



Press Release

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**Town Center Planning Gets Lively Discussion
At Joint Mountlake Terrace Meeting**

Town Center planning was the focus of lively discussion at the Mountlake Terrace City Council's joint meeting with the Planning Commission on July 10. The City is undertaking a Town Center Plan process to help revitalize its downtown. A draft plan is expected for review by November.

Mayor Pro Tem John Zambrano praised the Planning Commission's hard work so far. The Planning Commission is a seven-member body of local volunteers appointed by the Council. He also urged them to forge ahead on the next phase of Town Center planning and other work.

"Possibilities," said Councilwoman Laura Sonmore, "that's what this is about. We are in the discovery stage now. With town center planning, we can all look at the possibilities and decide what we really want for downtown."

Commissioner Vic Sood noted that whatever is planned needs to be economically viable.

"We have a lot to offer here," remarked Council member Angela Amundson. She urged moving full-speed ahead with a plan--not a plan that goes on the shelf, but one that really goes to work.

Council members and Planning Commissioners shared Town Center ideas, including options for good streets and sidewalks, water features, links to parks and recreation, marketing the City to attract retail and commercial services, updating development regulations, building a veterans' memorial, adding a community senior center, and encouraging plenty of local gathering places.

All agreed that community roundtable meetings, with lots of public input, will help shape the Town Center plan. The community roundtables will be held July 24, 26, and 31 at three locations, starting at 6:30 p.m. Respectively, the locations are: Mountlake Terrace

High School cafeteria, Club House at Ballinger Lakes Golf Course, and the Mountlake Terrace Library. The public is invited.

Commissioner Michelle Robles said she remembered when you used to be able to shop in downtown Mountlake Terrace and didn't have to go to Northgate or Lynnwood for things you needed. "I'd like to have more places here to shop. We should be able to walk a few blocks downtown and buy some things, sit at a coffee shop, or get to our jobs."

Several Planning Commissioners said they had been waiting a long time to work on a downtown plan and they were excited to start the process.

Council member Doug Wittinger pointed out that he wants to see what is working or not working from the 1999 downtown study recommendations.

Councilwoman Michelle Angrick said that a town center plan really needs to include business needs. Businesses have a lot to offer the community. She also suggested visiting other communities to visualize both what we want and what we don't want here.

"Besides a plan," said Commissioner Bryan Wahl, "we really need to work on implementation. For example, how will we invest in downtown?"

Town Center is also known as the main downtown business area of Mountlake Terrace. It is the area along 56th Avenue West between 244th Street Southwest and almost to 228th Street Southwest. At most points, downtown is only 1 block deep, but between 236th Street Southwest and 232nd Street Southwest, it spreads out to 3 blocks deep.

Council members and Planning Commissioners also discussed other items on the citywide work plan. These included conservation strategies, development code updates, an economic vitality strategy, and a master plan for streets, walkways, and bicycling. The mater plan would be linked to future land uses, including light rail.

For more information or ways to be involved, contact the Mountlake Terrace Planning Division at 425.744.6266 or check the website: <http://www.cityofmlt.com/news.htm>.

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