

Old Brewhouse

Questions and Answers:

1. Why is this regionally significant landmark worth preserving?

The Old Brewhouse is the oldest industrial property in southern Puget Sound. It was the home of the internationally-famous **Olympia Brewing Company**, which provided thousands of jobs and left an indelible mark on the region's history and culture. The Old Brewhouse is the central feature of Tumwater's National Historic Register District. The landmark five-story Italianate brick tower has been emulated in architecture throughout the region.



*Olympia Brewing Company Brewhouse c. 1910
Photo courtesy of Henderson House Museum
City of Tumwater – HHM #150*

2. Can the structure still be saved?

The building is in deteriorated condition. Unsupported upper walls are in danger of falling, and water damage is widespread. The wooden roofs have rotted, but the copper roof above the tower is still in tact. Virtually no improvements to the building have been made by the past generation of assorted private owners. That being said, a walk-through inspection by a licensed structural engineer in 2004 did not reveal any structural deficiencies which could not be remedied.

3. What's been done to help preserve and restore the Old Brewhouse?

The City of Tumwater has taken a series of actions to encourage the adaptive reuse of the Old Brewhouse. The City first adopted Comprehensive Plan goals and policies to “protect designated ... national landmarks” and “encourage the development of the Tumwater Historic Commercial Zoning District.” The City then adopted special zoning and shoreline designation for the Old Brewhouse in the mid-1990's to encourage its redevelopment. The *New Market District Master Plan* provides the zoning regulations for this historic area. Finally, the City commissioned four studies to help determine the redevelopment potential of the Old Brewhouse site since 1993. The most recent report *Tumwater Historic District Infrastructure Analysis - Summary of Findings* was prepared in 2005 and is available on Tumwater's home page www.ci.tumwater.wa.us.

4. What is the Tumwater Historical Preservation Commission?

This seven member Commission is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the city council. They are responsible for identifying and actively encouraging the conservation of the City's historic resources. This is done by placing properties on a register of historic places, sponsoring community events to raise awareness of local history, and advising the Tumwater City Council on matters regarding historic preservation and historic register properties eligible to receive special property tax valuation. The Commission, along with the historic commissions of Olympia, Lacey and Thurston County, has proclaimed that “*Full restoration of the Old Brewhouse is warranted so that it can serve as a functioning part of the Capital Community for the next 100 years.*”

5. Who should I contact with questions or comments?

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“*Friends of the Old Brewhouse*” is a non-profit corporation seeking to increase public awareness regarding the Old Brewhouse. Their website is at www.OldBrewhouse.org.