings and recommendations from prior plans and studies.



Public dialogues like this one can draw on a range of perspectives to solve problems.

Southeast Transportation Issues

The street network in the southeast provides north-south routes, but few east-west routes. Mobility is poor for autos, buses, bicycling and walking. This creates overloading on the Yelm Highway and 18th Avenue corridors.

However, in 2012, a project to widen Yelm Highway and add roundabouts, bike lanes, sidewalks and crossing islands was completed. And, beginning in 2010, 18th Avenue from Fones Road to Boulevard Road was improved with bike lanes, sidewalks, streetlights, and two roundabouts.

These major reconstruction projects should increase capacity, reduce delay and accidents, and provide safer and more inviting streets for walking and biking

Chambers Basin Analysis

In 2006, groundwater and stormwater problems were evaluated in the area south and southwest of Chambers Lake, for future land use. The evaluation was

prompted by concerns over whether adequate drainage could be provided in this valley, due to shallow groundwater and flat grades. At the land-use densities proposed, there was a strong likelihood of persistent flooding, property damage, and other environmental impacts.

The evaluation determined that the valley area could not be developed to the planned urban densities of 5 to 13 units per acre, due to high groundwater and flat topography. As a result, the City reduced allowed development density and applied new low-density street standards in the valley. The unique design standard for local access streets in this area is narrower than the conventional local access standard, with sidewalks on one side, rather than both sides.

Boulevard Road Corridor

The 2006 Boulevard Road Corridor Study defined the multimodal and capacity improvements that were needed for this corridor. Boulevard Road is a major north-south route and a major regional corridor to the city center. It is also considered a residential street to the many people who live along it.

Full street standards, including sidewalks, lighting and trees, are planned for the entire corridor, with some changes to planter strips to lessen property impacts. There will be a center-turn lane for the entire corridor, interspersed with landscaped pedestrian islands, landscaped medians, and left-turn pockets.

Roundabouts are planned for three major intersections along the corridor. A double-lane roundabout was built at Log Cabin Road in 2009. A single-lane roundabout at 22nd Avenue was constructed in 2014, and a roundabout at Morse-Merryman Road was completed in 2018.

The City plans to evaluate the long-term need for a roundabout at 18th Avenue, as well as possible intersection improvements at 30th Avenue, 41st Way, and Wilderness Drive. As safety and mobility concerns warrant, parking on Boulevard Road (north of where it crosses I-5) may be removed to allow for a center-turn lane and other intersection improvements at Pacific Avenue and Boulevard Road.

Pacific and Lilly Focus Area

In the area bounded by Pacific Avenue and Interstate 5, Lilly Road and the city limits, the traditional block pattern of local access streets now provides good access for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.

However, to the south of Pacific Avenue and north of the Woodland Trail, most properties are oriented toward Pacific Avenue, and the lack of side streets makes it hard for vehicles to enter or leave this busy arterial. This area lacks bike lanes and crossing islands, and is not inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Meanwhile, nearby Lilly Road dead-ends at Pacific Avenue for travelers coming from the north, and just one block to the west, Fones Road dead-ends at Pacific Avenue for travelers coming from the south. Long-term, it would be ideal to align Fones Road to Lilly Road, but this would require major reconstruction of public rights-of-way and private properties.

Improvements to the street network could significantly improve traffic circulation in this area:

- Lilly Road should be extended southward to connect with Sixth Street, providing a new route for movement between Fones Road and Lilly Road.
- Fifth Street should be extended to connect with the new Lilly Road Extension.
- While Royal, Plummer, Ferry, Wier, and Birch streets now provide good access to the Pacific and Lilly area, they could be realigned to improve development potential. (However, any realignment would need to meet the City's intersection-spacing standards, to maintain pedestrian-sized blocks.)
- Plummer, or its successor street, should be connected through to the South Sound Center to create an additional connection between Lilly Road and South Sound Center.
- Access to Royal Street from Lilly Road has poor sight distance, and could be a candidate for closure; even now it is strictly one-way in-bound, because of this limitation. (Ordinance #5661, 12/26/96)

Northeast Transportation Issues

Lilly Road Corridor

Lilly Road provides an alternate to South Bay Road for residents of the rural county and the Urban Growth Area heading from the north to the city center or Interstate 5. The congestion and access problems on the Lilly Road corridor north of Martin Way, past St. Peter Hospital and on to 26th Avenue will continue to increase without additional street connections to the east and west of Lilly Road. The City has identified this as a "strategy area," which means that before existing streets can be widened, new street connections must be considered.

Without additional street connections in the northeast, growth will increase traffic congestion at the intersections of Martin/Lilly Road, Martin/Sleater-Kinney Road and Pacific/Fones Road.

Increases in peak-hour traffic volumes will lead to longer delays at traffic signals, and will worsen the level of service at the intersections with traffic lights, projected to be at level of service F before 2020. Given the current conditions at these intersections, it would be difficult to justify building additional lanes to relieve congestion, and it would not be in keeping with the vision of this Plan.

With the loss of opportunities to connect Lilly Road to South Bay Road in two locations, at 12th Avenue and Lister Road, the City will need to place greater emphasis on the remaining proposed street connections in the area of Lilly Road.

Circulation North of 15th Avenue, NE

A proposed street connection west of Lilly Road from Lindell Road north and east to Lister Road was eliminated, due to concerns about a wetland crossing.

Access to the residential area west of Lilly Road and south of 26th Avenue is needed and should be integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. The 24th Avenue alignment is the remaining opportunity north of 15th for a new collector street.

24th Avenue, NE, Alignment

With the loss of the Lister/Lindell Street connection, the proposed neighborhood collector connection on the alignment of 24th Avenue is increasingly important. Emergency service response time could be improved to this neighborhood by a connection proposed at 24th Avenue, NE. This would cross the same Class II wetland system as described in the 12th to 15th crossing.

At the proposed 24th Avenue crossing, Woodard Creek and the wetland lie in a depression, which is favorable for a bridge crossing. Approach fills would be allowed to keep the bridge a single span of 130 feet.

Westside Transportation Issues

Olympia's Westside experienced a great deal of commercial and residential development in the 1980s and early 1990s. Many of the commercial developments in West Olympia, such as the Capital Mall, Target, Haggen, and the Capital Auto Mall, are regional in nature and tend to generate traffic from as far away as Pierce, Lewis, Mason, and Grays Harbor counties. And, because these are retail land uses that typically produce a large number of non-work-related trips, much of this traffic won't be affected by commute trip reduction strategies.

This fact, and the relatively limited access to this area, have prompted several studies. Each has produced similar results and recommendations. The West Olympia Access Study (2008 to 2010) drew further conclusions about traffic capacity and needed improvements, particularly access to US 101.

US 101/West Olympia Access Project

Access to and from West Olympia is primarily through the Black Lake/Cooper Point interchange and the Crosby/Mottman interchanges, which, together, feed traffic to Black Lake Boulevard and Cooper Point Road, currently the largest intersection in the City.

When the Crosby Boulevard/Mottman Road interchange was improved in 1996, the City of Tumwater and the Washington State Department of Transportation agreed not to build this interchange beyond five lanes at mid-block due to capacity limitations, and to keep the area as human scale as possible. Part of this agreement was to study additional future access to US 101. New access between

US 101 and West Olympia would distribute traffic more evenly throughout the street network and take pressure off streets that otherwise would be overburdened.

In 2008, the City and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) began a joint study of the City street and state highway systems on the Westside, and agreed on an approach to developing additional access to US 101.

The chosen approach includes an eastbound on-ramp and a westbound off-ramp at Kaiser Road as Phase 1 (within 15 to 20 years) and an off-ramp extension in the westbound direction from Black Lake Boulevard to Yauger Way as Phase 2 (beyond 20 years).

This approach will distribute traffic on the Westside street system and provide three westbound exit options. This redundancy in the street system is especially valuable to the hospital and medical facilities in the area, and will make better transit operations possible.

The approach will allow the existing commercial area near Black Lake Boulevard, Cooper Point Road and Harrison Avenue to grow and intensify in an area where infrastructure is already in place. This new access to US 101 also may create pressure to zone underdeveloped areas with high densities and a different mix of uses.

In cooperation with WSDOT, the extensive process to development of an Interchange Justification Report for these new ramps began in 2014. This report will include traffic analysis, environmental review, and initial design work.

Future related work will identify improvements to the local street network to increase walking, biking and transit trips, and look for ways to improve street and pathway connectivity.

Harrison Avenue from Cooper Point Road to Overhulse Road Evaluation

In the mid-1990s, Harrison Avenue from Cooper Point Road to Yauger Way was improved to meet street standards. It now has two vehicle lanes in each direction, a center-turn lane, sidewalks, bike lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, and streetlights. The improvements between Yauger Way and Kaiser Road were in response to increased vehicle traffic on this street. Before the improvements, it was expected that the street would be at unacceptable levels of congestion by 2008 or 2009.

A 2006 study examined the need for and timing of the widening to four to five vehicle lanes. At several public meetings, community members and businesses gave the City a wide range of opinions on the widening issue. A consultant validated the technical analysis about the need to widen the road.

In 2011, the street was widened to four to five vehicle lanes, and bike lanes, planter strips, trees, lighting, and sidewalks were added. Pedestrian crossing islands were added for pedestrian safety, while preserving access to businesses.

The remaining section of Harrison, from Kaiser Road to Overhulse Road, is likely to be completed as future developers fund frontage improvements.

Kaiser Road and Black Lake Boulevard Area Connections

New street connections are expected as more growth occurs in the area of Black Lake, Kaiser Road and US 101. The planned connection from Kaiser Road to Black Lake Boulevard south of US 101 will create a new north-south corridor parallel to Black Lake Boulevard, and will help connect the northwest UGA to US 101 and the west end of Harrison Avenue. Consistent with standards, this new 2-lane major collector will include bike lanes, sidewalks, planter strips, trees, lighting and a curved design to slow vehicle speeds.

If at some future time, Kaiser Road is extended to Black Lake Boulevard, extension of Park Drive to Kaiser Road may be considered in order to provide access for bicycles, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles.

Urban Corridors, Strategy Corridors and Bus Corridors

Urban Corridors

“Urban corridors” are an integrated land use and transportation concept defined in the 1993 Regional Transportation Plan and reflected in the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan. The urban corridor approach intends to reduce sprawl and dependence on the auto by allowing people to live in attractive urban neighborhoods where they can walk or use transit to get to work and meet their daily needs.

The region and Thurston County have designated the main fully built-out urban arterials and collectors (such as Pacific Avenue, Capitol Way, Martin Way, etc.), as well as other heavily traveled roads that continue through urban growth areas into the rural county as “Urban Strategy Corridors” where level of service may exceed adopted standards.


Urban Corridors generally correspond with high density land uses. These corridors that help to serve residents in the urban growth areas are Harrison Avenue, Boulevard Road, and Cooper Point Road. The land use designations along these streets vary (see Future Land Use Map in the Land Use Chapter), to promote a gradual increase in density and scale of uses that supports and remains in context with the adjacent neighborhoods. These streets remain urban corridors for transportation planning purposes, and to be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan. Urban corridors are shown on the Corridors Map, Appendix H.

Along these corridors, land use will be supported by a multimodal transportation system. Improvements for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit in these corridors are intended to allow the densities to increase while minimizing new car trips. It

is acceptable for arterial and major collector streets within urban corridors to have a transportation level of service E. Bus corridors will be developed along the strategy corridors within these urban corridors. These corridors can be found on the Corridors Map found in Appendix H.

The Urban Corridors Task Force made up of policy makers from throughout the region convened in 2009 and met through 2011 to identify measures all cities in the region could pursue to achieve the vision for these corridors. Thurston County along with the cities of Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater passed a joint resolution accepting the recommendations of the Urban Corridors Task Force in November 2012.

Strategy Corridors

Most “strategy corridors” are major streets within urban corridors, though some fall outside urban corridor boundaries. As described in the [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#) , strategy corridors are places where road widening is not a preferred option for solving congestion problems, either because the street is already at the maximum five-lane width, or because adjacent land uses are built out or environmentally sensitive. Such roads include South Bay Road and Rainier Road. In strategy corridors, levels of service may exceed adopted standards, because while congestion may be at unacceptable levels, these are the areas where we want to encourage more density, more jobs and housing.

In strategy corridors, such as Yelm Highway, a different approach is needed for maintaining safety and mobility. If the County can make travel on foot, by transit and bicycle attractive and convenient, these strategy corridors will increase mobility despite increased traffic. In lieu of road widening, alternatives (e.g., intersection improvements, connections to regional trails, extending/increasing transit service) should be applied to mitigate congestion. Bus corridors will be developed along most of these corridors, where improved transit efficiency can encourage transit use. Traffic signal improvements that prevent buses from getting stuck in traffic, such as extended green time and queue jump lanes, will be an increasingly important focus for the City in these corridors. A map of the Strategy Corridors can be found on the Corridors Map found in Appendix H.

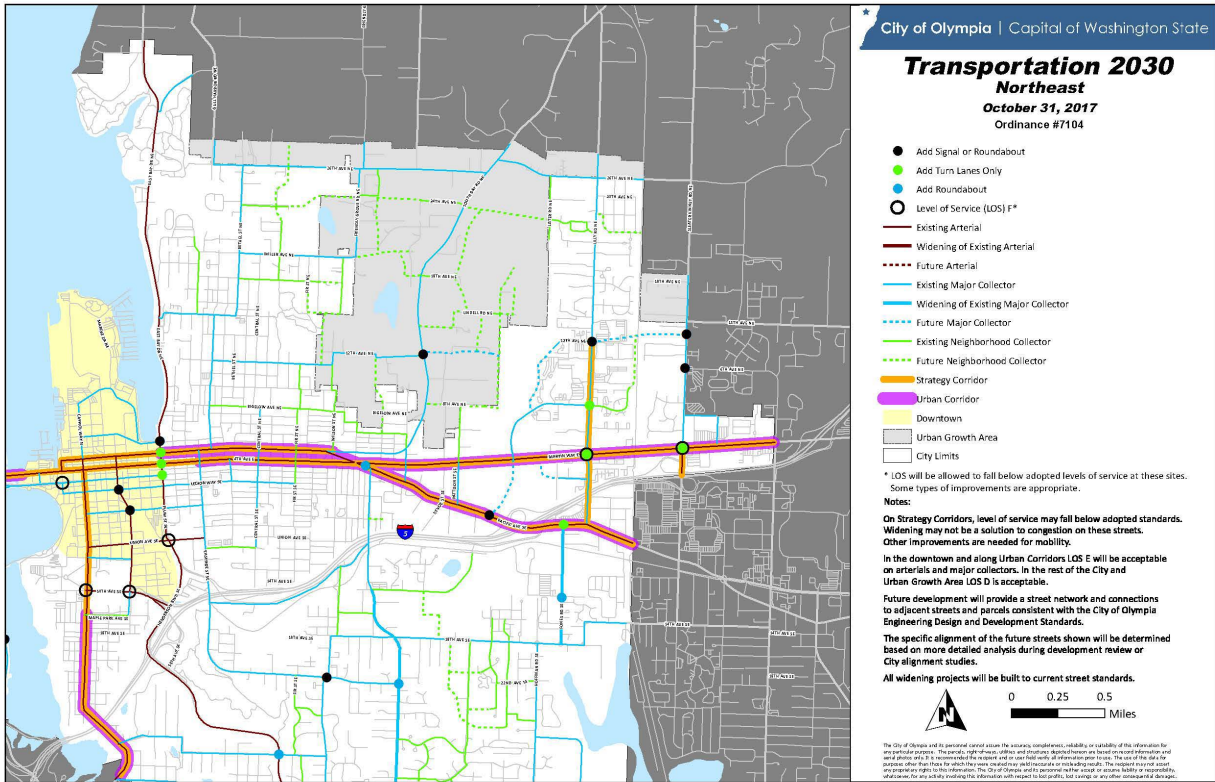
Bus Corridors

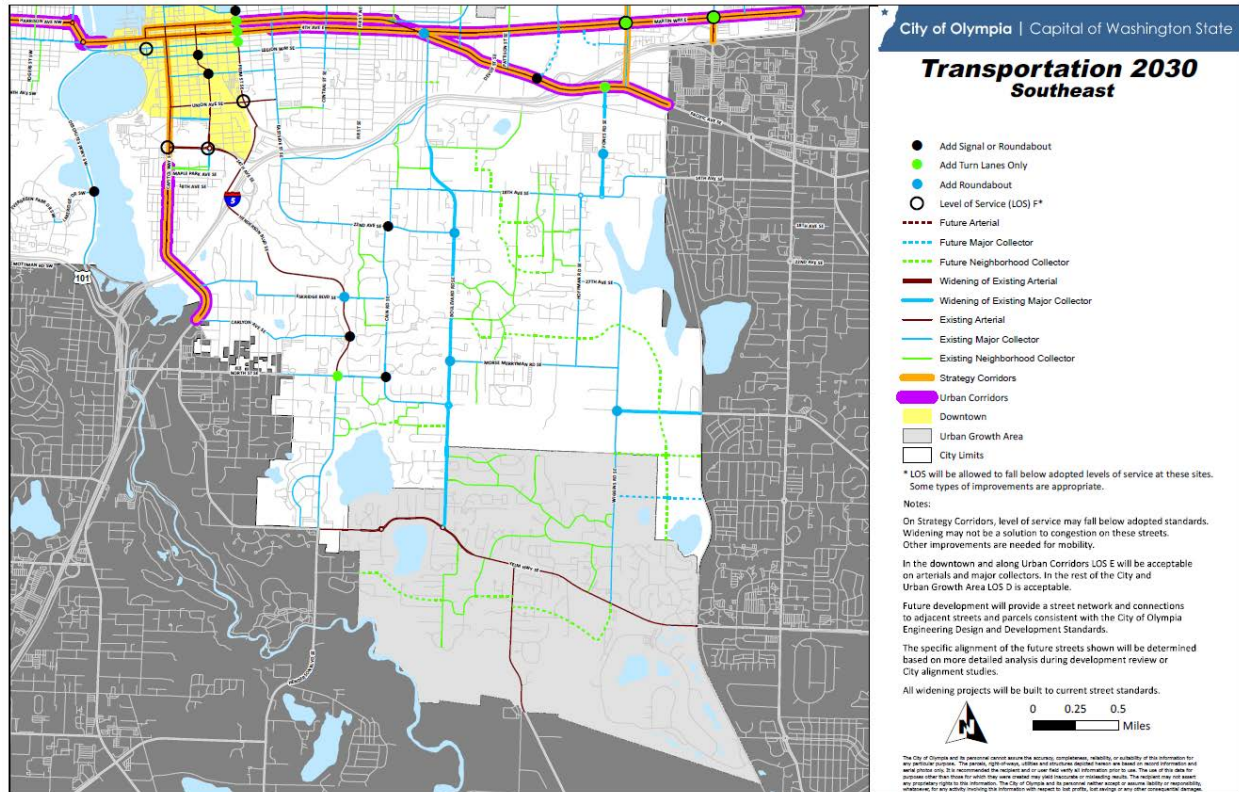
“Bus corridors” are main bus routes: major streets with high-quality, frequent transit service. Bus corridors correspond to most strategy corridors. Transit is expected to help improve mobility and capacity on strategy corridors, as will street improvements, and a mix of dense land uses. The bus corridor concept was introduced in 2009 as part of the Olympia Transportation Mobility Strategy. These corridors can be found on the Corridors Map found in Appendix H.

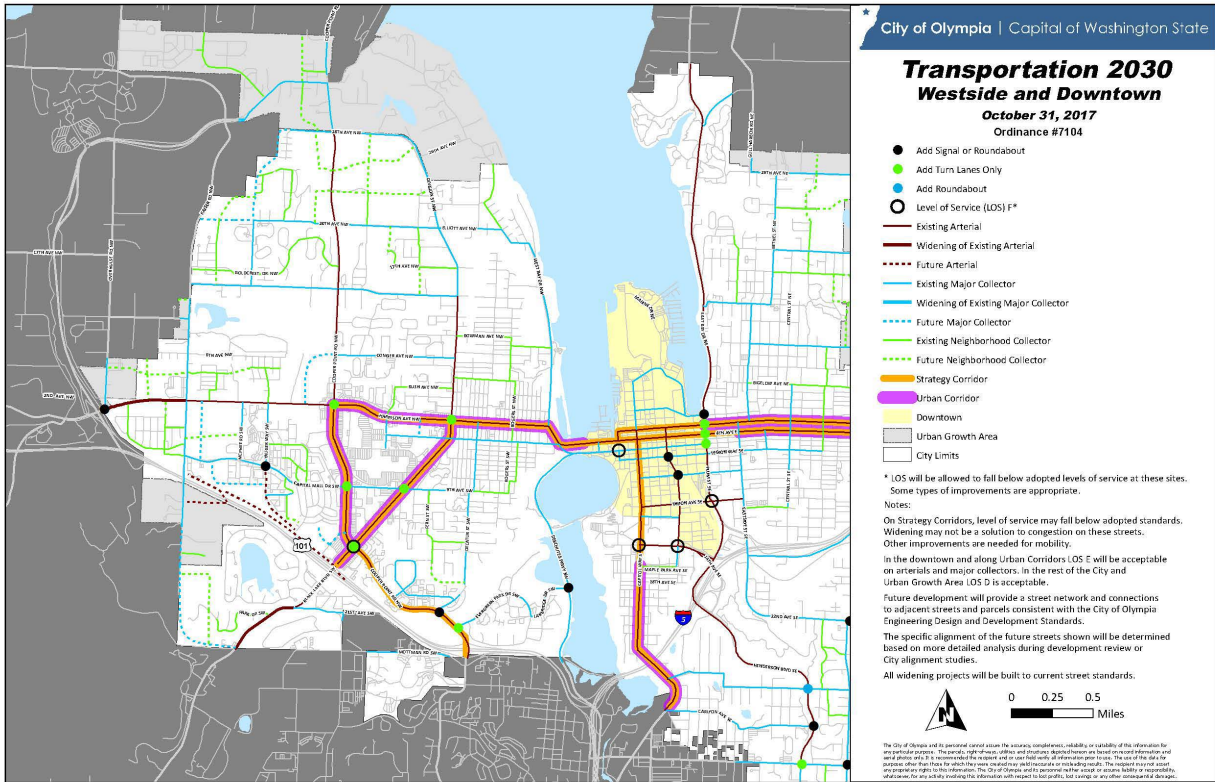
Appendix B: Transportation 2030 Street Capacity and Connectivity Project List and Maps

Projects are identified to achieve the Regional Transportation Plan and Olympia Comprehensive Plan goals and policies related to street capacity (level of service standards) and street connectivity. The following project list includes street capacity and street connectivity needs on arterials and major collector streets.

The Transportation 2030 maps illustrate planned street capacity improvements as well as the street connections planned on arterials, major collectors and neighborhood collectors.







Street Widening Projects

- Boulevard Road: widening to three lanes (roundabouts are listed with Intersection Projects)
- Harrison Avenue from Kaiser Road to Evergreen Parkway widening to four to five lanes

Street Connections

- Kaiser Road connection to Black Lake Boulevard
- 12th/15th Avenue connection from Lilly Road to Sleater-Kinney Road

Other Projects

- All Arterials: transit signal priority and high-occupancy vehicle improvements
- West Olympia Access to US 101: Interchange Justification Report
- West Olympia Access to US 101: Phase I Kaiser Road on and off ramps
- West Olympia Access to US 101: Phase 2 Yauger Way off ramp (beyond 2030 planning horizon)

Appendix D: Bike Network Map

Thurston County's urban core has a dense network of on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities (e.g., bicycle lanes, sidewalks and trails) that connect residential and employment areas with regional destinations, schools and public transportation services. Major shared-use trails, such as the Chehalis Western Trail and Yelm-to-Tenino Trail, provide active-transportation links between the urban core and South County jurisdictions. Map T-4 in Thurston County's Comprehensive Plan shows on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities – including bike lanes and existing and planned shared-use trails that connect Thurston County jurisdictions. Arterial and collector roads that are upgraded to current County standards will

include paved shoulders. Paved shoulders have a number of uses, including safety, bicycle and pedestrian usage, improved drainage, emergency pull off, and better support of the pavement for the driving lane. Because of the multiple usage of paved shoulders, particularly roads with higher traffic volumes, some roads may warrant shoulder paving even if they are not on a recognized future bikeway.

Future County Network

Compatible goals and policies in the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan, Regional Transportation Plan, and Regional Trails Plan support the creation of a connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that increase the share of trips made safely and conveniently by active transportation. As the number of cyclists and pedestrians increases, however, so does the potential for conflicts with fast-moving automobiles.

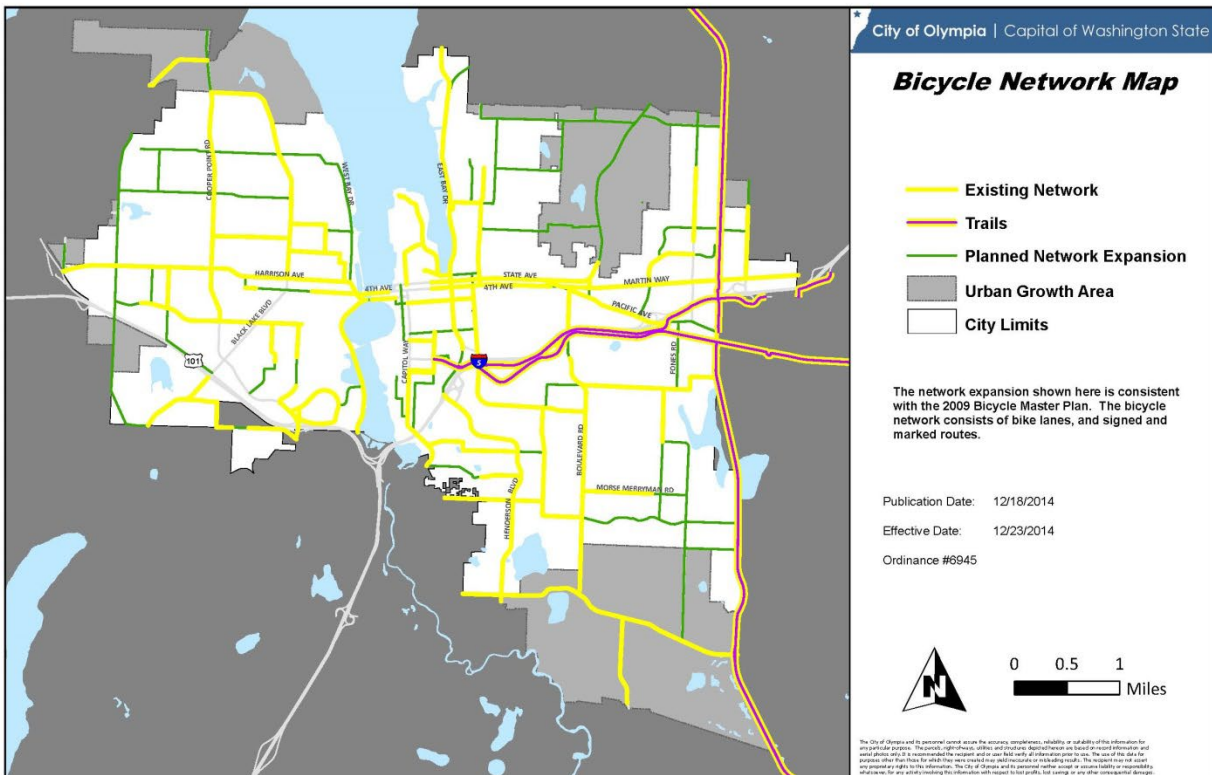
In response, the Comprehensive Plan contains policies intended to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities along and across roadways. In addition, Thurston County and its regional partners are working to expand and improve off-road trails, including those along out-of-use rail corridors.

Bicycle improvements will be part of roadway improvements, when possible, since adding these as part of roadway work is the most cost-effective strategy. The Regional Transportation Plan emphasizes the multiuse trails that serve as the backbone of the region's non-motorized system. Urban bike lanes and rural bike routes are best identified at the local level, with coordination between agencies to ensure seamless connections at jurisdictional boundaries, and at critical junctions with the multiuse trail network. Additional Regional Transportation Plan policies, which are also codified in this Comprehensive Plan chapter, encourage active-transportation connections to shorten trips, as well as neighborhood planning efforts to refine and identify pedestrian corridors to promote walking.

The bike lane projects in Olympia's Bicycle Master Plan (2014) represent the vision for the network, and are likely to go beyond the 20-year planning timeframe. These projects will be coordinated with the City's roadway resurfacing or reconstruction projects. Priorities may be adjusted for construction efficiencies. Some projects may be completed as frontage improvements built by

private development in accordance with City street standards.

The Bicycle Network Map illustrates the existing network and future network expansion. This network includes bike lanes, as well as signed and marked routes.




Bicycle Network Map

Appendix E: Highways of Statewide Significance (Thurston County)

- Interstate 5, 276.62 miles, Oregon to Canada
- State Route 8, 20.67 miles, US 12/Elma to US 101/Olympia (entire route)
- United States Highway 12, 324.51 miles, US 101/Aberdeen to Idaho (entire route)
- United States Highway 101, 336.66 miles, SR 4 to I-5/Olympia (0.01 miles of physical gap not included)

Appendix F: Transportation Facilities and Services of Statewide Significance

- The Interstate Highway System: See Highways of Statewide Significance
- Interregional State Principal Arterials: See Highways of Statewide Significance
- Intercity Passenger Rail Services:
 - Olympia to Seattle, with stops in Tacoma and Tukwila (5 trips per day)
 - Olympia to Portland, with stops in Centralia, Kelso and Vancouver (5 trips per day)
- Intercity High-speed Ground Transportation: none
- Major Passenger Intermodal Facilities: none
- Ferry Terminals: none
- Intercity Bus Depot: Olympia Greyhound Station
- Olympia Transit Center (Intercity Transit, Mason Transit and Grays Harbor Transit)
- Park and Ride Facilities: Martin Way (Lacey)
- Park and Ride Facilities: Mud Bay (Thurston County)
- Park and Ride Facilities: Hawks Prairie (Lacey)
- Park and Ride Facilities: Centennial Station (Thurston County)
- Rail Facilities: Centennial Station (Thurston County)
- The Freight Railroad System: none
- Switching and Terminal Companies: none
- The Columbia/Snake Navigable River System: none
- Marine Port Facilities and Services: Port of Olympia
- High Capacity Transportation System serving regions as defined in RCW [81.104.015](#) : none

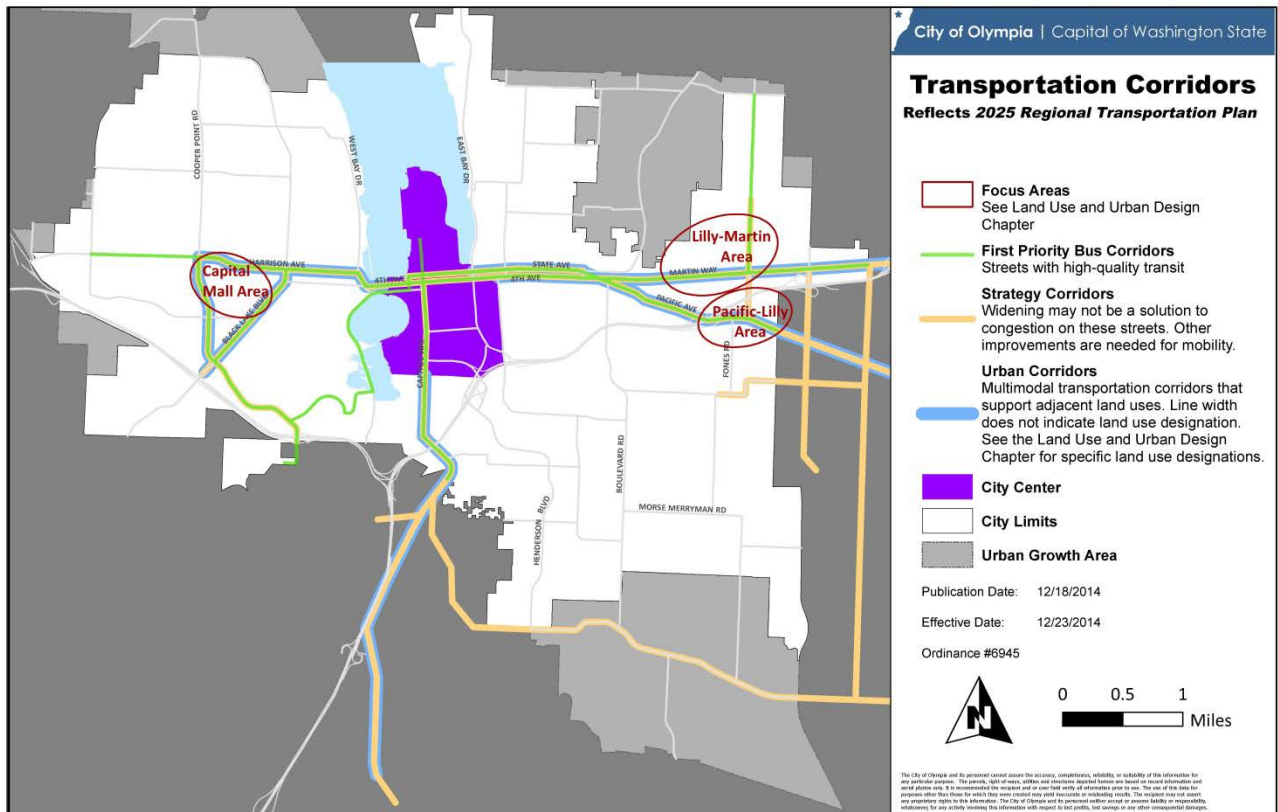
Appendix G: Facilities of Statewide Significance

The following Facilities of Statewide Significance are located in the Washington State Department of Transportation's Olympic Region, in Olympia:

- Interstate 5, from Mile Post 104.56 to 108.13, Limited Access Fully Controlled, Urban Interstate, National Highway System
- United States Highway 101, from Mile Post 364.91 5 to 366.91, Limited Access Fully Controlled, Urban Principal Arterial, National Highway System, State Scenic and Recreational Highway

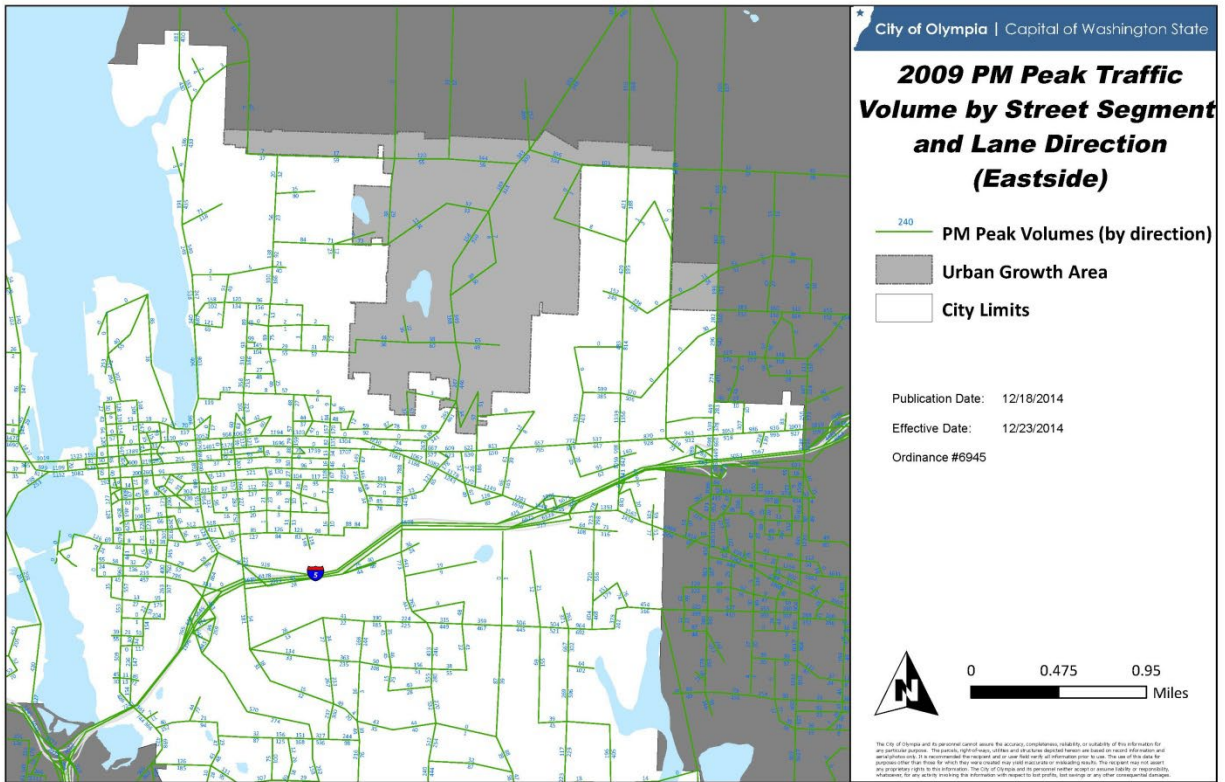
Appendix H: Transportation Corridor Map

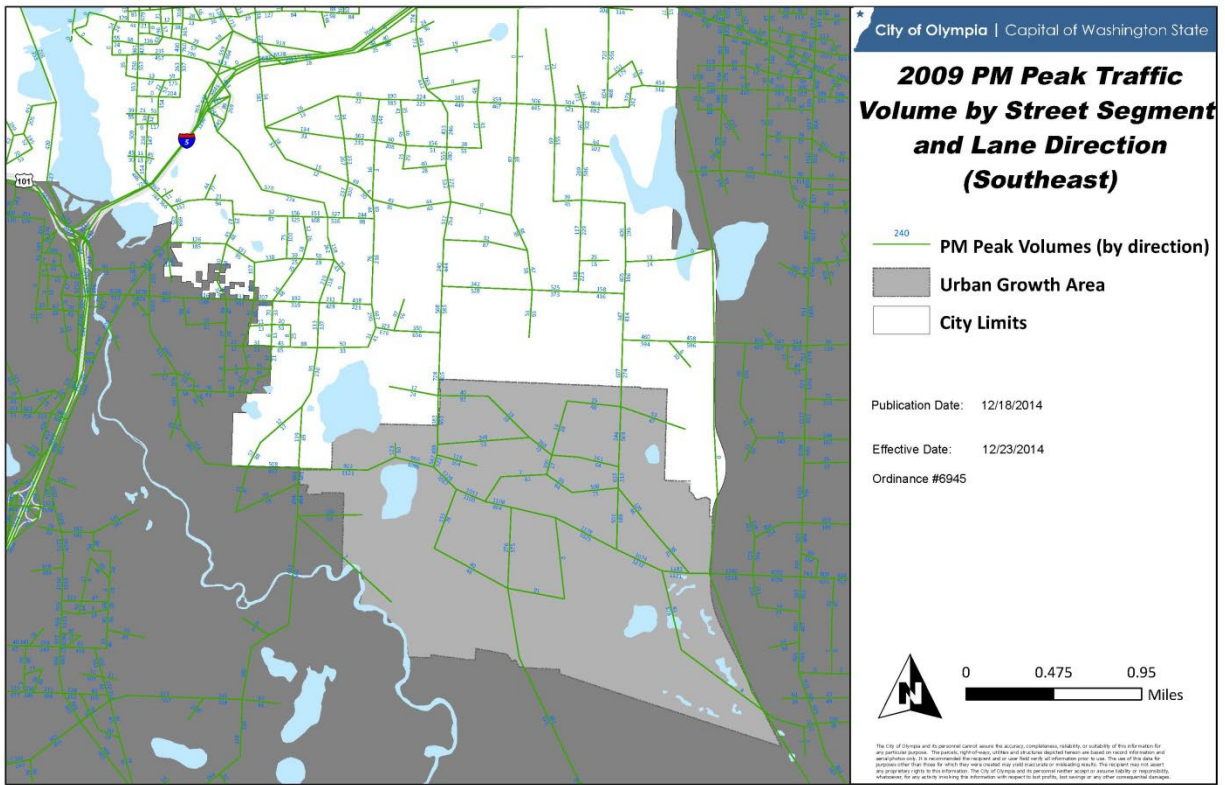
This map illustrates the locations of bus corridors, urban corridors and strategy corridors in Olympia.

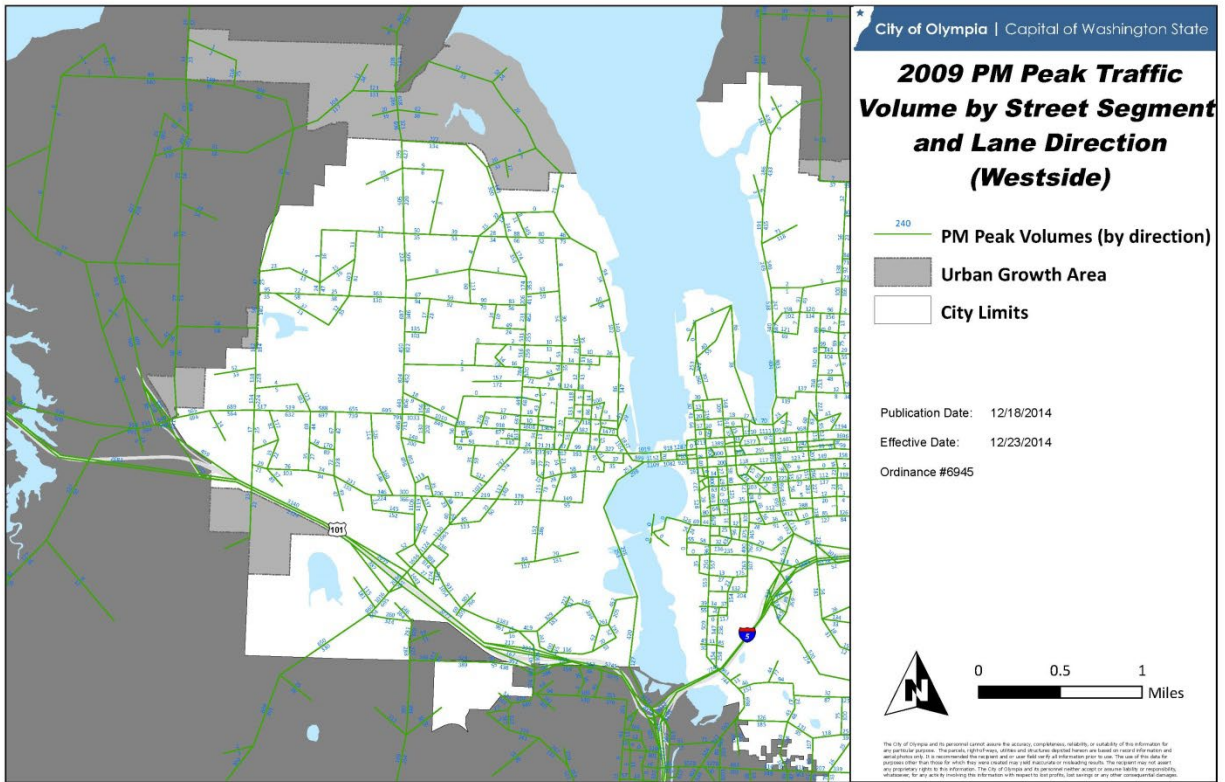


Appendix I: Traffic Forecast Maps

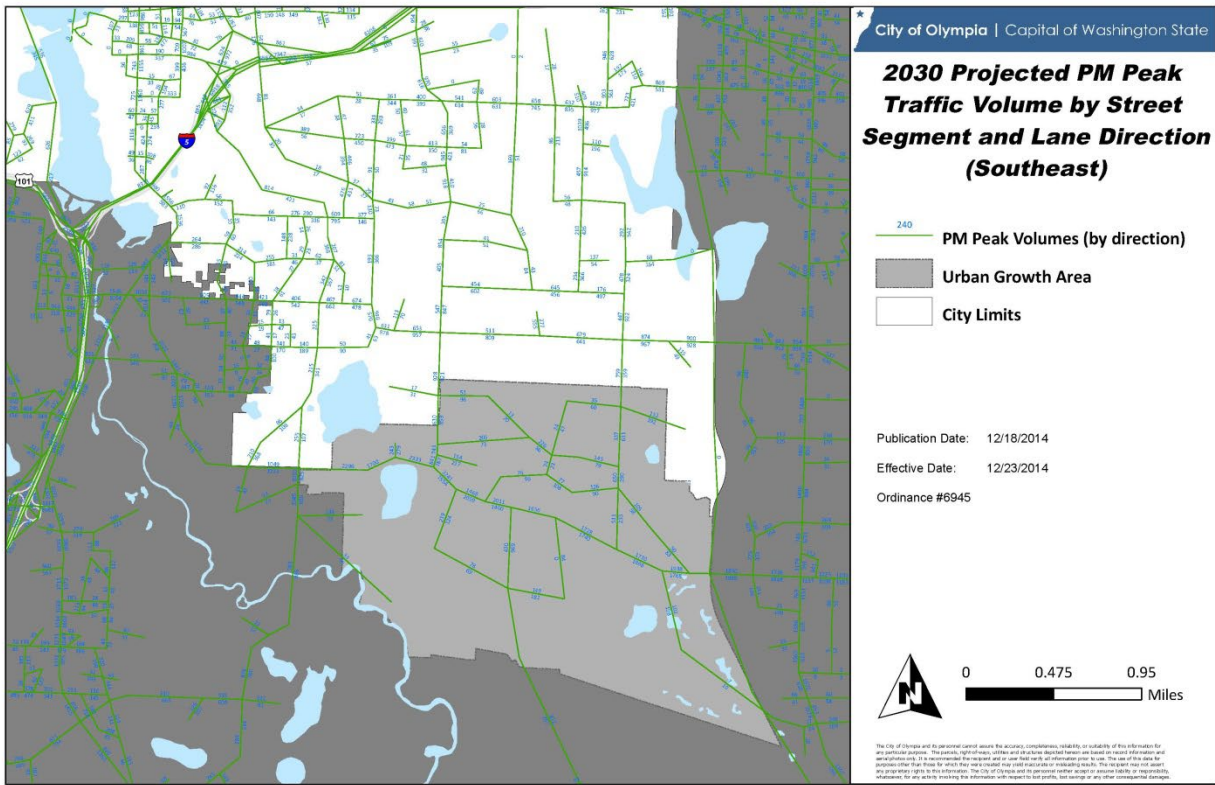
These maps show current traffic volumes on Olympia's street system, as well as forecasted 2030 traffic volumes. These volumes were generated from a traffic model used for transportation planning in the Thurston County region. The volume data is based on the State of Washington Office of Financial Management projected population and employment forecasts for the Thurston County region.

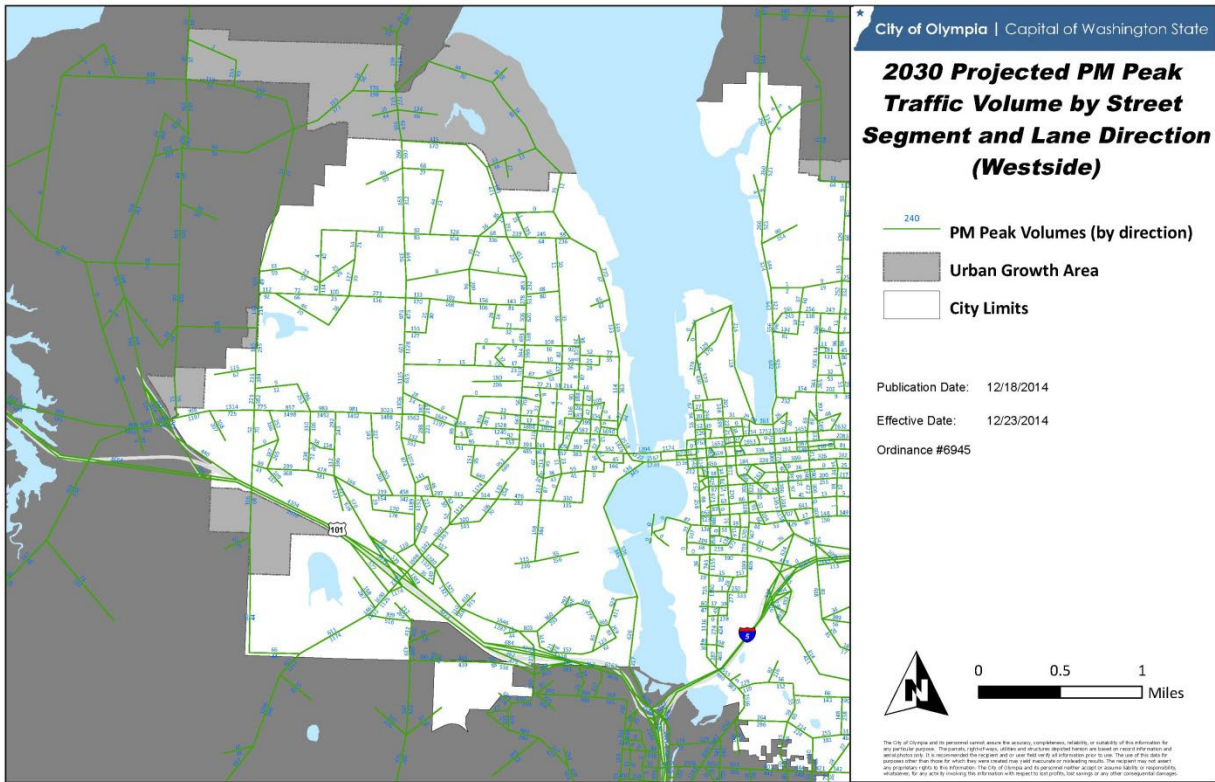












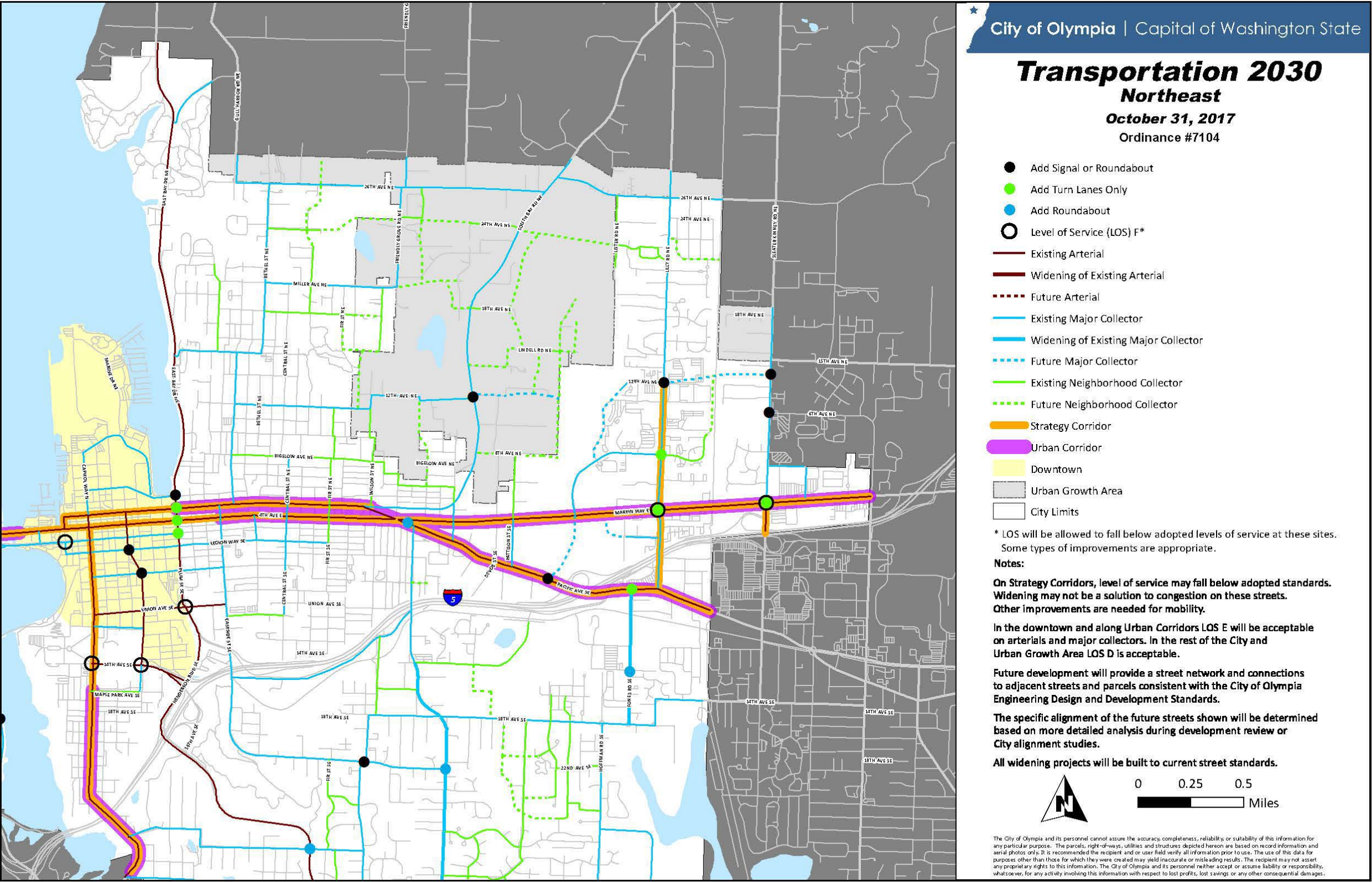


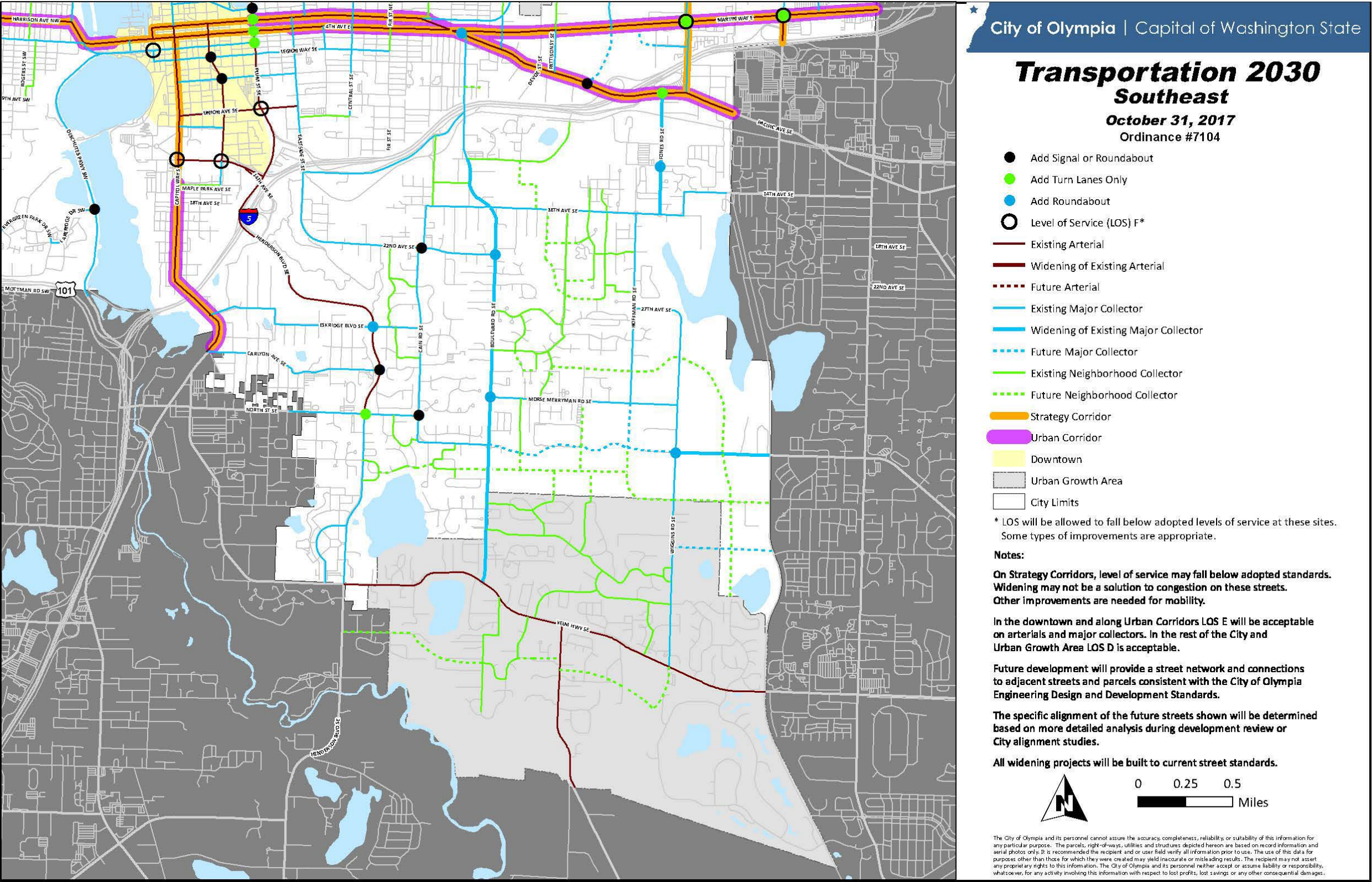




For More Information

- The [Transportation Mobility Strategy](#)  provides policy guidance for achieving a multimodal transportation system
- The [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#)  describes how the region will work together to resolve regional problems and establish regional priorities
- The Washington State [Growth Management Act](#)  guides communities to develop comprehensive plans and development regulations that guide growth for the 20-year horizon
- The City of Olympia [Transportation Master Plan](#)  includes 20 years' worth of projects to improve our street system for walking, biking, driving and riding the bus.
- The [Commute Trip Reduction Law](#)  calls on large employers in urban areas of the state to reduce drive-alone commute trips made by employees
- The [Thurston Regional Trails Plan](#)  defines off-street trail network priorities and issues throughout Thurston County.





Transportation 2030 Westside and Downtown

October 31, 2017

Ordinance #7104

- Add Signal or Roundabout
- Add Turn Lanes Only
- Add Roundabout
- Level of Service (LOS) F*
- Existing Arterial
- Widening of Existing Arterial
- Future Arterial
- Existing Major Collector
- Widening of Existing Major Collector
- Future Major Collector
- Existing Neighborhood Collector
- Future Neighborhood Collector
- Strategy Corridor
- Urban Corridor
- Downtown
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

* LOS will be allowed to fall below adopted levels of service at these sites. Some types of improvements are appropriate.

Notes:

On Strategy Corridors, level of service may fall below adopted standards. Widening may not be a solution to congestion on these streets. Other improvements are needed for mobility.

In the downtown and along Urban Corridors LOS E will be acceptable on arterials and major collectors. In the rest of the City and Urban Growth Area LOS D is acceptable.

Future development will provide a street network and connections to adjacent streets and parcels consistent with the City of Olympia Engineering Design and Development Standards.

The specific alignment of the future streets shown will be determined based on more detailed analysis during development review or City alignment studies.

All widening projects will be built to current street standards.



0 0.25 0.5
Miles

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Northeast Olympia Sidewalk Network on Major Streets

- Missing Sidewalks
- City Limits
- Urban Growth Area
- Major Street System
(Arterials, Major Collectors,
Neighborhood Collectors)

Based on the Sidewalk Program (2003). Program goal is to build sidewalks on at least one side of all major streets.

Publication Date: 12/18/2014

Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



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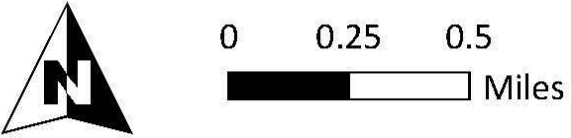
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***Southeast Olympia
Sidewalk Network
on Major Streets***

- Missing Sidewalks
- City Limits
- Urban Growth Area
- Major Street System
(Arterials, Major Collectors,
Neighborhood Collectors)

Based on the Sidewalk Program (2003). Program goal is to build sidewalks on at least one side of all major streets.

Publication Date: 12/18/2014
Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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West Olympia Sidewalk Network on Major Streets

- Missing Sidewalks
- City Limits
- Urban Growth Area
- Major Street System
(Arterials, Major Collectors,
Neighborhood Collectors)

Based on the Sidewalk Program (2003). Program goal is to build sidewalks on at least one side of all major streets.

Publication Date: 12/18/2014

Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



0 0.25 0.5
Miles

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Bicycle Network Map

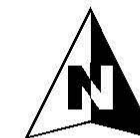
- Existing Network
- Trails
- Planned Network Expansion
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

The network expansion shown here is consistent with the 2009 Bicycle Master Plan. The bicycle network consists of bike lanes, and signed and marked routes.

Publication Date: 12/18/2014

Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



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Miles

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Transportation Corridors

Reflects 2025 Regional Transportation Plan

- Focus Areas**
See Land Use and Urban Design Chapter
- First Priority Bus Corridors**
Streets with high-quality transit
- Strategy Corridors**
Widening may not be a solution to congestion on these streets. Other improvements are needed for mobility.
- Urban Corridors**
Multimodal transportation corridors that support adjacent land uses. Line width does not indicate land use designation. See the Land Use and Urban Design Chapter for specific land use designations.
- City Center**
- City Limits**
- Urban Growth Area**

Publication Date: 12/18/2014

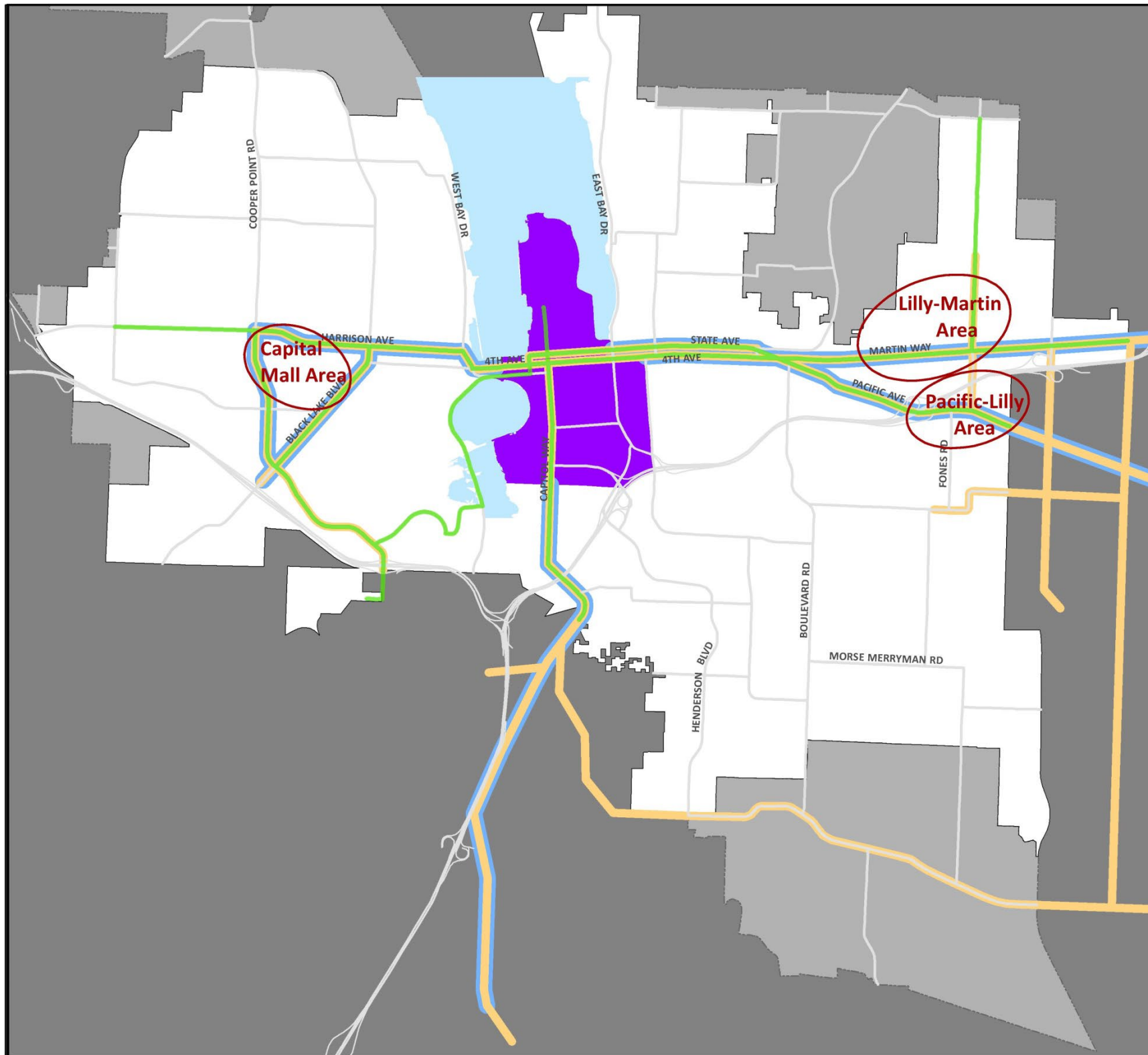
Effective Date: 12/23/2014

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2009 PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Downtown)

- 240 PM Peak Volumes (by direction)
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014
Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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2009 PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Eastside)

- 240 PM Peak Volumes (by direction)
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014
Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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2009 PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Southeast)

- 240 PM Peak Volumes (by direction)
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

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Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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2009 PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Westside)

- 240 PM Peak Volumes (by direction)
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

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Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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2030 Projected PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Downtown)



Publication Date: 12/18/2014

Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945

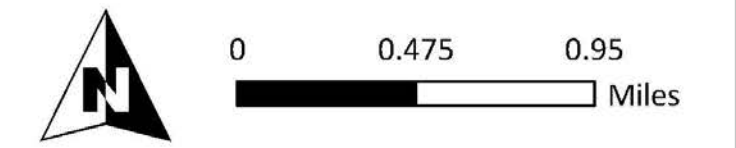


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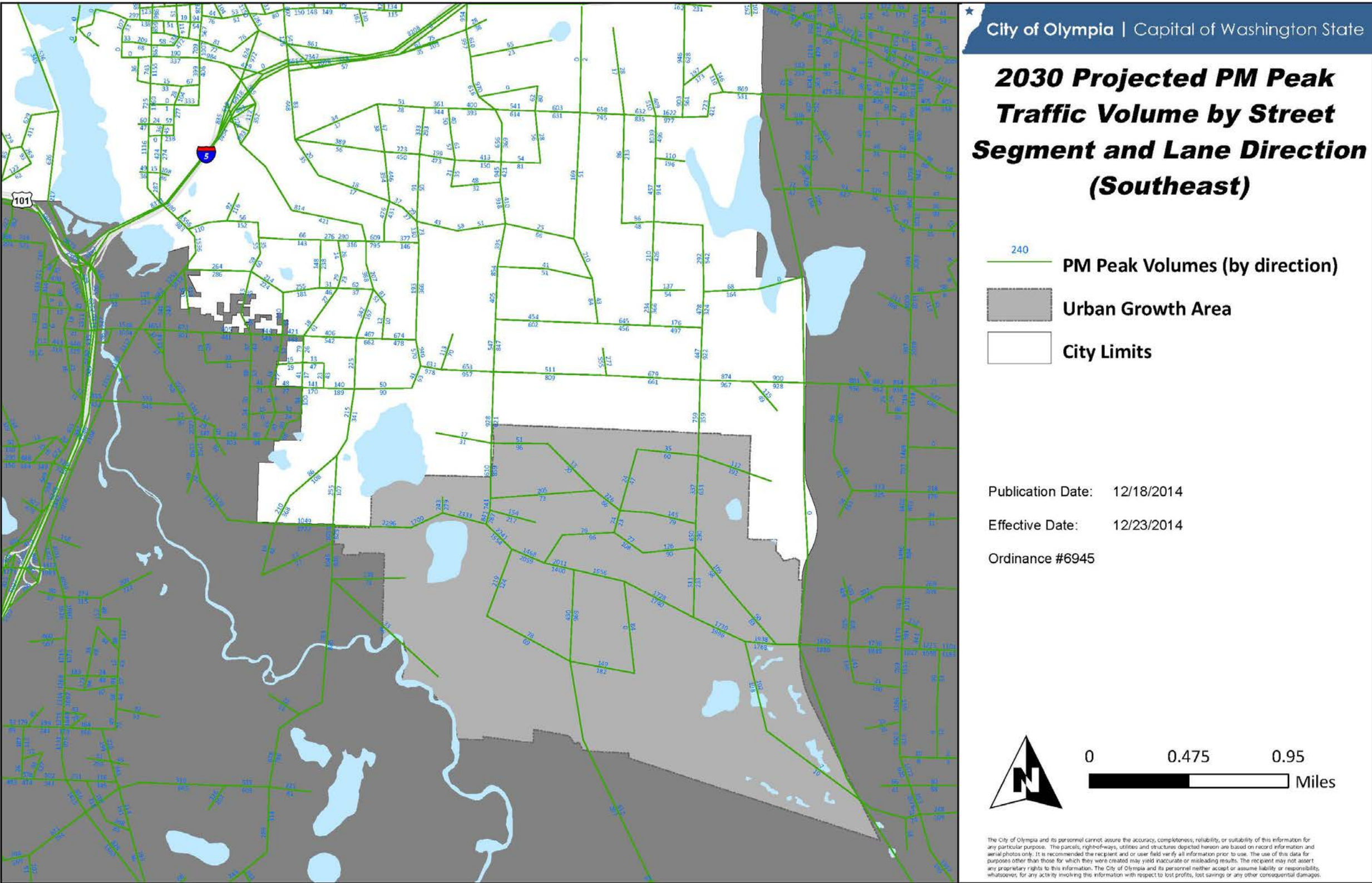
2030 Projected PM Peak Traffic Volume by Street Segment and Lane Direction (Eastside)

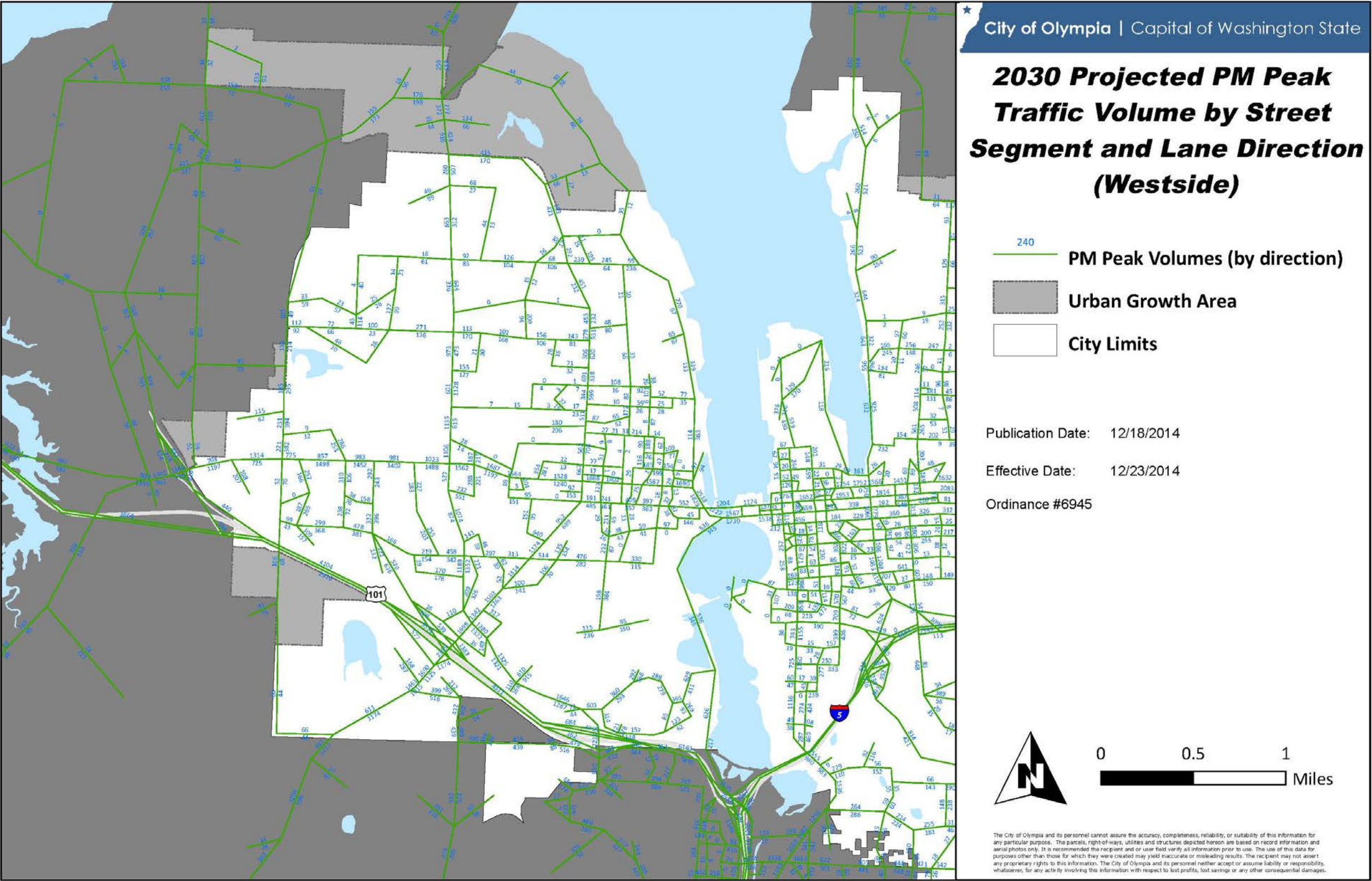
- 240 PM Peak Volumes (by direction)
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014
Effective Date: 12/23/2014
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Utilities



Public Works utility employees enjoying a day on the job

What Olympia Values:

We value clean and affordable drinking water. We want wastewater and stormwater treated effectively before it is discharged into Puget Sound. We understand and value the role that 'reuse, reduction and recycling' plays in our effort to conserve energy and materials.

Our Vision for the Future:

Clean, plentiful water and significant reduction of waste.

Introduction - Utilities Shape the Future

Cities are expected to provide water and sewer facilities to unincorporated areas within their respective urban growth areas.

As a matter of policy, Thurston County does not provide municipal water and/or municipal sewer service to rural areas, with the exception of those areas where a public health related issue or water quality concern necessitates county involvement. Therefore, the County does not provide for programmatic construction of capital facilities in association with rural sewer and water systems, which are not currently owned, operated, and

maintained by the county.

Olympia's future ability to achieve long-term environmental, economic and social balance is influenced by how we deliver utility services to the community. To achieve sustainability, we'll need to shift from a short- to a long-term focus that considers how today's actions will affect future generations. The long-term view will emphasize reducing waste, preventing pollution, engaging the community, and managing our fiscal and environmental resources conservatively.

City utilities include Drinking Water, Wastewater, Storm and Surface Water, and Waste ReSources (garbage, organics, and recycling). Privately-owned utilities such as natural gas and electric, cable service, and telecommunications facilities are regulated locally, especially within publicly-owned rights-of-way. Olympia's future will be shaped, in part, by where and when these facilities are provided.

Olympia's utilities also provide services that protect nature and conserve resources by reducing pollution and waste, restoring habitat, and conserving water. The City is also partnering with private utilities to provide their Olympia customers with more opportunities to use renewable energy.

Most of the utility programs discussed in this chapter have adopted their own detailed master plans to guide the design and daily administration of their services. This chapter is intended to serve as a bridge between those specific plans and the broader vision of this Comprehensive Plan.

City-Owned Utilities Working Together

City-owned and operated utilities provide the community with essential services and can help shape Olympia's future in meaningful ways. We take a coordinated, cost-effective approach to managing our utilities and fully consider the economic, social and environmental implications of all our actions.



Drinking water is provided by a City-owned utility.

Community engagement and involvement is an important component of City utility management. Customers and users help with environmental restoration projects and efforts to reduce pollution and waste. They also can participate in utility management and rate setting. A Utility Advisory Committee (UAC) appointed by City Council reviews programs, policies and rates.

The publicly-owned and operated utilities provided in City or the Urban Growth Area include:

- **Drinking Water.** This utility's mission is to provide and protect healthy drinking water for the community. This involves protecting groundwater and promoting water conservation, as well as ensuring that our drinking water meets federal Safe Drinking Water Act standards.
- **Wastewater.** This utility collects and conveys wastewater to treatment facilities to protect public and environmental health. It also works to reduce the number of septic systems in the City.
- **Storm and Surface Water.** The mission of this utility is to minimize flooding, improve water quality, and protect or enhance aquatic habitat.
- **Waste ReSources.** Provides collection services for residential and commercial garbage, residential recyclables and residential organics

(yard debris, food waste and soiled paper), and also encourages waste reduction through educational programs. Its mission is to lead our community toward a waste-free future.



The City collects organics for composting through its Waste ReSources utility.

Over the next 20 years, there will be a growing need for us to manage our utility resources efficiently. Our challenges will include:

- **Repairing and replacing aging systems.** Operation and maintenance needs will continue to expand, as the pipes, pumps, valves, treatment facilities, reservoirs and wells that make up our utility system age. These needs must be met while keeping rates affordable.
- **Protecting the natural environment.** Water quality deterioration and habitat loss will continue to be a concern as development and utilities expand to new areas.
- **Preparing for sea level rise.** In addition to the flooding threat, the City's underground utilities in the downtown area will be

- jeopardized.
- **Water conservation and reuse.** Continue to make efforts to conserve water resources. Utilize reclaimed water where appropriate to preserve potable water supplies.
 - **Climate change.** Work to implement the Regional Climate Mitigation Plan and to adapt to impacts of our changing climate.
 - **Eliminate combined stormwater/sewer facilities.** Work to separate stormwater facilities from sewer facilities where they still exist.

Our utility programs will need to find partnerships and outside resources to help the City face these new challenges.

Goals and Policies

GU1 Utility and land use plans are coordinated so that utility services can be provided and maintained for proposed future land uses.

PU1.1 Support the City's annexation of all properties for which new City wastewater or drinking water services are requested if the property is outside the City, but inside the Urban Growth Area.

PU1.2 Require new developments to construct drinking water, wastewater and stormwater utilities in ways that meet the community development, environmental protection, and resource protection goals of this Plan, and that are consistent with adopted utility plans and extension policies. Plan for and include infrastructure needed for use of reclaimed water.

PU1.3 Evaluate land use plans and utility goals periodically to ensure growth is guided by our knowledge of current environmental constraints and the latest available utility technology.

PU1.4 Support the City's efforts to make necessary improvements to utility facilities that do not currently meet minimum standards. Prioritize capital improvements to existing systems based on age, condition, risk of failure, and capacity.

PU1.5 Ensure that public utility and transportation-related facilities constructed in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area meet City standards for safety, constructability, durability and maintainability.

GU2 Reliable utility service is provided at the lowest reasonable cost, consistent with the aims of environmental stewardship, social equity, economic development and the protection of public health.

PU2.1 Ensure that new development projects pay for their own utility infrastructure based on their expected needs for the next 20 years. Also require them to contribute to their portion of existing infrastructure. Routinely review new-development charges (such as general facility charges) when updating utility master plans, or more frequently as needed.

PU2.2 Ensure that utility fees, such as rates and general facility charges, are structured to reasonably reflect the actual cost of providing services to each customer class.

PU2.3 Consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of utility repairs, replacements and upgrades.

GU3 Utilities are developed and managed efficiently and effectively.

PU3.1 Coordinate long-term planning and scheduling of utility capital improvements with neighboring jurisdictions and other local agencies, such as LOTT.

PU3.2 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to provide regionally coordinated utility systems for urban services that benefit from a regional approach.

PU3.3 Evaluate programs for effectiveness and efficiency on a regular basis.

GU4 Use water resources efficiently to meet the needs of the community, reduce demand on facilities, and protect the natural environment.

PU4.1 Encourage and allow re-use techniques, including rainwater collection, greywater systems, and use of Class A reclaimed water as alternatives to use of potable water, in order to enhance stream flows or recharge aquifers, while also protecting water quality.

PU4.2 Raise community awareness about why and how to conserve water.

PU4.3 Plan for and develop/require infrastructure needed to utilize reclaimed water as projects are developed and utilities are extended or replaced.

Drinking Water on Tap


Olympians recognize that the water they use comes from groundwater supplies that need to remain plentiful and unpolluted by our “above-ground” activities. The City’s Drinking Water Utility aims not only to preserve the supply of this resource, but to keep it clean – both for us and for the plants, fish and wildlife that also depend on it.



A young Olympian drinks from a new water fountain at Percival Landing.

Every day, the City of Olympia delivers affordable, high-quality drinking water to nearly 55,000 people through about 19,000 connections. This water consistently meets 100% of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards for safe drinking water, and it is pumped to our homes at a fraction of the cost some will pay for unregulated bottled water.

The City also provides transmission and distribution of Class A Reclaimed water to customers in a limited area of downtown Olympia.

Olympia's Drinking Water Utility operates under a permit granted by the Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water. Information about the City's Drinking Water Utility can be found in [Olympia's Water System Plan](#) .

In the next 20 years, the Utility will face these challenges and issues:


- **Changing water quality regulations.** The Utility must be ready to respond to any changes in water quality regulations and treatment requirements imposed by state and federal agencies.
- **Keeping pace with development.** Fast or slow, the rate of

- growth will determine how new water sources are developed and when they come on line.
- **Protecting groundwater from contamination.** Risks to groundwater will increase as the population increases, and will require the City to regularly evaluate, monitor, and take action to control sources of pollution.

Goals and Policies

GU5 Adequate supplies of clean drinking water are available for current and future generations and instream flows and aquifer capacity are protected.

PU5.1 Monitor water levels in aquifers and maintain numerical groundwater models.

PU5.2 Coordinate with Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater and Public Utility District #1 to assure adequate water supplies throughout the Urban Growth Area's Water Service Area, following the provisions of the [Growth Management Act](#) , Public Water System Coordination Act, and the Municipal Water Law.

PU5.3 When practical, develop regionally consistent Critical Areas Ordinance regulations, Drainage Manual requirements, and other policies to ensure we are protecting groundwater quantity and quality across jurisdictional boundaries.

GU6 Groundwater in (Wellhead) Protection Areas is protected from contamination so that it does not require additional treatment.

PU6.1 Monitor groundwater quality to detect contamination, evaluate pollution reduction efforts, and to understand risks to groundwater.

PU6.2 Implement programs to change behaviors that threaten groundwater quality, and that raise awareness about aquifers and the need for groundwater protection.

PU6.3 Prevent groundwater contamination in Drinking Water Protection Areas by developing and implementing spill prevention and response plans.

PU6.4 Maintain the Critical Areas Ordinance, policies, development review process and program management, to ensure we protect groundwater quality and quantity.

PU6.5 Maintain a contaminant-source inventory that identifies priority pollutants for each water source within Drinking Water (wellhead) Protection Areas, and update them regularly.

PU6.6 Work with other jurisdictions to develop and implement land use policies that preserve and protect our ground water resources.

GU7 The drinking water system is reliable and is operated and maintained so that high quality drinking water is delivered to customers.

PU7.1 The City of Olympia will maintain and update the [Water System Plan](#), [Engineering Design and Development Standards](#) and [Olympia Municipal Code](#) to ensure drinking water utility facilities meet the requirements of the [Growth Management Act](#), North Thurston County Coordinated Water System Plan, Washington Department of Health and Olympia Fire Code.

PU7.2 Maintain 100 percent compliance with all state and federal requirements, and continually improve the area's water quality management program.

PU7.3 Support a design for Olympia's water supply system that achieves the most favorable and practical fire insurance rating, consistent with adopted service levels.

PU7.4 Continue to improve maintenance management, including preventive maintenance, repairs and replacements.

PU7.5 Prepare for and respond to emergencies and maintain secure facilities.

PU7.6 The County and City should each continue to improve their respective operations and maintenance program management, including safety, asset management and meter replacement.

PU7.7 Require private water purveyors that build new systems within Olympia's water service area to build to Olympia's standards so the systems can be integrated in the future.


Managing Wastewater Effectively




The purpose of Olympia's Wastewater Utility is to protect public and environmental health by ensuring that wastewater is collected and conveyed to treatment and disposal facilities with minimal risk.

Olympia provides wastewater collection service to 17.5 square miles of the City and about eight square miles of Urban Growth Area in unincorporated Thurston County. However, many neighborhoods and individual lots are still using septic systems. By 2035, Olympia expects public sewers will be extended to serve most of the Urban Growth Area.



Olympia crew members maintaining the sewer system to ensure proper functioning.

All wastewater collected by Olympia is conveyed to LOTT-owned transmission mains and treatment facilities for treatment and disposal. Treatment and disposal is managed by the [LOTT Clean Water Alliance](#) , which is a partnership of the cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County.

Wastewater Utility activities are guided by the [Wastewater Management Plan](#) . The [LOTT Clean Water Alliance](#)  developed and actively manages its own Plan, known as the [Wastewater Resource Management Plan](#) , which it updates every year. The Plan addresses the treatment and disposal needs for all of its partners.

The Wastewater Utility coordinates a number of activities with the [LOTT Clean Water Alliance](#), including maintenance, condition assessments, and pre-treatment program efforts. These activities are all required under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, which covers both the City's wastewater collection system and LOTT-owned facilities. This shared responsibility requires continuous communication between the two entities, at both the operation and planning levels.

Extension of sewer and use of community on-site sewage systems within the urban growth area is addressed in the [Thurston County Sewerage General Plan](#) (1990).



Installing a deep sewer manhole on Henderson Boulevard as part of a planned capital improvement project.

The Wastewater Utility faces the following key challenges over the next 20 years:

- **Extending services** to areas within the UGA that do not currently have utility resources. Some areas within the UGA have been identified as difficult to extend sewer service to due to topologies, environmental conditions, or because the areas are separated from existing neighborhoods on septic. In order to provide for higher-density development within the UGA, extension of sewer to new development is necessary.
- **Maintaining existing infrastructure.** More than half of the City's wastewater infrastructure has passed its design life or is susceptible to corrosion. Given the need to protect public health, repair and replacement of failing sewer systems typically cannot be deferred.
- **Reducing septic systems.** Many septic systems, especially in older parts of the City, are beyond or approaching their design life, or were installed at densities in excess of current standards. This

presents the potential for failure and risk to public and environmental health.

Goals and Policies

GU8 The City and some of the urban growth area are served by a City-owned wastewater collection and transmission system that is designed to minimize leakage, overflows, infiltration and inflows so as to provide sufficient capacity for projected demand.

PU8.1 Extend the wastewater gravity collection system when appropriate through both public and private development projects.

PU8.2 Limit and ultimately phase-out community septic systems in the Urban Growth Area.

PU8.3 Encourage septic system owners to connect to the City wastewater system by offering incentives, cost-recovery mechanisms, pipe extensions and other tools.

PU8.4 Permit new STEP systems only for individual lots in neighborhoods currently served by STEP systems.

PU8.5 Whenever possible, require the conversion of septic systems to the City-owned wastewater collection system upon septic system failure or building use change, whenever feasible.

PU8.6 Work with Lacey, Tumwater and the City of Olympia to review and update policies like the Thurston County Sewerage General plan that determine where sewer lines should be extended, when conversion is necessary, and when on-site sewage systems should be allowed to serve new development.

Rainfall, Runoff, and Surface Water

The mission of the County's and City's Storm and Surface Water Utilities are to provide services that minimize flooding, maintain or improve water quality, and protect or enhance aquatic habitat. The goals and policies that protect water quality and aquatic habitat are located in the [Natural Environment](#) chapter. This Utility works on reconciling conflicts between protecting our 'built' landscape from flooding and conservation of our water quality and aquatic habitat.

Thurston County stormwater facilities operations are guided by the Stormwater Management Program Plan and is regulated by the Ecology-issued Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit.

The Permit requires the County to develop and implement a Stormwater Plan designed to reduce discharges of pollutants from municipal stormwater systems to protect water quality. The Permit requires the Stormwater Plan to include the following program components:



- Public Education and Outreach
- Public Involvement and Participation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Controlling Runoff from New Development, Redevelopment, and Construction Sites
- Municipal Operations and Maintenance
- Planned actions to meet applicable Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements
- Planned actions to meet the Permit's monitoring requirements.

Thurston County's Permit covers unincorporated urbanized areas and urban growth areas associated with permitted cities (i.e., the Cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater) falling under the jurisdictional control of the County. The geographic scope of the permit coverage evolves as the County's jurisdictional control transfers due to annexations to permitted cities.



Porous pavement, bioretention and constructed wetlands demonstrate stormwater options for low impact development at Yauger Park.

Olympia's Storm and Surface Water Utility maintains more than 130 miles of underground pipe, more than 7,000 storm drains, and 95 stormwater ponds that filter stormwater runoff from roads and rooftops before it reaches our streams and Budd Inlet. The "surface water" for which Olympia's Storm and Surface Water Utility shares responsibility includes nine streams within the City, four lakes, four large wetlands, and about six miles of marine shoreline.

The Stormwater Utility is guided by the [Storm and Surface Water Plan](#)  which outlines its challenges, goals, implementation tools and financial implications. Increasingly, this Utility is affected by state and federal regulatory requirements such as the [Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit](#) .



Kayakers in Budd Inlet as seen from Percival Landing.

Olympia's growth and urbanization have placed increasing demands on our natural systems. Major challenges facing the Storm and Surface Water Utility in upcoming years include:

- **Managing the impact of increasing stormwater runoff.** The cumulative impact of paving and development will increase pollutants in streams and Puget Sound, decrease infiltration to groundwater, and reduce forest habitat.
- **Preparing for sea level rise.** We will need a coordinated effort to protect our downtown from the flooding that could result from a sea rise scenario of 50 inches by 2100.
- **Keeping up with new technology.** As innovative approaches to treating and controlling stormwater rapidly evolve, the Storm and Surface Water Utility must evaluate the effectiveness and long-term implications of new technologies, while also managing risks associated with potential failures.

Goals and Policies

GU9 The frequency and severity of flooding are reduced and hazards are eliminated, except during major storm events.

PU9.1 Improve stormwater systems in areas that are vulnerable to flooding.

PU9.2 Emphasize the importance of emergency preparedness.

PU9.3 Evaluate the structural integrity of aging stormwater pipes and repair as needed.

PU9.4 Inspect private and public stormwater systems to identify required maintenance and repairs.

PU9.5 Inventory and inspect County-owned culverts and ditches and perform maintenance if needed.

PU9.6 Ensure that private pipe and pond systems are maintained.

Towards Zero Waste

Waste is an expanding global problem caused by a growing population and increasing consumption. Our national economy is based on extracting resources, manufacturing and distributing products; a system that encourages excessive waste and does not take into account the full environmental and social costs of this activity. The result is increasing depletion of natural resources, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and deteriorating air and water pollution - all of which are environmentally unsustainable and costly to society.

The amount of waste collected per person each day, coupled with an increasing population, puts pressure on our already strained regional waste management system. Olympians can help solve these problems through a variety of regional and local actions that seek to reduce the

amount of waste generated, and increase the amount recycled and recovered for reuse.



Compost at home to reduce waste.

In the next 20 years, we will face the following challenges and opportunities:

- **Reduce sources of waste.** The whole life cycle of a product must be considered as we find ways to reduce waste in both "upstream" production and distribution processes and "downstream" consumer choices and waste management practices.
- **Respond to an ever-evolving waste stream.** Continue adapting to changes in packaging, markets, and product recyclability.
- **Optimize the current collection system.** Continue to increase the portion of waste that is recycled or composted, while maintaining efficient operations.
- **Maximize commercial recycling.** Continue to evaluate the potential for City-provided commercial recycling services.

Goals and Policies

GU10 Solid waste is managed as a resource to provide environmental, economic, and social benefits.

PU10.1 Reduce waste and encourage recycling through the City's purchasing, recycling and disposal policies.

PU10.2 Follow the solid waste management hierarchy established in federal and state legislation, which sets waste reduction as the highest priority management option, followed by reuse, recycling and responsible disposal.

PU10.3 Support expansion of, when practical and feasible, recycling, composting and waste reduction programs to maximize the diversion of material from disposal into remanufacture and reuse.

PU10.4 Support the goals and policies of the Thurston County Solid Waste Management Plan.

GU11 Solid waste is managed in a responsible and cost-effective manner.

PU11.1 Encourage and promote waste reduction and recycling.

PU11.2 Encourage management of waste locally to reduce transfer and disposal costs.

PU11.3 Support the City's exploration of new methods for reducing, reusing, recycling and disposing of solid wastes.

PU11.4 Support the City's creation and maintenance of efficient and effective routing and collection programs.

GU12 Environmental impacts caused by solid waste management are minimal.

PU12.1 Support the City's efforts to handle and dispose of solid waste in

ways that minimize land, air and water pollution and protect public health.

PU12.2 Ensure that the operations of the Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center (WARC) are in compliance with state and federal regulations, and are responsibly managed.

Coordination with Private Utilities

Most private utilities are regulated at the state level by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC), which ensures that customers receive safe and reliable service at reasonable rates. The Commission regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities and practices of most of Washington's investor-owned gas, electric and telecommunication utilities.

Growth in residential, commercial, or industrial development often requires expanded utility services. Because of this, land use decisions that affect both density and the location of new development will drive new private utility needs.

In Olympia and the Urban Growth Area, private utilities provide these services:

- **Electricity:** Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is the only provider of electricity to Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. PSE is an investor-owned utility providing electricity to nine western and central Washington counties.
- **Natural Gas:** PSE is also the only natural gas provider to Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. PSE serves natural gas customers in six western and central Washington counties.
- **Standard Telephone Service:** The only provider of standard telephone service in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area is CenturyLink Communications International, Inc. (CenturyLink). CenturyLink is an investor-owned corporation offering local telecommunication services to customers in 14 states. It also provides broadband data and voice (including long-distance) communications services outside their local service area, as well as globally.

- **Telecommunications and Cellular Telephone Service:** Many new telecommunication providers have entered the market and offer options that have created a very competitive environment. These factors make it difficult to accurately assess how future telecommunications will be provided.
- **Cable Services and Programming:** Comcast is the only cable provider serving Olympia. Properties that lie within the UGA are covered under Thurston County's franchise. Currently, cable companies are not regulated by the state, but by local governments and the FCC. Comcast has a 10-year non-exclusive franchise agreement to use public right-of-way to provide cable services within the Olympia city limits. This agreement was adopted by the City Council in 2009.

Goals and Policies

GU13 Cooperation and coordination exists among jurisdictions and private utility providers.

PU13.1 Coordinate utility planning activities with the private utility providers. Support the City's work with private utilities to achieve consistency between their facility plans and the City's regulations and long-range plans.

PU13.2 Share information, when requested, with private utilities on current and projected figures for population, employment, development, and utility service demand.

PU13.3 Process permits and approvals for private utility facilities in a fair and timely manner, and in accordance with development regulations that foster predictability.

PU13.4 Ask for input from the private utilities when developing policies that will affect their service and activities, such as street excavation, street obstructions, and fees.


PU13.5 Maintain agreements, where appropriate, with private utilities,

updating them as needed to adapt to changing needs and plans.

PU13.6 Olympia and Thurston County will coordinate with each other and with the cities of Lacey and Tumwater to create consistent utility regulations and long-range plans that promote efficient and effective utility services.

PU13.7 Olympia and Thurston County will coordinate with each other and with the cities of Lacey and Tumwater when private, multijurisdictional utility additions and improvements are being planned.

PU13.8 Regarding private utility facilities, make decisions that are consistent and complementary to regional demand and resources and that reinforce an interconnected regional distribution network.

PU13.9 Olympia and Thurston County will coordinate with each other and the cities of Lacey and Tumwater on emergency management related to utility services by following the [Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region](#) .

GU14 Private utilities are located underground to protect public health, safety and welfare, and to create a more reliable utility system.

PU14.1 Place new private utility distribution lines underground wherever practicable. This should be based on sound engineering judgment, on consideration of health and safety, and in accordance with the regulations and tariffs of the Washington Utilities Transportation Commission and the City's Engineering Development and Design Standards.

PU14.2 Encourage placing existing private utility distribution lines underground, in accordance with the regulations and tariffs of the Washington Utilities Transportation Commission and the City's Engineering Development and Design Standards.

PU14.3 Apply utility undergrounding requirements to all private development projects.

GU15 Private utility facilities will be located in the same area.

PU15.1 Promote the co-location of new utility distribution and communication facilities when doing so is consistent with utility industry practices and national electrical and other codes. (See policy PU3.6 that recommends a guidance drawing showing utility locations.)

PU15.2 Give private utilities timely notice when road construction is planned, to coordinate utility trenching work.

GU16 Adverse impacts of above-ground utility facilities such as sub stations and cellular towers on surrounding land uses are minimized.

PU16.1 Locate private utility facilities near compatible adjacent land uses.

PU16.2 Support the City's zoning code that includes standards to ensure that new private utility facilities are coordinated and integrated with surrounding land uses so they are reasonably compatible with the natural and built environment. These regulatory standards should also support facility design which minimizes the visual intrusion of facilities in all areas.

PU16.3 Encourage telecommunication utilities to use existing structures, such as existing towers and buildings, where a new installation will not conflict with height restrictions.

GU17 Every resident and business in Olympia has access to affordable cable television and Internet services.

PU17.1 Support the City's efforts to encourage cable services to incorporate their latest features and improvements for their Olympia-area

customers as they become technologically and economically feasible.

PU17.2 Support the City's efforts to seek to ensure that any cable franchisee serving the Olympia area provides a high quality of customer service, signal transmission, and programming variety.

•

**GU18 Communications between public buildings
reflect advances in cable technology.**

•

PU18.1 Support the City's efforts to ensure cable service to major public buildings allows programs to originate there, as well as to be received there.

**GU19 Public educational institutions and
governments can air programming on designated
channels on the cable system.**

PU19.1 Support the City's efforts to ensure that cable service includes no fewer than four local access channels, which are responsibly and fairly administered in the public interest.

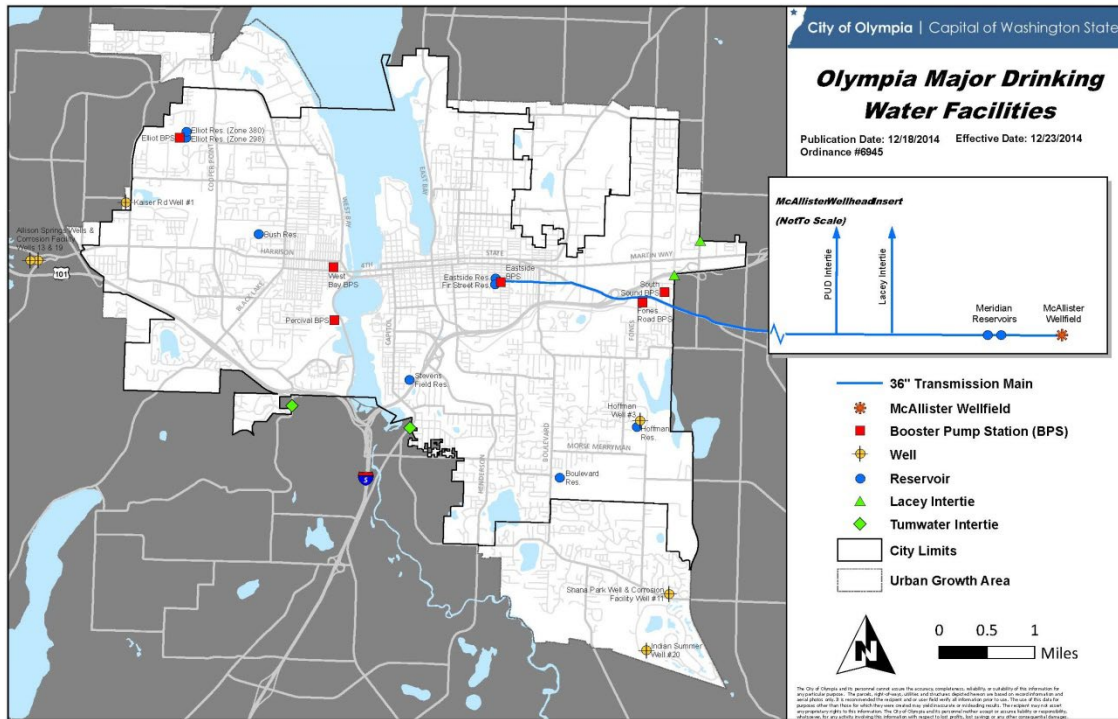
Appendix A: Utilities Inventory and Future Needs

City-Owned Utilities

Drinking Water

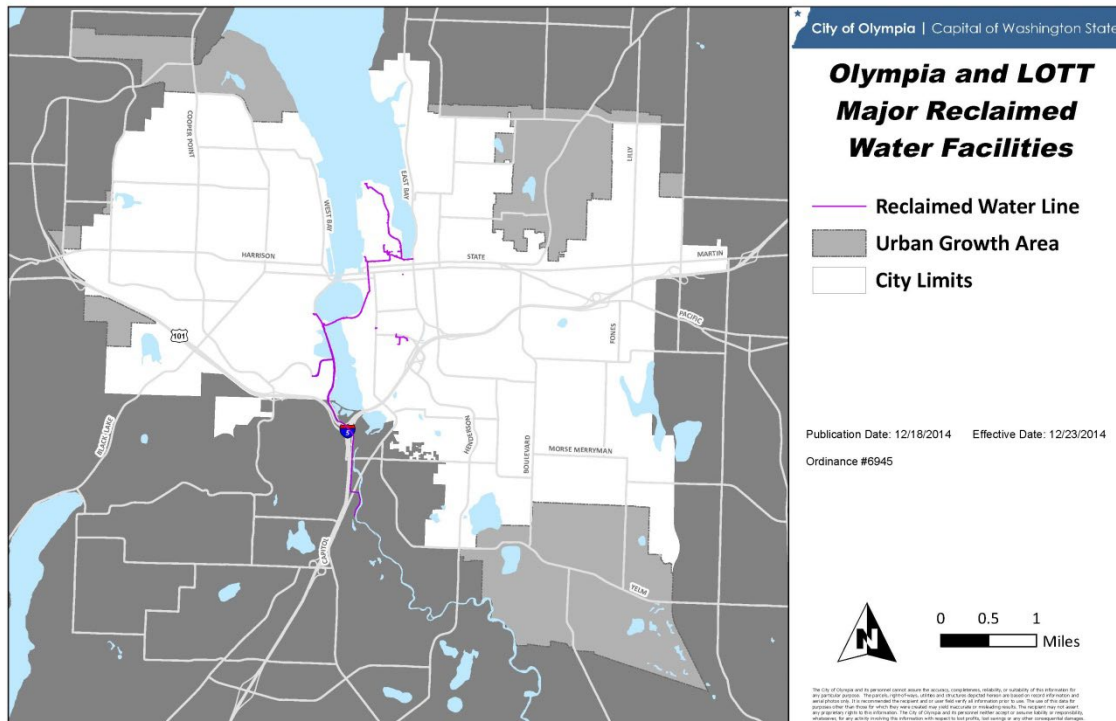
Inventory

A network of wells, pumps, reservoirs and transmission lines supply water to Olympia's customers. The McAllister Springs Wellfield provides the majority of drinking water for the City. The McAllister Wellfield consists of three groundwater wells with a capacity of 10,500 gpm. A 36-inch transmission main moves water from the wellfield to the Meridian reservoirs, and then on a nine-mile journey into reservoirs at Fir Street. From there, it is pumped and piped throughout the City. The rest of the City's drinking water is provided by six wells (two wells at Allison Springs, and one each at Kaiser, Indian Summer, Shana Park, and Hoffman). The map below shows the major components of Olympia's water system.



Olympia Major Drinking Water Facilities

Class A reclaimed water treatment, production and main distribution facilities are jointly owned and operated by the Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County (LOTT) Clean Water Alliance. Olympia owns and operates a limited distribution system for reclaimed water in the downtown area. Olympia and LOTT Major Reclaimed Water Facilities map shows the major components of both the City's and LOTT's reclaimed water system.



Olympia and LOTT Major Reclaimed Water Facilities

Existing Capacity

Olympia's water service area boundary map generally follows the Urban Growth Area. Policies related to providing service to this area are defined in Washington's Municipal Water Law, the North Thurston County Coordinated Water System Plan, and [Olympia's Water System Plan](#) and municipal code. Olympia has adequate water rights reserved to supply customers within the service area for a minimum of 50 years. Conservation and reclaimed water programs will also help extend Olympia's water supply.

Eleven storage tanks serve seven pressure zones throughout the City, with a total capacity of 30.88 million gallons. Five are steel and six are concrete. The Meridian Storage Tanks, located west of McAllister Springs, provide 8 million gallons of storage. The transmission and distribution system is a network of 275 miles of pipe, ranging from ¾-inch to 36 inches in diameter and ranging in age from new to nearly 80 years old.

The pipes are made of various materials, including galvanized steel, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), asbestos cement, concrete, ductile iron, steel, high-density polyethylene and plastic. The City is divided into seven water pressure zones for distribution throughout the service area.

Future Facilities

Future needs for drinking water will be met by:

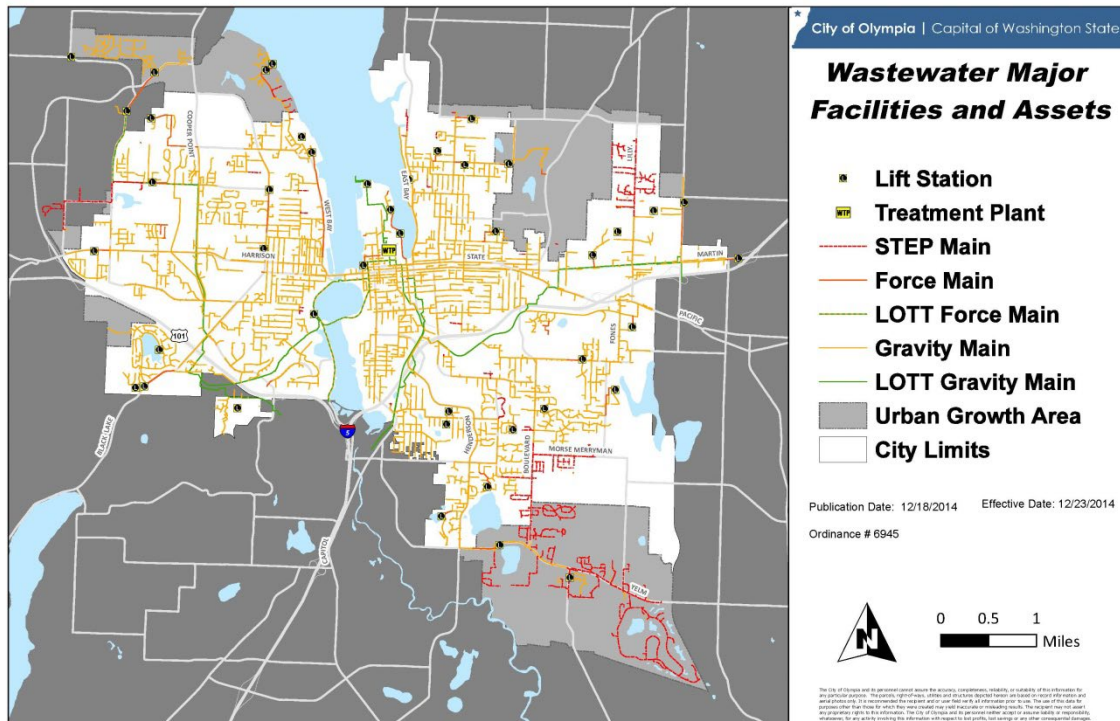
- Developing new water sources.
- Repairing and replacing deteriorating pipes, pumps and reservoirs.
- Developing new transmission, distribution and storage facilities to serve the growing community.

General facilities charges, which are paid by developers, will fund growth-related improvements. Other improvements will be financed through utility rates, often using bonds and low interest loans. The City is also jointly developing a reclaimed water infiltration facility with the City of Lacey for water supply mitigation purposes, outside the City's service area.

Wastewater

Inventory

Within Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, the wastewater system consists of nearly 200 miles of gravity pipes, 30 pump stations and 1,800 STEP systems owned and maintained by the City. There are 4,200 privately owned and maintained septic systems, and regional collection and treatment facilities owned by the LOTT Alliance. Major infrastructure components are shown on the [Wastewater Major Facilities and Assets map](#) below. The way the wastewater system is planned and managed has a major impact on the City's ability to accomplish its land use, environmental, economic development, and growth-management goals.



Wastewater Major Facilities and Assets map

Existing Capacity

Generation rates refer to the amount of wastewater produced by an average customer on a typical day. The Olympia-derived base flow (estimated at approximately 4.2 million gallons per day (MGD)) was divided by the 2006 service population to arrive at the following profile.

- Residents: 63 gallons-per-capita per day, or 170 gallons per-day per Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU).
- Employees: 27 gallons-per-employee per day.

Using these values, the base wastewater generated within the City of Olympia is projected to increase from 4.2 MGD to 7.2 MGD by 2025.

Future Facilities

Computer analysis indicates that, in general, the City's wastewater system has few existing and potential future capacity limitations as long as future flows are carefully routed to appropriate regional collector pipes. Planning for and directing these future flows is a key strategy for optimizing system

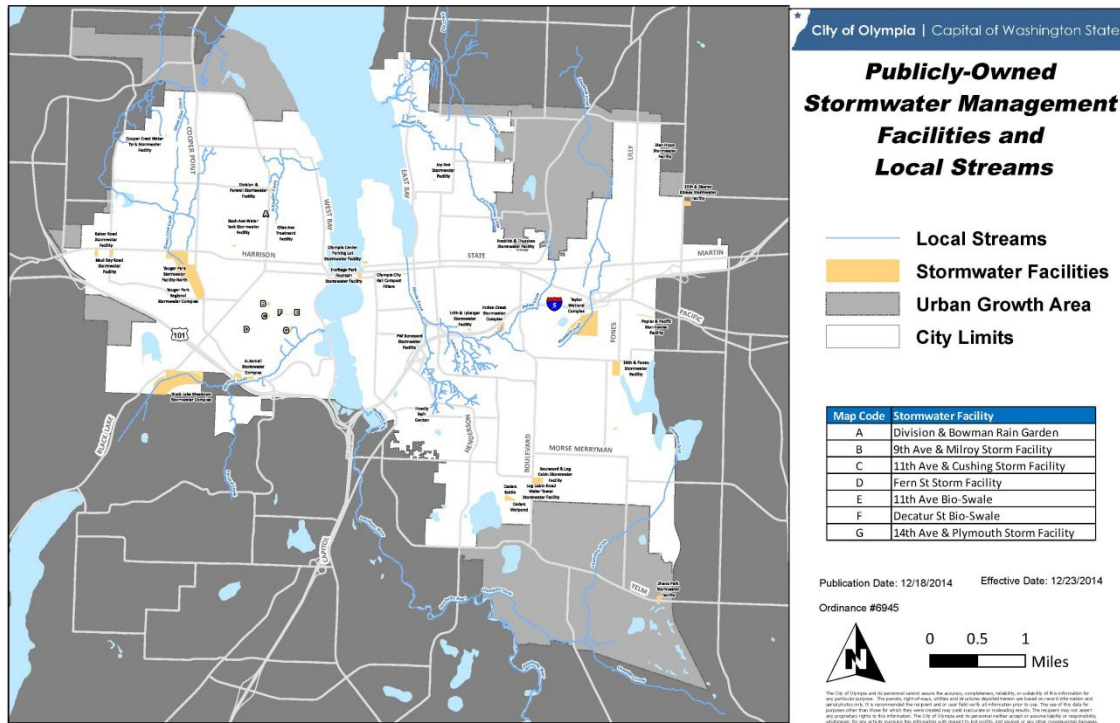
capacity. Using computer flow simulations, Wastewater Utility staff monitors and manages existing and future flows, tracks the need for long-term improvements, and plans for future construction projects before reaching capacity. The [LOTT Clean Water Alliance](#) [Wastewater Resource Management Plan](#) addresses future capacity and treatment upgrades to the regional system.

When infrastructure improvements are needed due to new development, future users of the new facilities repay the City through general facilities charges, latecomer fees or other potential cost recovery tools.

Storm and Surface Water Utility

Inventory

The City maintains more than 130 miles of underground pipe, more than 7,000 storm drains, and 95 stormwater ponds that carry storm water runoff from roads and rooftops to our streams and Budd Inlet. The [Storm and Surface Water map](#) shows the location of the City's major storm and surface water facilities. In addition to Olympia's public stormwater infrastructure, the Utility provides technical assistance and performs maintenance inspections on privately-owned stormwater systems throughout the City. A variety of small areas are still served by a combined sanitary/stormwater sewer, which routes flows to the LOTT treatment plant.



Publicly-Owned Stormwater Management Facilities and Local Streams map

Existing Capacity

For the most part, historical flooding problems have been corrected over the past couple of decades. Now, flooding problems are typically smaller in scale and easier to address than in the past. The Utility manages a pipe televising program to assess the condition of underground infrastructure and to schedule maintenance and repairs before serious problems develop.

Many of the older areas of the City were built before stormwater treatment was required. The Utility looks for opportunities to retrofit stormwater treatment in these areas when feasible.

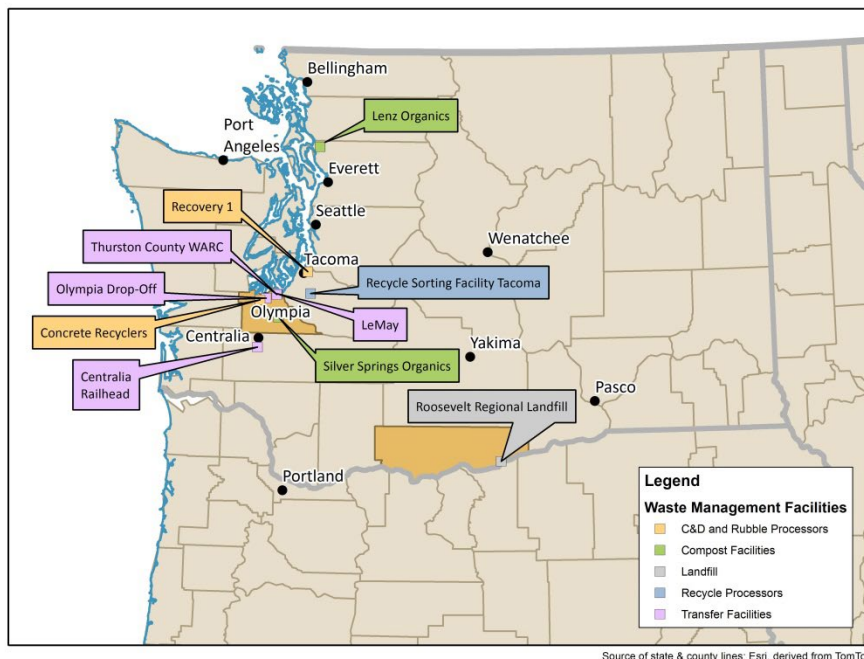
Future Facilities

Thurston County's and Olympia's Stormwater Drainage Manuals require new development to infiltrate stormwater onsite whenever possible. The need for existing stormwater facility upgrades or repairs is assessed annually as part of the [Capital Facilities Plan](#) update processes.

Waste Resources

Existing Capacity

The map below shows the regional processing facilities the City uses for collected materials. Mixed organic waste (yard debris, food scraps and food-soiled paper) and garbage are delivered by City vehicles to the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC) at Hawks Prairie. Thurston County owns the WARC and contracts with Allied Waste Services for transfer, transport and landfilling of garbage - and for the transfer, hauling and composting of organic waste materials. Currently, co-mingled recyclables are taken to a private transfer station near the County's WARC, and then to a regional Materials Recovery Facility in Tacoma, Washington.



Waste Management Facilities

Garbage and non-recyclable construction and demolition debris is compacted into large containers and hauled to a railhead in Centralia. This

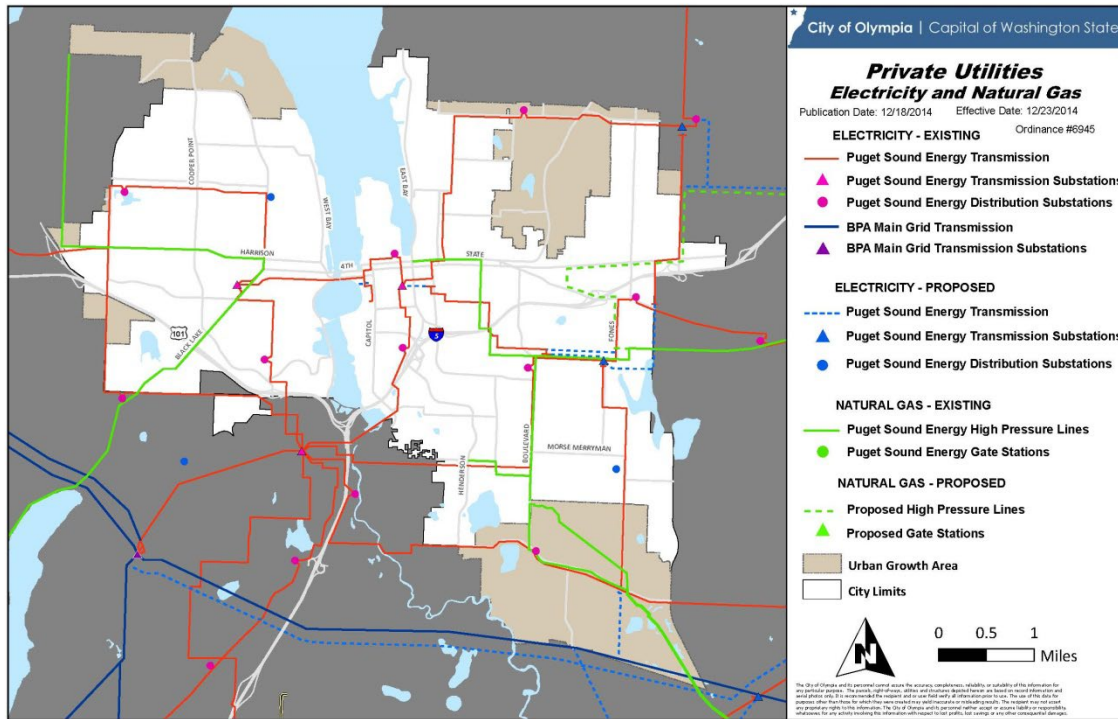
debris is transported by rail to the Roosevelt Regional Landfill in Klickitat County, which is operated by Rabanco, an Allied Waste subsidiary. Mixed organic waste (yard debris, food scraps and food-soiled paper) is hauled from the WARC to approved composting facilities in the State. Some woody debris and organic waste is taken to industrial sites for burning as hog fuel for energy.

Description & Inventory of Private Utilities Serving the Olympia Area

Electricity and Natural Gas


Unlike some other private utilities, providers of electricity such as Puget Sound Energy (PSE) must provide electricity upon demand and in accordance with "tariffs" on file with the Washington Utilities and Trade Commission (WUTC). To fulfill its public service obligations, PSE must plan to extend or add to its facilities when needed.

However, this obligation does not apply to the delivery of natural gas, as it is considered a convenience, rather than a necessity, as electricity is. PSE natural gas service is a demand-driven utility and, as such, is prohibited from passing on the cost of new construction to existing customers. Instead, it installs natural gas service for new construction and when customers convert from electricity or oil to natural gas. PSE owns and operates all electrical transmission and distribution stations, as well as the transmission and distribution lines within the City of Olympia. The map below shows existing and proposed major PSE electric and natural gas facilities, but does not show distribution lines.



Puget Sound Energy Electric and Natural Gas Facilities

Telecommunications and Cellular Telephone Service

The volatility and competitiveness of the telecommunications market makes it difficult to accurately assess the way future telecommunications will be provided. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates cellular providers in each cellular geographic service area, and in Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, there are several FCC-licensed providers. In April 2006, the City adopted the [Olympia Wireless Telecommunications Master Plan](#) , which includes information about future expansion needs and probable facility locations.

At the state level, cellular telecommunications companies are regulated by the WUTC. Although the technology is increasingly used as a reliable backup communication system during times of emergency, the WUTC defines cellular technology as a utility of convenience, not necessity. Therefore, cellular phone providers are not required to provide service upon demand.

There are several dozen antennas for cellular phone service located in and around Olympia. The cellular phone system depends on a series of these low-powered antennas in a honeycomb pattern of "cells" that invisibly blanket the service area. Each cell site has a signal radius ranging from a few blocks to a few miles, depending on terrain and capacity.

Standard Telephone Service

As regulated by the WUTC, standard telephone service is considered a necessity. Therefore, CenturyLink Communications International, Inc. (CenturyLink, formerly Quest and AT&T) must provide phone facilities on demand. As communities grow, its facilities are upgraded to ensure adequate service levels and to offer new services.

Standard telephone service has four primary components: central switching offices (two are located in Olympia), main cable routes, branch feeder routes, and local loops. All these components work together to provide a dial tone to every subscriber.

CenturyLink also maintains a broadband telecommunications network over a mix of optical fiber, coaxial cable and copper wire. CenturyLink has said that it plans to continue serving the Olympia area.

Cable Services

Comcast, Inc. is the area's sole cable service provider, and its receiver site also serves surrounding communities. The two key components of the cable system are a receiver site – a tower that picks up air and satellite signals - and a fiber-to-the-node cable system. The cable television system is fed directly by coaxial and fiber-optic cable from the receiver site to Comcast's Olympia subscribers.

Cities and counties may grant franchises to cable companies that allow them to locate their lines in the public rights-of-way. In exchange, local governments may require cable companies to provide certain services. Olympia's franchise agreement requires Comcast to:



- Provide service throughout the City, and install the cable underground for all new construction.
- Meet minimum standards for the number of channels provided, variety of programming, quality of customer service, and technical quality of signal transmission.
- Provide a public access studio and facilities that allow programming to originate from a number of public facilities identified by the City.
- Provide financial support for local access television equipment.

Federal law allows local government to charge a franchise fee for use of the Right-of-Way, currently no more than 5% of gross revenue.

In the Olympia area, the “public access studio and facilities” requirement in the franchise is administered by Thurston Community Television (TCTV), a non-profit organization -- on behalf of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Thurston County.

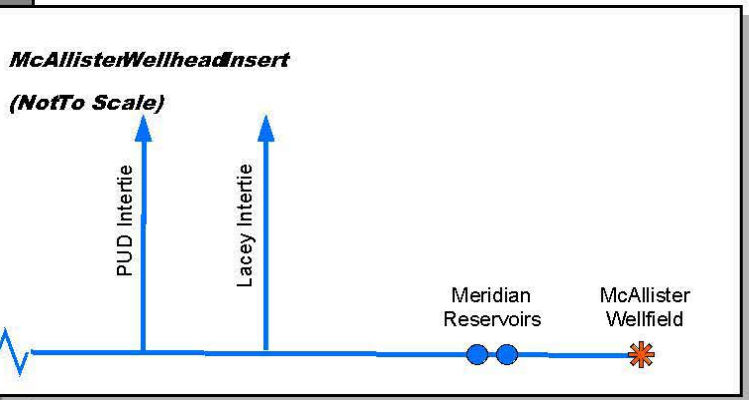
Each year, Comcast engineers assess whether it needs to expand its Olympia system so it can continue to provide cable hook-ups to customers as demand rises. At this time, the City is adequately served and expects that will continue for at least the next 20 years.

For More Information

- [1990 General Sewerage Plan for Thurston County](#)  This document outlines the plan for providing sewer services to the unincorporated Urban Growth Areas within Thurston County.
- Thurston County’s [Emergency Management Plan](#)  is a cooperative local government effort to identify and prioritize ways the region can protect itself from its natural vulnerability to hazards such as storms, landslides, earthquakes and flooding.
- Current and past technical analyses and reports regarding sea level rise in Olympia can be reviewed on the City’s Sea Level Rise webpage.

Olympia Major Drinking Water Facilities

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



- 36" Transmission Main
- McAllister Wellfield
- Booster Pump Station (BPS)
- Well
- Reservoir
- Lacey Intertie
- Tumwater Intertie
- City Limits
- Urban Growth Area



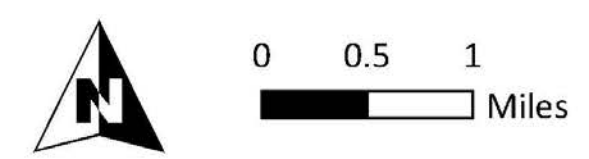
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The City of Olympia and its personnel cannot assure the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of this information for any particular purpose. The parcels, right-of-ways, utilities and structures depicted herein are based on record information and aerial photos only. It is recommended the recipient and/or user field verify all information prior to use. The use of this data for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The recipient may not assert any proprietary rights to this information. The City of Olympia and its personnel neither accept or assume liability or responsibility, whatsoever, for any activity involving this information with respect to lost profits, lost savings, or any other consequential damages.

Olympia and LOTT Major Reclaimed Water Facilities










- Reclaimed Water Line
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014
Ordinance #6945



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Wastewater Major Facilities and Assets

-  **Lift Station**
-  **Treatment Plant**
-  **STEP Main**
-  **Force Main**
-  **LOTT Force Main**
-  **Gravity Main**
-  **LOTT Gravity Main**
-  **Urban Growth Area**
-  **City Limits**

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance # 6945



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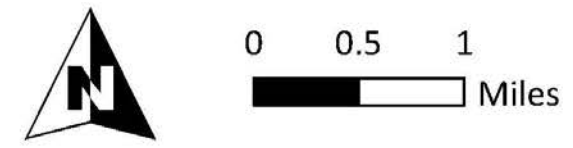
Publicly-Owned Stormwater Management Facilities and Local Streams

- Local Streams
- Stormwater Facilities
- Urban Growth Area
- City Limits

Map Code	Stormwater Facility
A	Division & Bowman Rain Garden
B	9th Ave & Milroy Storm Facility
C	11th Ave & Cushing Storm Facility
D	Fern St Storm Facility
E	11th Ave Bio-Swale
F	Decatur St Bio-Swale
G	14th Ave & Plymouth Storm Facility

Publication Date: 12/18/2014 Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



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Public Health, Arts, Parks and Recreation



Extraordinary parks, arts and recreation provide opportunities for meaningful life experiences.

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value the role parks, open space, recreation and art play in our lives; as these contribute to our sense of community, and to our physical, spiritual and emotional well-being.

Our Vision for the Future:

A healthy, fun and enriching place to live.

Introduction

The Olympia area has great parks, a vibrant arts community, and many recreation and enrichment programs to enrich our lives and strengthen our connection to the community. Public gathering places, whether a small pocket park or large playfield satisfy our need to join with others in the community. One only has to walk to a neighborhood park, search for a new skill to learn, or catch the latest downtown Arts Walk to experience

this. The County, City, community groups, volunteers, and businesses all play a vital role in shaping parks, arts, and recreation. These facilities and programs improve people's quality of life, promote active lifestyles, create a sense of place and contribute to the local economy.

The mission of Thurston County Parks and Trails is to be the regional steward of parks, open space, and natural resource lands and waterways dedicated to public use for recreation and leisure enjoyment.

Parks, Open Space, Trails, Arts and Recreation Programs and Facilities

Thurston County's attractive, well managed parks, trails, nature preserves, and recreation programs enhance the quality of life and nurture the health and well-being of our people, our community, our environment and our economy. County and City programs offer opportunities to exercise and reduce stress, as well as support personal growth and emotional well-being.

Some recreational amenities are regional in nature and a regional approach to their implementation can be effective. For example, community parks lend themselves to a regional approach, particularly if a potential site is located near a border with Lacey or Tumwater. Other regional efforts could include an Art Center, a regional trail network, recreational programming, or even an ice-skating rink or swimming pool

The following goals and policies apply to all parks, open space, trails, arts and recreation programs, and facilities.


GR1 Unique facilities, public art, events, and recreational programming encourage social interaction, foster community building, and enhance the visual character and livability of Olympia.

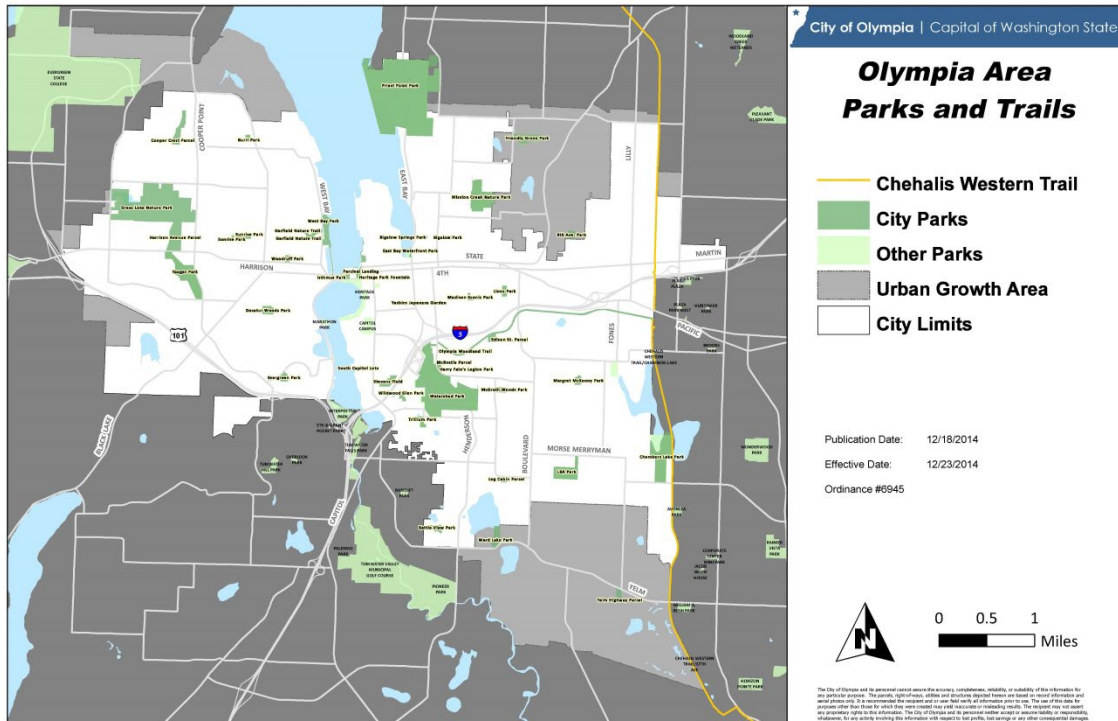
PR1.1 Promote County and City parks, open space, trails, arts, and recreation programs and facilities so they are used and enjoyed by as many community members as possible.

PR1.2 Be responsive to emerging needs for programs, facilities, and community events.

Parks

The residents of Thurston County, including those in the Urban Growth Areas, are proud of their community and recognize the natural value and everyday enjoyment that comes from existing parklands and recreational amenities. From actively programmed events to casual gatherings with friends and neighbors; from natural areas for relaxation to inviting areas for exploration, discovery, and play – these assets have a direct connection to the quality of life experienced by every individual within this community.

The parks and open spaces in the Urban Growth Area and City of Olympia give us a variety of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Despite the number of parks, however, there are still unmet needs, such as soccer fields, dog parks, community gardens, bike and nature trails, and open space. For a complete inventory of all existing park, recreation and open space lands in Thurston County, see the [Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan](#)..



View Map – Olympia Area Parks and Trails


Maintaining the quality of the area's parks and recreation system

Level of Service Standards

The Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan:

Based on evaluation, community input and proper stewardship responsibilities, Thurston County has determined a Level of Service (LOS) of 3.0 developed acres per 1,000 residents and the per capita LOS as described in the 2020 Park Impact Fee Study. The criteria used for evaluation includes: potential funding, usage, stakeholder influence, and maintenance costs.

The Capital Facilities Plan:

The [Capital Facilities Plan](#) describes how the County finances new park acquisition and development. Some of the different funding options include: Conservation Futures; Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program; real estate excise transfer tax; and individual impact investors. which is funded by a variety of sources including park impact fees, Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) mitigation fees, grants and donations. While most of the park projects proposed in the [Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan](#)  already have identified funding sources, some do not.

Neighborhood Parks

A Neighborhood Park is usually a small playground and open area designed primarily for non-supervised, non-organized recreational activities. A typical Neighborhood Park might include a children's playground, a picnic shelter, a restroom, and open grass areas for passive and active use. These parks also may include trails, tennis courts, basketball courts, skate courts, public art, and community gardens. Since each Neighborhood Park is unique, residents will often travel throughout the area to experience a variety of them. The service area for Neighborhood Parks is thus the entire City and its Urban Growth Area.



Neighborhood parks such as Lion's Park provide nearby places to be active.

When portions of the Urban Growth Area are annexed, it should include additional open space to meet added demand. The goal is to have a neighborhood park within walking distance to most residences.

Community Parks

Community Parks are designed to serve the larger community, and are either athletic fields or sites that have a special focus.

Athletic field space can range from a single field at a park to a multiple-field complex. Large athletic field complexes are the most cost-effective for efficient scheduling and maintenance. Though they are designed for organized activities and sports, individual and family activities are also encouraged. Athletic field complexes bring large groups together and require more facilities, such as parking, restrooms and picnic shelters. Olympia's three existing athletic field complexes are: LBA Park, Yauger Park and Stevens Field. Combined, these parks total 75 acres.

Other Community Parks may have a special focus, such as a waterfront, garden, or water feature. Some examples include Kennydell Park, Burfoot

Park and Percival Landing.



Community parks add to Olympia's vitality (Percival Landing).

Regional Parks


Regional parks are typically larger destination parks that attract users from a broad service area. These parks provide a combination of passive/leisure recreation and active, enterprise opportunities. Serving large geographic and metropolitan areas as well as tourists and visitors, these parks can have significant natural, cultural, or historical features and often include shorelines, water access, trails, and educational/interpretive features. Examples include Burfoot Park and Deschutes Falls Park.

Olympia provides athletic fields through a combination of City parks and school fields. But there still is a need for additional rectangular fields. In recent years, soccer groups have been turned away and have used fields available in other jurisdictions. Some athletic fields have been so over-used that they cannot recover for the following season, which is leading to long-term deterioration. While the City will continue its efforts to acquire large parcels for future athletic field complexes, it recognizes that with very few large undeveloped parcels available, it may be necessary to meet the future athletic field need with single fields at multiple parks.

For organized sports, it matters less where the player lives, but rather where a game is scheduled. Much like a transit system or library system that is “area-wide”, Community Parks serve the entire Olympia urban growth area. Thus, the service area for Community Parks is defined as being all of Olympia and all of Olympia’s urban growth area.

The City estimates that it needs to acquire an additional 84 acres of community parks to meet the demand for Community Parks within 20 years.

Open Space

Though largely undeveloped, the county’s open spaces provide residents with visual relief from urban environments, as well as overall environmental and health benefits. Open space sites may or may not be improved, but can include trails, greenway corridors, community gardens, farmed areas, buffers between land uses of differing intensities, and areas left in their natural state. It is worth noting that some of these lands may only exist informally or in the form of a protected conservation easement. (Note that the term "Open Space" as used in this chapter has a more specific meaning than as used in the Natural Environment Chapter pursuant to RCW [36.70A.160](#) ).



Open spaces such as Mission Creek Nature Park provide opportunities to experience nature within the city.

Research has shown that residents are willing to travel looking for the special and unique features associated with one Open Space in particular. For instance, Watershed Park provides walking trails in a stream and wetland complex while Indian Road Park provides saltwater beach access and forests. Much like a transit system or library system that is “area-wide”, Open Spaces serve the entire Olympia urban growth area. Open Space has a very high value to residents.

Goals and Policies

GR2 A sustainable park system meets community recreation needs and Level of Service standards.

PR2.1 Provide parks in close proximity to all residents.

PR2.2 Ensure that our park system includes opportunities for community members to experience nature and solitude as a healthy escape from the fast pace of urban life.

PR2.3 Preserve and enhance scenic views and significant historic sites within the park system.


PR2.4 Support the City's efforts to identify, acquire, and develop future park and open space sites in the Urban Growth Area.

PR2.5 Beautify entry corridors to our City and our neighborhoods, giving priority to street beautification downtown and along Urban Corridors.

PR2.6 Continue to require SEPA-based mitigation fees in the Olympia Urban Growth Areas so new development pays its fair share to the park and open space system based on its proportionate share of impact. Thurston County and the City of Olympia will work to devise an alternative system for funding parks and open space in the unincorporated Urban Growth Area.

PR2.7 During development review, if consistent with park level of service standards or other needs, encourage developers to dedicate land for future parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

GR3 An urban trails system interconnects parks, schools, neighborhoods, open spaces, historical settings, neighboring jurisdictions' trails systems, important public facilities, and employment centers via both on- and off-street trails.

PR3.1 Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and State agencies to build a regional trail network and coordinated trail signage program that is consistent with the [Thurston Regional Trails Plan](#) .

PR3.2 Use existing rail, utility, and unopened street rights-of-way, alleys, streams (where environmentally sound), and other corridors for urban trails.

PR3.3 Preserve unimproved public rights-of-way for important open space, greenway linkages, and trails.

PR3.4 Encourage walking and bicycling for recreation and transportation purposes by linking parks to walking routes, streets and trails.

PR3.5 When located in areas where future trails are shown on the adopted map, ensure that new development provides appropriate pieces of the trail system using impact fees, the SEPA process, trail Right-of-Way dedication, or other means.

GR4 A lively public waterfront contributes to a vibrant Olympia.

PR4.1 Encourage the acquisition of saltwater shoreline property and easements to create more public access to the waterfront.

PR4.2 Preserve street rights-of-way when they extend to shorelands and install signs that indicate public access.

GR5 Thurston County's and Olympia's parks system investments are protected.

PR5.1 Protect the City's investment from damage by vandalism, encampments, and other misuse in a manner that preserves the intended purpose.

PR5.2 Consider regional approaches to funding major recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, regional trails, art centers, and tournament-level athletic fields.

Arts

Olympia is now home to approximately 2,500 individual artists and almost 100 arts organizations and venues. Our resident artists are musicians, writers, actors, and visual artists who are both nationally known and emerging. Olympia hosts award-winning theater, ground breaking music performances, the Procession of the Species, and a strong visual arts community that ranges from informal artists to those with nationwide gallery representation.



Arts Walk is one of the largest public events in the community and a source of civic spirit and pride.

Over the next 20 years, Olympia will face two challenges:

- **Creating an Arts Center.** In 1989, the City first identified a need for a regional arts center with exhibition space, working studios, and rehearsal space for regional artists.
- **Retaining Artists.** Social and economic factors such as cost of living, affordable housing, and stable economy may make it harder for Olympia to retain its artists.

Goals and Policies

GR6 Permanent and temporary public art is located in parks, sidewalks, roundabouts, public buildings, alleys and other public spaces.

PR6.1 Support diverse works of art.

PR6.2 Encourage opportunities and participation by local, regional and national artists.

PR6.3 Support the use of public art to create unique community places and visible landmarks.

PR6.4 Encourage the use of art into public spaces such as sidewalks, bridges, parking meters, tree grates, buildings, benches, bike racks and transit stops.

PR6.5 Encourage community participation at all levels of the public art process.

PR6.6 Encourage that the public art collection be regularly maintained so it retains its beauty and value.

PR6.7 Encourage art in vacant storefronts.

PR6.8 Encourage neighborhood art studios.

PR6.9 Support art installations that produce solar or wind generated energy.

PR6.10 Support the city's efforts to help artists, organizations and businesses identify possible locations in commercial areas for studios and exhibition space.

PR6.11 Support the city's "art in city buildings" program that would host rotating art exhibits.

GR7 Arts in Olympia are supported.

PR7.1 Encourage the city to pursue a regional community arts center.

PR7.2 Support the city's efforts to pursue affordable housing and studio/rehearsal space for artists, including support for, or participation in, establishing or constructing buildings or sections of buildings that provide living, work and gallery space exclusively for artists.

PR7.3 Encourage broad arts participation in the community.

PR7.4 Support the city's efforts to provide opportunities for the public to learn about and engage in the art-making process.

PR7.5 Support the city's efforts to provide opportunities that highlight the talent of visual, literary and performing artists.

PR7.6 Support the city's efforts to provide technical support to art organizations.

PR7.7 Support and promote a theater and entertainment district in downtown Olympia.

PR7.8 Support the city's efforts to create a range of opportunities for the public to interact with art; from small workshops to large community events.

PR7.9 Support the city's efforts to encourage early arts education opportunities.

Recreation

The City's recreation programs promote physical and mental well-being, bring community members together in a positive, supportive, and fun atmosphere, and create memorable experiences for individuals and families in the city, urban growth area, and beyond. The City offers traditional programs such as sports leagues, youth camps and clinics, and

special interest classes. It also responds to emerging recreational interests, such as the Ultimate Frisbee league, high-energy dance classes, and community gardens. Each year, approximately 400 teams participate in City sports leagues, more than 4,000 community members take a leisure recreation class, and more than 1,500 youth participate in camp programs. In addition to enhancing participants' wellness, people who participate in these programs also gain a sense of belonging to the community.



Recreation Programs foster community health and wellness ("Kids Love Soccer" Program).

Olympia's recreation programs face the following challenges:

- **Activating our Community.** Our sedentary lifestyles are contributing to health problems. The City must find places and programs that can compete with the ease and simplicity of TV and computers for our time and attention
- **Connecting with Nature.** Our electronic toys and indoor jobs have created a culture less connected to nature. If our residents are not connected to nature it will become increasingly difficult for them to understand or embrace environmental stewardship
- **An aging population that's ready for action:** Between 2010 and 2030, Olympia's senior population is projected to double. But the seniors of the future are likely to be more active and adventurous than in prior generations. Olympia's recreation programs need to embrace this trend.

Goals and Policies

GR8 Olympians enjoy lifelong happiness and wellness.

PR8.1 Support city efforts to provide opportunities that promote a mentally and physically active lifestyle and healthy food choices, including participation in local food production.

PR8.2 Support city efforts to provide programs and facilities that stimulate creative and competitive play for all ages.

PR8.3 Support city efforts to provide programs, facilities, and community events that support diverse self-expression.

PR8.4 Support city efforts to provide opportunities for bringing balance, relaxation, and lifelong learning into one's life.

GR9 Families recreate together.

PR9.1 Enhance recreation opportunities for the Olympia area's physically and mentally disabled populations.

PR9.2 Support the City's efforts to provide recreational opportunities for all family structures.

PR9.3 Support the City's efforts to work towards providing recreation programs that are affordable and available to all community members.









PR9.4 Support the City's efforts to provide parks and programs to serve people of all ages, and with many different abilities, and interests.

PR9.5 Support the City's efforts to develop programs and design park facilities that encourage activities people can do together regardless of their age.

PR9.6 Support the City's efforts to provide convenient, safe, active,

outdoor recreation experiences suited for families.

For More Information

- [Parks, Arts and Recreation Plan](#) 
- Thurston County's Comprehensive Plan (chapter 9) provides an assessment, policies and goals for residents.
- [Thurston County Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan](#) 
- For the regional recreation needs see a list of parks at [Thurston County Public Works Parks and Trails](#) 
- Thurston County's Capital Facilities Plan describes funding for parks and trails
- Olympia's [Capital Facilities Plan](#)  shows how park projects will be funded during a six year period
- For a complete list of all of Olympia's parks and trails, see [Parks and Trails](#) 
- For a comprehensive look at regional trail planning, see the [Thurston Regional Trails Plan](#) 
- Information on the City's Public Art Collection can be found at [Public Art](#) 
- To learn more about the City of Olympia's recreational programs and classes, see [Parks and Recreation](#) 

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Economy



An employee at Olympia local business, Olykraut.

What Olympia Values:

Olympians recognize the value of a healthy economy that is stable and sustainable. The health and welfare of the community depends upon there being a range of employment opportunities so that we are not dependent on just one sector for our economic welfare. Local businesses should have access to quality infrastructure so that they have what they need in order to engage in commerce. Community members should have access to a broad range of locally produced goods and services so that they can be assured that their money is spent in ways that sustain our community. Our community should continue to be an active center for arts and recreation – and grow and foster their development. Education and health care are also critical to a stable and sustainable economy – our community is graced with several premier institutions in each of these sectors and we collaborate with them on projects of mutual benefit.

Our Vision for the Future:

Olympia's economy is diverse and balanced. Family wage jobs and career opportunities are available to our community members from multiple sectors, including government and manufacturing, health care, education, and service sector employment. A significant and ever-increasing amount of our goods, services and food is locally sourced. We emphasize sustainable business practices and environmentally friendly development.

Introduction

The strength of our economy is what determines whether we are able to pay for the public services that help to make our community a great place to live. A diverse and healthy economy provides a reliable tax base that generates revenues sufficient to keep pace with inflation. The quality of the community is the most powerful economic engine we have for attracting and maintaining high quality job opportunities.

We have been told by Olympians they value an economy where:

- There are plentiful living-wage jobs.
- Consumers and the City support local entrepreneurs.
- Residents and businesses want many of their goods and services to come from local sources.
- A highly educated workforce, entrepreneurial spirit and culture of innovation energize our economy.
- Art projects, art events, and support for the arts are integral to the community and its economy.

A healthy economy must provide jobs that pay a living wage, usually defined as a wage that allows a household to meet its basic needs without the need for public assistance. The level of a living wage will vary based on the size and makeup of the household.

See the links in the “For More Information” section at the end of this chapter for more information about what constitutes a living wage in our community, cost burdened households and middle-income housing affordability.

Olympia’s Economic Profile

Cities play a critical role in supporting local economic activity. Without municipal services, economic activity and development is simply not possible. In turn the commerce that takes place in our community is responsible for much of the revenue that Thurston County and the City receive by way of taxes and fees that are used to help to support our quality of life. In the economic development arena, the Olympia area has the following roles:

- Using land-use authority to provide places for businesses to locate.
- Maintaining efficient, fair, transparent, and predictable permitting processes that reduce business-cost and timeline uncertainties.
- Collaborating with public and private entities that have a more direct role in economic development, such as ports, business associations, and economic development associations.
- Developing and maintaining the infrastructure healthy businesses and neighborhoods need.
- Investing in traditional infrastructure, such as roads, sewer and water service, as well as in schools, parks, arts, and the natural environment.
- Collaborating between jurisdictions on the Martin Way Corridor Study to identify a common vision, as well as opportunities to develop the identity and character of the Martin Way corridor as it grows into the future.
- Commissioning reports, such as the “2013 Investment Strategy: Olympia’s Opportunity Areas” and the Downtown Olympia “Community Renewal Area Feasibility Study,” to provide information for the community to make informed decisions about its economic future.

Olympia’s Three Top Employers:

Government:

Olympia is the capital of Washington and seat of Thurston County. The State, County, and City provide many local jobs. The Olympia School District is one of the largest single employers within the City. Many of these government jobs are tied to our more diverse, statewide economy, which helps to shield our community from economic swings. However, fluctuations in state government affect our local economy.

Given that our state’s population is projected to grow significantly, it is very likely that employment with the state of Washington will continue to contribute in a positive way to our local economy in the long-term. State employment helps to sustain our skilled and well-educated workforce, which in turn provides an attractive labor force for private sector companies to draw from as they make decisions about where to locate.

The state has also been moving away from leasing private space to house its employees. A new 200,000 square foot office building is in the planning stages

for the Capital Campus block located at the northwest corner of Capitol Way and 11th Avenue. This will likely mean that there will continue to be an excess of office space available for rent in the greater Olympia area. Other issues like school funding mandates may also impact the size of the State's workforce and its leasing practices.

The Investment Strategies report calls out that almost a third of state government employees statewide (32%) are over 55 years of age. As these employees retire over the next decade, many of those positions will likely be filled with younger employees. This trend could impact the demand for residential housing within Thurston County, regardless of the overall size of state government. A younger state workforce could likely lead to a higher demand for multifamily housing that is supported by transit. Data from the Thurston Regional Planning Council's Sustainable Thurston report suggests that the "millennial" generation prefers urban multifamily housing options over suburban life styles. The changing demographics of Olympia's workforce will impact the City in several ways. There will likely be a demand for more downtown multifamily housing as millennials seek housing near their place of employment. Also, a retiring workforce will likely lead to the need and interest in more downtown multifamily housing, senior services and senior-oriented activities. These changes provide opportunities for quality growth in our future.

The Olympia School District is another significant governmental employer with approximately 1,300 employees providing K-12 education to approximately 9,000 students. The school district's Capital Facility Plan includes over \$178,000,000 in construction projects and another \$11,680,000 in small works projects. The Olympia School District's operating budget is over \$92,000,000. Future plans include a new middle school in Southeast Olympia.

Health care:

Olympia is also a regional medical center, serving Thurston, Mason, Gray's Harbor and Lewis counties. Health care is Thurston County's second largest employment sector, with an estimated 11,595 jobs and is projected to continue growing in the future.

Retail:

Olympia's shopping mall, auto mall, and downtown business core make it the

region's largest retail center, providing significant sales tax revenue. Retail provides an estimated 11,076 jobs in 2010 and is the county's third largest employment sector. However, unlike our government and health care employers, retail provides an average living wage that is just under what the City estimates is needed for a single adult in Olympia.

The *Investment Strategy* report adds, "The City of Olympia is projected to accommodate an estimated additional 18,000 jobs by 2035.ⁱ Of those, almost 75% of new jobs in Olympia will be in commercial sectors. Jobs in industrial sectors (10%) and government (15%) will make up the remainder of new employment. Countywide, the sectors with the largest forecasted new jobs are professional and business services. However, Thurston Regional Planning Council's forecasts have construction employment growing substantially with total construction employment more than doubling by 2040 from 5,620 in 2010 to 12,700. Manufacturing employment is also forecasted to increase but at a much slower rate adding about 500 jobs from 2010 to 2040."

The Port of Olympia

Olympia is also the only city in Thurston County with a deep-water harbor. The Port of Olympia operates a marine import and export terminal, the largest recreational boating marina on South Puget Sound, and a state-of-the-art boatyard. The Port is also the home of many private, marine-related businesses, the Batdorf & Bronson Roasting House, the Olympia Farmers' Market, and many professional offices and retail businesses.

Among our partners in economic development, the Port of Olympia has the closest relationship to Olympia's economy, and its mission is to grow the Thurston County economy, move people and goods, and improve the County's recreation options and environment. The Port is a special-purpose district, and its boundaries are the same as Thurston County's.

Although a smaller factor in our local economy than state government, the Port's potential is significant and gives the region an opportunity to further diversify its economy.

Education, Entertainment, and Geography

Olympia is the region's restaurant, art, and entertainment center. There are three nearby colleges, The Evergreen State College, St. Martin's University, and South Puget Sound Community College, which have a major impact on the culture of our community and our high average level of education.

As a result of The Evergreen State College, the City of Olympia has become home to many innovative entrepreneurs and artists that were originally attracted to our community to go to school. Evergreen is widely acknowledged as one of the nation's premier liberal arts institutions and its location here provides an opportunity for continued and expanded collaboration on entrepreneurial development. Evergreen hosts three master's programs – in public administration, teaching and environmental studies. Each of these programs provides an opportunity to collaborate with the college to attract and foster complementary research and development activities. Our community serves as a learning laboratory for students and potentially an international destination for learning and cultural exchange. The City should continue to seek opportunities for direct partnerships with the college on program development, capital facilities planning and student housing. A physical presence in our downtown could create opportunities for both the City and the College.

In addition, Olympia is well-served by its highway network, which includes Interstate 5 and Highway 101, with links to State Route 8 and the Olympic and Kitsap Peninsulas. All of this means Olympia's location provides easy access to a variety of recreational opportunities - from bike trails and kayaking within our city limits, to skiing and hiking in the mountains, to beachcombing along the coast and regional customers for the area's retail businesses and health care providers.

Thurston County benefits from regional economic growth and activity in the Puget Sound region that filters down to the County as the region grows. Joint Base Lewis-McChord has increased demand for housing in the region, particularly in Lacey.

There are growing signs of an urban infill market in Olympia in part driven by a changing demographic oriented towards urban living. In the last ten years, most

recent building activity in Olympia has focused on rehabilitation or remodeling of existing space with limited new development. As growth has rebounded, multifamily development has been the first sector to recover. Builders are taking advantage of sites that are easily developable and/or high amenity areas. Continued population growth in the region will generate demand for additional housing and commercial services, such as general services, retail, and health care. To be competitive Olympia must understand the strengths and weaknesses of its market.

A Healthy Economy Enhances our Quality of Life

Olympia enjoys a relatively healthy economy and stable revenue base, making it possible for it to invest in public improvements and services. These include the Washington Center for the Performing Arts, The Olympia Center, Percival Landing, the Farmers Market, new sewer capacity, new roads, and other needed infrastructure. All of this makes Olympia increasingly attractive to private investors, which will further increase our revenue base, and make more community improvements possible.

Downtown Olympia

Downtown Olympia is a special place. For many years it has served as Thurston County's only downtown. It has the only urban waterfront in the region, attracting recreational boaters from throughout Puget Sound. It has the only performing arts center, is the region's banking sector and is the recreational hub for the Urban Growth Area and the region.

Downtown Olympia is also home to the state's largest farmers-operated farmers' market. The Olympia Farmers' Market serves as a link to a substantial network of small family-owned farms and businesses, many based in the Urban Growth Area and rural Thurston County. The market serves as a tourist attraction and destination and a place for local residents to purchase local food. Farmers Markets have proven to be a good way to foster the development and expansion of locally owned businesses. In recent years small neighborhood markets are beginning to appear in Olympia with the hope of fostering more neighborhood

centers and even more accessibility to locally grown and produced products.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings see the streets of downtown come alive with theater patrons, diners and live music fans. Recent enhancements such as the Hands on Children's Museum, East Bay Plaza, LOTT Clean Water Alliance's WET Center and Percival Landing reconstruction add to downtown's status as a destination.

Goals and Policies

GE1 Olympia has a stable economy that provides jobs that pay a living wage.

PE1.1 Provide a desirable setting for business investment and activity.

PE1.2 Develop or support programs and strategies that encourage living-wage jobs.

GE2 Olympia has a strong revenue base.

PE2.1 Encourage retail, office, medical and service activities where appropriate for their value in providing employment and tax revenues.

PE2.2 Ensure that the total amount of land planned for commercial and industrial uses is sufficient for expected demand.

PE2.3 Diversify the local economy in a way that builds on our stable public sector base, and by supporting businesses that can reduce reliance on goods and services from outside the community.

PE2.4 Regularly review the development market to identify changing circumstances that create barriers or opportunities for investment in our community.

GE3 A vital downtown provides a strong center for Olympia and the Urban Growth Area's economy.

PE3.1 Support a safe and vibrant downtown with many small businesses, great public places, events, and activities from morning through evening.

PE3.2 Support continuation of the Dash Shuttle as a means of linking the Capital Campus and downtown.

GE4 The City achieves maximum economic, environmental and social benefit from public infrastructure.

PE4.1 Plan our investments in infrastructure with the goal of balancing economic, environmental and social needs, supporting a variety of potential economic sectors, and creating a pattern of development we can sustain into the future.

PE4.2 Make decisions to invest in public infrastructure projects after analysis determining their total costs over their estimated useful lives, and their benefit to environmental, economic and social systems.

PE4.3 Support the City in taking advantage of infrastructure grants, loans, and other incentives to achieve the goals of this Joint Plan.

PE4.4 Economic uncertainty created by site contamination can be a barrier to development in downtown and elsewhere in our community; identify potential tools, partnerships and resources that can be used to create more economic certainty for developments by better characterizing contamination where doing so fulfills a public purpose.

PE4.5 Identify where new and upgraded utilities will be needed to serve areas zoned for commercial and industrial use, and encourage the development of utilities to service these areas.

PE4.6 Support the encouragement of new development in areas the City has designated for infill before considering proposals to expand land-use areas, or adding new ones.

PE4.7 Serve sites to be designated for industrial or commercial development with required utilities and other services on a cost-effective basis and at a level appropriate to the uses planned for the area and coordinated with development of the site.

PE4.8 Avoid building lengthy and expensive service extensions that would cost more than could ever be recovered from revenues.

GE5 Collaboration with other partners maximizes economic opportunity.

PE5.1 Support appropriate economic development efforts of neighboring jurisdictions, recognizing that the entire region benefits from new jobs, regardless of where they are.

PE5.2 Collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to develop a regional strategy for creating a sustainable economy.

PE5.3 Look for economies of scale when providing services at the regional level.

PE5.4 Collaborate with local economic development organizations to create new and maintain existing living-wage jobs.

PE5.5 Support the City's efforts to work closely with state and county government to ensure their offices and facilities are in the City of Olympia, which is both the state's capitol and the county seat. Continue to work with the State of Washington on its Preferred Leasing Areas Policy.

PE5.6 Support the City's efforts to collaborate with The Evergreen State College, St. Martin's University, and South Puget Sound Community College on their efforts to educate students in skills that will be needed in the future, to contribute to our community's cultural life, and attract new residents.

PE5.7 Support the City's efforts to encourage The Evergreen State College, St. Martin's University, and South Puget Sound Community College to establish a physical presence in downtown.

PE5.8 Support neighboring jurisdictions in their role as the regional center for

other activities, such as manufacturing, freight transportation, and air transportation.

PE5.9 Balance the Port's need for truck and rail transportation corridors, while minimizing conflicts with other traffic needs and land use goals.

PE5.10 Coordinate funding opportunities with other public stakeholders (Intercity Transit agency, the Port of Olympia, the State of Washington, Olympia School District, others) with the CFP for major infrastructure investments to maximize the impact of those investments.

Community and Economy

Several recent studies suggest that a sense of "place" – a sense of authenticity, continuity and uniqueness – is the key to a community's future economic opportunity. One study found that cities in which residents reported highest levels of attachment to and passion for their communities also had the highest rates of economic growth over time. These studies also discovered that qualities such as a welcome and open feeling, attractiveness, walkability, and a variety of social events and venues all contributed to this emotional bond. Parks and trees, community and historic landmarks, and public art also contributed to that hard-to-define "sense of place."

In 2009, Olympia was selected as one of the Top 10 Best Cities in the nation, by Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine. While identifying state government as the "keystone of Olympia's economy," it called Olympia itself a "cultural diamond in the rough" where a thriving visual and performing arts scene is celebrated. It is our individuality as a community -- and our quirkiness -- that sets us apart from other communities, and which makes Olympia such a great place to live and start a business.

According to the 2011 Thurston County Creative Vitality Index, more than 650 "creative jobs" were added to the community between 2006 and 2009. These include public relations specialists, writers, librarians, photographers, architects, and others in "creative occupations."



Downtown Olympia's shops, restaurants and theaters are a draw for residents and visitors alike.

Olympia has received many awards for livability over the years. In 2010, Olympia was recognized as the most secure mid-sized city in the U.S by Farmers Insurance, based on factors that included crime statistics, weather, risk of natural disasters, housing depreciation, environmental hazards, and life expectancy. In 2010, the *Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index* ranked Olympia in the top 20% of cities in Washington State. Its survey categories included life evaluation, emotional health, physical health, healthy behaviors, work environment, clean water, and general satisfaction with life and work.

Those same qualities that contribute to the strong emotional bonds many residents form with Olympia also appeal to visitors. Visitors contribute to our economy by shopping, dining, taking in a performance in one of our theaters, and spending the night in a hotel. According to the Thurston Visitor and Convention Bureau, in 2013, Thurston County businesses received an estimated \$250 million from visitor spending. This activity generated an estimated \$19 million in state and local taxes that year, and employed an estimated 3,000 people.



According to the Thurston County Creative Vitality Index, Performing Arts revenue grew 1.4% between 2008 and 2009.

Olympia's arts community is also a draw for tourism, and one of its beneficiaries.

Music

According to findings from a study completed by students at The Evergreen State College for the Olympia Arts Commission, the music industry in Olympia generated an estimated \$27 million in total business revenues --including manufacturing, retail, and venue receipts-- in 2008, contributing approximately \$2.5 million in local and state taxes for that year.

Theater

The Arts Alliance of Downtown Olympia determined that in 2009, local theaters brought 167,000 people downtown to attend more than 500 live performances, primarily in the evenings and Sunday matinees. The industry had a \$3.8 million operating budget, and brought in an estimated \$1.6 million to the community in local pay and benefits.

Artists as business owners

As of January 2010, State Senate District 22, which includes Olympia, was home to 410 arts-related businesses that employed 1,374 people, according to a report published by the national organization, *Americans for the Arts*. According to the report, "'Arts-centric' businesses play an important role in building and sustaining economic vibrancy. They employ a creative workforce, spend money locally, generate government revenue, and are a cornerstone of tourism and economic development."

Small businesses

According to the Thurston Economic Development Council, an estimated 14,000 small businesses are registered in Thurston County, and 92% of them employ 10 or fewer people. Small businesses include service providers, small manufacturers, farmers, artists, and many of the retail businesses that set our community apart from others.



Olykraut is a small artisan company, turning local produce into value-added product since 2008.

In order for these businesses to provide a living wage [for their owners and employees], they need a strong customer base. Since 2007, the Olympia-based volunteer organization, *Sustainable South Sound* has hosted a “Buy Local” program, which encourages community members to shop at local farms and businesses. The program has an education and outreach program that shows people where their dollars go, based on where they shop, and a savings book with incentives to shop at more than 140 participating farms, businesses and organizations. They also help businesses find local sources for the goods and services they need for their own operations. Business training and support is available through our local colleges and university, the Thurston Economic Development Council, and Olympia-based *Enterprise for Equity*, which helps people with limited incomes start and sustain small businesses.

Goals and Policies

GE6 Historic resources are used to promote economic stability.

PE6.1 Encourage new development to harmonize with existing historic buildings and areas.

PE6.2 Protect and enhance the City’s ability to attract tourists and visitors through preservation of historic resources.

PE6.3 Renovation, reuse and repair of existing buildings is often preferable to new construction and should be done in a manner that protects and enhances the resource when historic properties are involved.

PE6.4 Support the City’s help of low- and moderate-income individuals rehabilitate their historic properties.

GE7 Tourism is a community revenue source.

PE7.1 Provide or support, services and facilities to help visitors enjoy our community's special events and unique character, and work to fully capture the potential economic benefits of their visits.

PE7.2 Continue to support efforts to restore, maintain and improve Olympia's local museums and other attractions.

PE7.3 Support continued tree plantings as a way to continually improve on Olympia's natural beauty and attractiveness to tourists – and to help create a network of scenic roadways and streets.






PE7.4 Implement strategies to enhance heritage tourism opportunities.

GE8 Small businesses contribute to Olympia and the Urban Growth Area's economic diversity.

PE8.1 Promote the concept that buying from local businesses is a way to strengthen the local economy.

PE8.2 Provide support for start-up businesses. Develop local awareness of the need for business incubator facilities, and allow for more home-based businesses.

For More Information

- [Knight Foundation Soul of the Community Project](#)  studies that sense of "place" that attached people to their communities
- [The Profile](#)  is the Thurston County Regional Planning Council's flagship document that provides demographic, statistical and mapping information
- [Thurston Economic Vitality Index](#)  provides both a trend analysis and snapshot of Thurston County's economy based upon a series of key indicators
- [Poverty in America Living Wage Calculator](#) 
- [Sustainable Thurston's Creating Spaces Preserving Places: A Sustainable Development Plan for the Thurston Region](#) 

¹Source: Washington Department of Personnel, 2013

¹Thurston County Employment Forecast Allocations, 2013: Thurston Regional Planning Council

Public Services



Olympia Fire Department ladder truck during a training exercise

What Olympia Values:

Residents value the protection our police, fire, and emergency medical services provide. They also support codes that enforce efforts to maintain neighborhood quality, adequate and affordable housing for all residents, community gathering places, and recreational centers.

Our Vision for the Future:

Responsive services and affordable housing for all.

Introduction

A stable community requires only that minimum needs are met for food, shelter, and safety. But for a community to thrive, it must also focus its public services on healthy and educated children, social service needs, responsive public safety systems, and strong neighborhoods. Public Services in the Urban Growth Area are provided by Thurston County and special purpose districts, such as school districts and fire districts. As property is annexed into the City of Olympia, provisions should be in place

to provide a smooth and seamless transition of those services to the City (when the City becomes the service provider).



Olympia youth eat together at a community food event.

Schools Shape Minds and Neighborhoods

Schools are centers of learning for our children, and their health and vitality can affect the health and vitality of the surrounding neighborhood. While the County or City don't manage schools, we can help ensure the safety of children and work on facility planning with the school districts. In fact, this Joint Plan must identify potential sites for future schools, as they are "lands needed for public purposes."

Olympia's Urban Growth Area is served by Olympia School District No. 111, and a small portion is served by North Thurston School District No. 3. We are also fortunate to have opportunities for continuing education at South Puget Sound Community College, St. Martin's University, and The Evergreen State College.

Goals and Policies

GS1 Schools are well located.

PS1.1 Include the needs of schools, such as pedestrian safety and a quiet environment, when making land-use decisions for nearby areas.

PS1.2 Build schools in central locations within areas they serve and on sites that will allow children to walk safely to school.

PS1.3 Locate schools on (or near) a neighborhood collector street to minimize the impact of school bus and other traffic on the surrounding neighborhoods.

PS1.4 Link new residential developments to school capacity.

PS1.5 Coordinate with school officials when planning and prioritizing sites for future schools and historic preservation efforts.

GS2 Neighborhoods are strong due to partnerships between residents and schools.

PS2.1 Encourage school districts to retain their existing sites, as the schools are critical to maintaining a strong and healthy neighborhood.

PS2.2 Promote sharing school facilities for neighborhood parks, recreation, and open space.

PS2.3 Support safe walking and bicycling routes for students.

Affordable Housing for All

Adequate and affordable housing is critical to a healthy community. It must be located near jobs and services or on bus routes. It also must be safe and well-maintained.

The County and City each address housing needs for our most vulnerable community members through the Regional Consolidated Plan. The Regional Consolidated Plan identifies priority housing, shelter, social service, economic development and public facility needs. The County and City work with other jurisdictions, private industry and nonprofit organizations to find solutions to low-income housing needs.

The Thurston County Homeless Crisis Response, which is updated every five years, provides a framework for addressing unhoused people. Among other topics, the Homeless Crisis Response prioritizes those with the highest need and address racial disparity in housing and other services.

Goals and Policies

GS3 Affordable housing is available for all income levels throughout the community.

PS3.1 Promote a variety of residential densities and housing types so that housing can be available in a broad range of costs.

PS3.2 Encourage preservation of existing houses.

PS3.3 Take steps to ensure housing will be available to all income levels based on projected community needs.

GS4 Deteriorating residential areas within the Urban Growth Area are revitalized.

PS4.1 Support efforts to preserve the historic features or character of historic properties in housing rehabilitation programs.

PS4.2 Provide assistance and incentives to help low-income residents rehabilitate properties they cannot afford to maintain.

GS5 Special needs populations, such as people with developmental disabilities, the homeless, the frail elderly, and others who have difficulty securing housing, have adequate, safe, and affordable housing.

PS5.1 Disperse housing for low-income, moderate-income, and special-needs residents throughout Olympia and its Urban Growth Area, and discourage concentration of such housing in any one geographic area.

PS5.2 Support the *Fair Share Housing* allocation process and work with other jurisdictions to monitor progress toward achieving agreed upon goals.

PS5.3 Evaluate the possibility of providing density bonuses, where appropriate, to builders who provide low-income housing in market-rate developments, and of tying the bonus to affordability.

PS5.4 Encourage new housing on transportation arterials and in areas near public transportation hubs.

PS5.5 Encourage self-help housing efforts in which people earn home equity in exchange for renovation or construction work, such as "sweat equity" volunteer programs.

PS5.6 Retain existing subsidized housing.

Social Services Fulfill a Vital Need

There are many reasons why community members may sometimes need extra help. The loss of a job or a serious illness can leave many of our residents without the means to meet their basic needs. Currently, the social safety net in our community is made up of a network of religious and charitable organizations that partner with local government to provide services to vulnerable community members.

GS6 Our community is safe and welcoming and social services are accessible to all who need them.

PS6.1 Support non-profit and faith-based charitable organizations that provide funding and/or oversight for social service funding.

PS6.2 Work with other local governments to provide financial support and oversight of social service funding.

PS6.3 Support programs and projects that assist low-income people and those at risk of homelessness with public funding.

PS6.4 Identify barriers to social service, shelter and housing resources for low-income people and those at risk of becoming homeless.

GS7 There is enough emergency housing, transitional housing, permanent housing with supportive services, and independent affordable housing.

PS7.1 Encourage a strong network of emergency shelter resources for homeless and at-risk families with children, veterans, childless adults,

unaccompanied youth, and victims of sexual and domestic violence.

PS7.2 Take a regional approach with other jurisdictions so that support for a broad range of social services and resources, including shelter and housing, can be maximized.

PS7.3 Encourage businesses, charitable non-profit organizations, and faith-based community organizations to provide shelter and housing services.

PS7.4 Support coordinated service delivery models to maximize the best use of public, charitable, and privately-funded shelter and housing resources.

PS7.5 Support best practices that reflect current standards of care, and incorporate emerging models that optimize the use of public and charitable resources.

PS7.6 Encourage shelter and housing providers and programs to locate in the greater Olympia area, or near transportation arterial hubs, so residents can easily access them.

PS7.7 Work toward making the community more aware of homelessness in the County and how it can be prevented as a way to encourage charitable support and involve community members.

PS7.8 Use data to continually assess the community's need for shelter and housing and who it is serving. Use this data to continually improve these services.

PS7.9 Revise policies that limit or prevent the community from providing shelter and housing resources.

PS7.10 Coordinate land use, housing, transportation, and capital facility planning to support all aspects of shelter and housing resources, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing with supportive services, and low-income housing.

PS7.11 Integrate group homes into all residential areas of the community. Set zoning standards to ensure group home sizes (number of residents

and staff) are compatible with allowed densities and that transportation and other services are available.

GS8 The existing low-income housing stock is preserved.

PS8.1 Support efforts to continue to fund the repair and rehabilitation of single-family and multi-family housing using federal, state, and local funding sources.

PS8.2 Support applications by the Housing Authority of Thurston County and other non-profit housing developers to construct or purchase existing units for low-rent public housing.

PS8.3 Support applications from eligible non-profits to federal and state funding sources to build new, or rehabilitate existing housing to meet low-income housing needs.

PS8.4 Encourage and provide technical assistance to private developers and non-profits applying for below-market-rate state or federal loans to construct or rehabilitate low-income, multifamily rental housing.

PS8.5 When Community Development Block Grant or Housing and Urban Development-funded buildings are at risk of being converted to market-rate status, support City efforts to inform the tenants of any purchase and relocation options available. When possible, support City efforts to help the Housing Authority of Thurston County and non-profit organizations buy such housing.

PS8.6 Enforce policies* that provide financial and relocation help to people who are displaced from their homes as a result of construction and development projects using federal funds.

**(Per section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, requiring the replacement of low- and moderate-*

income housing units that are demolished or converted to another use, in connection with a Community Development Block Grant project.)

GS9 New low-income housing is created to meet demand.

PS9.1 Continue to support projects funded by low-income tax credits and revenue bonds.

PS9.2 Investigate and support appropriate multi-jurisdictional support for the Housing Authority of Thurston County bond sales.

PS9.3 Promote partnerships between public and private non-profit organizations to increase housing and home ownership opportunities for people with special needs, and for low- and moderate-income households.

PS9.4 Evaluate the possibility of supporting a program that would allow low-income tenants of manufactured home parks to jointly purchase and renovate permanent sites for their manufactured homes. Consider funding programs to subsidize the interest rates, loan origination fees, and/or other costs of acquiring the land.

PS9.5 Support City efforts to help low-income and special needs residents find ways to purchase housing, such as shared or limited-equity housing, lease-purchase options, co-housing, land trusts, and cooperatives.

PS9.6 Work with jurisdictional partners through the county-wide Home Consortium, to fund affordable housing projects that serve low- and very low-income residents.

PS9.7 Support non-profit and faith-based organizations in their efforts to provide emergency homeless shelters.

Code Enforcement Promotes Neighborhood Livability

Code Enforcement is a program that allows community members and others to report violations of codes relating to health, safety, and welfare on private property. The program will investigate, for example, complaints about noise, trash, graffiti, signs, abandoned vehicles, overgrown noxious weeds, dangerous buildings, and encampments. As our communities grow, age, and become more dense, the program is becoming increasingly important to maintaining public safety and our high quality of life. The County and City expect that Code Enforcement will be collaborating even further in the future with the Thurston County Sheriff's Office, other Thurston County Departments, Olympia's Police, Fire, Public Works, Building, and Legal Departments as well as with neighborhood associations, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and regional government agencies, such as Thurston County Animal Control.

Goals and Policies

GS10 The County rarely resorts to issuing citations as a way to bring code offenders into compliance.

PS10.1 Direct efforts toward compliance first and penalties only when necessary.

GS11 Neighborhoods are involved in effective and efficient code enforcement.

PS11.1 Educate neighborhoods about code enforcement and other City services, and how they can best interact with them.

PS11.2 Communicate regularly with neighborhoods.

GS12 Complaints and resolutions are tracked and reported consistently.

PS12.1 Provide community members who submit complaints with timely information on current code enforcement activities.

PS12.2 Communicate with those who submit complaints and alleged violators in a predictable and timely manner.

Fire Services Prevent Harm to People and Property



An Olympia Fire Department vehicle.

Thurston County's Fire Districts and the Olympia Fire Department are organizations of highly trained and prepared professionals who use the

best technology available to protect the community and themselves.

Both fire departments are also a part of the Thurston County Medic One System, whose paramedics and fire fighters can respond to injured people within six minutes of an alarm.



A City of Olympia fire fighter salutes in a formal uniform.

Goals and Policies

GS13 The community has a high level of fire protection, emergency medical services and disaster management services, equal to or exceeding the industry standard.

PS13.1 Continue to manage fire protection functions, paramedic services, and emergency services by planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the resources available.

PS13.2 Continue to provide a highly skilled and adequately staffed fire

fighting force to respond to fire, medical, and hazardous material emergencies, and to protect life and property.

PS13.3 Continue to provide fire prevention and inspection services to minimize damage from fires.

PS13.4 Continue to provide paramedic and basic life support care as part of the Thurston County Medic One System.

PS13.5 Support upgrading the fire flow capacity of Olympia's water system where needed to meet current safety standards.

PS13.6 Model best practices in the local fire service community in areas like fire fighter safety, command practices, training and equipment maintenance.

PS13.7 Coordinate preparation, mitigation, response and recovery to disasters through the Emergency Management program that includes planning for major catastrophic events.

PS13.8 Support the City of Olympia's efforts to continue to serve as the coordinating agency for post-disaster recovery through the coordination of disaster cost recovery, and the facilitation of our community's short- and long-term recovery goals and objectives.

PS13.9 Educate community members on how to sustain their households without outside assistance for a minimum of 72 hours during an emergency event, and that some events, such as a severe earthquake, may require them to sustain themselves for five to ten days or more.

PS13.10 Address the severe and extended impacts of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake in the County's emergency response plans and preparations.

PS13.11 Continue to gather best available information on the impact a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake would have on the community, including the potential magnitude, impacts of vertical movements, and tsunamis.

Police Services Promote Public Safety

Public safety is key to our high quality of life. Our most beautiful neighborhoods, streets, and parks would not be desirable if there was always the threat of a crime. We cannot consider our streets to be walkable if people do not feel safe.

There are many ways to deliver police services. Every police organization has an individual "personality." It is shaped by the community's values and expectations, the personal characteristics of its leaders, geography, demographics, and cultural heritage.

Thurston County is ultimately responsible for providing the leadership needed to ensure a high quality of policing services. Community members tend to be very involved in local government, and leadership comes from them as well.

Goals and Policies

GS14 Police services are delivered in a manner consistent with the values of the community members of Thurston County and Olympia.

PS14.1 Deliver police services in a professional, timely, objective, and impartial manner.

PS14.2 Understand and respect the diversity of our community. Strive to reflect that diversity in the composition of the Sheriff's Department.

PS14.3 Interact respectfully with everyone in the community to earn their respect, using force only when needed. All levels of the agency must display the humility, cordiality, and courtesy needed to help community members see themselves as allies of their police force.

PS14.4 Encourage a spirit of cooperation that balances the collective interests of all community members with the personal rights of individuals.

PS14.5 Maintain a departmental environment that is open, accessible, responsive, and seeks feedback in a way that is consistent with the small-town feeling of the community.

PS14.6 Provide strong and effective responses to serious criminal behavior, and use discretion and alternative sanctions for minor offenses.

GS15 Members of the community are empowered as partners in solving community problems.

PS15.1 Form interdisciplinary partnerships with individuals and groups in the community to address policing issues.

PS15.2 Involve community members as we look for ways to reduce repeat crimes, and use education to prevent crime.

PS15.3 Emphasize the need for law enforcement to have positive, day-to-day interaction with the public that encourages collaboration on problem-solving, rather than responding only to crises. Regular contact between law enforcement and community members helps strengthen working relationships and makes policing more effective.

GS16 Police services are provided in a manner consistent with community values and that are cost-effective.

PS16.1 Provide a high quality of service in the traditional police agency functions.

PS16.2 Develop alternative ways to respond to calls for service when sworn officers/deputies are not required. This will free-up more time for our officers/deputies to develop strategies for preventing crime in our community.

PS16.3 Whenever possible, make full use of non-sworn employees, volunteers, and referrals to other agencies so the County can respond to service requests cost-effectively.

PS16.4 Focus on the quality of service provided to community members with non-emergency calls, rather than the speed of response.

PS16.5 Measure the level of service not by inputs (such as officers/deputies per capita), but by outcomes such as problems eliminated and community satisfaction with the quality of officer/deputy interaction.

PS16.6 Regularly track how workloads are generated and find ways to reduce them, or allocate work more efficiently, both in and outside the Sheriff's Department. External entities which generate law enforcement workload should share responsibility for providing ways to manage it.

PS16.7 Use technology to improve efficiency at completing necessary but time-consuming activities, such as report filing, data management, communication, and administrative tasks.

PS16.8 Use data management technology to improve access to information, both for law enforcement personnel and community members.

PS16.9 Provide specialized police units and services important to maintaining quality of life.

GS17 The community participates in identifying policing priorities and solving policing problems.

PS17.1 Enlist the support of other public agencies and community service groups to help solve policing problems, and to evaluate the effectiveness of law enforcement services.

PS17.2 Ensure regular communication and cooperation between the Sheriff's Department and other County and City departments, at both the managerial and line levels.

PS17.3 Support the City's efforts to recruit community volunteers and use them effectively.

PS17.4 Communicate with Olympia's diverse population to seek input on how best to meet their needs.

GS18 The effectiveness of Thurston County's law enforcement services are maximized by collaborating with other service providers.

PS18.1 Work with social service providers to explore potential mutual strategies to address social problems.

PS18.2 Build good working relationships with other agencies and social service providers, identifying divisions of responsibility and ways to cooperate effectively.

PS18.3 Avoid using jails and the criminal justice system to address non-criminal social problems, whenever possible. Work with the courts to find alternatives to imprisonment, such as dispute resolution, substance abuse treatment, and other strategies that address underlying problems for non-criminal issues.

PS18.4 Take steps to improve cooperation and communication among law enforcement, prosecutors, defenders, judges, and corrections agencies. Work with them on process improvements that will improve the effectiveness of our criminal justice system.

PS18.5 Combine resources with other law enforcement agencies when a joint approach to law enforcement and crime prevention makes sense, such as central dispatch, drug enforcement, and SWAT teams.

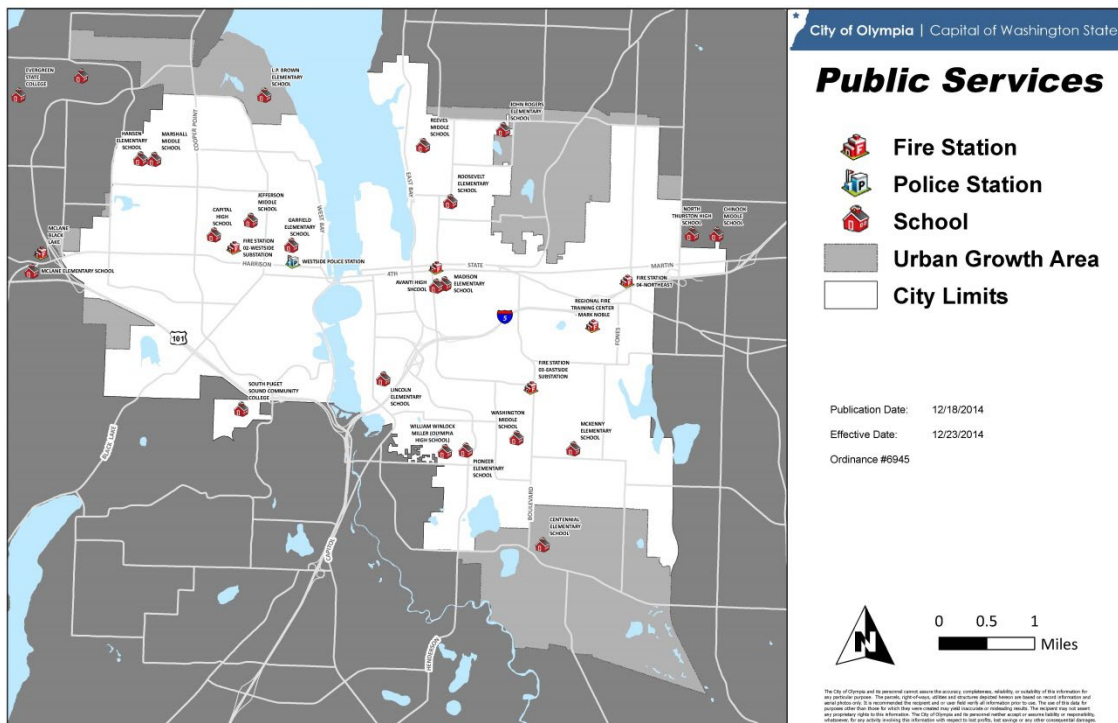
PS18.6 Look for creative ways to build relationships with private security firms, Animal Control, and other organizations, so they can help extend the capability of our Sheriff's Department.

PS18.7 Build relationships with other police agencies to gain from their experiences and expertise.

GS19 The conduct of deputies is held accountable to defined community expectations.

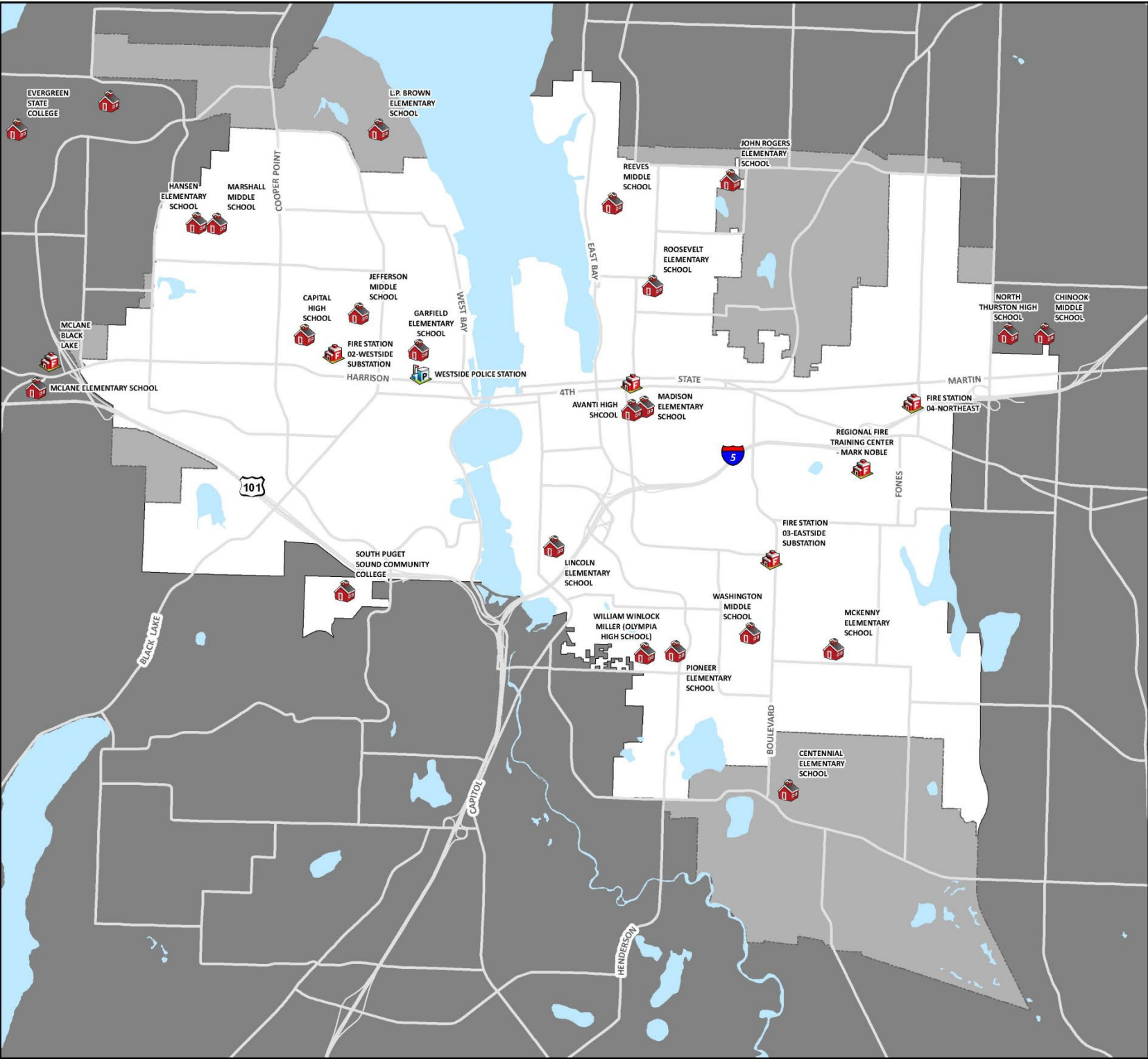
PS19.1 Ensure that the accountability system includes accessibility, integrity, legitimacy, learning, and reasonable cost.

PS19.2 Ensure that the accountability system meets the interests of the Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, Sheriff's Department management, affected labor unions and the community in collaboratively providing accountability and support systems (like training, counseling, and feedback) that meet the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



For More Information


- [Thurston Regional Transportation Plan](#)
- [Growth Management Act](#)
- [Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for Thurston Region](#)
- [Olympia School District Master Plan](#)





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City of Olympia | Capital of Washington State


Public Services

 Fire Station

 Police Station

 School


 Urban Growth Area

 City Limits

Publication Date: 12/18/2014

Effective Date: 12/23/2014

Ordinance #6945



00.51

Miles

The City of Olympia and its personnel cannot assure the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of this information for any particular purpose. The parcels, right-of-ways, utilities and structures depicted hereon are based on record information and aerial photos only. It is recommended the recipient and or user field verify all information prior to use. The use of this data for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The recipient may not assert any proprietary rights to this information. The City of Olympia and its personnel neither accept or assume liability or responsibility, whatsoever, for any activity involving this information with respect to lost profits, lost savings or any other consequential damages.

Public Services

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Capital Facilities Plan

Both Thurston County and the City of Olympia adopt Capital Facilities Plans. These plans schedule the timing, location, projected cost, and revenue sources for the capital improvements identified for implementation in other Comprehensive Plan chapters. These include parks, transportation, utilities and general capital projects. The 6-year financing plan for capital projects is amended annually. Thurston County adopts a Capital Facilities Plan for capital improvements in the County, including for the Olympia Urban Growth Area.