

# OLYMPIA EAST DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Executive Summary

Prepared for the City of Olympia







Figure 1. Examples of development types envisioned for East Downtown.

## Executive Summary

Olympia's East Downtown is poised to begin a dramatic transformation. With the Port of Olympia and its partners undertaking an \$80 million project over the next ten years and the Cherry Street Plaza office building adding 160,000 square feet and a 500-car parking garage, the district is bracketed by energizing new development. At the same time, market analysis indicates that new types of commercial and residential development are becoming feasible within the district itself. Add to this the fact that East Downtown is directly connected to the downtown core to the west and government office area to the southeast, it is clear that the district merits the City's attention.

While it will take several years for this transformation to evolve, now is the time to direct its course. Some timely action on the part of the City, local business and property owners within the next few years can set the direction for East Downtown to become a vibrant mixed-use district and assume a keystone role in central Olympia's future.

The vision for East Downtown put forward by participants in this plan—including Stakeholder Committee members, local property owners, business owners, and citizens attending three workshops held in the fall of 2004—calls for East Downtown to feature a mix of commercial activities and housing types within a walkable neighborhood setting. Entertainment and arts activities will add evening activity, and historic buildings will contribute to the district's character. Together with the Farmers Market, the marina, and nearby features, East Downtown's cultural activities can be a regional attraction and a strong part of the City's identity. Connections to the port, downtown core, government office district, and the transit center will make it a central Olympia crossroads.

East Downtown Development Plan

**Guidelines for New Development**

- Work with the Port on State Ave. to allow development flexibility but ensure attractive streetscape
- Retain "A" street designation for pedestrian oriented uses and facades on 4th Ave.
- Retain "B" street designation on Legion and on Cherry to encourage a wide variety of uses but provide safe, attractive pedestrian routes. Relocate "B" street designation from Chestnut.

**LEGEND**

- Opportunity to work with Port
- Preferred area for park / plaza
- Opportunity to upgrade alley
- Upgraded Cherry St.
- Walking street with auto access
- Existing trails
- Connection between Cherry St. and East Bay
- Gateway
- Improved pedestrian crossing
- Special crosswalk marking
- Upgraded State Ave. streetscape
- Continued existing planting on Legion Way
- New truck route

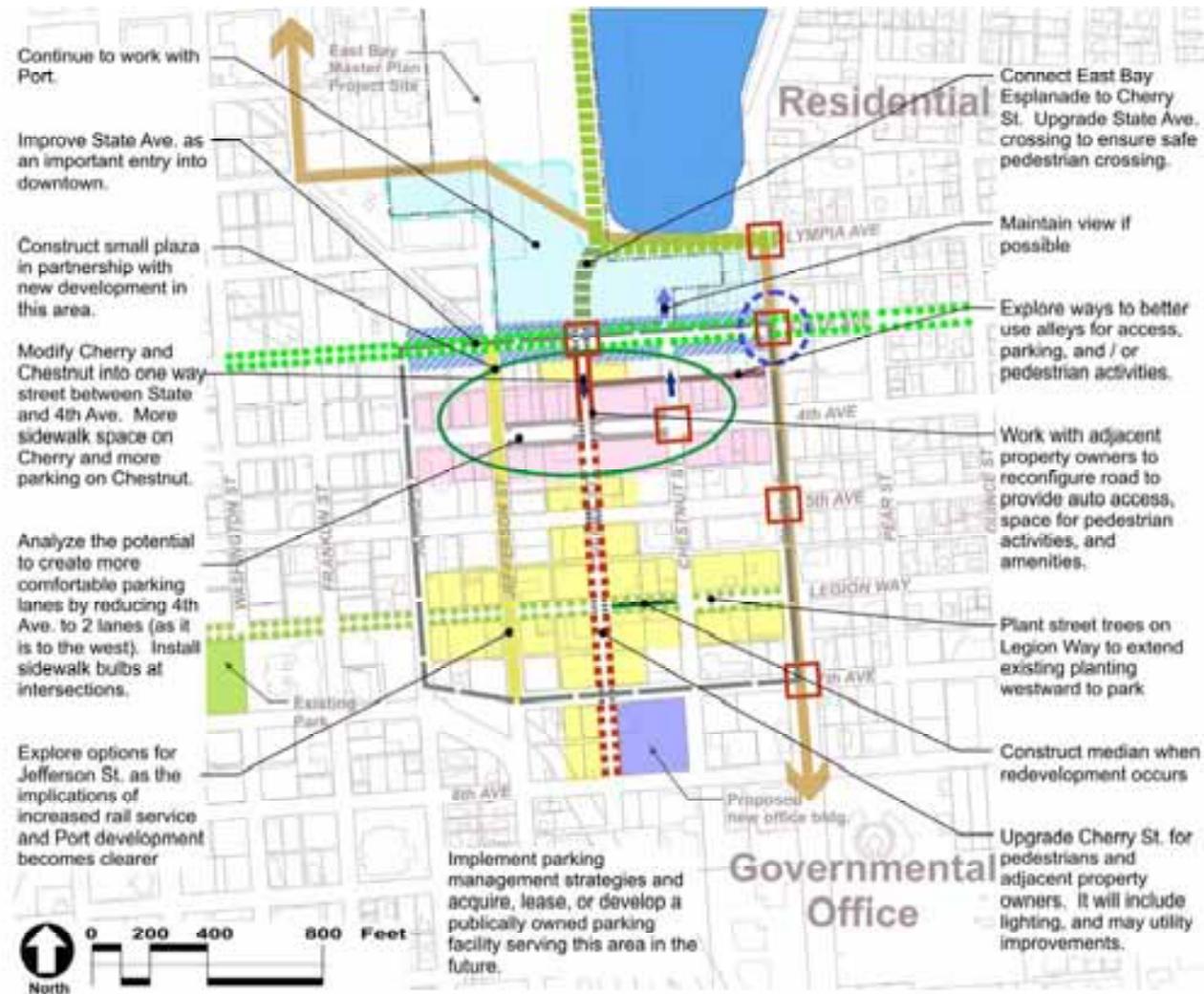


Figure 2. East Downtown planning concept.

## East Downtown Development Plan

To achieve this vision, the plan calls for an integrated strategy of short- and long-term actions. The most significant of these include:

- Upgrading the district's key streets to provide a better pedestrian and vehicle circulation system, development setting and connection to and from the surrounding areas.
- Minor adjustments to current design standards to reinforce the pedestrian character of selected streets. Since the vision calls for a variety of activities, the current mixed-use zoning designation is appropriate.



- Working toward the development of a parking facility that will serve both the downtown core and East Downtown.
- Building partnerships with local business and property owners and providing development assistance. The plan recommends forming an association of stakeholders in the community to take cooperative action and work collectively with the City. During the visioning process, City staff identified several actions that could assist developers on projects consistent with the community's vision. Special emphasis is placed on the City working cooperatively with the Port of Olympia on issues such as the reconstruction of State Avenue and connections between East Downtown and the East Bay project. East Bay and East Downtown development efforts can build on one another to be substantially more effective than if done in isolation.

Figure 3. Extending Legion Way's trees will enhance east/west connections to the downtown core and upgrade the setting for the new development.

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Because redevelopment will occur incrementally, depending on market conditions and cooperative civic action, the plan identifies a phasing strategy consisting of relatively inexpensive initial actions and more ambitious long-term projects. But just waiting for development to occur will not likely achieve the desired results. Public workshop participants, as well as Stakeholder Committee members and business and property owners, stressed the need for demonstrated City commitment. Initial City actions may be modest, as long as interest is sustained over the long term. The rewards for strategically directed public effort, however, will be great, for Olympia's East Downtown has the potential to play a vital role in the City's life, livelihood, and regional identity.



*Figure 4. Cherry Street improvement will connect the Port's East Bay project to the new Cherry Street Plaza building and foster redevelopment near 4th Avenue.*

## PROJECT PRIORITIES – EAST DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN STREET IMPROVEMENT

PROJECT PRIORITIES		PRIORITY NOTES	COST (in 2005 \$s)	
1.	Rebuild south ½ of Cherry:	Wider sidewalks – 12 ft New street surface – 16 ft one-way lane Raised mid block crossing Bulb outs on 4 <sup>th</sup> Stamped concrete at crossing Utility undergrounding	Could make a major impact in the area; allow/encourage restaurant/theater exterior activity; adjacent business/property owners showed an interest in participation; would be a priority with redevelopment/improvements on block or in Port area.	\$405,754
2.	Rebuild north ½ of Cherry:	Wider sidewalk New street surface Bulb Outs on State Stamped concrete at crossings Utility undergrounding	Would complete the Cherry Street rebuild (above); would be a priority with redevelopment/improvements on block or in Port area.	\$347,378
3.	Restripe 4 <sup>th</sup> :	Wider 9' parking lanes Add bike lanes Jefferson to Chestnut Remove vehicle travel lane Jefferson to Chestnut	Not a very flashy improvement but would improve safety of those exiting parked cars on north side of street; would add striped bike lane.	\$80,747
4.	Legion Way Street Improvements - Cherry St. to Plum - Large Canopy Street and Trees and Bulb Outs -	Remove travel lane east bound; preserving right turn and through lane at Plum. Use space for wider sidewalks and bulb outs at corners and mid-block (remove 1-2 parking stalls for each of 4 mid-block bulb outs)  See Priority 5 for Cherry to Washington improvements.	Fewer larger canopy street trees would be used to replicate older street trees on Legion east of Plum. These larger trees would extend the existing tree canopy and integrate the east and west sections of Legion. Improve the street to encourage pedestrians and redevelopment projects along Legion. Would be a priority with development improvements along the corridor.	\$661,974
5.	Legion Way Street Improvements – Cherry St. to Washington St.- Standard Street Trees in Grates and Bulb Outs at Corners	Add standard street trees in grates, maintain sidewalk width, and bulb outs at corners where on-street parking exists.  This option would be added to Priority 4a. or 4b.	Continue street trees and bulb outs on Legion Way. Would be a priority with development improvements along the corridor.	\$715,089
6.	4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Bulb Outs and Sidewalks”	West to east (rebuild sidewalk Jefferson to Cherry (and add bulb outs at corners); assumes no undergrounding of utilities and not	Improve street to encourage pedestrians, clean up appearance of street, and decrease crossing distance for pedestrians.	\$550,521

PROJECT PRIORITIES		PRIORITY NOTES	COST (in 2005 \$s)
		resurfacing 4 <sup>th</sup> – only patching.	
7.	State Street – Plum to Chestnut – Bulb Outs and Wider Planters	Both north and south side of State Street (area not adjacent to the Port property.) Could be coordinated with State Street improvements completed as part of Port project.	\$346,505
8.	Chestnut Street like Cherry Street	Wider sidewalks – 12 ft New street surface – 16 ft one-way lane Utility undergrounding Bulb outs on State Street and 4 <sup>th</sup>	\$705,478
9.	State Street - Chestnut to Cherry - Northside improvements	Complete with Port East Bay development.	\$239,035
10.	Plum and State intersection	Textured concrete in the crosswalks Downtown gateway or entrance signage	No cost available
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>\$4,703,360</b>

East downtown plan\2006\jan 31 priority improvements matrix