



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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Public and private partners explore craft brewing and distilling center at former Tumwater brewery site

Tumwater, WA — A commitment to explore redevelopment of the historic Tumwater Brewery site and facilities north of Custer Way, through creation of a Craft Brewing and Distilling Center was formalized this week. The parties to this commitment have agreed to consider opportunities for public/private partnerships to redevelop the site and create the Craft Brewing and Distilling Center to benefit the industry and the local, regional, and state economies. Initial partners include the City of Tumwater, George Heidgerken (property owner of former brewery parcels north of Custer Way), Port of Olympia, South Puget Sound Community College, Thurston Economic Development Council, Olympia Tumwater Foundation, Washington State University Extension, and the Washington State University School of Food Science. Although partnership efforts are currently focused on the “historic” north side of the brewery properties, the project has potential for expansion.

The Craft Brewing and Distilling Center concept framed within this commitment facilitates numerous uses and partners to expand these two rapidly growing industries, drawing investment, fostering innovation, creating jobs and attracting tourism. The center would have a regional focus to facilitate craft brewing and distilling activities, extend industry research, education, workforce training, and public information. Such a facility could serve as an incubator for small brewers and distillers and provide public amenities such as a museum, river walk, trail connections and preservation of the iconic and historic brewhouse, to name a few.

The City of Tumwater has been defined by the presence of the Olympia Brewery site for over a century. The site is located in the heart of Tumwater, adjacent to the Deschutes River, with signature visibility from the I-5 corridor. The brewery closed in 2003. Redevelopment of this site would contribute to regional employment, revitalization of the local and regional economy, and reinvigorate a site that has lasting historical, cultural, and community value.

The Brewing and Distilling Center partnership evolved from efforts between the City of Tumwater and the private property owner (north of Custer Way) to facilitate redevelopment. The State Department of Ecology has provided an Integrated Planning Grant in the amount of \$200,000.00 to perform an environmental assessment and a market feasibility study, currently underway.

A recently awarded planning grant from the Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) provides for a study of public/private partnership opportunities which will further refine viability of the Craft Brewing and Distilling Center concept for this site.

The letter signed by the partners this week represents a commitment to continue to work together in a manner consistent with their respective roles, missions, and available resources of the public and private partners to develop a proposal for a viable Craft Brewing and Distilling Center. The environmental assessments and market studies are expected to be complete this fall.

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