

DOWNTOWN RAYMOND REVITALIZATION

Final Report | December 2024



University of Washington

Community, Environment & Planning (CEP) 460: Planning in Context

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Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

The Downtown Raymond Revitalization Project is a collaborative initiative that celebrates the community's assets while seeking out areas of improvement. Revitalization means creating and investing in spaces for Raymond's communities, businesses, and visitors. Our work aims to identify ideas that will have an immediate impact on the vibrancy of the area and to create a path towards implementation for these ideas.

OBJECTIVES

We intend to build Raymond's identity around Willapa Bay, informed by the town's history and culture. Our recommended action areas: Public Art, Signage, Streetscape, Media, and Governance, represent feasible strategies for Raymond's revitalization initiative. Actions were selected to meet eco-tourism and community engagement standards.

- **Eco-Tourism:** Attract and support local businesses by establishing city branding associated with community and environmental values.
- **Community Engagement:** Establish connections with community groups and members to lead the delivery of proposed projects.

This project envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable downtown area. Informed by case studies and stakeholder engagement, we hope to develop **a plan for a community-driven revitalization project.**

Introduction

Pacific County is rural, defined by four incorporated cities: Ilwaco, Long Beach, Raymond, and Southbend, and unincorporated areas, including Bay Center/Nemah, Naselle Valley, North Beach (Tokeland, North Cove), Southwest County (Chinook), and Willapa Valley (PCDPW).

Raymond was incorporated in 1907 atop the Willapa River delta. The economy was dominated by timber extraction and lumber production, benefiting from coastal river access. By 1913, the population reached 6,000. However, declining employment in the timber industry began after WWII, leaving the current population at approximately 3,100.

Considering the historic industry decline, the city needs to pivot and reinvent itself, informing the necessity of a revitalization plan. The potential for reestablishing economic opportunity is centered around tourism, generating commerce and industry around the marine sector cluster. The county's coastal tidelands and forests lend its key industries to shellfish, timber, fishing, and tourism. Connections to Clatsop County, Oregon, and Grays Harbor, Washington further provide an interchange of economic interests such as jobs, tourism, and transit for Pacific County communities.

Recent interests are devoted to uplifting recreational assets throughout Raymond, defining themselves as a "craft beverage destination, while advertising their Carriage Museum and the 53-mile Willapa Hills Trailhead (Pacific County EDC). These investments intend to gain visitor attraction, highlighting the historical, cultural, and recreational appeal of the town. Raymond's recent developments in tourism, heritage preservation, public spaces, recreation, local businesses, arts, and eco-tourism lend themselves to continued strides in revitalization. As our team collaborates with the Pacific County Economic Development Council, we intend to leverage Raymond's assets: local history, artists, and reimagining streetscape and signage infrastructure to contribute to a more vibrant and diverse economy.

Our Team



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Purpose & Scope

This project establishes a plan for the revitalization of downtown Raymond, emphasizing infrastructure improvements and economic development for “Main Street”, and considering a “creative district” corridor.

Project deliverables include conducting interviews with Raymond stakeholders like city staff/council members and community leaders, producing regular reports and engagement with the stakeholder steering committee for course correction, and producing a final report.

Due to the timing, capacity of the team, and scope of this project—we concluded that our efforts will be most effective by focusing on downtown beautification. While business, recreation, and housing are undeniably important factors in a thriving downtown, we see downtown beautification as the foundation to set those larger changes in motion.

Our team has conducted the first phase of the revitalization proposal; as of January 2025, the project will be turned over to MUP 506/507.

Mission Statement

Our team ultimately aims to create a **sustainable, comprehensive, and innovative** revitalization proposal that reflects the **unique needs and character** of the Raymond community.

Audience & Client



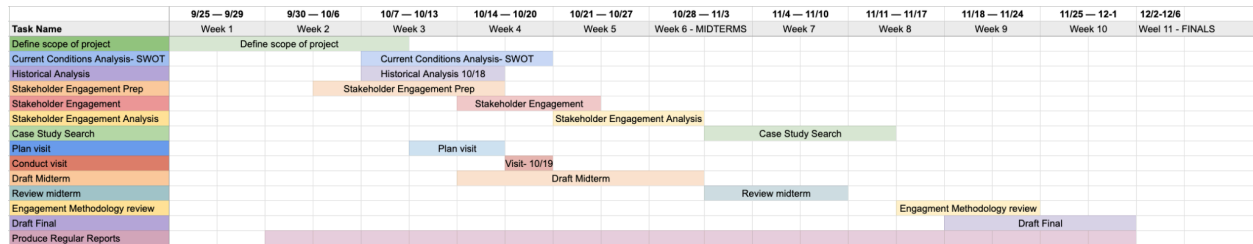
The Pacific County Economic Development Council (EDC) and the City of Raymond, Washington are the primary clients and audience. Our partnership with the Pacific County EDC informs the focus of our project, dedicating ourselves to their mission in supporting local businesses, strengthening infrastructure, working with communities, protecting natural resources, and advocating for future growth and investments. The EDC serves as a key advisor, ensuring our proposed strategies align with the economic priorities for Pacific County.

Raymond is a small town with a rich history rooted in timber, fishing, and agriculture. The city intends to redefine its identity as a hub for tourism, art, and small businesses. With a population of approximately 3,081, Raymond values projects that celebrate its intimate and diverse community, improve quality of life, and promote sustainable economic opportunities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

This project is designed to serve Raymond's local government, businesses, and residents, creating actionable recommendations to enhance downtown vibrancy and attract visitors and investments. By engaging with community member insight and the expertise of stakeholders, we aim to develop solutions that reflect Raymond's values and aspirations.

Methodology

Schedule Overview



In order to stay on track and outline our progress, we created this Gantt chart to serve as our roadmap for the remainder of the quarter. Due to the limited timeline of the project, it was necessary to schedule our tasks and workflows in order to be most effective. Below, we will discuss our three main methodologies in greater detail. We prioritized a site visit, community feedback review, and case study collection.

Site Visit

On October 18th, 2024 we made our site visit to Raymond. We started the day with a tour of the city by one of the city council members which was helpful to get acquainted with the area. We met with various stakeholders throughout the day, such as business owners, government officials, and the mayor. As we got to meet community members and experience the common gathering spots, it was clear that the Raymond community is very tight-knit. We saw a lot of potential and we recognized the importance of preserving and highlighting Raymond's unique charm and character.

Some of the key themes we identified as areas for growth included dilapidated infrastructure, limited tourism appeal / visibility to passing vehicles, and underutilized public space. We also took note of the area's strong creative and artistic assets, walkable main street, and historic buildings. The site visit largely informed our SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), which served as our foundation for the remainder of the project.

Community Feedback Review

Our next priority following the site visit was to review and analyze the results from the Raymond Community Survey conducted in August 2024. This comprehensive survey asked respondents about their favorite and least favorite parts about the area and received a total of 142 responses. In addition to reviewing the “2024 Raymond Community Survey Outcomes” document, we also analyzed the raw data ourselves. We wanted to overlay the answers with demographic data to identify any trends as well as recreate some of the graphics to be more compelling in our presentations.

The two most significant trends we found as a result of our analysis was that most respondents got their news about town events from social media, regardless of age, and that “Downtown Beautification” was a top priority for respondents.

Case Study Collection & Analysis

Our next strategy was to collect and review case studies to inform our recommendations. We compiled a list of examples from across the globe that were applicable in some way to Raymond and to our areas of focus. We then picked the most relevant of the group and used those to directly influence and inform the final list of recommendations.

One study in particular that was largely influential was the dissertation “Murals: Approach, Implementation, and Community Perception — The Benefits to Community Art in Alaska,” which explores the processes of creating murals, their impact on community engagement, and the cultural and social benefits they bring to Alaskan communities. We believe that referencing this case study — the geographical location significant due to the parallel of the intimate coastal setting — is beneficial for the implementation of a public art project in Downtown Raymond, as it goes into the specific step-by-step process of how this Alaskan town involved the greater community, what supplies were gathered in preparation, and a precise project timeline. Following this case study would not only serve as creative and community-building inspiration for this aspect of downtown revitalization, but simultaneously work as a framework for project execution if a mural were to be pursued.

Results & Conclusions

Midterm Client Feedback

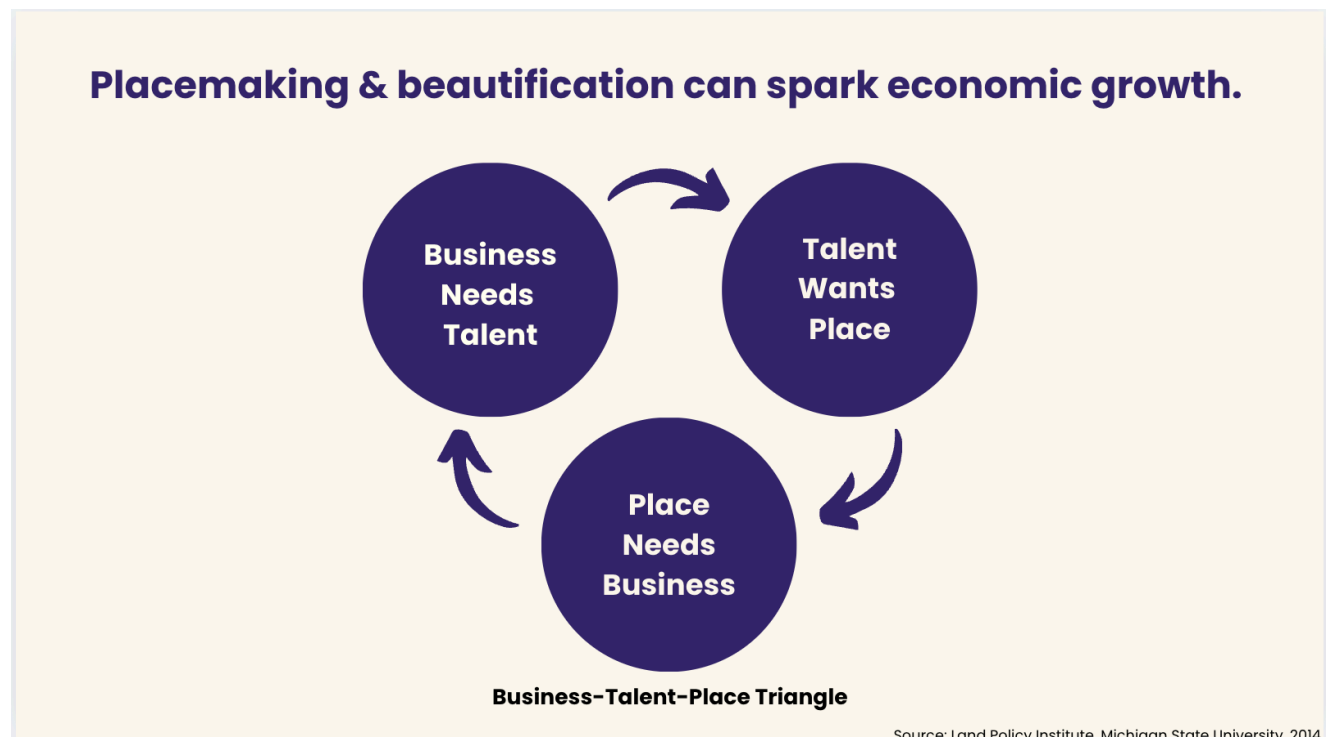
Informed by our site visit, the Pacific County EDC Raymond Community Revitalization Survey, and stakeholder feedback, we conducted a SWOT analysis. Strengths of Raymond are recognized in the character of the community itself, assets which were evident in our visit, including small-town community values, proximity to nature, historic significance, and cultural diversity. Weaknesses include the challenges with the built infrastructure, largely shaping the limited opportunity for recreational and business developments. Opportunities include leveraging eco-tourism, funding through Weyerhaeuser grants, and community partnerships. However, limited public exposure and small population are threats to revitalization strategies. Climate risk and environmental hazards further threaten build developments and resilience considerations.

We established our drafted proposal and progress update for our clients at the midpoint of our three month project. We received suggestions within the following categories: visualizing suggestions, community engagement, and building identity. Renderings are the most valuable in visualizing our suggestions as these represent plans for change, and public anticipation. The celebration and honoring of Indigenous peoples should be prioritized for community engagement, along with developing strategic implementation plans for communities to engage with and respond to. With intentions to showcase Raymond's identity, we needed to reference similar rural, coastal municipality case studies, to reveal insights into revitalization strategies. Particularly, understanding how these similar communities connected themselves to the natural environment, and how Raymond would economically position themselves around the connection to the Willapa Bay, River, and Trails. We have implemented and considered these recommendations since the mid-point of the project, however, it should be noted that we prioritized these areas as we completed our final proposal.

Focus on Beautification & Placemaking

The feedback from the midterm presentation, alongside our community feedback review, helped us to identify our primary focus of the project. We identified downtown beautification and placemaking as the most actionable, most realistic, and as having the most outsized impact to effort ratio. Downtown beautification was identified by residents as a top priority, alongside housing, business, and recreation (Raymond Community Survey, 2024). Although all of these would be valuable improvements, we felt that our skills as students and our timeline favored downtown beautification. Additionally, we had heard from stakeholders that they wanted to tackle some of the low hanging fruit, before taking on larger projects.

A publication from researchers at Michigan State University titled *Placemaking as an Economic Development Tool*, helped to reveal how beautification and placemaking can have widespread and tangible economic impacts. The Business–Talent–Place Triangle pictured here, helps to visualize how placemaking can spark a compounding cycle of growth (Wyckoff, 2015).



Implementation Matrix Overview

We compiled our ideas into what we call an Implementation Matrix. This 3-page document aims to streamline future projects by facilitating **decision-making**, supporting **grant applications**, and ensuring a seamless **transfer of progress** to other University of Washington student partnerships.

The full Implementation Matrix Document will be attached along with this report file.

Final Deliverable – Fall 2024

Downtown Raymond Revitalization Implementation Matrix



Prepared for: The Pacific County Economic Development Council

Prepared by: Caroline Hedlund, Grace Wilson, Juan Haeckermann-Godoy, Alyssa Yanagi, Natalia Perdomo, Carlos Besana, Nha Khuc

What is an Implementation Matrix?

This document aims to streamline future projects by facilitating **decision-making**, supporting **grant applications**, and ensuring a seamless **transfer of progress** to other University of Washington student partnerships.

Mission Statement

“ We aim to create a sustainable, comprehensive, and innovative revitalization proposal that reflects upon the unique needs and character of the **Raymond community**.
— CEP 460 Studio Group ”

Contact Details

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Public Art Signage Streetscape Media Governance

Proposal	Description	Image	Cost Estimate (\$-\$-\$)	Timeline	Priority (1-4)
Mural: On empty wall next to public pool & playground	Mural highlighting local community and/or town history. Assists in placemaking and beautification. Designed by local artist or community partner. Opportunity to honor Indigenous community.		\$\$	Medium	2
Lamp Post Banners: 3rd Street	Lamp post banners reading "Raymond Arts District," "Creative District," etc.; Assists in wayfinding & city branding; Designed by local artist or community partner.		\$\$	Medium	3
Bike Lane: 3rd Street	Bike lane through 3rd street; Option for low or high investment; Assists in pedestrian & non-automobile mobility; Connects local businesses to cycling community.		\$ - \$\$\$	Long	3
Landscaping: 3rd Street	Additional landscaping along 3rd St.; Assists in beautification and sustainable branding; Opportunity for ecological design & native species; Conducted by volunteer group or community partner.		\$	Short	3

Public Art Signage Streetscape Media Governance

Proposal	Description	Image	Cost Estimate (\$-\$-\$)	Timeline	Priority (1-4)
Google Photo Update:	Submit request form to change Google Image result for "Raymond, WA"; Assists in city branding & image; Opportunity to increase tourism & promote local businesses.		\$	Short	1
Online Calendar: Town Website	Online calendar platform available to residents & visitors; Assists with online presence & city branding; Opportunity to increase community engagement & promote local initiatives.	 City of Aberdeen, WA	\$	Medium	4
Media Intern: Raymond Highschool	Media intern position to manage Facebook & Website; Assist in online presence and city branding; Partner with Raymond High school CTE program; Provides opportunity for professional growth.	 City of Raymond Facebook	\$	Medium	2
Mediator Group:	Mediator group to facilitate decision making and coordinate development projects; Composed of local stakeholders, business owners, & residents; Prioritizes local knowledge & experience.	 transformativeconversations.com	\$	Short	1

Image Source: Team site photos & renderings unless otherwise noted

Recommendations

Public Art



MURAL ON 465 4TH ST. EAST-FACING PROPERTY WALL ADJACENT TO RAYMOND SWIMMING POOL

Raymond has some blank walls that are the perfect canvas for a colorful mural. Public art has been proven to increase tourism and engagement, especially in rural communities (Perkins et al., 2023). This would help promote Raymond's unique identity and embrace cultural diversity. A successful public art project is done by collaborating with local stakeholders, artists, youth, and businesses. Incorporating public art can be an easy way to begin the revitalization of the area and it supports placemaking and beautification. Murals are testaments of local culture, as they make you feel welcomed, and it shows a glimpse of the life and history that exists in a place.

We reviewed a case study that discusses creative place-making in rural towns in New Zealand through the creation of murals (Perkins et al., 2023). One of the main

takeaways from this case study is to work with the Raymond community to identify the main themes that represent their collective identity. It might be of interest to consider creating a “mural trail” concept, which means planning multiple mural sites around town to encourage a walking or driving route that could be of interest to tourists passing through, this could involve some of the murals that Raymond already has.

The reason why we chose the east-facing wall adjacent to the Raymond Swimming Pool is because this location is special to the community and it is popular in the summer, as it is the only public pool in the county. A pop of color would also make the playground that’s by the pool be more eye-catching. A mural on this wall could mix in all of the elements found in the surrounding area. One thing to consider is that the city would need to inquire with the building’s owner about permission to use the wall.

COMMUNITY PROJECT

Making this project a community effort would make it more impactful and it would reflect the cultural richness of the community. This can be done recruiting students to volunteer in the painting process. The design could be done by a local artist, a community member, or by a student. Something that could help is gathering feedback from what the community would like to see, and then giving an artist creative freedom to put all of this together. A helpful resource to find inspiration would be [Urban ArtWorks](#), a public art collective based in Seattle, they have a lot of examples of “paint-by-number” murals, which basically divide the whole piece into smaller pieces that community members can tackle together. This project also provides an opportunity to honor the importance of Indigenous peoples that are native to the land.

SIGNAGE



ALONG 3RD ST.

Proper branding and signage will celebrate Raymond's rich culture and history, establishing a cohesive identity for the town's residents and visitors. Effective branding should accurately represent Raymond's values, influencing perception, fostering a sense of place, and ultimately define the community. Strategic branding and signage are vital to attract visitors, support local businesses, and celebrate cultural and historic diversity. These elements will not only guide people physically through the downtown area, but will also facilitate emotional appeal and connection which will strengthen community pride. A resource to consider is the [CGI Digital cost-free streetscape banners program](#).

STREETSCAPE

ALONG 3RD ST.

As Raymond begins its revitalization, it is important to first focus on the creation of a main street. Raymond's location along U.S. Route 101 puts it on the path of many tourists heading to the Pacific coasts of SW Washington, and Oregon. The Willapa Hills Trail also traverses through Raymond, meaning that bikers in the region will traverse through the city center and use its services. The creation, or rather, full development of 3rd street, would allow both drivers and cyclists to make Raymond a stop in their north-south travels, and eventually a frequent main destination. While businesses and art are essential components to an active main street, the street itself is the setting for people to stroll along, access shops, and absorb an identity of the place. Implementing aesthetically pleasing landscaping and a multi-modal street design that provides comfort to all users is essential for the creation of an economically successful area. While the main street can be the first focus of a downtown revitalization, these design changes should be implemented across other streets in the area as time allows.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN



Attentive landscape design is a characteristic that is now present in America's most desired tourist destinations and shopping centers. The general public enjoys walking, biking, and even driving through areas rich in vegetation. Raymond's setting among evergreen forests signifies the ability to use native plant species to maintain 3rd street as an urban greenway year-long. In the spring and summer, plants with recurring flower blooms can provide photo locations for visitors and residents, which can, too, draw in business.

BIKE LANE



While most visitors of Raymond will arrive by car from Route 101, the Willapa River Trails will attract bike users to visit Raymond as well. This may be as they travel through the area, or they may be enticed to begin their bike journeys from Raymond. While wide sidewalks already provide safety and comfort to pedestrians along 3rd Street, this is not the case for bikers. Third Street's ample width allows for the implementation of bike lanes. The current design of the street, with wide lanes and few stop signs, can encourage speeding. This can be a seriously dangerous issue as more cars and pedestrians will be in the area when economic activity spikes after revitalization. A re-organized 3rd street can allow for all modes of transport, motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians to safely and comfortably get

around and do business in the area. These design implementations can later be implemented to other streets of Raymond as seen appropriate. Maintaining accessibility for semi-trucks to the Weyerhaeuser facilities will be of high priority as well.

Street Safety Design Guidelines

3rd Street	Other Streets
Narrow car lanes to 9'	Preserve 11' lanes on truck routes
Include travel lane, parking lane, bike lane, sidewalk (in that sequence)	Prioritize back-in angle parking for increased safety
Implement 4-way stops at most intersections	Bike lanes and/or share the road signs where appropriate
Prohibit parking within 20 ft of intersections for increased visibility and turning radius	
Use paint & planters to rearrange space (e.g. Green paint for bike lane)	

MEDIA

GOOGLE PHOTO CHANGE

The screenshot shows a Google search for "raymond washington town". The search results for "Raymond" are displayed, including a photo of a building, a map, weather information, and travel directions.

Raymond
City in Washington State

Weather

Wed	Thu	Fri
☁ 47°	☁ 46°	☁ 47°

Google Weather

Get there

✈	🚗
57m	4h 32m
from Moses Lake	281 mi

City of Raymond
<https://cityofraymond.com>

About

Enhancing Raymond's online presence is crucial for shaping public perception and attracting visitors. While the city boasts beautiful landscapes, historical buildings, and museums, these attractions are not adequately reflected in the current Google search results for "Raymond, WA." To address this issue, the city staff can manage the Google search landing page photos by submitting a feedback form to request changes to the current images. The replacement photos could be:

- Raymond theatre
- Surrounding natural environment
- Businesses in downtown Raymond

By showcasing these attractions and businesses, Raymond can effectively promote local businesses, highlight historical monuments, and display its natural beauty to potential visitors. This process not only improves the city's online presence, but also informs visitors on potential activities, sightseeing spots, and experiences that Raymond offers.

According to Google's guidelines, responses to feedback submissions typically take about 20 business days. By implementing these suggestions, Raymond can effectively communicate its character, attractions, and communities, ultimately enhancing its online presence and attracting more visitors to experience its unique charm.

EVENT CALENDAR

To enhance Raymond's appeal to visitors and strengthen community connections, we propose integrating a WordPress calendar plugin into the city's website. This calendar would serve as a central hub for sharing information about events, activities, and public meetings, making it easier for both residents and visitors to stay informed. By maintaining a comprehensive and accessible events calendar, the city can highlight its vibrancy and actively drive tourism by positioning Raymond as a must-visit destination.

The calendar would allow potential visitors to plan ahead, increasing the likelihood of attendance at local events and activities. Additionally, it would encourage greater community engagement by promoting participation in local events and drawing residents to downtown Raymond more frequently. By adopting this digital tool, Raymond can enhance its online presence, expand its reach, and foster meaningful connections with both residents and visitors, ultimately supporting the city's growth and vitality. To learn more about the Calendar plugin and features, visit: [Events Calendar | The Events Calendar](#)

GOVERNANCE

MEDIA INTERN

We propose creating a Media Intern position for the City of Raymond to enhance its online presence and community engagement. This intern would manage the city's Facebook page and website, ensuring timely updates and consistent branding. By partnering with Raymond High School's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, the city can provide students with a valuable professional development opportunity while fostering a deeper connection to their hometown. The intern would oversee social media activity, maintain an event calendar, and assist in city branding efforts, bringing fresh energy and innovative ideas to digital marketing. Delegating these tasks to a motivated community member or student will not only strengthen the city's online presence but also support local talent and promote civic pride. Ultimately, this opportunity will also help support overburdened city employees.

MEDIATOR GROUP

We suggest forming a mediator group to streamline decision-making and coordinate community development projects. Composed of local stakeholders, business owners, and residents, this group would prioritize local knowledge and experience to adapt community wishes into actionable initiatives. Acting as a neutral party (outside of the City of Raymond), the group would facilitate collaboration between diverse interests, such as artists and business owners, ensuring balanced outcomes that reflect the community's vision. Inspired by the successful approaches detailed in *Murals: Approach, Implementation, and Community Perception – The Benefits to Community Art in Alaska*, this group would alleviate the workload of city employees, who currently manage extensive responsibilities with limited support. By guiding projects and outreach efforts, the mediator group would enhance efficiency, foster inclusivity, and harness the unique expertise of Raymond's residents to drive meaningful development.

Next Steps

Beginning in Winter Quarter 2025 (January), Masters of Urban Planning students (MUPs) will take the lead on advancing the project, leveraging their expertise to build on the groundwork already established. The team will create a detailed implementation plan, incorporating valuable feedback from key stakeholders and guidance from Sue and Kelly, to ensure the project aligns with community needs.

Concurrently, efforts should begin to establish a citizen mediator group, which will serve as a bridge between local stakeholders and help guide the project. Outreach strategies should include distributing flyers, using Google Forms for community input, and utilizing platforms like Eventbrite to invite residents to collaborative meetings. A preliminary date or weekend in Spring or Summer should be set for a community mural implementation, ensuring ample time for planning and participation. Additionally, an intern position should be established to work with the City of Raymond on enhancing its digital presence, laying the foundation for improved communication and engagement throughout the project's lifespan.

Thank you



Our studio has truly enjoyed partnering with the EDC and working with the Raymond Community this quarter! We appreciate your support and guidance and we hope our work will help spark future endeavors.

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