



JOINT-ELECTED OFFICIALS WORKSHOP – Summary Report  
Port of Olympia - Olympics Room  
January 30, 2019

## INTRODUCTION

As a companion to the December 11, 2018 Open House and Community Meeting, a joint meeting of the City of Olympia Council, LOTT Clean Water Alliance Board of Directors and the Port of Olympia Commission was held on January 30, 2019. The January 30, 2019 elected officials workshop was an opportunity for discussion among elected officials and leadership staff. Public comment was limited to written form. One written comment was received.

## QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

An abbreviated summary of the comments and questions raised by elected officials during the workshop organized by subject matter follows.

### *General*

I know we needed a cap for the planning period. After 2100, it does not mean that sea level rise will stop. After 2100 for example, we might need to move the treatment plant. As we progress through the planning period, we should consider moving the time period out beyond 2100.

What elevation relative to the sea level rise projections are buildings constructed downtown required to be built to?

If downtown is undergoing redevelopment over time, it does seem that we need to build to a higher elevation. It is hard to envision planning for five feet of sea level rise immediately, however. Planning for 2 feet would be a substantial and reasonable place to start, with protection projects designed to be added to over time, if needed. If we were to start at 5 feet, it would create a barrier.

This is a conceptual plan. As each agency is considering the Plan, do not let the perfect get in the way of the good. We have to pass the Plan first, so that the work can begin.

Is the area around Moxlie Creek the edge of the mitigation area?

In the case of Olympia, how is this Plan going to align with the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Strategy and all the things we are looking at doing downtown such as incentivizing growth? We have a regional Climate Action Plan that should also be brought into this process. Would a special district, as referenced in the Plan as a funding mechanism, be a taxing district? This Plan is adaptable. Perhaps the City's Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Strategy are not as adaptable as this Plan?

Do we know if existing underground utilities were built to withstand groundwater? Or is it infiltrated?

The City of Olympia should ask if there are sea level rise items that need to go in the Comprehensive Plan docket on an annual basis.

This is a good report. I like the approach that was taken in it. Part of what I like is that it places an emphasis on monitoring, and an evolving response. This Plan talks about other climate change-related uncertainties such as increased rainfall. While we are doing our best to develop a response, it feels overwhelming given the uncertainty. This uncertainty makes coordination difficult, but also imperative. We need to get our collective act together based on the information we have, but in context with ongoing adaptation, monitoring, and perhaps changes in ongoing relationships. We will need to bring others into the conversations as we need help to adapt in the future. I was pleased to see that we are talking about having an annual check-in on our progress. We may find that in a not too long time period, we will need to take another significant step to reassess today's findings.

What is the timeline for moving to Plan adoption?

That our three entities, elected officials and staff are collaborating is great. Bringing in other agencies will be important. We are at the point that here is the draft plan and as community leaders we need to decide what happens next. If the projections are in the ballpark, which I think they are, then reducing our climate disrupting behaviors and considering how to reduce our carbon emissions as organizations, should also be done - otherwise it seems disingenuous. We are considering short-term, 24 inch solutions. If each new forecast shows the situation getting worse quicker, are we punting the responsibility for protection onto future generations if we only spend a portion of the costs now? You have the larger portion of the costs - we did some. Whose responsibility is it to imagine the long-term resilient shoreline? What does it mean to armor ourselves for just a portion of sea level rise? I hope we will consider these concerns as we approve the Plan in our jurisdictions.

I appreciate this is an adaptable Plan and monitoring will occur to address changing science and the possibility of more aggressive levels of sea level rise. I am concerned about the Plan's cost estimates and planning for 24 inches versus 68 inches, but do appreciate that we can build upon our strategies as needed. We need to think about our goals for our downtown. Our goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are tied to reducing vehicle miles traveled, which is directly impacted by land use decisions. We want 5,000 people living downtown to help with meeting our emission reduction goals. We have a sense of urgency now regarding adaptation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We will need to take changes in land use seriously.

### ***Agency and Stakeholder Involvement***

I understand that we do not think of the Plan as the total solution. We have some properties on the water ward side of the proposed protection measures. We will need public/private partnerships to address properties located closer to the water as we get further into this.

Speaking of public/private partnerships, have you talked to Puget Sound Energy, cable companies and others with infrastructure downtown? I would like to see more conversations happening since such infrastructure will be impacted, at least during emergencies.

If I am correct, I did not see a lot of state department involvement in the project.

I suggest reaching out to the possible private sector partners sooner rather than later.

It would be good if the coastal engineer group that is discussed in the Plan would put together a regional/joint legislative agenda. I like the idea of governance. Can we start meeting at the first tier – the organization committee – so we can begin discussing what would be involved in an interlocal agreement? We need to have conversations with the Department of Natural Resources and the Corp of Engineers to discuss environmental considerations.

### ***Potential Costs and Funding***

Requesting funding by the legislature for sea level rise projects and putting our plan together for such requests is the type of work that the governing committee could work on together.

Can we afford to start at five feet? The Plan provides options. Do we start with low barrier, elevated walkway or go as far as elevating streets? We do not know how much it will cost to raise the entire Marine Terminal at this time.

What is the relationship between an ordinance that imposes requirements on developers and a district-wide protection? One of the Plan's recommendations is to consider finish flood elevation requirements based on a building's projected life span. Do we want developers to invest in buildings, or contribute to a district fund that will protect all of downtown?

For those things that appear to be "knowable" – the things we know we need to do in the next five years which are estimated to cost \$1.25 million – do the appropriate agencies have the projects in their capital budgets? Does the Department of Enterprise Services know? Are there things that are unfunded?

The Plan mentions monitoring and establishing a tide station in Budd Inlet. What does that cost and who does it? Is it the Army Corps, or something that we can collectively take on?

### ***Science and Sea Level Rise Projections***

Have unknowns, such as greater levels of polar ice melting, been taken into account in the Plan's sea level rise projections?

Does Olympia's location on Budd Inlet amplify the sea level rise projections?

### ***Capitol Lake***

The Department of Enterprise Services appears to be a key to collaboration. How does this sea level rise work impact the Capitol Lake EIS?

### ***Budd Inlet Treatment Plant and Combined System***

Downtown has a combined storm/sewer system. Given the potential for saltwater infiltration into the treatment plant I think separating the combined system will need to be looked at in the future. It is the biggest threat to LOTT. The treatment plant itself can be protected, but saltwater infiltration into the plant could cause major issues. I hope that we are thinking about treating stormwater onsite so that separation of the systems could happen in the future.