Project Overview

The City of Olympia and Thurston Regional Planning Council are collaborating to support the transformation of the Martin Way District in northeastern Olympia into an area with a richer mix of housing units, services and active transportation choices. The study — made possible by a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant — will:

- Define infrastructure needs;
- Define options for funding needed infrastructure;
- Explore how public funds can leverage improvements consistent with the corridor vision;
- Conduct a market analysis of properties in the district and identify opportunities for development and re-development.

Existing Conditions

The Martin Way District stretches about 1.5 miles from Sawyer Street eastward to Lilly Road and includes a quarter-mile area north and south of Martin Way, which served as the region’s primary north-south highway before the construction of Interstate 5 a half-century ago. Today, the area is characterized by proximity to Providence St. Peter Hospital and other medical facilities, a large wetland, and some of the last undeveloped parcels along Martin Way. The district features frequent bus service but lacks a complete sidewalk network and contiguous development along the street edge, despite the district’s zoning density and proximity to Interstate 5 [See Appendix, Map 1: Martin Way District Boundaries, Zoning & Amenities].

Survey Overview

The lack of active-transportation and public utility infrastructure are assumed to be barriers to redevelopment in the district. The city of Olympia, Thurston County Housing Authority and Thurston Regional Planning Council developed a survey collaboratively and sent it out to nearly 3,100 residents who live within or near the district in June 2013 to learn more about their corridor perceptions, travel habits, and desired transportation and land-use changes. A total of 542 residents filled out their 18-question survey fully or partially, for a response rate of about 17 percent [See Appendix, Map 2: Survey Mailing Area].
Question 1 asked respondents to rate on a scale of one to five how difficult it is for them to access pharmacies, schools, restaurants, parks and other amenities. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a one or two, which denote “hard to get to,” is shown in red in Figure 1A. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a three, which reflects a neutral response, is shown in orange. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a four or five, which denote “easy to get to,” is shown in green. The percentage of survey respondents who did not answer this question is shown in grey.

Figure 1A: Perceived Access Along Martin Way Corridor

The vast majority of survey respondents noted that they have easy access to commercial services [See Appendix for raw survey data]. Indeed, the district is within a quarter-mile of four grocery stores and within a half-mile of Lacey’s Woodland District, which features a robust mix of retail shops, restaurants, banks and other commercial services. Downtown Olympia is about 1.5 miles west of the district.

Survey respondents noted that public services, green/open spaces and athletic facilities are most difficult to get to. Most of the district’s green/open spaces are in the form of developable parcels and undevelopable wetlands. And while the district does not contain any designated parks, it sits close to the Woodland, I-5 and
Chehalis Western trails, as well as North Thurston High School’s athletic complex. Public services within the district include the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department and Olympia Fire Station 4. Behavioral Health Resources, a nonprofit that provides mental health and addiction recovery services throughout South Sound, plans to expand its headquarters campus amid the 3800 block of Martin Way.

**Question 1** also asked respondents to rate on a scale of one to five their satisfaction with the corridor’s safety, infrastructure, cleanliness and other attributes. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a one or two, which denote “low satisfaction,” is shown in red in Figure 1B. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a three, which reflects a neutral response, is shown in orange. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a four or five, which denote “high satisfaction,” is shown in green. The percentage of survey respondents who did not answer this question is shown in grey.

**Figure 1B: Perceived Satisfaction With Martin Way Corridor**

Most survey respondents expressed general satisfaction with their ability to bike, access a bus, or drive and park amid the district. Even so, nearly a third of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the sidewalk network. Further, between 20 and 25 percent of respondents expressed low satisfaction with the district’s feel, availability of crosswalks, ease of walking, cleanliness and safety. The responses indicate that more could be done to improve the pedestrian experience along the arterial, which features an incomplete sidewalk network, several vacant buildings (e.g., the former Holly Motel and Bailey’s Motor Inn), and fast-moving/high-
volume automobile traffic. TRPC planners visited the site during the summer of 2013 to observe transportation activity, building type/condition and infrastructure. Planners observed pedestrians using parking lots, bicycle lanes and the roadway’s shoulder to walk where there were no sidewalks. Several parking lot driveways and stretches of shoulder were littered with debris. A wooded, undeveloped lot northwest of the intersection of Patterson Street and Martin way was littered with debris and showed signs of a homeless encampment.

A September 2012 walkability audit, led by TRPC, noted that Martin Way’s sidewalks are in “fair” condition but lack street trees that provide shade and ramps that provide access for persons with disabilities. The audit also noted that street crossings are “moderately marked,” but the width may be too great for some pedestrians to cross in a timely manner. The audit (http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/landuse/Documents/Urban_Corridor_Communities/Walkability_docs/Walkability_Audit_NextSteps_Final_web.pdf) concluded with the following recommendations for the corridor:

- The city of Olympia and Intercity Transit (IT) can work in partnership to use the transit agency’s facility expansion fronting Martin Way to help set a new pattern for development oriented to the street with a comfortable and well-defined walking area along the roadway with adequate buffer from traffic.
- Select other catalyst sites along the corridor that are likely to redevelop and work with property owners to define a clear pedestrian space for better access, comfort and safety. An expected standard discussed during the audit is having an 8’ sidewalk, decorative lighting and 10’ planting strips.
- Make Indian and Woodard Creeks an amenity and focal point for people during the daytime. A stormwater or wetlands park could have the dual function of making the corridor a more appealing destination while helping protect water quality.
- Prepare an access management plan in cooperation with property owners that works in tandem with pedestrian facility improvements to create a better functioning and more orderly corridor for all users. The access management plan needs to incorporate appropriate crossing strategies or treatments of Martin Way roughly every 300’ to 500’ to support safe access to public transportation and destinations. The stretch of Martin Way between Devoe Street and Pattison Street is especially critical as a crossing for safe access to transit.

Questions 2 -7 asked residents about their travel habits. Ninety-two percent of respondents marked that they own a car, and 82 percent marked that they drive “most of the time.” Seven percent marked that they ride the bus “most of the time. Thirty-one percent marked “sometimes,” and 62 percent marked “never.”
When asked how often they walk, 8 percent of respondents marked “most of the time.” Seventy-five percent marked “sometimes,” and 17 percent marked “never.” The vast majority of respondents marked that they travel between 1 and 10 miles to the place where they work or shop.

Questions 8-16 sought general demographic information about respondents, including their age, gender, household size, marital status, income, place of work, housing tenure, and educational attainment.

Question 17, which was open-ended, asked residents what their vision is for the corridor — i.e., what changes they would like to see.

A major theme of the responses is a desire to travel by means other than privately owned vehicle. Indeed, there is also a strong desire to improve the connectivity of active transportation modes — notably, walking, cycling and riding the bus. Many respondents wrote that a complete sidewalk network would improve the pedestrian experience. Likewise, several respondents wrote that they desire more crosswalks and signal lights.

Another theme of the responses is a desire to remove blight and improve safety/cleanliness perceptions. Some respondents called for fixing aging infrastructure, cleaning up debris, and increasing the number of trash and recycling bins along the corridor. Other respondents called for the removal of old and unkempt buildings.

Several respondents wrote that more needs to be done to address homelessness in the area. Some respondents called for more police patrols. Other respondents called for additional social services or a homeless shelter.

A final theme of the responses is a concern about the types of buildings and their uses along the corridor. Respondents expressed a desire to mix housing with the commercial services currently found along Martin Way. Some respondents also expressed a desire to get away from the strip-mall type of buildings that are now dominant along the corridor. Other respondents expressed concern about how much new building construction would happen amid the district, while others objected to additional chain and big-box stores.

Question 18, which was also open-ended, asked whether respondents have “particular concerns” about the corridor. A major concern is a perceived lack of public safety, according to the surveys. Again, several respondents expressed concern about what they perceive as a large number of homeless people and panhandling. Respondents also called for stronger police presence to deter crime.

Other respondents also wrote that a reason motorists feel unsafe is because some pedestrians and cyclists do not use safety precautions. Bolstering the network of sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes would help address this concern, respondents noted.

Another concern cited frequently is the corridor’s aesthetics. Respondents called for better landscaping along Martin Way. Respondents also contended that there are insufficient public parks and green spaces.

###
Appendix

Map 1: Martin Way District Boundaries, Zoning & Amenities
Map 2: Survey Mailing Area
Raw Survey Data

**Question 1A: Ease of Access to ... (1 is hard to get to; 5 is easy to get to)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to</th>
<th>Hardest to get to</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Easiest to get to</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td>17 22 49 128 306</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacies/Drug Stores</td>
<td>18 33 67 136 249</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/Coffee Shops</td>
<td>14 39 95 134 221</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Stores/Gas Stations</td>
<td>18 25 76 130 253</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Businesses</td>
<td>13 41 117 155 167</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chain Retailers</td>
<td>17 31 92 145 204</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Clubs/Workout Facilities</td>
<td>36 59 110 87 121</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>34 60 94 132 152</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital and Medical/Dental Facilities</td>
<td>14 30 65 108 288</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>21 28 85 105 159</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare Facilities</td>
<td>22 37 97 63 109</td>
<td>214</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Centers</td>
<td>31 58 104 85 97</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>22 44 91 97 142</td>
<td>146</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>32 74 134 99 110</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>28 59 124 92 96</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Housing Options</td>
<td>27 64 121 97 91</td>
<td>142</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks, Trails and Open Space</td>
<td>36 62 105 137 146</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 1B: Satisfaction with ... (1 is low satisfaction; 5 is high satisfaction)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with</th>
<th>Low satisfaction</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>High satisfaction</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Sidewalks</td>
<td>85 87 114 107 112</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Trails</td>
<td>43 65 116 145 117</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Crosswalks</td>
<td>50 67 117 153 97</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Bike Lanes</td>
<td>39 58 126 136 93</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Biking</td>
<td>44 62 126 129 85</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Walking</td>
<td>46 64 123 132 120</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Bus Service</td>
<td>30 40 114 120 132</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of bus Stops</td>
<td>40 39 111 117 134</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Walking to Bus Stops</td>
<td>41 66 96 115 117</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Trash or Litter</td>
<td>47 63 148 141 87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Safety</td>
<td>39 75 164 147 67</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Crime</td>
<td>38 71 188 114 62</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of on-street Parking</td>
<td>65 79 125 107 71</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community feel/neighborliness</td>
<td>54 76 119 150 86</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Option</td>
<td>Count (N)</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you own a car?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do you drive?</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often do you take the bus?</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often do you walk?</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How far do you travel to work?</td>
<td>Less than 1/2 a mile</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/2 to 1 mile</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 miles</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-10 miles</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 10 miles</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't work</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How far do you travel to shop?</td>
<td>Less than 1/2 a mile</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/2 to 1 mile</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 miles</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-10 miles</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 10 miles</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Age</td>
<td>29 and under</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-64</td>
<td>207</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 plus</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. Marital Status</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>114</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic partner</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/divorced</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>51</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Household Size</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>218</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 plus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Level of college</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not graduate from high school</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year college graduate</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year college graduate</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 4-year college graduate</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Household income</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$39,999</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000-$59,999</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000-$79,999</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000-$99,999</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,999</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $150,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 14. Place of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Work</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work in Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work outside of Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work from home</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 15. Housing Tenure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Tenure</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own mobile home/own land</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own mobile home/rent land</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 16. How long have you lived in your current house?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under one year</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more years</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>