

Thurston County 10-Year Destination Master Plan Overview City of Tenino



July 9, 2024

Today's Update

Destination Master Plan

- Problems we're aiming to solve
- Process
- Plans moving forward
- Q&A



What are the Problems the DMP Aims to Solve

- When evaluated via the dNext Assessment model in both 2016 and 2021 Thurston County was determined be **weak as a destination** and was **weak in terms of community alignment**.
- Experience Olympia & Beyond was operating organizationally in what the industry would consider a **dated organizational model** and a shift from marketing-only to marketing and destination management was to be explored.
- Thurston County was still **struggling to rebound from lost hospitality jobs** (COVID).
- **The Destination Master Plan provided a framework** to coordinate community alignment, foster a strategic path forward towards job growth by bolstering destination strength through a management and marketing approach.

Destination Master Plan

What is it?

A comprehensive framework outlining the vision, goals, and strategies for the sustainable development of Thurston County's tourism sector **balancing visitor needs with Thurston County resident priorities** based on collective impact.

The completed DMP should serve as a well that stakeholders can draw from to support their ongoing work and priorities.

CSL



Ten Year Destination
Master Plan for
Thurston County, WA

A Community-Driven Sustainable Tourism Plan

June 2024

Tourism's Cycle of Impact

1. Visit

If you build a place where people want to visit, then you have built a place where people want to live.

2. Live

If you build a place where people want to live, then you have built a place where people want to work.

4. Invest

If you build a place where business & residents will invest, then you have built a place where people will want to live.

3. Work

If you build a place where people want to work, then you have built a place where business & residents will invest.



Multi-Jurisdictional Support

Thurston Economic Development Council

EDC Board of Directors
 Board President: **SPYF** (2020-2021)
 Board Vice President: **SPYF** (2020-2021)
 Board Secretary: **SPYF** (2020-2021)

Executive Director:
 Executive Director: **SPYF** (2020-2021)

Board Members:
 Board Members: **SPYF** (2020-2021)

Advisory Board:
 Advisory Board: **SPYF** (2020-2021)

Supporting Organizations:
 Supporting Organizations: **SPYF** (2020-2021)

March 29, 2023

Dear QUEST grant application review committee members,

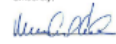
I am writing to express the support of the Thurston Economic Development Council for Experience Olympia & Beyond's grant application to fund a coalition-based, county-wide Destination Master Plan for Thurston County. A Destination Master Plan will provide a new, broad-reaching regional effort to implement programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the hospitality sector—still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—as well as the needs of residents from the surrounding Pacific coast for career pathways.

Collectively, the travel, tourism, hospitality, and event industries are a powerful economic pipeline within Thurston County (supplying over \$445 million of economic impact in 2021) with the ability to support a wide and diverse variety of local people, businesses, and organizations—providing high quality jobs and prosperity. By deploying a county-wide, coalition-based Destination Master Planning process, we will invite the expertise and experience of a broad range of Thurston County sector partners to help not only develop solutions for regaining jobs lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but planning for high-quality jobs growth, putting the industry back on track for year over year economic expansion.

The Thurston EDC sees this effort as a continuation of the Thurston Strong coalition of COVID-response for regional employers—as well as an extension of the Thurston Economic Alliance—Thurston County's regional economic development plan. As such, the entities who have signed on to this hospitality workforce consortium have all worked closely together for many years now, coordinating efforts and funding sources, and meeting and communicating regularly—and as we have become a well-known team. Amalgamated, we have deep and broad relations with both sectors of the region, and will use our resources to bring a share their workforce needs, and so help provide Pacific tailor-made hospitality workforce training and talent pipeline.

Please consider funding this project application as an enabler to restore jobs growth in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Sincerely,



Michael Cade
 Executive Director | 360.455.3055 | mcade@tedcouncil.com

Thurston Economic Development Council
 1029 10th Avenue SW, Suite 1000, Olympia, WA 98501
 360.455.3055 | Fax: 360.455.1800 | www.tedcouncil.com

4252 5th Ave SE / Lacey, WA 98503 / P 360.794.8223 / F 360.792.2212

CITY OF TUMWATER

City Hall
 555 Grand Road SW
 Tumwater, WA 98501-6315
 Phone: 360-564-5855
 Fax: 360-564-1316

March 27, 2023

Dear QUEST grant application review committee members,

I am writing to express my support for Experience Olympia & Beyond's grant application to fund a coalition-based, county-wide Destination Master Plan for Thurston County. A Destination Master Plan would provide a new and broad-reaching regional effort to implement programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the hospitality sector—many still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—and Thurston County residents looking for career pathways. In 2020, Thurston County went from having 3,960 hospitality jobs¹ to 3,240 jobs. At 2021 year-end, jobs rebounded slightly, regaining 138 jobs, but the total number was still down 682 jobs since 2019 (year-end job numbers for 2022 will likely not be available until June 2023). By deploying a county-wide, coalition-based Destination Master Planning process, we will invite the expertise and experience of a broad range of sector partners throughout Thurston County to help not only develop solutions for regaining those lost jobs but also plan for the industry back on track for year-over-year economic expansion.

Tumwater is home to a variety of destination experiences. We offer visitors many local arts, cultural, and recreation assets. From Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls to our historic buildings and museums, and the new Craft District Marketplace featuring local food and beverages. Understanding how we can leverage these assets into tangible strategies to support tourism and hospitality and create benefits for our community members will be vital for continued and equitable economic prosperity.

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Experience Olympia & Beyond is a valued partner in promoting T and tourism, furthering our economic development strategies, and and Cidermaking. We appreciate your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



Debbie Sullivan
 Debbie Sullivan
 Mayor

c/ Tumwater City Council
 John Doan, City Administrator
 Austin Ramirez, Economic Development Program Manager

March 27, 2023

Pacific Northwest Workforce Development Council
 QUEST Grant
 201 5th Ave SW
 2nd Floor
 Olympia, WA 98501

Dear QUEST grant application review committee members,

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For context, in 2020, Thurston County went from having 3,960 hospitality jobs¹ down to 3,240 jobs. At year-end 2021 jobs rebounded slightly regaining 138 more jobs, but still down 682 jobs since 2019 (Year-end job numbers for 2022 will likely not be available until June 2023). By deploying a county-wide, coalition-based Destination Master Planning process, we will invite the expertise and experience of a broad range of Thurston County sector partners to help not only develop solutions for regaining those lost jobs, but planning for high-quality jobs growth, putting the industry back on track for year over year economic expansion.

A county-wide Destination Master Plan is a 10-year strategic road map to optimize how visitors benefit greater Thurston County by balancing increased positive economic impact (high quality jobs and new revenue growth in-destination) and quality of life protections for residents. Collectively, the travel, tourism, hospitality, and event industries are a powerful economic pipeline within Thurston County (supplying over \$445 million of economic impact in 2021) with the ability to support a wide and diverse variety of local people, businesses, and organizations—providing high quality jobs and prosperity county-wide.

Please consider funding this project application as an essential step for Thurston County to restore jobs growth in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Sincerely,



Rick Wall
 Interim City Manager

¹All jobs and economic impact figures, Tourism Economics, provided by State of Washington Tourism (SWT)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jill Barnes
 Washington Center

Jamie Brayshaw
 Octopus Cafe

Nate Burgher
 Nate Burgher Photography

SECRETARY
 Erica Conner
 Orta Construction

Jessie Dean
 The Popojay

Ryan DiCrescenzo
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Daniel Farber
 Temple Beth Hershish

Josh Gobel
 Gobel Architects

Rich Huey (Ex-Officio)
 City of Olympia

Eric Johnson
 Olympia Computer

TREASURER
 Blake Gies
 Olympia Federal Savings

Sofia Landis
 Sofia's Scoops

March 24, 2023

Dear QUEST grant application review committee members,

I am writing to express my support for Experience Olympia & Beyond's grant application to fund a coalition-based, county-wide Destination Master Plan for Thurston County. A Destination Master Plan would provide a new, broad-reaching regional effort to implement programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the hospitality sector—still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—as well as Thurston County residents in need of career pathways.

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Olympia relies heavily upon tourism economic driver for jobs and new business sectors. This Master Plan is a strategy and growth in our downtown.

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Sincerely,



Mike Reid
 Economic Development Director

¹All jobs and economic impact figures, Tourism Economics, provided by State of Washington Tourism (SWT)

CITY OF OLYMPIA Capital of Washington State
 P.O. Box 1997, Olympia, WA 98507-1967
 olympia.gov

March 24, 2023

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Sincerely,



Cheryl Selby
 Mayor Pro Tem

City Manager: Jay Turney
 Councilmembers: Jim Cooper, Wm Hapich, Dana Matheson, Lisa Parsley, Donita Payne

¹All jobs and economic impact figures, Tourism Economics, provided by State of Washington Tourism (SWT)

Destination Master Plan

Inclusive Leadership From Day 1

Patty Belmonte, CEO, Hands on Children Museum

David Burnett, Corporate Executive Officer, Island Enterprises, Squaxin Tribe

Michael Cade, Executive Director, Thurston Economic Development Council

Todd Cutts, Executive Director, Olympia Downtown Alliance

Amy Evans Harding, Commissioner, Port of Olympia

Tony Liberal, Director of Business Development, Medicine Creek Enterprises, Nisqually Tribe

Jennica Machado, Economic Development Director, Thurston County

Harry Pickernell, Director of Operations, Chehalis Tribal Enterprises

Lisa Parks, City Administrator, City of Tumwater

Annette Pitts, CEO, Experience Olympia & Beyond

Mike Reid, Economic Development Director, City of Olympia

Line Roy, Director of Recreation & Communications, City of Yelm

David Schaffert, Executive Director, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce

Sarah Schelling, Senior Project Planning Mgr., Community and Economic Development, City of Lacey

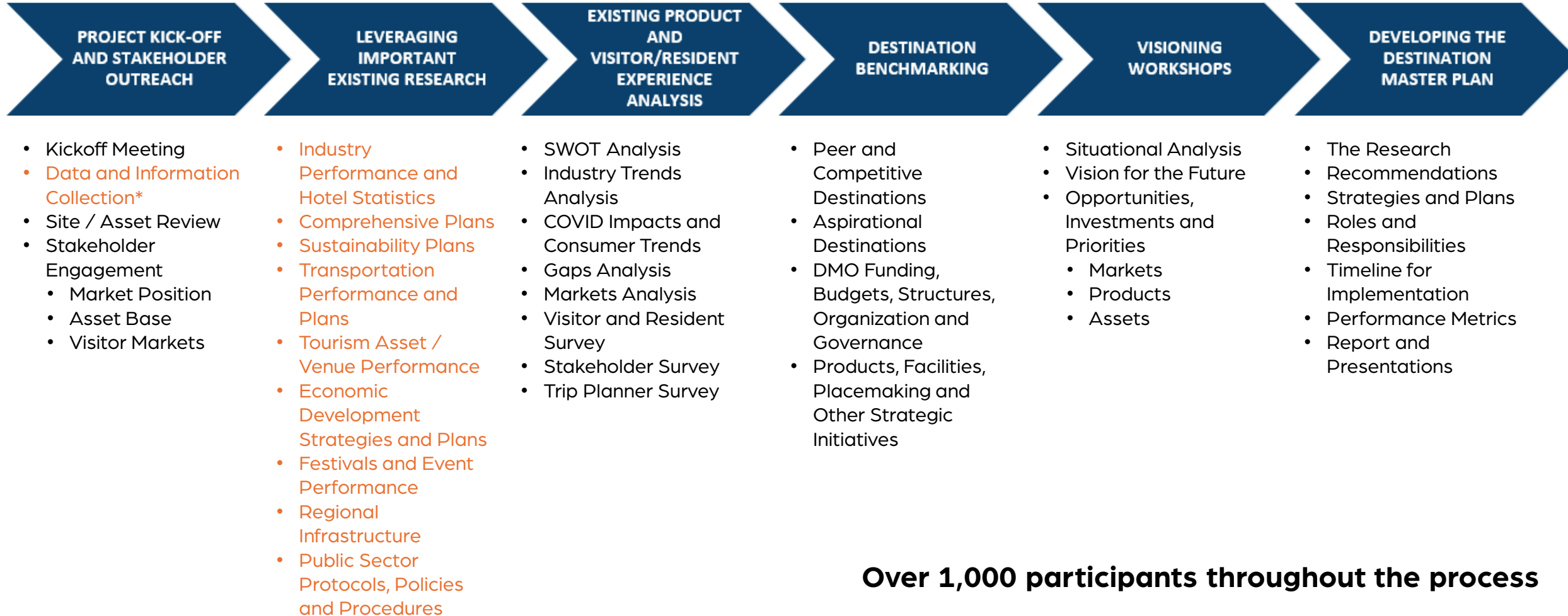
George Sharp, Rural Program Manager, Thurston Economic Development Council Representing Tenino, Bucoda, Grand Mound and Rochester

Satpal Sohal, Owner, La Quinta Inn & Suites, Tumwater



Destination Master Plan

How did we do it?



Over 1,000 participants throughout the process

**Over 100 strategic, comprehensive, and/or economic development plans submitted, reviewed and integrated*





29 Countywide Priorities Resulted

1. Initial Implementation

- Agritourism and the Thurston Bountiful Byway
- Arts, Entertainment, Live Music, and Nightlife
- Conference and Meeting Space
- Destination Stewardship
- Events, Festivals, and Seasonality
- Expanded/Diversified Lodging
- Family Attractions
- Quiemuth Resort Complex
- Retail and Commercial District Development
- Sporting Events & Facilities
- Waterfront Activation



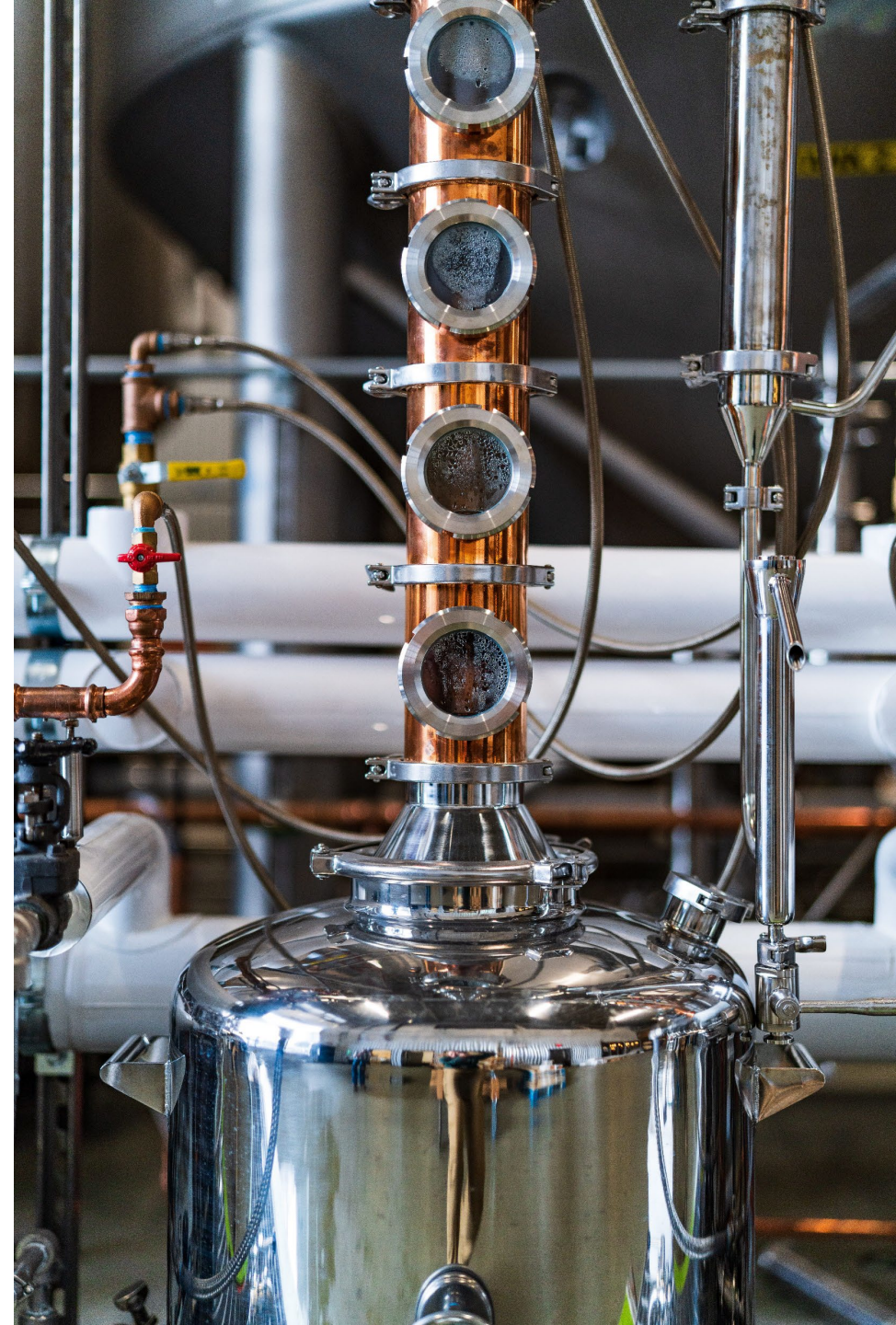
2. Advocacy

- Aviation Planning
- Culinary Destination
- Downtown Olympia
- Mental Health/Unhoused/Drug Use/Safety and Security
- Outdoor Recreation
- Tourism Funding
- Trails & Networks



3. Monitoring

- Craft Beverage Marketing & Promotion
- Doing Business / New Investments
- Equestrian Tourism
- Innovation and Technology
- Public Gathering Spaces
- Rural Development
- Workforce Housing



EOB Board Initiatives & Initial Priorities

- Agritourism & Thurston Bountiful Byway
- Community Engagement
- **Connectivity***
- Craft Beverage Marketing & Promotions
- Destination Stewardship
- Equestrian Tourism
- Events, Festivals & Seasonality
- **Outdoor Recreation***
- **Sporting Events & Facilities***
- **Tourism Funding***
- **Tribal Relationships & Tourism***

*Identified by the EOB Board as initial priorities for EOB implementation.



EOB Board

Key Takeaways & Actions

- Research tourism **funding** options.
- Explore creating a **501(c)3** organization.
- Advocate for **statewide tourism funding**.
- Seek **guidance and assistance from AIANTA**.
- Build and **strengthen current partnerships**.
- Identify **new partners and partnerships**.
- Reach out, **listen, and learn** with and from partners.
- Develop an **inventory of known assets that support each initiative**.
- **Communicate**, build support, explain the “why”, and **articulate the benefits**.
- Strive to **be more competitive for scarce resources**.
- Speak and **advocate collectively and with one voice**.

Next Steps

- Experience Olympia & Beyond Board and staff are planning for **implementation on identified priorities Q1, 2025**
- **DMP Steering Committee will transition into DMP Taskforce.** Members of the DMP Steering Committee will be invited to participate at the level that works for them. **Additional community leaders and residents will be invited to join.** Meetings will be held quarterly to report on progress, share information and resources.
- **DMP Steering Committee members can determine if they want to help champion, support or lead** implementation on Issues & Opportunities identified in the plan.





Questions?

Please contact:
Annette Pitts, CEO
annette@experienceolympia.com
or Emily Lawrence,
Director of Marketing & Community Engagement
emily@experienceolympia.com

