



2020 - 2040 Town Center Plan

Resolution No. 2531 — Adopted: May 11, 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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2020-2040 TOWN CENTER PLAN

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HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The **2020-2040 Town Center Plan** (“the Plan”) is an officially adopted planning document of the City of Troutdale. It is the primary reference to advise and guide the City and stakeholders on expectations for future growth and development within the Town Center zoning overlay district. The Plan may be used as a reference to justify future land use decisions or policy initiatives but is not a regulatory document.

The Plan replaces in entirety its predecessor document, the 1998 Town Center Plan. The Plan itself may be amended over time to account for changing circumstances, attitudes, or realities at the discretion of the Troutdale City Council.

Conflicting Standards & Policies

At the time of the adoption of this Plan, other planning reports, studies, plans, or guiding documents may have been approved or are being worked upon. Over time, additional planning reports, studies, plans, or guiding documents may also be considered and approved by the City on a unilateral basis or in conjunction with other agencies. In present or future cases of conflicting standards or policy suggestions, *the Plan (including any minority reports) shall supersede any other report, study, plan, or official document*, except in the following instances:

- adopted City Council goals
- adopted City or Urban Renewal Agency budgets for a given fiscal year
- adopted regulatory codes, including Troutdale Municipal Code, Troutdale Development Code, relevant building codes, state statutes, and Metro Code governing urban growth management
- changes to regulatory codes as listed above
- adopted capital improvement plans for the City of Troutdale and Multnomah County
- approved and effective standards for City- and County-based public works facilities, including transportation and utilities

The Town Center Plan contains proposals that may influence future policy and recommend changes to other regulatory documents. However, the Plan’s adoption shall not assume, compel, or require the City of Troutdale to act upon those changes. Adoption of this Plan shall not supersede required approval actions to amend other regulatory documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Place refers to our surroundings. The environment in which we exist. More than a location, but the nature of that location. Place is powerful and it shapes us. All of our senses have the ability to change the way we feel, the way we act, to add or detract from our lives. But place trumps all of that. In one single place, we can hear sounds that cheer us up, smell something that makes our mouth water, see something that takes our breath away, feel a sense of connectedness and belonging.”

— Jeff Siegler



by 2040, the Troutdale Town Center will preserve its small-town feel while becoming the most vibrant, scenic, and historic hub in the region;

where families thrive,
businesses prosper,
and visitors return.



WHAT IS THE TOWN CENTER PLAN?

The **Town Center Plan** is a guiding document designed to help plan for the next 20 years of future physical, social, and economic growth in the historic heart of Troutdale, Oregon.

The original Town Center Plan was adopted in 1998 and set the tone for the first generation of intentional development and investment in the Town Center District, comprised of downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. Those efforts have helped to establish a sense of place for the community at large and contributed to a small-town feel that is embraced by residents, businesses, and visitors.

Troutdale should now plan for the next generation of growth and opportunity under present and future circumstances which have changed considerably since the original plan was adopted.

The **2020-2040 Town Center Plan** (also referred to as “the Plan”) is the result of a three-year effort by community stakeholders, Staff, and consultants to provide a comprehensive plan to achieve a vision for the Town Center District that is endorsed by community feedback.

The Plan contains detailed content that:

- reviews the history and present status of the District
- documents community feedback
- establishes a vision for the future
- sets expectations for new development
- creates community branding materials and marketing strategies
- informs potential changes to city policies and regulations
- provides an implementation strategy to set ideas into action

WHERE IS THE TOWN CENTER DISTRICT?

The Town Center District (also referred to as “the Town Center” or simply “the District”) refers to an actual geographic area as defined by the City and Metro, the regional government agency for the Portland metropolitan area. “Downtown” or the “Central Business District” refer to a specific location within the Town Center and are thus not directly interchangeable.

The District includes five distinctive yet interconnected neighborhoods:

Downtown, which is the core of the District and includes the commercial businesses along Historic Columbia River Highway and residential properties up to 3rd Street.

The **Hungry Hill** neighborhood to the south, a residential area which is anchored by Troutdale Elementary School and Helen Althaus Park, located between 3rd Street and 8th Street.

The **Riverside** neighborhood to the east, which stretches to the Sandy River and includes mostly residential properties along Beaver Creek, along with cultural, historic, and recreational amenities.

The **Halsey** neighborhood to the west, which includes residential development along Halsey Street in between Downtown and the Edgefield campus.

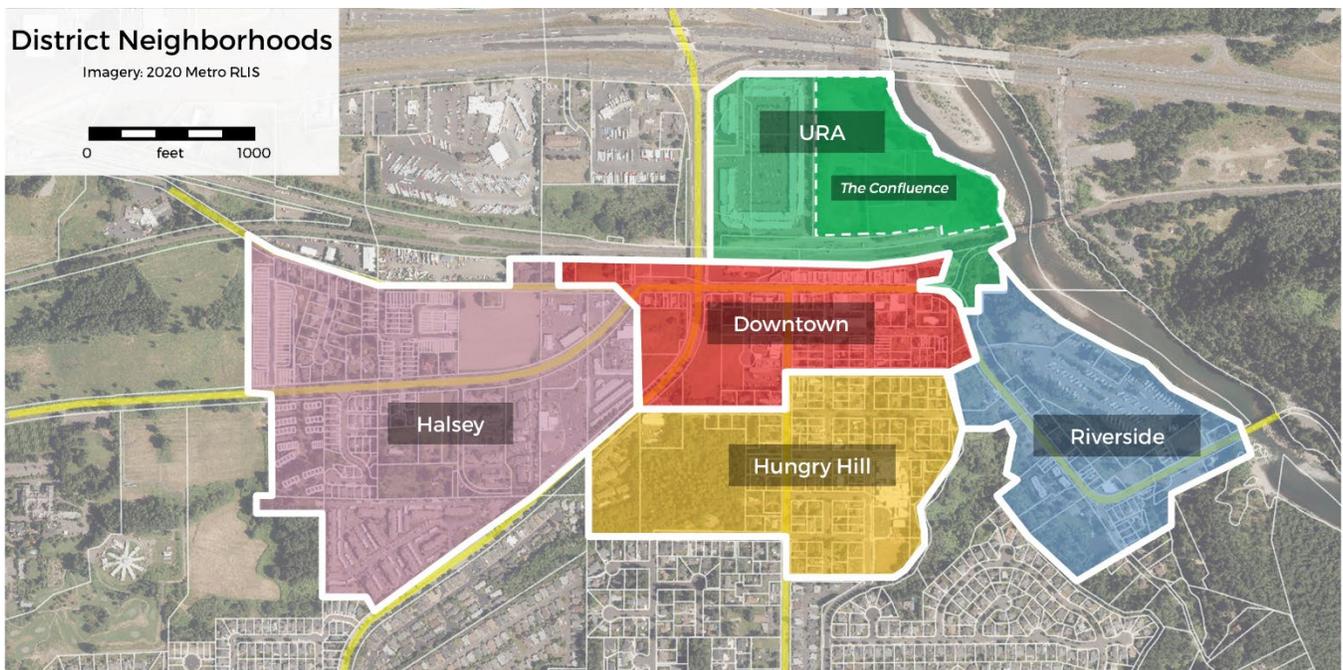
The **Urban Renewal Area**, which includes The Confluence site, the Columbia Gorge Outlets, and Depot Park. **The Confluence** site is the largest developable area in the District and will play a critical role in the long-term success of the Town Center and the City itself.





Above: The Town Center district boundaries in relation to surrounding areas. The District is bound by Interstate 84 to the north, the Sandy River to the east, residential areas to the south, and the McMenamins Edgefield campus to the west.

Below: The District has five distinct neighborhoods that are clustered around the Downtown core. The Urban Renewal Area (URA) contains The Confluence site.



WHAT IS IN THE PLAN?

This Plan is more than just a typical district or neighborhood plan.

The Town Center Plan not only considers development potential for properties or improvements to infrastructure but also considers how socioeconomic factors and future trends may affect those changes. It also provides strategies to improve civic pride and sense of place through branding and marketing strategies. Lastly, the Plan includes implementation strategies and actions that stakeholders can consider and apply to fulfill the Town Center Vision.

The Plan is organized into three main chapters:

1 - The Past & Present chapter inventories the story of how the District came to be in its state in 2020. It also documents public outreach efforts to capture community feedback which helped to form the Town Center Vision and set the course for the other two chapters of this Plan.:

2 - The Future chapter pivots to a discussion on how the community should approach the next 20 years of growth and development for the Town Center. The chapter is comprised of four main sections elements and their components:

- The **Town Center Vision**
- The **Socio-Economic Element**
 - Social considerations
 - Economic considerations
 - Resiliency & Future Trends
- The **Physical Element**
 - Resources component
 - Land Use component
 - Transportation & Mobility component
 - Opportunity Sites & Corridors
- The **Branding and Marketing Element**



3 - Implementation provides suggested actions for implementing the Plan into everyday practice not only for the City of Troutdale, but also for stakeholders who hold as much interest in the success of the District as the city government itself. It identifies the leading entity to take on the responsibility and additional stakeholders that are instrumental in helping to fulfill the action. It also addresses the immediate fiscal impact of an action. Actions are listed for the initial five-year period of this Plan, with suggestions for future updates on five-year cycles to refresh action items.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Town Center Plan project was a three-year planning effort. The **project outline** closely resembles the overall layout of the Plan and generally followed the following timeline:

- Fall 2017 – Council directs Staff to update Plan, establishes Town Center Committee
- Winter-Spring 2018 – Previous planning efforts reviewed
- Summer-Fall 2018 – Public open houses and citizen feedback
- Fall 2018 – Development of Town Center Vision
- Winter-Spring 2019 – Socio-Economic topics
- Summer-Fall 2019 – Physical elements & Opportunity Site planning
- Fall 2019-Winter 2020 – Branding & marketing efforts
- Spring-Summer 2020 – Implementation discussion
- Summer 2020-Winter 2021 – Plan finalization

Initiated by City Council action in 2017, an ad-hoc **Town Center Committee** (also referred to as “the Committee”) was formed to deliver a comprehensive update of the 1998 Town Center Plan. Providing support to the Committee was City of Troutdale Staff from the Community Development Department.

The Committee and Staff also relied on assistance and contributions from public, private, and non-profit **stakeholders** in addition to professional and technical **partners** in the fields of economics, housing, architecture & design, and community branding.

Public engagement was solicited largely on several occasions in 2018 and during the branding and marketing efforts in 2019, though a consistent feedback loop was always provided given the nature of planning and the interest in the topic. Several community open houses were held in 2018 and outreach efforts were made at the Troutdale SummerFest in 2018 to solicit community feedback. Over 300 individuals provided a measure of feedback; whether it was a simple suggestion on a comment card or a detailed response to a survey.

The feedback that was most instrumental to the committee was in the form of a SWOT Analysis, which surveyed the Town Center’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.



SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Small Town Feel

Overwhelmingly, the greatest strength identified in public engagement was the District's small-town feel, which translated to both the built and human environment. This was attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors alike. People are appreciative of a smaller scale in comparison with surrounding areas, and there is a genuine and understandable worry that future growth and development will radically affect that dynamic.

A Pivotal Moment for Downtown

Several "first generation" businesses who invested in Downtown in the past 20 to 30 years are considering the sale of their buildings or businesses, making way for the possibility of new investment. Public feedback suggests that while many view Downtown with interest and appreciate the aesthetic that has been created, there are concerns about the current and future retail mix of businesses.

Feelings of Disconnect

A troubling bit of feedback was shared that reflected a disconnect between the typical Troutdale resident and the services offered in Downtown. A sizable number of people felt that Downtown was "for the tourists" and not a place that was receptive or interesting to residents and families in particular. Furthermore, younger residents did not feel as connected with the community and often moved to Troutdale more for cost-of-living and less for community attraction. Increased community amenities and things to do were frequently brought up as desired outcomes to improve the District.

Bridging Aspiration with Reality

Of critical concern for the District's long-term viability is the relatively low population density of the district when compared to other town centers in the region. Stakeholders indicated a desire for increased commercial services such as additional food and dining or a grocery store, but those services often require having a critical mass of people close by to sustain their business models.

Simply put, visitors alone cannot make the District more attractive for commercial services, nor will it bridge the disconnect felt by some residents. Residents—existing and new—are needed, too. The ability for the Town Center to accommodate additional people living in the District without fundamentally changing its character is the defining balancing act that this Plan seeks to address.

Pride in Place

Included with that effort is a softer but equally important effort, which is to better connect the Downtown with the rest of the District and the balance of the community itself. Downtown should not be a place only marketed for visitors. It must be a place that current residents wish to go to and new arrivals will want to live near. As a result, businesses will want to set up shop and tourists will want to visit too. Fostering community pride is as important an action as any one development idea or incentive program.

TOWN CENTER VISION

The Town Center Committee took in hundreds of comments and detailed feedback from dozens of stakeholders to create a unifying **vision statement** for the District:

By 2040, the Troutdale Town Center will preserve its small-town feel while becoming the most vibrant, scenic, and historic hub in the region; where families thrive, businesses prosper, and visitors return.



In addition to the Town Center Vision, a series of **guiding statements** will help to provide direction for decisions, projects, ideas, and strategies towards fulfilling the vision. They serve as a reminder for why certain actions are being undertaken and the value that the community sees in it. Each guiding statement directly matches with a Plan component.

- **Social:** The Town Center is a place where all people call live, work, and visit in a safe and accessible manner.
- **Economic:** The Town Center is a place of unique economic prosperity and opportunity due to the high desirability of our area and deep commitment to support local business.
- **Resiliency & Future Trends:** The Town Center is a place that is adaptive, creative, and flexible to address future trends while ensuring the vision remains in place.
- **Resources:** The Town Center is a place that ensures the common good through prudent growth management and preservation of our community resources.
- **Land Use:** The Town Center is a place that will conserve what is good and ensure that future development patterns are complementary to the small town feel and theme.
- **Transportation & Mobility:** The Town Center is a place where a 10-year-old, a 90-year-old, or anyone in between can get around the District in a safe and accessible manner.
- **Opportunity Sites:** The development (or redevelopment) of an opportunity site has a positive impact not only on the site or its surroundings, but on the Town Center as a whole.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ELEMENT

The Plan considered a multitude of social and economic factors along with considering resiliency and future trends that can affect the Town Center District. Below are some of the key findings.

Social

- **Youth and Families:** Encourage diversification of businesses, addition of civic uses, and investment in recreational facilities to improve the family-friendliness of the District
- **Seniors and Accessibility:** Promote live-in-place opportunities through expansion of retail and human services in addition to investments in housing, transportation, and ADA compliance.
- **Education:** Expand continuing education possibilities and tie them with entrepreneurship.
- **Housing:** Allow for a range of housing types and price points, but with a preference toward quality and complimentary development while encouraging homeownership and civic pride.
- **Public Safety:** Begin efforts to discourage vagrancy and improve lighting in the District.
- **Hazard Mitigation:** Ensure a safe built environment through enforcing existing codes while promoting best practices in structural siting, material usage, and property upkeep.

Economic

- **Market Positioning:** Tourism alone will not sustain downtown Troutdale. Downtown must increase attractiveness for residents and nearby residents, particularly east of the Sandy River.
- **Commercial Services:** Diversification of retail is critical, and certain services should be equipped to have both a physical and online presence to succeed.
- **Economic Development:** A program committed to downtown is expected to take a leading role in terms of supporting existing and new businesses.

Resiliency & Future Trends

- **Demographic Changes:** Troutdale will become more racially diverse over time. The Town Center should strive to remain appealing to all.
- **Affordability and Equity:** The Town Center can provide a balance that allows people of all incomes and socio-economic statuses to live in, work in, and enjoy the district
- **Shared Economy / Micro-Retail:** Flexibilities should be afforded to allow these types of commerce to exist in the District along with standard commercial services.
- **Automation:** Future investments in infrastructure should be flexible and adaptable in considering how automation may change consumer needs or behaviors.
- **Energy Conservation:** Consider financial incentives for new development.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Consider methods to encourage implementation of green infrastructure.
- **Climate Change:** Establish a climate resiliency plan that ties into hazard mitigation plans.

THE PHYSICAL ELEMENT

Most area plans are focused on the physical element, which contains analysis and ideas on land use and transportation in concert with existing resources. This Plan covers these items and provides several key findings based on the categories below:

Resources

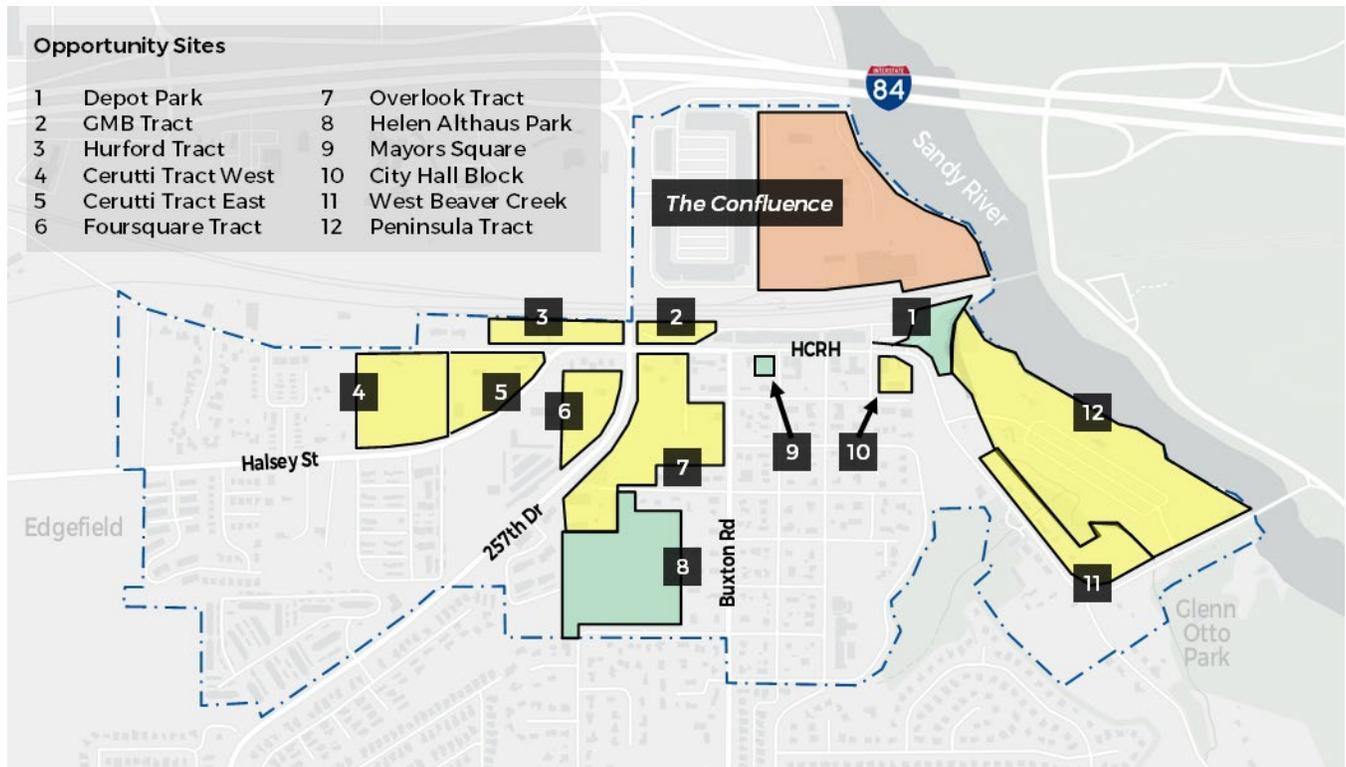
- **Natural Resources and Environment:** The District's natural resources are a major factor in the desirability of the area. The City shall ensure that future development must complement our natural beauty.
- **Recreation and Open Spaces:** Park investments should be made to increase family-friendly activities while providing resources to also conserve more sensitive natural areas.
- **Public Facilities and Services:** Additional civic uses should be brought into the District, but potentially consolidated to limit costs and improve service delivery.
- **Scenic and Historic Areas:** Troutdale should consider new historic landmark designations, conserving historic resources, and establish viewsheds or easements to protect scenic areas.
- **Community Design and Architecture:** More consistency in design is sought in public areas, along with a higher level of design review and oversight for larger private development.

Land Use

- **Conservation Areas:** Ensure naturally-constrained areas remain adequately protected while providing potential for development that can respect and enhance these critical sites.
- **Existing Built Environment:** Troutdale's scale and structures contribute to its small-town feel. New development should respect this and seek to blend harmoniously to what's already here.
- **Adaptive Reuse:** Troutdale risks losing places that have contributed to its history. The adaptive reuse of certain buildings may provide authenticity, creativity, and interest to a development.

Transportation & Mobility

- **Vehicular:** Troutdale will not "declare war" on cars, understanding that private vehicles provide convenience in a suburban community with limited transit options and terrain challenges.
- **Parking & Loading:** Parking problems are not just a supply issue (not enough spaces). Parking demand must be considered as well, with loading areas emerging in importance.
- **Active (Bicycle and Pedestrian):** People are more comfortable with biking and walking when they are separated from traffic in higher-speed corridors.
- **Transit:** Though regional transit is limited; localized "last mile" transit opportunities in the District may emerge to compliment and improve the overall system.
- **Alternative:** The District's size and geography make it worthwhile to consider other ways to get around town, including micro-transit, electric-assisted vehicles, and golf carts.



OPPORTUNITY SITES & CORRIDORS

How can needed or desired development be added to Town Center without fundamentally changing the characteristics of the district? This is a difficult question that the Committee wrestled with over time. Without a clear strategy on how to deal with the effects of density, the existing built and natural environment would be subject to development that would alter what people appreciate about the District. A strategy to be intentional about how and where development should go began to emerge.

The Plan identifies **12 opportunity sites** (not including The Confluence site) and **eight corridors** where development and investment should be focused to help fulfill the vision, optimize those parcels to their highest and best use, and conserve the existing built environment.

In establishing these sites, the Plan is not demanding when (or how) a site should develop. Instead, the Plan sets a preference for development when a site is under consideration. The Committee reviewed the carrying capacity of each site and its relationship to surrounding properties, other opportunity sites, and the District as a whole. Then, based on market analysis and community feedback, ideas for preferred land uses emerged and were ranked accordingly.

Although the Committee arrived at a general consensus on preferred land use types, there were strong concerns from some members about the impact of certain development on opportunity sites 3 and 7. Please refer to those site details in the plan and the corresponding minority report in Appendix A.



URBAN RENEWAL AREA / THE CONFLUENCE SITE

The Confluence site is a collection of city-owned parcels within the Urban Renewal Area. The site provides Troutdale with the most exciting and challenging opportunity site of all; a chance to transform a 20 site adjacent to Downtown and along the banks of the Sandy River into a special place.

The site is strategically situated to take advantage of its surroundings, though is also hamstrung in some cases by them in terms of access restriction. The major public amenity will be a four-acre linear park along the embankment of the Sandy River, with a multi-use trail connecting the site to Downtown and regional trails to the north and east.

Beyond the difficulties of access considerations and cost, perhaps the main community concern remains that this location should complement Downtown, rather than compete with it. As a result, the Committee established certain development expectations that it hopes will be considered as the Urban Renewal Agency engages in solicitation and prospective developers create proposals.

- The **street grid** should be carried over from downtown as an organizing principle
- The **water tower** should be retained as an iconic feature of the site and future development
- The **exchange of property** with the ownership of the outlets should be allowed in order to provide more direct access to/from the west
- A centralized **parking facility/garage** should be established
- A direct connection with downtown via a **pedestrian bridge** should be built
- A direct **vehicular connection** with downtown should be studied and constructed
- A consistent and specific **architectural style** should be established
- Building heights may go as high as 75 feet but should be **stepped-back** or terraced to lessen visual impact from adjacent public spaces and streets
- Residential development should prioritize **home ownership** opportunities

BRANDING & MARKETING

During public engagement, it became clear that many people liked living or working in Troutdale, but often cited conveniences such as “proximity to” or “more affordable”. When tested regionally, Troutdale’s knowledge within the area became less well known. It is was clear though there was an undercurrent of pride in the community but a belief that the community could do a better job in telling its story. This is where community branding and marketing kicks in.

As the historic and cultural heart of the city, it became apparent that branding identity through placemaking and advertising would become of chief importance. Under the Town Center Plan’s project umbrella, the City retained the services of Arnett Muldrow & Associates, a nationally recognized leader in place-based community branding.

The consultants visited Troutdale on three separate occasions; to take inventory of the community’s thoughts through interviews, panel discussions, and surveys; to craft a brand identity and strategy based on further stakeholder input; and to refine those items based on feedback while providing deliverables that can be easily implemented through resources and guides.

At its heart, community branding is an exercise in pride of place. Troutdale was provided a branding statement and deliverables that clearly respected our place and provided excitement for the future.

Troutdale: Our Nature Will Move You

The core themes: shaped by natural forces; rooted in history; transported over time; connected in dramatic ways; and grounded in community are all part of a story that links to our physical and human nature and how the Town Center in particular has developed. Those values come across in the branding statement, the wordmark, the logos, the colors, and the extensions of the brand.



Branding and marketing will help the Town Center position itself as a destination to be enjoyed not only for visitors, but for residents too. In helping to foster civic pride, the brand can be extended to placemaking elements, community events, and general merchandise.



IMPLEMENTATION

The Town Center Vision can be achieved best if those who care continue to remain engaged. As a result, providing a sound implementation strategy will be critical in the ultimate success of the district, so long as it is flexible to accommodate for future conditions and situations. While it is impossible to predict the future, it is within the control of the community to be intentional in its decision-making.

Unlike many other planning documents, this Plan has already begun to set the tone for future expectations of implementation. Listed below are several items that have already occurred in 2020 or are in the process of establishment at the time of the Plan's adoption.

- Aligning **Council Goals** to support planning efforts within the Town Center, particularly with the Urban Renewal Area
- Creating an **economic development role** within the Community Development Department
- Assuming short-term direct responsibility for **tourism promotion**.
- Implementing **community branding**, ranging from merchandise to city limit signage.

The implementation section establishes two general timeframes. The "**Getting Started**" timeframe carries forth implementation items through 2025. The longer-term "**Maintaining and Revising**" period of 2025 to 2040 will provide suggestions on future actions and periodic updates that could occur to keep the Plan relevant through 2040, when the Plan should be replaced in its entirety.

Getting Started (2020-2025)

A five-year horizon is convenient in that it matches up generally well with a mayoral term of the City Council and is more digestible in projecting financial considerations. In addition, a five-year window gives deference to technological and societal changes that are too difficult to forecast 20 years out.

Listed below are several actions that should be considered in the first five years. Further details and assigned responsibilities for each action can be found in the Implementation chapter of the Plan.

Oversight Actions

- Designate a City Staff member responsible for **carrying out the plan** on a day-to-day basis.
- Create a permanent **Town Center Alliance Board** (TCAB) as a successor entity to the Town Center Committee for implementation oversight and advisory functions.
- Empower TCAB to provide **feedback on community design**. This includes for public sector investments and private property development during a land use application process..
- Improve coordination with **stakeholder partners** that contribute to civic life. These include but are not limited to community organizations, nonprofits, and regional tourism entities in addition to organizers of festivals, activities, and events.

Regulatory Actions

- Update the City's **Transportation System Plan** and **Capital Improvement Plan** to consider new investments in the eight corridors identified in the plan.
- Review and revise **development code standards** for the Town Center zoning overlay district and Central Business District zoning district, with particular focus on the Opportunity Sites.
- Review and revise **residential and commercial design standards** for the Central Business District and Town Center. Residential standards will have to be revised due to the passage in 2019 of House Bill 2001. Commercial standards could be reviewed simultaneously.
- Establish workable standards for **food carts, food cart pods, micro-retail**, and other pop-up commercial investments and land uses to expand business opportunity.
- Revise **sign design standards** for downtown businesses.
- Require the use of **decorative street lighting** in all new developments.

Policy Actions

- Create a sanctioned **Main Street program** that is affiliated with the Main Streets America model and Oregon Main Street statewide program. The program should be established by the City and should be evaluated by 2025 for the potential to spin off into a separate non-profit organization, remain within the City's responsibility, or some combination thereof.
- Consider implementing a **Business Improvement District (BID)** or **Economic Improvement District (EID)** to capture funding that can be reinvested for allotted purposes.
- Evaluate the potential for **jurisdictional transfer** of Corridors C and D (Historic Columbia River Highway's downtown and East End segments).
- Develop a **community signage and wayfinding system** in concert with the community brand.
- Evaluate the feasibility of locating **civic uses** at appropriate opportunity sites.
- Establish a consistent standard for **streetscape and park fixtures** made by the City.
- Evaluate the methodology behind **System Development Charges**.

Programmatic Actions

- Consider specific incentives or programs to **attract development** within the opportunity sites and encourage adaptive reuse of properties listed as historic resources.
- Consider revising the **collection method** for System Development Charges (SDC).
- Consider a **dining facility investment program** to support commercial kitchen improvements in existing commercial spaces and reduce SDC burdens by revising methodologies for rates.
- Develop an **entrepreneur support program** to foster new ideas and investments, including but not limited to micro-lending, rental spaces (incubator), and educational partnerships.
- Provide management of "**adopt-a-planter**" or "**adopt-an-intersection**" programs.

Urban Renewal Area Actions

- Prepare **additional development concepts** that can be tested for site suitability, economic feasibility, and community embracement.
- Establish a **new zoning district and land use designation for the URA** that is better geared to match development opportunity with community expectations.
- Allow for TCAB the ability to hold public meetings and **make recommendations of development proposals** at The Confluence site to the Urban Renewal Agency or its successors.
- Finish plans and construct the **Sandy Riverfront Park** and trail connection.
- Study options for a more **direct connection** between The Confluence site with Downtown.
- Study the viability of constructing a **parking facility** and securing partnerships for cost-sharing.
- Engage with the Governor’s Regional Solutions Team and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to consider future **rail service** for intercity and Gorge tourism purposes.

Future Studies & Parallel Efforts

- Update the City’s **Parks Master Plan** for specific plans to improve Opportunity Sites 1 (Depot Park), 8 (Helen Althaus Park), and 9 (Mayors Square) and create a public art master plan.
- Work with Multnomah County to **update road profiles** on County-owned corridors to improve future streetscapes and increase mobility options.
- Study reducing vehicular traffic on **Sandy Avenue** with improved bicycle-pedestrian facilities.
- Charter a new **economic and retail study** for Downtown to evaluate impacts of COVID-19.
- Charter a Town Center **parking and loading study**, with particular focus on Downtown and Glenn Otto Park and in concert with parking facility study (URA Actions).
- Develop a **mobility study** that can investigate alternative transportation methods (such as establishing a golf cart zone) and future trends in transportation and mobility.
- Develop a **tourism plan** that links promotion of amenities, activities and events with branding and marketing elements to fulfill destination marketing organization (DMO) responsibilities.
- Develop a **climate resiliency plan** that can incorporate suggestions to increase resiliency to climate change, improve hazard mitigation actions, and promote green infrastructure.

Maintaining and Revising

Long-range planning particularly over a 20-year period--is difficult to get right. Circumstances and preferences can change. Plans must be able to do so as well, provided they are anchored to a vision and tended to by people who care. Having annual performance reviews ensures future accountability.

It is also suggested that the Plan is has comprehensive reviews in 2025, 2030, and 2035 to provide necessary updates to projects and policies that reflect community expectations and economic realities at those times. It also provides an opportunity to re-assess priorities and pivot to new challenges.



- 1 -

THE PAST & PRESENT

"The links connecting our past to our present are powerful and enduring in the lives of each of us."

— Pamela McLean

1.1 BACKGROUND

THE TOWN CENTER DISTRICT

Troutdale's Town Center District (hereafter referred to as the "Town Center" or the "District" in this plan) encompasses roughly 270 acres (0.42 square miles) in an area that stretches across the central portion of the Troutdale city limits. The general boundary of the Town Center is framed by Interstate 84 and the Union Pacific railroad to the north, the Sandy River to the east, the top of the hillside to the south, and the Edgefield campus to the west.

The Town Center is by design and regulation intended to be a mixed-use area of medium to high densities compared to the balance of the community, containing residential, commercial, and open space areas. The District can be further divided into five general neighborhoods:

Downtown, located in the core of the Town Center. This area is centralized among the four areas. Downtown is comprised of the historic plat of Troutdale upon establishment and areas to the west. It includes commercial storefronts along the Historic Columbia River Highway and residential areas. The area is bound by the Union Pacific railroad to the north, 3rd Street to the south, 257th Drive to the west, and the bluff area east of Kibling Street to the east.

The "**Hungry Hill**" neighborhood, also referred to as the "First Addition" is located south of Downtown on the hillside. This area is largely residential and contains Troutdale Elementary School and the largely undeveloped Helen Althaus Park. It is bound by 3rd Street to north, Sandy Avenue to the east, 8th Street to the southeast, 7th Street to the southwest, and 257th Drive to the west.

The **Riverside** neighborhood, located the east of Downtown, largely in between Beaver Creek and the Sandy River. This area contains several of Troutdale's important historic and cultural resources. The area is bound by the Sandy River to the northeast, Glenn Otto Park and the Jackson Park neighborhood to the southeast, and a steep bluff to the west.

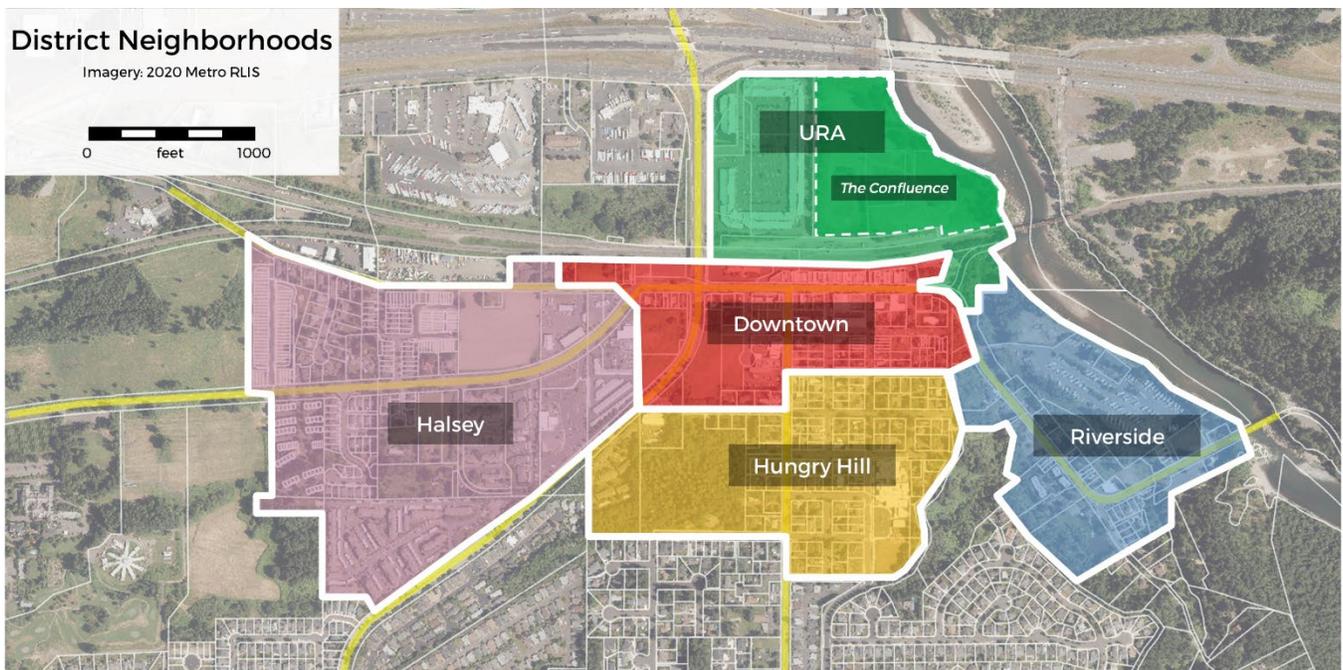
The **Halsey** neighborhood, located predominantly along Halsey Street to the west of Downtown. This area is largely medium to high density residential and more recently developed than the other areas. It is bound by the Union Pacific railroad to the north, downtown to the east, 257th Drive to the south, and the Edgefield campus to the west.

The **Urban Renewal Area (URA)** to the north of downtown, which includes the Columbia Gorge Outlets and a large, underdeveloped area to the east of the outlets that formerly contained industrial uses and the City's water treatment plant. The URA is largely bound by Interstate 84 to the north, the Sandy River to the east, the Union Pacific railroad to the south, and 257th Drive to the west. A small portion of the URA containing Depot Park extends across the railroad tracks to the south.



Above: The Town Center district boundaries in relation to surrounding areas. The District is bound by Interstate 84 to the north, the Sandy River to the east, residential areas to the south, and the McMenamins Edgefield campus to the west.

Below: The District has five distinct neighborhoods that are clustered around the Downtown core. The Urban Renewal Area (URA) contains The Confluence site.



HISTORY OF THE TOWN CENTER

The history of the Town Center overlays with the history of Troutdale as a settlement and ultimately a municipality. Since the establishment of the community by pioneering families in the 19th century, the area that makes up the Troutdale Town Center has always been considered just that—the center of the community. For generations it has served as the civic, economic, and cultural heart of our community.

For many years, the extent of Troutdale as an incorporated community was entirely within the confines of the modern-day District. It was only in the latter half of the 20th Century that Troutdale began to expand to the south and transform from a rural small town along a railroad and river to the dynamic suburban community that it is today.

In the 1990s, efforts were made to foster a true downtown feel and underscore a sense of place. The precursor to official Town Center planning were the initial efforts of Max and Sheryl Maydew along with additional investors in the 1990s to create a nostalgic Main Street commercial core along excess Union Pacific property on the north side of the Historic Columbia River Highway (hereafter referred to as the “Historic Highway”). This was done to compliment several of the historic structures on the south side of the Highway from the early 20th Century to better frame the Main Street feel.

The efforts to better establish the built environment in Downtown has served the community extremely well. This was award-winning work that not only attracted investors and accolades, but also business opportunity and visitors. It helped to propel adjacent residential and mixed use development throughout the Town Center and provides the template and the “bones” for this planning effort.

In the first two decades of the 21st Century (and since the time of the last Town Center Plan), Troutdale’s growth has expanded to the north to encompass industrial lands, transforming itself from a so-called bedroom community to also becoming a major job center in the region. But between the largely residential development to the south and largely industrial development to the north, the Town Center remains as the civic, cultural, and historic heart of the community.



Views of the Historic Columbia River Highway from similar angles. The left image is from 1921; the right image is from 1942. Source: Troutdale Historical Society and Oregon Historical Society



"Don't you think it is a pretty town? I'm in love with it!" reads a note on an image of Downtown Troutdale looking southwest up Hungry Hill from the early 1900s. Source: Troutdale Historical Society



The Troutdale Depot, located on the north side of the Union Pacific tracks, circa 1950. The depot was relocated to its present site in the 1970s. Note the Bissinger Company Water Tower in the background. Source: Troutdale Historical Society

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Planning for town center districts is a result of regional planning. In 1995, the Metro regional government approved a **2040 Growth Concept** which established 30 distinct “Town Center” districts across the Portland region. According to the expectations set forth in the Growth Concept:

“Town centers provide services to tens of thousands within a two- to three-mile radius. One- to three-story buildings for employment and housing are characteristic. Town centers have a strong sense of community identity and are well served by transit.”

The Troutdale Town Center District was identified first through this regional planning efforts. Metro identified certain geographies as “regional centers”, “employment centers”, “town centers”, “main streets”, and “corridors” in creating the 2040 Growth Concept, which has served as the primary vision for regional growth and development for the past 25 years. Troutdale’s Town Center was identified as a Town Center, with a short segment of the Historic Columbia River Highway identified as a “main street” and Halsey Street identified as a “corridor”, connecting with Fairview and Wood Village’s consolidated town center and Main Street to the west.

THE 1998 TOWN CENTER PLAN

In accordance with the Growth Concept, the City of Troutdale prepared and approved the **original Town Center Plan** in 1998, just as the community was establishing the creation of its award-winning three block storefront development along Historic Columbia River Highway. The original Town Center Plan has proven to a resourceful document that helped to steer policy and standards to help establish and embellish Troutdale’s main commercial and mixed-use core.

Upon completion and adoption of the 1998 Town Center Plan, the City of Troutdale created a Central Business District (CBD) zoning classification for downtown Troutdale and the Town Center Zoning Overlay District (“Overlay”), which exists to this day to regulate land use and future development patterns. An overlay district is not considered the underlying zoning district for a property; rather it may apply additional, fewer, or unique uses and standards to those properties for certain purposes. In the case of the Town Center, the Overlay sought to fulfill certain development expectations identified in the Town Center Plan.

As of 2020, the Overlay includes all of the areas within the district and some peripheral areas that this report will identify that may not need to be considered “town centric” due to changes in land use demand, ownership direction, or other justification. Those peripheral areas are no longer being planned for within the Town Center and include the Edgefield North property along Halsey Street and the Tysons Subdivision to the south along 257th Drive.

1.2 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT OUTLINE

This Plan is a comprehensive update to the original 1998 Town Center Plan and represents the second generation of planning for the district.

The Town Center Plan project was a three-year planning effort. From its inception, the Plan was to be comprehensive in nature; not only looking at land use and transportation planning considerations, but to also factor in socioeconomic factors, resiliency and future trends. It also provided an opportunity to provide a chance to establish an identity through branding efforts. City Staff would be responsible for coordinating this effort while working with a volunteer committee, consultants, and other stakeholders.

The **project outline** closely resembles the overall layout of the Plan itself. It kicked off in late 2017 and continued into 2018 with a review of past planning efforts. From there, it took inventory of current circumstances and solicited public opinions.

As 2018 closed, the project shifted toward future planning with the establishment of a vision statement. In 2019, detailed review began and discussion occurred on socio-economic topics and future trends. The project then spent time addressing physical elements of the Town Center, including community resources, land use, and transportation. A large focus was on the designation of opportunity sites and how they should develop and contribute to the future of the Town Center.

In late 2019 and early 2020, the project worked to develop a community brand and associated marketing materials that would complement future investments in planning and management of the Town Center. The project began to review drafts of the Plan in Fall 2020 and completed its assignment in Winter of 2021.



TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE

In Fall 2017, the Troutdale City Council established an ad-hoc Town Center Committee to steer the efforts in creating the new plan. The Committee was initially comprised of 21 individuals, including representatives from the City's Planning Commission, Citizens Advisory Committee and Historic Landmarks Commission in addition to several directly appointed members that included residents, business owners, real estate professionals and other community leaders.

Over a three-year period, the Committee met regularly on a near monthly basis to take inventory of existing conditions, solicit feedback from community, establish a vision, contemplate issues, explore opportunity sites, and participate in community branding efforts. The results of their considerable input are contained within this Plan.

The Committee's membership reflected a desire to provide a balance of knowledge, interests, and opinions in order to establish credibility with the community and give Staff a comprehensive body to provide planning guidance. The Committee originally included:

- A member of City Council
- Two members of the Planning Commission
- Two members of the Citizens Advisory Committee
- Two members of the Parks Advisory Committee
- Three members of the Historic Landmarks Commission
- Several board members of the Troutdale Historical Society
- Local business leaders and the Chamber of Commerce
- The principal of Troutdale Elementary School
- Property owners, managers, and real estate agents
- Law enforcement
- Interested residents

The Committee met for the first time in October 2017 and met regularly throughout the project. The Committee also hosted several public engagement and outreach efforts which are discussed at length in a subsequent section. Although there was some attrition from the original membership for a variety of reasons, the Committee members by in large served in a dedicated fashion and provided profound feedback and a commitment to teamwork throughout the planning effort. Those who wound up dropping off the committee still provided valuable insight and contributions to this Plan.

STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS

In addition to the Town Center Committee, several critical stakeholders and partners contributed to the Plan. They included other departments within the City of Troutdale, other government agencies in the region, particularly Multnomah County for transportation matters and Metro for future considerations in transportation and parks and nature considerations.

Other stakeholders contributing to this Plan included non-governmental groups, such as professionals in real estate and economics. It also included community- and interest-based groups, ranging from visual artists to avid cyclists. Their input and passion for Troutdale helped to underscore the specific public engagement efforts.

The City of Troutdale relied upon the expertise and talents of several consultants through partnerships. These partners worked directly with portions of the Plan or whose work partially intersected with features in this plan. Their contributions are found in discussions of economic inputs, forecasts of housing need, ideas for adaptive reuse, and renderings of branding and marketing materials for improving pride in place.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

A long-range plan like the Town Center Plan is only successful if the community at large has had a hand in crafting it. Public engagement is a critical component in any planning exercise, but for many who provided feedback, it was personal. Troutdale matters to them.

Throughout much of the process, the Committee engaged in efforts to solicit public feedback to ensure that its interests were being heard.

The Town Center Committee was able to determine certain key findings that stemmed from public outreach of community stakeholders in addition to information and analysis provided by Staff. These findings helped to inspire the recommendations set forth in the plan.

There were several strategies the Committee incorporated to solicit public feedback:

- Open houses
- Surveys
- Event Booths
- Media & social media content
- Citizen board engagement
- Presentations





OPEN HOUSES

Three separate open houses were held by the Committee in 2018 to solicit public feedback. Nearly 200 people attended these open houses, which generally lasted three to four hours. Feedback from the community at these open houses were extremely instrumental in forming the Town Center Vision and developing strategies to establish opportunity sites and focus on community branding. Feedback was also extremely helpful in developing preferences and an initial concept for the urban renewal area.

The **first open house** occurred on the evening of January 30, 2018 at the Troutdale Police Community Center (TPCC) and was attended by roughly 90 people. As this was the first open house, the topics were generally broad in scale and feedback was provided to help establish qualitative analysis of existing conditions. This open house also provided an opportunity for the Columbia Gorge bike hub project to provide information about their efforts to establish a hub at Depot Park.

The **second open house** occurred on the evening of May 23, 2018 at the TPCC and was attended by roughly 40 people. Similar to the first open house, discussion topics and shared information were still kept generally broad, however there was more of a focus to help steer the Committee's future conversation towards developing the Town Center Vision. Local restaurants provided support and offered deals for attendees to visit their establishments after attending.

The **third open house** occurred on the evening of September 26, 2018 and was held at the newly constructed Troutdale Elementary School. Roughly 60 people attended this session, which was more tailored to get specific feedback on guided questions that were displayed at panels located throughout a multi-purpose room. The particular questions that were asked included:

- What should go at the intersection of the Historic Columbia River Highway and 257th Drive?
- Can Mayor's Square be more engaging?
- How do we balance market real estate demand from the desire of existing residents?
- How do we handle parking?
- How do you get a grocery store to come?
- How do we make the Town Center attractive for both residents and tourists?

SURVEYS

Two different online surveys launched at separate times during the planning process.

The first survey was released in 2018 and occurred in concert with the first two public open houses and was instrumental in identifying people's general impressions of the community and to guide the creation of the Town Center Vision. This survey garnered approximately 80 engagements and largely confirmed the feedback the Committee received at the Open Houses. Survey takers included a solid mix of residents, business owners, and visitors.

The second survey was released in 2019 as community branding efforts began to take place. Roughly 60 engagements occurred via survey. By this time, the Town Center Vision had been developed, so this survey was meant to confirm the Committee's understandings about people's impressions of Troutdale. It was helpful in developing the brand statement and themes.

EVENT BOOTHS

Committee members and City Staff set up information tables at two events in 2018 and one in 2019 which allowed for roughly 80 unique interactions with citizens.

Troutdale Elementary School hosted an Art Walk in early June 2018 to showcase student artwork and to pay homage to the former school building, which was to be torn down that summer. Committee members set up a booth that contained information about the planning process, the District, and opportunities for visitors to chat about their interests. A water tower coloring contest was held, along with a contest to guess the height of the water tower at the urban renewal area.

Troutdale's annual SummerFest is held regularly in July. In 2018, the Committee set up a tent booth in Glenn Otto Park in conjunction with another city effort to discuss hazard mitigation risks in the community. This effort garnered about 60 unique interactions, including several with youth. In 2019, a similar outreach at SummerFest was made with a larger focus on potential ideas for the urban renewal area site development, garnering an additional 40 unique interactions.

MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Staff contributed several articles that documented the progress and highlighted engagement opportunities within the **Troutdale Champion** newsletter that is sent six times a year to utility customers in the City. Some of the articles featured full two-page spreads in the Champion, documenting the feedback received at the Open Houses, the development of the Town Center Vision, and of progress made in contemplating the future of the urban renewal area.

Advertising for open houses and survey opportunities occurred on **social media**, predominantly on the City's official Facebook page. This led to additional engagement that normally would not have occurred in traditional methods of notification.

CITIZEN BOARD ENGAGEMENT

The Town Center Committee was set up so that several of the seats were reserved for citizens that were already participating in an existing board. This allowed for these members to serve as de facto ambassadors between their two assignments and provided the opportunity for them to give feedback through the lens of their respective committee.

City Council feedback was particularly instrumental through their dual role as the Urban Renewal Agency Board. Several presentations were made throughout the project updating them on real estate transactions, demolition plans, and future planning ideas. Their input helped the Town Center Committee shape the development of the concept and base expectations for the site. Councilors were also often in attendance at open houses and participated in the community branding discussions.

The Troutdale **Planning Commission** received periodic updates from Staff about ideas that were being developed and how they could impact future long-range planning or development code standards. Receiving feedback from the Commission was instrumental in establishing assumptions for future land uses on opportunity sites. Their role will increase dramatically as implementation of this plan sets forth in the coming years.

Citizen Advisory Committee members were quite reliable in coming to open houses and offering excellent feedback. They also helped out at event booths and helped to get the word out on surveys and open house participation.

The **Parks Advisory Committee** was particularly instrumental in helping to shape discussions for the future of the park and trail in the Urban Renewal Area. The committee hosted their own open house for trail planning in 2019 which was attended by nearly 50 people. Their role and input will be especially important with a future update to the Parks Master Plan which has direct implications on at least three of the Town Center Plan's opportunity sites.

The **Historic Landmarks Commission** provided a good anchor to remind the Committee that history matters and that potential future development should give deference to what is already here. Their members' contributions were especially helpful in adding adaptive reuse concepts for historic resource properties and ensuring the scale of future development doesn't categorically change the nature of the Town Center.





PRESENTATIONS

City staff would periodically present updates of the Town Center Plan to a variety of audiences, ranging from intimate Rotary Club meetings to the Governor's Regional Solutions team consisting of appointed state officials from a variety of agencies.

Given the comprehensive nature of this plan, presentations could focus in on particular topics of interest, especially urban renewal, transportation, and opportunity site possibilities. In 2020 alone, general comprehensive updates were given to the City Council, the Multnomah County commissioner and staff, the Metro Councilor and staff, the East Multnomah County Transportation Committee, and the East Metro Economic Alliance's developers forum, which attracted nearly 100 people in real estate development and related fields.

Feedback received from these presentations provided additional ideas to incorporate into the plans but did not fundamentally change the Town Center Vision or any of the basic assumptions or core details of the Plan.

1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

PHYSICAL SITUATION

As of 2020, the Town Center District is a mostly developed area in a suburban setting that is connected by several arterial and collector streets. Several larger lots within the District remain vacant, while smaller infill or re-developable lots exist throughout the Town Center.

The surrounding residential areas to the east and south are largely established and generally lower density than what is typical of a town center setting from a regional perspective. The residential areas to the west across 257th Drive include a mix of older residential areas of apartments and single-family homes along with newer residential “middle housing” development of attached homes and townhomes. Residential vacancy rates were at historic lows. The American Community Survey reported a 1.3 percent vacancy rate for the entire city. New townhome development in Downtown and the Halsey neighborhood was occurring at the time of this Plan’s adoption.

At the core of the District is Downtown, which consists of both historic and recently-built structures. Downtown itself was largely embellished in the 1990s with a significant infill project on the north side of Historic Columbia River Highway. In the 2010s, increased focus on residential development took place. The financial success of the Discovery Block townhomes located along 2nd Street between Dora Avenue and Harlow Avenue has served as particular inspiration for real estate investors since 2018.

Commercial tenancy has been generally stable, however certain businesses and properties have begun to deteriorate due to neglect or lack of interest. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 has caused further short- to medium-term concern about commercial viability.



QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This type of information source comes from actual data and factual circumstances obtained from verifiable sources in the public and private sectors. This project utilized the following sources and methodologies for obtaining quantitative information:

Census Bureau & Other Federal Sources

- 2010 Census data
- Annualized Census estimates (extrapolated data)
- American Community Survey (ACS)
- Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program
- Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

State & Regional Sources

- Geographic Information System (GIS) data
- Oregon Population Forecast Program (Portland State University)
- 2011 State of the Centers Report (Metro)
- 2040 Growth Concept (Metro)
- Tax Assessors Office (Multnomah County)

Local Sources

- 1998 Town Center Plan (including 1996 Demographic Profile)
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Business license filings
- Land use application case files
- Building permit data
- Utility billing

Quantitative information can help establish a base line for all other analyses and serves as a common platform in which interpretations and conclusions can be made from an informed position. Certain types of information lend themselves to quantitative analysis. The following metrics were considered and are typical of a planning project of this type:

- Population & demographics
- Housing
- Economic activity
- Traffic analysis

Details on each metric are discussed within this section.

POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

According to the Census Bureau, the City of Troutdale's estimated population in 2016 was 16,617. Because the Town Center district does not directly overlay with a Census tract, it is difficult to obtain an accurate and official population estimate for the district. However, there are methods for obtaining a good-faith estimate.

In the 1996 Demographic Profile that accompanied the 1998 Town Center Plan, **the population of the District was 922** using 1994 population estimates. A forecast suggested that the population of the Town Center would grow "by over 2,000 residents" by 2015. These estimates appear to reflect the rapid growth that was ongoing in the City at the time along with an ambitious build-out scenario of available land. While it is safe to assume that the growth did not occur at the clip anticipated, the snapshot population estimate was rather accurate, based on Census reporting and utility hookup counts that existed at that time.

Metro's 2011 State of the Centers Report indicates an **estimated district population of 1,924 in 2011**, which the Town Center Committee believes to be **too high**. While growth did occur in the 15 years between the 1996 Demographic Profile and the 2011 snapshot, the rosy estimates were not reflective of the pace required. This may be in part to the slowdown in the economy as experienced in the Great Recession between 2007 and 2010. No building permits were issued at all for new residential construction in the Town Center in 2008 or 2010, whereas 31 were issued in 2007 and 101 were issued in 2006. Since 2010, building activity has resumed, but at a more modest pace. A total of 25 residential lots were developed between 2010 and 2017.

Metro's 2017 State of the Centers Report indicates an **estimated district population of 1,176 in 2017**. That estimate is generated through regression models that utilize a multitude of data sets and estimations. The Town Center Committee believes this number to be **too low**, due to the historic population reporting performed in previous years indicating a higher population figure, without significant reduction in the district's housing stock. In the 2011 State of the Centers Report, the population was listed as 1,924.

Further assumptions can be made using a combination of GIS data, tax assessor records, and utility billing statements to get an accurate number. Using this method, a population estimate of **1,300** was reached. Taking the average of the two Metro estimates and internal modeling, **an adjusted, estimated figure of 1,400** will be utilized for this Plan, or roughly 2.8 persons per dwelling unit.



HOUSING

Housing within a town center district is often an overlooked aspect of determining the success of a downtown and its environs. It is especially important to have a critical mass of people nearby to support existing and prospective businesses. Certain businesses such as grocery stores will rely on their specific catchment area to determine if there is enough of a market to support their investments. Popularity with visitors alone often cannot displace the need to have everyday people nearby.

Residential Density

Within the Town Center district, GIS data indicates about 500 residential lots with about 800 total dwelling units existing as of 2020, ranging from single-family homes on a single lot to a 224-unit apartment complex. This figure also includes undeveloped lots but excludes lots with commercial or mixed-use characteristics.

Roughly **130 net acres of land** within the Town Center District (close to 50 percent) is currently zoned for exclusive or predominantly residential uses. This figure excludes areas that have natural constraint overlays for wetlands, floodplains, or steep slopes. The data suggests that the current residential density is roughly 6.2 dwelling units per acre. Assuming that an additional 100 housing units are to be built by 2022 based on pending development applications in 2020, that figure rises to 6.9 dwelling units per acre. Adding in units that are currently located in non-residential zoning districts (roughly 50) brings up the figure to about **7.3 dwelling units per acre** for about 950 total dwelling units.

This prospective figure remains **just below** the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan standards for averaging 8.5 dwelling units per acre for "medium density residential" land uses. This classification accommodates smaller lot detached single-family dwellings (below 7,000 square feet in lot size) and so-called "middle housing" typologies like duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.

Medium density residential is seen as the base level for residential density in a town center district for the 2040 Growth Concept. Although the Town Center contains high density residential development, there is also low density residential development based on historic development patterns which evens out the density calculation.

This figure is also **significantly lower** than many of the other town centers in the region, which typically average around 15 to 20 dwelling units per net residential acre. Some of these town centers with higher residential densities have proven to be more successful in recent years in attracting and retaining commercial services and community services that the public indicated a desire to have. They are also typically better served by transit, which often relies on a 15 dwelling units per acre calculation to financially justify regular service.

Increasing density to match comparator town centers should not be the goal. Troutdale's built environment and peripheral location is unique. However, acknowledging the importance of increasing residential density to better support existing and prospective commercial and community service uses is critical in setting a course for development possibility in the coming 20 years.

Housing Types

Troutdale's Town Center has a relatively healthy balance and mixture of single-family detached, multi-family apartment, and so-called "middle housing" typologies.



Single-Family Detached homes have historically been the residential standard not only within the Town Center but also throughout the city. Within the Town Center, they predominate particularly in the Hungry Hill neighborhood, with additional placements in the Halsey and Eastside areas. They typically are arranged on lots of 7,000 square feet or more (up to six dwelling units per acre). While some detached homes are on smaller lots and are thus considered medium density, a sizeable number of detached homes in the Town Center are considered low density.



Multi-Family units typically refer to apartments (which are rented) but can also be condominiums (which are owned). In the Town Center, multi-family units are found predominantly in the Halsey neighborhood, though some exist in the other areas. Historically, these units began to be built in this area in several waves, beginning in the 1980s. Some of these units are income-restricted whereas others are market rate. There has been no significant multi-family development within the District in over a decade, and several of the complexes have not been recently remodeled.



Middle Housing units are defined as those housing types in between single-family detached homes and multi-family units. They are effectively considered medium-density residential, typically averaging between 8 to 12 dwelling units per acre. They include duplexes, triplexes, townhomes (attached single-family residential) and cottage cluster housing styles. Popular in the early 20th century, these prototypes had been written out of many regulatory standards until recently. In the case of the Troutdale Town Center, middle housing not only exists throughout the district, but also has seen an uptick of development interest since 2010.

With the increase of land and construction costs, the trends across the Portland metropolitan area in 2020 suggest that medium and high-density residential development are the likeliest outcomes of development interest. This trend can be disruptive to a lower density environment that has historically defined Troutdale's building patterns.

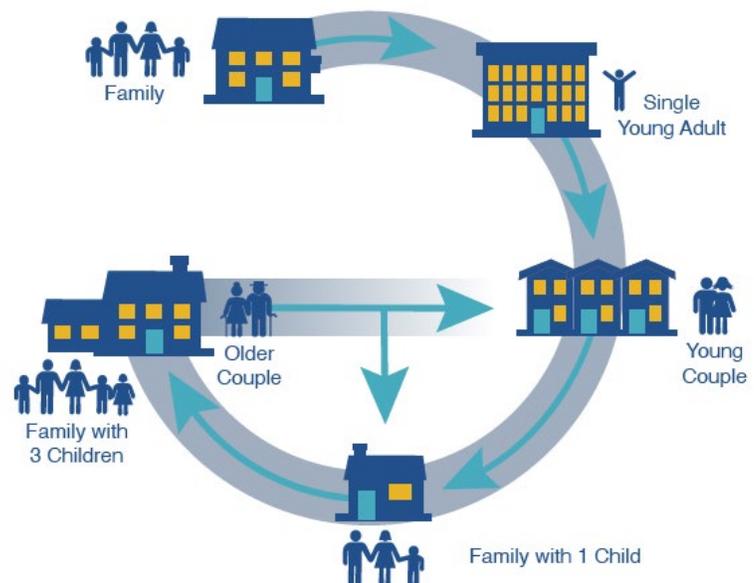
The passage of House Bill 2001, which effectively removes prohibitions on middle housing typologies in single-family residential zoning districts might further incentivize redevelopment of lower density residential properties to achieve "highest and best use" in development code terms. "Highest and best use" however may not be viewed the same way in terms of community design and feel. Without providing options to steer new development in logical areas, existing areas may experience highly disruptive changes to a neighborhood's character as underdeveloped lots become redeveloped.

Housing Needs

In 2020, the City of Troutdale adopted an updated Housing Needs Analysis, which is an official report required by the state to address housing supply over a 20-year period. The results of the study suggested the following key points:

- Troutdale has sufficient capacity to accommodate a required 720 new dwelling units by 2040
- Of the 720 new units, nearly 270 units within the Town Center district are anticipated to be developed by 2023. At the time of this Plan's adoption, an additional 240 units were recently completed or under construction in areas outside of the Town Center, leaving 210 units across the City to be that are required to be accommodated for future development.
- Troutdale's Town Center has undeveloped areas (particularly the urban renewal site) that can accommodate much of that remaining figure without having to redevelop existing built areas.
- Troutdale has specific housing needs for low income and high-income earning households (see image on right)

Although historic development patterns in east Multnomah County suggest that higher density housing is often geared to low income households, there is increasingly a market sought for higher end medium and high density housing options in the form of luxury apartments or condominiums. This can be especially attractive to older households that may wish to downsize from their existing larger single-family home but may wish to stay in Troutdale. It can also be attractive to younger upwardly-mobile households for single adults, couples, or small families.



Another trend that was referred to in the Housing Needs Analysis is the aging of the baby-boomer (born 1946-1964) generation, which will continue to enter retirement age within the next 20 years. This generation contributed largely to the overall housing development and investment in Troutdale, which is increasingly becoming more balanced with Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Millennial (born 1981-1995) households. Although the median age of Troutdale residents is 35.1, the average age for homeowners skews older.

Providing housing opportunities for senior and assisted living in addition to multi-generational housing solutions through an increase of accessory dwelling units (ADU) will likely increase in the coming years.

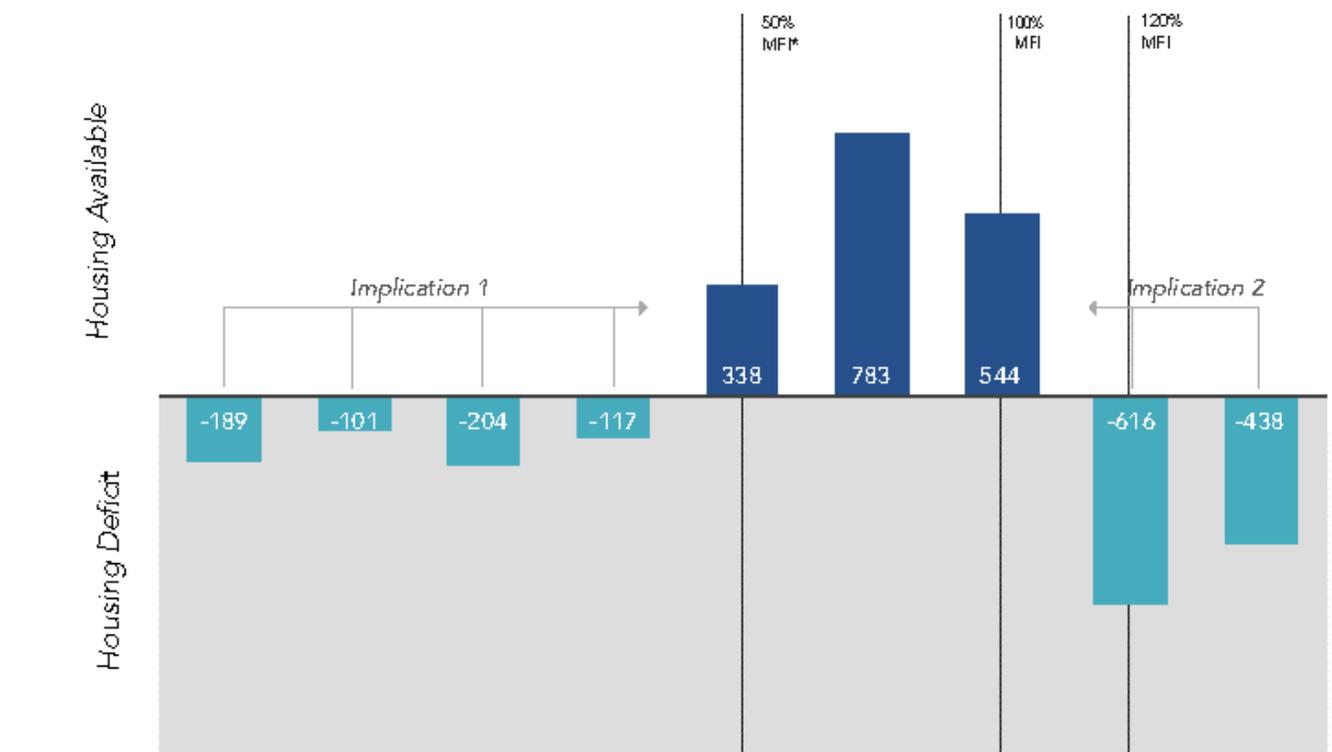
Housing Affordability Table

Source: 2020 Troutdale Housing Needs Analysis

Troutdale currently has a deficit of housing affordable to households earning less than \$35,000, and an even larger deficit for households earning more than \$100,000.

For lower income households, the types of housing with a deficit in Troutdale include more affordable housing types such as income-restricted government-subsidized housing, multifamily products, and more affordable single-family homes (e.g., tiny homes, cottages, manufactured housing).

Troutdale also shows a substantial need for higher-amenity housing types for households earning more than \$100,000 per year or more. Higher-amenity housing types include single-family detached housing, single-family attached housing (e.g., townhomes and row houses), and higher-end multifamily products (including condominiums).



Household Income	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$14,999	\$15,000 - \$24,999	\$25,000 - \$34,999	\$35,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$74,999	\$75,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 or more
# Households	430	190	289	410	923	1,124	857	1,169	514
# Surplus / Deficit Units	189	101	204	117	338	783	544	616	438
Share of Units in each Income Category	4%	2%	1%	5%	21%	32%	24%	9%	1%

*Median Family Income for a family of four.

Implication 1

Some lower income households live in housing that is more expensive than they can afford because affordable housing is not available. These households are cost burdened.

Implication 2

Some higher income households choose housing that costs less than they can afford. This may be the result of the household's preference or it may be the result of a lack of higher cost and higher amenity housing that would better suit their preferences.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

With the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 and an uncertain economic future or growth trajectory at the time of this Plan’s adoption, economic activity information has the risk of being outdated. A recommended implementation action is to have a new economic analysis performed by 2025 once the extent of the economic impact of the coronavirus is better understood and documented. The information contained herein should be used as a general snapshot on the economic conditions prior to the pandemic and are useful for establishing future expectations.

Economic Study

In 2018 as a parallel effort to this Plan and in conjunction with regional work aligned with the Main Streets on Halsey corridor planning efforts, the City of Troutdale commissioned Johnson Economics, a local economic research firm to perform a retail analysis and commercial opportunities study. The analysis established the following conclusions:

Consumer Profile

The City of Troutdale is considered a middle-income community that is nearly identical to the regional median income. Higher income areas exist to the south and east of the Downtown, with areas to the southwest having generally lower income levels. The growth of Troutdale as an employment center has had benefits, though it also indicated an increase among low- and middle-income households in the East County region. The firm stated in the report that “all else being equal, higher income levels generate stronger support for downtown establishments.”

HOUSEHOLDS		AVERAGE AGE		AVERAGE HH SIZE		MEDIAN INCOME		\$100K+ HOUSEHOLDS		% 4+ YEARS HIGHER ED	
Hollywood *	46,841	Lake Oswego	44	Cornelius	3.22	Lake Oswego	\$112,861	Hollywood *	15,420	Lake Oswego	68%
Montavilla *	38,991	Clatskanie	42	Hillsboro	3.20	Willamette *	\$85,726	Montavilla *	8,682	Hollywood *	61%
Lents *	28,281	Milwaukie	41	Forest Grove	2.98	Hollywood *	\$74,477	Beaverton	6,210	Willamette *	52%
Beaverton	26,298	Gladstone	40	Newberg	2.95	Oregon City	\$70,384	Tigard	6,101	Sellwood *	51%
Tigard	21,545	Sellwood *	39	Troutdale	2.84	Canby	\$66,951	Kenton *	4,674	Kenton *	45%
Gresham	20,955	Tigard	39	St. Johns *	2.79	Sellwood *	\$66,418	Milwaukie	4,306	Montavilla *	43%
Kenton *	19,374	Montavilla *	39	McMinnville	2.76	Tigard	\$64,237	Sellwood *	4,222	Tigard	41%
Milwaukie	19,208	Hollywood *	39	Canby	2.75	Hillsboro	\$63,902	Lake Oswego	4,045	Beaverton	38%
Sellwood *	14,447	St. Helens	39	Lents *	2.74	Sandy	\$62,851	Oregon City	4,021	Milwaukie	38%
Oregon City	14,013	Willamette *	38	Willamette *	2.73	Milwaukie	\$62,330	Gresham	4,002	St. Johns *	38%
Hillsboro	13,843	McMinnville	38	Kenton *	2.70	Gladstone	\$58,462	Lents *	3,643	Oregon City	31%
Gladstone	11,970	Oregon City	38	St. Helens	2.70	Kenton *	\$58,258	Hillsboro	3,490	Newberg	28%
St. Johns *	11,394	Canby	38	Gresham	2.69	Newberg	\$57,347	Willamette *	2,444	Canby	27%
McMinnville	10,786	Gresham	37	Oregon City	2.69	Beaverton	\$57,056	Gladstone	2,419	Hillsboro	26%
Troutdale	9,355	Sandy	37	Sandy	2.67	Troutdale	\$56,695	St. Johns *	2,166	Lents *	25%
Newberg	8,757	Beaverton	37	Beaverton	2.51	Montavilla *	\$56,437	Troutdale	1,987	Forest Grove	24%
Forest Grove	8,175	Lents *	37	Clatskanie	2.51	Forest Grove	\$55,071	Newberg	1,835	Troutdale	23%
Lake Oswego	7,884	Newberg	37	Gladstone	2.50	Clatskanie	\$54,249	Canby	1,795	Gladstone	22%
Canby	6,988	Forest Grove	36	Lake Oswego	2.46	Gresham	\$53,503	McMinnville	1,693	McMinnville	21%
St. Helens	6,302	Cornelius	36	Tigard	2.42	St. Johns *	\$53,410	Forest Grove	1,562	Gresham	21%
Cornelius	5,864	Troutdale	35	Montavilla *	2.40	St. Helens	\$51,118	St. Helens	1,169	Sandy	19%
Willamette *	5,334	Kenton *	35	Sellwood *	2.37	McMinnville	\$50,002	Sandy	954	St. Helens	16%
Sandy	4,647	Hillsboro	34	Milwaukie	2.35	Lents *	\$48,149	Cornelius	643	Clatskanie	15%
Clatskanie	1,614	St. Johns *	34	Hollywood *	2.30	Cornelius	\$47,174	Clatskanie	295	Cornelius	14%

* Non-CBD commercial areas. All are located within Portland except for Willamette, which is in West Linn.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, JOHNSON ECONOMICS

Commercial Sectors

According to the study, the distribution of three main commercial types in 2016 (services, goods, and eating/drinking establishments) is generally on par when compared to other downtown areas across the region. However, downtown Troutdale has fewer establishments and lower employment counts.

Market Share of Downtown Troutdale Commercial Space by Type



SOURCE: CoStar, Oregon Employment Department, JOHNSON ECONOMICS

ESTABLISHMENTS		EMPLOYMENT		GOODS		EATING/DRINKING		SERVICES		ACCOMMODATION	
Hollywood	166	Hollywood	1,444	Hollywood	493	McMinnville	468	Hollywood	682	McMinnville*	77
Beaverton	132	Beaverton	1,184	Beaverton	289	Lake Oswego	424	Beaverton	560	Lake Oswego	15
Lake Oswego	113	McMinnville	1,182	Sellwood	233	Beaverton	327	McMinnville	450	Beaverton	8
McMinnville	107	Lake Oswego	952	McMinnville	187	Hollywood	269	Hillsboro	435	Canby	3
Hillsboro	98	Newberg	660	Newberg	181	Gresham	263	Lake Oswego	382	Kenton	1
Newberg	90	Sellwood	638	Sandy	165	St. Johns	259	Tigard	313	Hollywood	0
Oregon City	84	Hillsboro	616	St. Johns	161	Willamette	248	Newberg	257	Newberg	0
St. Johns	79	Sandy	610	Canby	140	Oregon City	232	Canby	237	Sellwood	0
Sellwood	67	St. Johns	571	Lake Oswego	131	Newberg	222	Milwaukie	236	Hillsboro	0
Sandy	66	Tigard	527	Hillsboro	81	Sandy	222	Sandy	223	Sandy	0
Milwaukie	65	Gresham	488	St. Helens	80	Sellwood	205	Sellwood	200	St. Johns	0
Canby	64	Canby	475	Montavilla	77	Montavilla	180	Gresham	199	Tigard	0
Gresham	60	Oregon City	460	Tigard	64	Milwaukie	156	Oregon City	176	Gresham	0
Willamette	60	Milwaukie	451	Milwaukie	59	Forest Grove	152	Willamette	163	Oregon City	0
Tigard	55	Willamette	446	Forest Grove	53	Tigard	150	Cornelius	163	Milwaukie	0
Forest Grove	46	St. Helens	312	Oregon City	52	Kenton	136	St. Johns	151	Willamette	0
St. Helens	44	Forest Grove	304	Kenton	35	St. Helens	102	St. Helens	130	St. Helens	0
Montavilla	36	Montavilla	297	Willamette	35	Hillsboro	100	Forest Grove	99	Forest Grove	0
Kenton	32	Kenton	263	Troutdale	27	Canby	95	Kenton	91	Montavilla	0
Troutdale	26	Cornelius	205	Gresham	26	Troutdale	67	Troutdale	46	Cornelius	0
Gladstone	17	Troutdale	140	Clatskanie	12	Lents	40	Montavilla	40	Troutdale	0
Lents	12	Lents	69	Cornelius	9	Clatskanie	34	Gladstone	38	Lents	0
Cornelius	12	Gladstone	61	Gladstone	1	Cornelius	33	Lents	28	Gladstone	0
Clatskanie	10	Clatskanie	58	Lents	1	Gladstone	22	Clatskanie	12	Clatskanie	0

* Accommodation in McMinnville includes restaurant/bar employment at the McMenamins Hotel Oregon.

SOURCE: Oregon Employment Department, JOHNSON ECONOMICS

Supportable Employment

Johnson Economics performed an analysis where they estimated the commercial employment Downtown Troutdale theoretically should be able to support based on the demographic makeup of its surrounding population. The analysis uses employment-to-population ratios in key demographic segments, calculated from the downtown sample.

Though based on the resident population, the employment ratios reflect some visitor support, as several of the downtowns are partially supported by visitors. In terms of resident support, the analysis might overestimate what Downtown Troutdale can realistically support based on current population figures, as it is based on downtown areas that generally have stronger or more central locations relative to the residential areas they serve.

The analysis found that the following commercial sectors could see growth:

- Limited-service restaurants (also known as fast-casual or non-waiter establishments)
- Full-service restaurants
- Coffee/juice/ice cream shops
- Bars/pubs
- Mail/Delivery services
- Bank/Financial institution

General Conclusions

The report found that Troutdale had a “small but relatively upscale downtown” with a “tourist-oriented profile”. It also stated that the “pedestrian core is too limited to sustain longer visits and lacks connections to sites of historic cultural, or natural importance” and as a result is “Not often mentioned as a ‘must’ destination in tourist guides that cover the Portland region and the Columbia Gorge”.

Additionally, the study found that downtown Troutdale had “**less of a resident-orientation** than most other historic downtowns in the region, and the synergy between establishments is more limited than vis-à-vis visitors.” The study suggested that part of the issue of not having as much residential support is geographic, with it being at the edge of residential areas and adjacent to a freeway as opposed to being surrounded in all cardinal directions by residential neighborhoods. Other factors suggested was a lack of key resident services like libraries, post office, banks along with an undersupply of professional and medical offices. The report also indicated that dining establishments have more of a boutique profile with less opportunities for more casual dining options attractive to workers and families.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

Traffic Counts

Within the Town Center, Multnomah County maintains 257th Avenue, Buxton Road, Halsey Street, and both east and west sections of the Historic Columbia River Highway. The City of Troutdale maintains most of the local streets, with a few private roads and driveways making up the balance of the network.

The most typical data obtained for traffic analysis are traffic counts. Though often considered qualitative, level of service (LOS) ratings are also helpful in determining traffic impact. LOS assigns letter ratings for traffic conditions ranging from A (free-flow) to E (gridlock). Both the City and County have LOS information. Of particular interest for planning purposes are "peak hour" LOS, which suggests how a road handles traffic.

Levels of service observed across the Town Center are generally seen as being within the acceptable range, though a few intersections can be troublesome. The most congested area is the intersection of 257th Drive and the Historic Columbia River Highway, particularly in the P.M. peak hour which corresponds with afternoon commute. The increased reliance on 257th Drive as a freight route to accommodate industrial development has negatively contributed to this situation, however the intersection was experiencing congestion beforehand.

Another trouble spot was turning maneuvers at the non-signalized intersection of Buxton Road and the Historic Columbia River Highway. County transportation engineers began working with the City on potential solutions in 2018, including a dedicated right-turn lane which was established in 2019. Further "signal warrant" analysis continues to determine what other improvements could occur, including partial or complete full-way stops or future signalization.

Increasing residential densities in close proximity to commercial services may reduce auto reliance, but the City should be realistic in understanding that not all trips can occur by foot or by bike. Any prospective development of significance must have a robust traffic study to provide an understanding of potential traffic impacts.

The COVID-19 Pandemic which began in 2020 has significantly altered traffic counts to a level that has not been fully understood. As more people shifted towards working from home arrangements, ebbs and flows of observed traffic impacts have changed. Reliance on delivery vehicles has also shifted.

It is anticipated that updated traffic counts and analysis that is derived from those counts will occur as the pandemic subsides. Therefore previous analysis performed on traffic counts have not been included within the Plan but may be added for a future update to the City's Transportation System Plan and as an appendix to this Plan.

Commuting Patterns

The Housing Needs Analysis commissioned by the City was able to observe commuting patterns for Troutdale residents and workers. Although the data was not filtered for the Town Center district, it is presumed that the percentages are not significantly varied from the balance of the city.

As with traffic counts, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered commuting patterns to a level that has not been fully understood. As more people shifted towards work-from-home arrangements, commuting patterns and habits have changed, particularly in the cases of mandatory or voluntary lockdowns of commercial office space.

The data below was taken largely from data obtained via the Census Bureau's American Community Survey and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data in 2017. It may be of benefit to have new information on commuting patterns be considered during a future update of this Plan.

A vast majority of Troutdale residents leave the city limits to go to work. Close to **94 percent** of residents with employment leave the City to go to work, with Gresham and Portland being the primary destinations for work, though other jurisdictions in the region (including Clark County, Washington) were also listed.

Since 2010, Troutdale has emerged as a major regional jobs center. The presence of the city's two largest employers (FedEx Ground and Amazon, shown on the right) alone have brought more than 3,000 jobs to the city. With close to 7,100 people working within Troutdale limits, only **six percent** of workers live in Troutdale proper. About one-quarter of workers come from Portland and 20 percent come from Gresham, with the balance from other locations in the metropolitan region.



Although the Town Center is not considered an employment center, commuting patterns are important to consider. For one, many commuters utilize roadways that cross through the district, contributing to traffic that ultimately does not directly benefit the district. Increasing residential housing options in the Town Center for those who work in Troutdale could allow for reduced commute and a higher share of workers who could commute to/from work in an alternative fashion, either via carpool, transit, bike, or in some cases walking.

Successful town centers often have a strong correlation of people working in the same community (or same district) where they live. This leads to increased time spent within a community, increasing the likelihood of commercial and community services being utilized. Studies from the Urban Land Institute and the American Planning Association point to higher levels of satisfaction of pride in place and overall quality of life for people with shorter commutes.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Data is important for justifying decisions, but direct written or oral commentary is instrumental in having the public believe that their opinions have been heard and recognized. Through the public outreach performed at the open houses, conducted by the surveys, and elicited through other means, the Committee obtained hundreds of comments. Below is a summary of this feedback.

WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD “TROUTDALE”?

Oftentimes, if the name of a place is suggested, people may automatically think of one characteristic or image that represents them. For instance, saying the word “Paris” may immediately make people think of the Eifel Tower, or “Arizona” may bring up the idea of retired people in a desert setting.

If someone is familiar with a place – either living there, working there, or having some knowledge of it – cannot immediately have something comes to mind, it suggests that the community might be unremarkable or blended in. Places that are fortunate to have spectacular surroundings, a memorable built or natural environment, and ones that have demonstrated community pride do not suffer from a lack of immediate connection. Troutdale and the Town Center should strive to be such a place.

The following word cloud illustrates people’s immediate association when the word Troutdale is said during outreach in 2018:

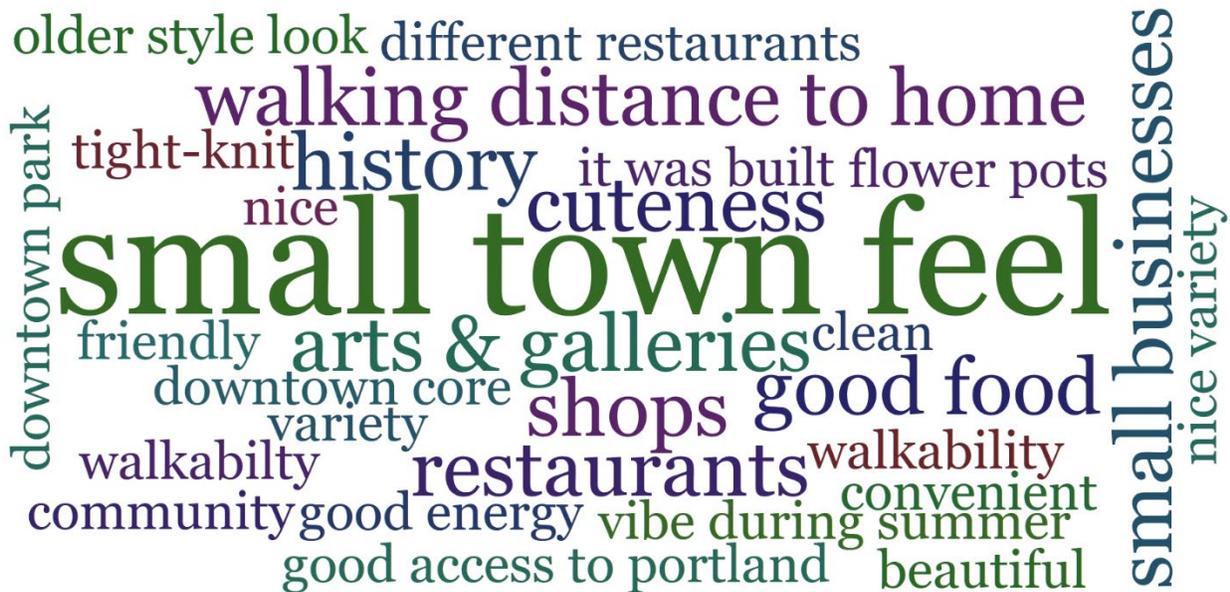


Other than “home” reply which consisted only of residents or nearby residents in unincorporated areas, there was not much differentiation on other answers between residents (who did not say home), businesses, or other stakeholders on what type of answer was provided. While there are certainly answers that relate to the Town Center and are positive in nature, a larger number of responses cited wind, which is often seen as a negative connotation. Equally concerning was “no response”, suggesting people didn’t have an immediate impression. This is not to say there were not opinions offered, but the lack of immediate connection speaks to an opportunity for the Town Center Plan to pursue by setting forth a vision and building up community pride in the next 20 years.

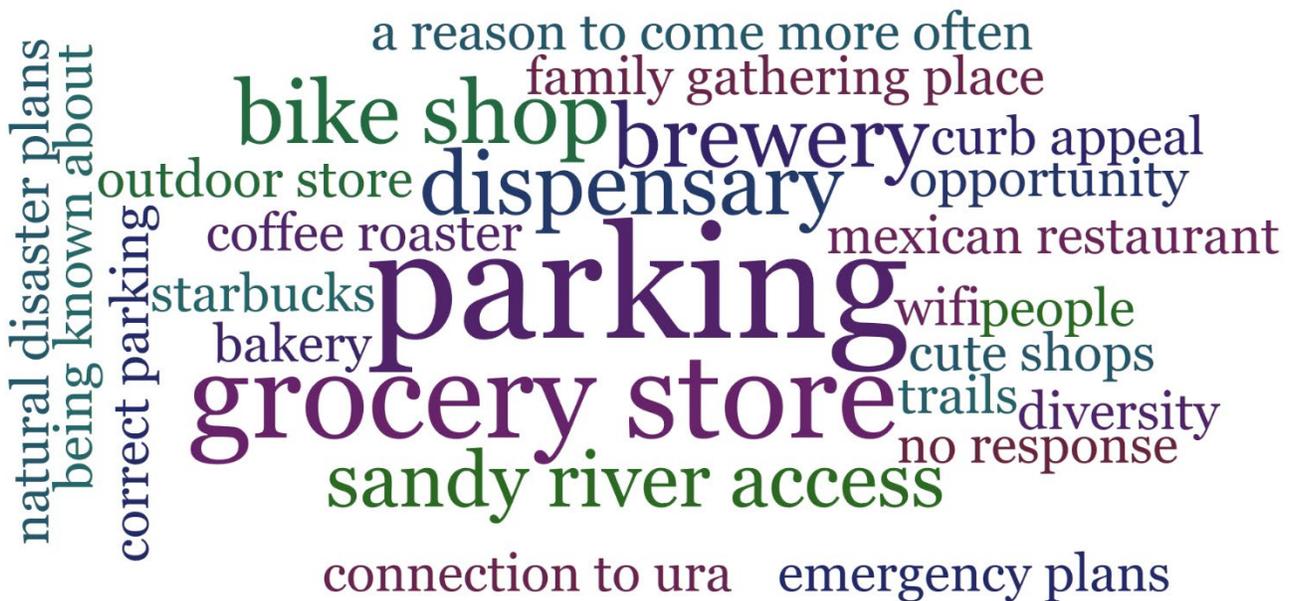
SWOT ANALYSIS

Perhaps the most critical feedback received came through asking what were the Town Center's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The following word clouds illustrated the responses that were provided:

Strength: The best thing about the Town Center is...



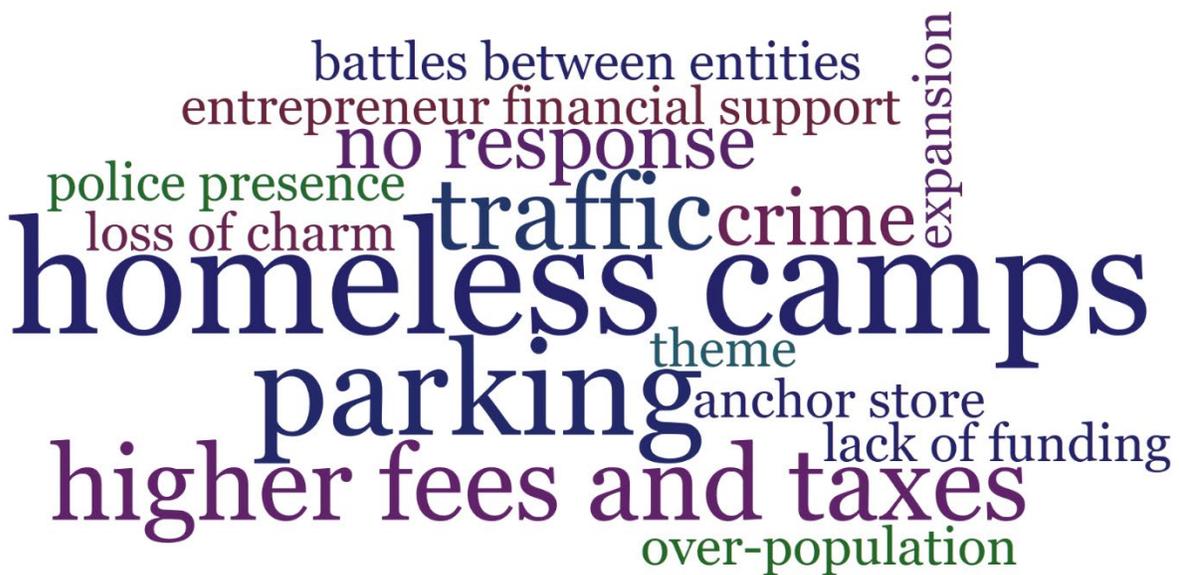
Weakness: What the Town Center lacks is...



Opportunity: I hope the Town Center will...



Threat: For the future success of the Town Center, I currently (2018) worry about...



These responses were instrumental in helping the Committee establish the Town Center Vision and put forth a work plan for future implementation to address these matters.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

People like the small-town feel.

Overwhelmingly, Troutdale is appreciated by residents, businesses, and visitors for its small-town feel and its dynamic location at the edge of not only a metropolitan region but also a national scenic area. The Town Center is seen as the heart of the community, however there is a sizeable amount of people who are unaware of its amenities or disconnected to its offerings. Pride in place—which is manifested not only in commerce and festivals but also in branding and marketing—will play an intricate role in bridging those gaps.

Not all residents feel connected to downtown.

Downtown's retail offerings were seen by many to be oriented toward visitors or certain segments of the population not reflective of Troutdale as a whole. A significant number of residents did not find much reason to go downtown, though indicated they might if expanded commercial services and community resources were placed there. Furthermore, concerns about previous attitudes and policy advocacy from certain businesses suggest that stakeholder interest is often self-motivated rather than place-based in circumstance.

Connections to a place are not just the physical routes to get there or the services that are offered. They also are emotional. Community pride is as important in promoting and supporting a particular place, and this is one area that can be embellished through branding and marketing.

There are concerns about future vitality of downtown businesses.

Downtown Troutdale's picturesque storefronts have helped to provide a sense of place. The shops and restaurants that are there helped to establish its reputation. However, Downtown's existing retail mix and storefront availability is beginning to show worrying signs of generational turnover, aesthetic neglect and loss of interest.

Future trends in consumer tastes and expectations will require that property and business owners to consider new (or different) ways of doing business through planning and investment (or reinvestment). Doing so will help to establish retail and dining experiences that can help sustain Downtown for the next 20 years.

People want to see additional commercial services and civic uses.

As of 2020, Downtown's retail mix includes some unique shops, professional offices, and personal services, but lacks additional variety and critical anchors, such as a bank/financial institution, a hardware store, or a recreational outfitter. A critical concern is a perception of a lack of activities or services catering to all members of the family, especially for children and seniors.

The range of civic uses beyond existing parks remain sparse, with no indoor or all-weather facilities open on a consistent basis. Aside from additional dining options, the desire for a grocery store in (or adjacent to) downtown remains a generational desire that remains unfulfilled.

Additional residential development is key to best support downtown long-term.

Among the 30 town center districts across the region, Troutdale has one of the lowest population densities recorded. Consumer expectations for certain types of amenities—such as additional dining, grocery stores, or other types of expanded retail or service—cannot be sustained as a result. Tourist traffic alone cannot make up the differences for a regular and consistent nearby population. Many businesses will rely on a catchment area of surrounding populations to decide on where to locate. Simply put, the Town Center needs more residents within the district to not only grow commercial opportunities, but to sustain existing businesses.

New development should not overwhelm the existing built environment.

Small-town feel does not mean that new development cannot take place. Nor does having an increase in population density mean that all is lost for ensuring a small-town feel exists in 2040. As a result, new development must be planned intelligently and positioned respectfully to fit into the community. This can be done by determining where development should be directed, what type of development should be expected, and how much development can be tolerated through the capacity of the land and the impact to the surrounding area.

Development at The Confluence site needs to compliment downtown, not compete with it.

The Confluence site within the City's Urban Renewal Area has enormous development potential. Careful decision-making must be made to maximize its potential while ensuring that Downtown and other areas of the Town Center are not left behind. Although historically seen as a commercially oriented site, recent trends and preferences suggest that a mixed use is the likely highest and best use for The Confluence.

The City of Troutdale has a responsibility for facilitating development and fostering pride in place.

Historically the City of Troutdale as an agency has not been active in participating in economic development matters and has focused its attention on maintaining or improving infrastructure and making certain capital investments in the Town Center district. It has often relied on other groups or individuals to promote itself, which has produced haphazard and disconnected efforts in recent years. The City should consider taking a more active role through Staff appointment and community oversight to fulfill the Town Center Vision.





- 2 -

THE FUTURE

“The future represents an idea or expectations that influence our present state of mind.”

— Kilroy J. Oldster

2.1 THE TOWN CENTER VISION

THE VISION AND GUIDING STATEMENTS

TOWN CENTER VISION

The Town Center Committee took in hundreds of comments from dozens of stakeholders to create a unifying **vision statement** for the Town Center in late 2018:

By 2040, the Troutdale Town Center will preserve its small-town feel while becoming the most vibrant, scenic, and historic hub in the region; where families thrive, businesses prosper, and visitors return.

From that point forward, all considerations and discussions by the Committee would revolve around fulfilling this vision statement. The concepts identified and actions listed within this Plan are the results of public input, Staff analysis, and Committee deliberation which sought to bring this Vision to a plan of action. The Town Center Plan is the blueprint and roadmap to fulfill the Town Center Vision.

GUIDING STATEMENTS

In addition to the Town Center Vision, a series of guiding statements will help to provide direction for decisions, projects, ideas, and strategies towards fulfilling the vision. They serve as a reminder for why certain actions are being undertaken and the value that the community sees in it. Each guiding statement directly matches with a section within this Plan:

- **Social:** The Town Center is a place where all people can live, work, and visit in a safe and accessible manner.
- **Economic:** The Town Center is a place of unique economic prosperity and opportunity due to the high desirability of our area and deep commitment to support local business.
- **Resiliency:** The Town Center is a place that is adaptive, creative, and flexible to address future trends while ensuring the vision remains in place.
- **Resources:** The Town Center is a place that ensures the common good through prudent growth management and preservation of our community resources.
- **Land Use:** The Town Center is a place that will conserve what is good and ensure that future development patterns are complementary to the small-town feel and theme.
- **Transportation & Mobility:** The Town Center is a place where a 10-year-old, a 90-year-old, or anyone in between can get around the district in a safe and accessible manner.
- **Opportunity Sites:** The development (or redevelopment) of an opportunity site has a positive impact not only on the site or its surroundings, but on the Town Center as a whole.

2.2 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ELEMENT

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place where all people can live, work, and visit in a safe and accessible manner.

YOUTH & FAMILIES

As of 2020, Troutdale is in the midst of demographic changes. The baby boomer generation that has largely contributed to the growth and development of the City is approaching seniority. Generation X and Millennials are now the majority of the City's population. Although household sizes have declined in Troutdale (as they have across the region, state, and country), Troutdale retains a sizeable percentage of younger people, including children under the age of 18.

A troubling bit of feedback that was received during public outreach was that the Town Center (and Downtown in particular) was not seen as a family-friendly location, due to a lack of available commercial and community services and inadequate parks and open space facilities for children.

The Town Center Vision set forth an expectation of a place where families thrive. Providing the ability for services and amenities that families can use can contribute to that vision. This goal takes on a variety of potential actions, including the recruitment of community and commercial establishments that cater to youth and families, planning for investments in existing parks and facilities that are fun and attractive to all ages, and promoting a sense of civic pride to encourage participation and connection to the community.



SENIORS & ACCESSIBILITY

This plan considers the definition of family to go beyond the traditional “nuclear family” to include multi-generational households. With an increasingly older population, seniors will continue to play an active role in the affairs of the community. As with youth and families, commercial and community services should be accommodative to the interests and needs of senior citizens.

The lack of a dedicated senior center has been referenced by many. The establishment of such a facility, potentially in concert with a youth center or other community spaces could be of interest. Providing options for well-placed senior housing in the Town Center can help reduce auto dependency and encourage additional services to be located close by.

Retired seniors are often more involved in volunteer opportunities than the general population. Their wisdom and experience are invaluable aspects and help underscore a community’s story and sense of pride. Troutdale should encourage and foster an active corps of volunteers to help improve and promote the Town Center and introduce new civic leadership. This can include docents or part time employees at a visitors center, people or groups that can adopt an intersection or planter box, or other types of engagement that can build up community pride.

Those with disabilities often have similar needs to seniors. Of particular concern to those populations is general accessibility. Transportation improvements in the form of improved transit, safer pedestrian crossings, and compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards are important

EDUCATION

The Town Center has hosted Troutdale Elementary School for nearly a century, and the recent completion of a new and modern school facility in 2018 has cemented that legacy for at least another half-century. Neighborhood schools are vital to the success of a town center area, and the school has served as an anchor for the District to support child development and instill community pride.

The model for education in the 21st century continues to evolve. Beyond the typical K-12 education model, the prospects for continuing education, technical and vocational training, and distance learning suggest that opportunities should be provided when possible for full community embracement of educational institutions and facilities. Having these facilities serve as multi-purpose facilities can bridge the divide between households with school-age children and the rest of the community and improve the prospects of lifelong educational opportunities and engagement.

The concept of tying education with entrepreneurship has long been established and typically been associated with the information technology sector. However career and technical education (CTE) can have a broader focus. The City should explore opportunities to coordinate economic development efforts with CTE programs at Reynolds High School and vocational programs at Mount Hood Community College. Partnerships with these institutions can lead to homegrown entrepreneurship that recognizes the input and involvement of a community, contributing to pride in place.



A rendering of the Lancaster Park subdivision in the Halsey neighborhood (Image: DSTL Development)

HOUSING

The Housing Needs Analysis commissioned in 2019 revealed that Troutdale has done well in accommodating needed housing and has ample buildable lands over the next 20 years to accommodate anticipated growth.

The analysis also pointed to the need to address housing across the income spectrum. The greatest housing needs existed for those with the lowest annual incomes (earning 50 percent or less of the area median income) and upper income earners (earning 120 percent or more of the area median income). The analysis suggests that those higher income earners are remaining in housing that is deemed more than affordable, thus resulting in higher demand for housing that is also affordable for middle-income earning households.

Troutdale's future housing policies and strategies will need to find ways to address the housing needs for all residents, though studies have shown that homeownership often leads to greater sense of community pride, as there is a literal vested interest in the success of a place.

This means that Troutdale should accommodate not only affordable housing, but higher end housing as well. The Town Center District is ideally situated to handle housing for all income spectrums, provided that they can complement the existing built environment and be well constructed. Providing opportunities for affordable housing can also assist larger employers in the community with retention, many of which have lower wage employees that commute great distances to work in Troutdale.

The ability for these workers to be in Troutdale not just for 8 to 12 hours a day but for 24 hours a day can lead to improvements in financial stability, workplace satisfaction, and overall quality of life for workers and their households. It can also help to foster community pride.

PUBLIC SAFETY

A worrisome pattern emerged in receiving feedback from the community. Concerns about public safety have emerged during the 2010s as the Portland metropolitan region deals with issues of vagrancy that result primarily from homelessness, unmet mental health needs, and drug addiction.

Despite its suburban setting, Troutdale has not escaped from the negative impacts and perceptions that have materialized. In the public outreach efforts, homeless encampments were seen as the biggest threat to the long-term success of the District.

Troutdale will need to work with policing authorities and other stakeholders to address this issue, though it is acknowledged that the City is limited to a degree on what it can accomplish, as these problems cross jurisdictional lines and require a coordinated and unified response in the region.

One public safety issue that is within the community's ability to solve is lighting and security in evening hours. Employees and visitors to Downtown have reported feeling unsafe in certain areas at night, due in part to insufficient lighting. The City should work with property owners and the Multnomah County Mid-County Lighting District to determine deficiencies and seek improvements where needed.

HAZARD MITIGATION

Troutdale works in concert with neighboring jurisdictions and Multnomah County on addressing hazards through a multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan framework.

The City is unilaterally tasked with reducing hazard risks in other ways. Building codes are implemented and followed to strengthen buildings and ensure adequate protections for fires, strong winds, and earthquakes. Areas that are in special flood hazard areas along Beaver Creek and the Sandy River are subject to specific flood regulations to limit the potential damage from flooding events, in some cases limiting or even restricting certain types of development. Risks for soil liquefaction during a seismic event also limits or restricts certain steeper hillsides from development.

Two events which occurred during the Town Center planning effort have provided additional sensitivity to reducing hazard risks. In 2017, the Eagle Creek wildfire erupted in the Columbia River Gorge and raced westward toward Troutdale. While the community was spared and only ever entered a "Level 1" evacuation notice, the event was a reminder that fire risk exists on an annual basis. The multiple wildfires that directly affected other parts of Oregon and indirectly affected Troutdale through hazardous air conditions in 2020 offered additional reminders of wildfire effects.

Property management of heavily forested areas and encouragement to use fire-resistant materials should be increasingly promoted by the City for implementation. The Town Center District has specific portions where this is relevant, particularly Helen Althaus Park and steeper areas in the Eastside neighborhood adjacent to Beaver Creek.

HISTORY AND THE ARTS

Troutdale has rightfully earned accolades for its commitments to support its history and the arts community. It is a legacy that began over a generation ago and continues to be seen as a civic virtue. The support of public art in particular is seen as instrumental in community identity and placemaking. Iconic bronze sculptures, creative murals, and gallery storefronts provide vibrancy to the community and underscore the Town Center Vision's commitment to remain vibrant.

Troutdale's history is manifested in the built environment and the supportive efforts of the Troutdale Historical Society in particular. Continued efforts to coordinate and support activities related to the communities history underscore the desire to be the "historic hub" as the Town Center Vision stated. Opportunities to repurpose and restore historic structures should be encouraged, such as the City's efforts to restore the historic Troutdale Depot in part as a visitor center.

The District's future development and infrastructural investments should always consider how art can be incorporated into plans. In addition, the City's support of the arts must be understood to go beyond periodic grant applications. Coordination with arts groups and school programming can help encourage a more comprehensive appreciation for art across the community.

The possibility of locating multi-purpose community areas for performances should be encouraged in future development plans and economic development strategies, provided they are scaled appropriately and managed accordingly.

Event coordination should be a focused area on how the Town Center can better support the Arts. As of 2020, one of most popular events that brings faraway visitors to Troutdale is the Fall Festival of the Arts. Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) funding could be better oriented to support this event or similar efforts that attract visitors from afar. The First Friday Art Walks have proven to be a mainstay but could perhaps benefit from additional support and promotion to have better recognition from the community at large.

Lastly, the promotion of the arts can be coordinated with tourism and marketing efforts. Highlighting the work of artists and galleries on social media or in other medias can help elevate the profile of Troutdale as an arts destination for both residents and visitors. Encouraging businesses and properties to allow for art installations can add to a streetscape and pique public interest. Oftentimes, City Staff are the ones who can assist with creating connections and fostering these relationships. Having dedicated Staff having some role in fostering those opportunities will further help our arts legacy.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place of unique economic prosperity and opportunity due to the high desirability of our area and deep commitment to support local business.

EXPANDING COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Public feedback indicated a desire for additional commercial services beyond the existing retail mix in the Town Center area. As set forth in other areas of this Plan, commercial services are largely driven by market capture, which relies on a critical mass of people in close proximity to a prospective location. Visitors alone cannot replace the presence of a permanent population base. Although commercial rent leases are lower in Troutdale than in other communities, a smaller market area due to geography and population may limit brick-and-mortar profits and overall commercial sustainability.

Increasing and diversifying the Town Center's commercial services will rely on increasing its proximate population. Therefore residential growth is as important as ensuring that existing or future commercial spaces can accommodate new services. This is especially true for the two most cited commercial services that citizens wish to see in the Town Center:

Food & Beverage

Eating and drinking establishments often require significant investments in appliances and upgrades to electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems in existing spaces. Unfortunately, much of the existing commercial space in Troutdale that is not already a dining facility would require significant tenant improvement upgrades to accommodate commercial kitchens and necessary fixtures required in building codes. These installations and payment of system development charges (SDC) can make conversions cost-prohibitive. SDC rates should be re-examined to evaluate the high cost-of entry.

These roadblocks can be overcome in several methods. Incentive programs can be explored to reduce the burden of upfront costs. SDC payments can be staggered. Accommodating food cart pods and allowing greater flexibilities for individual food trucks can greatly reduce the barriers with entering the market. However the City alone should not be the only stakeholder in considering methods to increase these options. Property owners need to also consider their own investments to make their spaces more competitive to attract the services that consumer demand is requesting.

Grocery stores

Supermarkets and smaller grocery stores often operate on very thin profit margins that make siting decisions a tedious and risky proposition. The 1998 Town Center Plan encouraged for the placement of a grocery store in the District, and those desires have not disappeared with this version of the Plan. Despite the residential growth that has occurred in the District over the past 20 years, additional population density is needed for a store to be financially viable in the Town Center. The scale and type of grocer will be dependent on market conditions, consumer demand, and industry trends.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Communities and regions that engage in traditional economic development often focus on recruitment of existing businesses looking to move to or expand within an area. For the purposes of town center planning and development, economic development requires a broader focus. Public outreach efforts for this plan indicated a high desire to not only bring about new business opportunities, but to provide efforts to support homegrown businesses and entrepreneurs.

Recruitment

Prior to 2020, the City of Troutdale did not have a specific role or expectation to have a City Staff member actively participate in the recruitment of businesses. The City’s role was to typically offer information, funding, and other levels of support to existing organizations and agencies responsible for economic recruitment, including but not limited to the West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce, the Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce, the Portland Business Alliance, the East Metro Economic Alliance, and the Port of Portland.

Through the Town Center Committee’s work and advocacy, Council policy has shifted. In 2020, an economic and tourism development program was established within the Community Development Department to take a more active approach to economic development. Recommendations within this Plan will factor heavily into the division’s future work plans and approach.

Business Support and Entrepreneurship

Troutdale has had a long history of investors and entrepreneurs taking chances and starting small. The built environment of Downtown in particular is a testament to those who have created ideas and brought services to the community that have provided benefit. In that spirit, the City should consider opportunities to continue this legacy by providing programs and offering incentives to encourage start-up businesses and entrepreneurship. Existing community partners and funding sources could be used to provide business owners tools, resources, and connections that they may be unaware of to help their business plans take root or move forward. If the City intends to pursue such programs and incentives, it should come with the expectation of financial oversight, much as a lending institution or investors would require accountability. If intended investments fall short, the City should consider its abilities to lien property to recoup those investments at a point in the future.



These efforts do not need to be invented, but rather replicated and tailored to the needs of Troutdale. For example, the City of Gresham launched a highly acclaimed “garage to storefront” business incentive program in 2010 that focused on reducing fees and red tape for businesses to begin operations within existing storefronts. Other cities have provided incentives for façade improvements, equipment upgrades, or acquisitions. These programs typically have geographic or scale restrictions.

Establishing a Main Street program for Downtown can help with these efforts. The Main Street model typically provides businesses with a place to go to have questions answered or to seek advice or further information on how other businesses or communities support homegrown economic development. Main Street programs are often tasked with providing information on incentive-based programs and are sometimes authorized to administer them. They also provide branding and marketing support and can often highlight the efforts of new businesses or entrepreneurs, thus elevating their profile in a local community through advertising and media outreach.



RESILIENCY & FUTURE TRENDS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place that is adaptive, creative, and flexible to address future trends while ensuring the vision remains in place.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

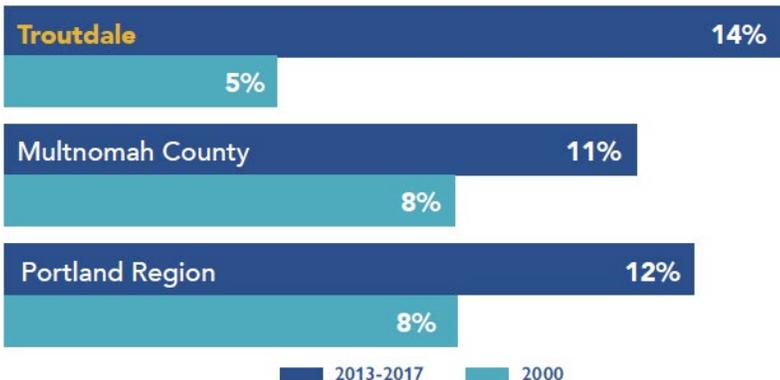
Troutdale is becoming increasingly diverse. According to Census Bureau figures, the white non-Hispanic/Latino population was 87.54 percent of the population. In 2019, that figure stood at just over 80 percent.

The fastest-growing racial/ethnic group in the city is the Hispanic/Latino community. In 2000, the Hispanic/Latino population was approximately 4.62 percent of the population. Population estimates for 2019 suggest that has increased to 13.7 percent of the population. The Hispanic/Latino population is also typically younger than the median age of the community. This percentage is now slightly higher than both Multnomah County and the Portland region, whereas it had previously lagged.

Troutdale is also comparatively a younger community when compared to Multnomah County and Oregon in general, with the median age in 2017 at roughly 35 years of age. Over time though, the City’s population is expected to grow older, with 22 percent of the population expected to be aged 60 or older by 2040.

Troutdale’s average household size is also decreasing. In the first decade of the century, the average household size in the city held steady at just over 3 persons per household. In 2017, Census estimates placed the average household size at 2.8 persons per household, reflecting a downward trend seen in the county and the state. Despite this trend, Troutdale has a larger percentage of families with three or more persons than the county or state, with close to half of households reporting that figure. The City has observed trends towards multi-generational households which have likely slowed the decreasing trend household size average.

PERCENT OF POPULATION THAT IS HISPANIC OR LATINO, 2000 AND 2017



Troutdale’s population is more ethnically diverse than the County and Portland Region.

Troutdale’s Hispanic or Latino population has nearly tripled as a percentage of all population since 2000.

AFFORDABILITY & EQUITY

Troutdale and east Multnomah County have long been viewed as an affordable area to live within the Portland metropolitan region. The region’s overall desirability has outpaced the rate of development, leading to a situation where a large portion of residents are increasingly unable to afford living in the region and Troutdale itself.

Households are considered cost-burdened when rental or mortgage payments exceed 30 percent of annual gross income. If housing costs exceed 50 percent of income, a household is considered severely cost-burdened. The trendlines in the 2010s are especially worrisome for Troutdale, as an increasing number of households become cost-burdened.

PERCENT OF TROUTDALE HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE COST-BURDENED & SEVERELY COST-BURDENED BY OWNERSHIP STATUS, 2017



This trend has been especially noticeable in the rental market. According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics, over half (55 percent) of renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent. Those same statistics also reveal that nearly 1 in 3 renters in Troutdale are severely cost-burdened.

Despite its reputation as an affordable community, State of Oregon statistics reveal that Troutdale is third only to Forest Grove and Gladstone with the highest percentage of cost-burdened renters in the Portland region among cities of 10,000 people or greater.

Affordability concerns however are not limited to renters; they also affect homeownership. The typical cost of a single-family home in Troutdale has increased in the 2010s, with median home sales prices eclipsing \$325,000 in 2017. Assuming a 30 percent standard for affordability, a household would have to earn just over \$97,500 to afford the median home sales price. According to Census data, roughly 69 percent of households in Troutdale earn less than that as of 2017. A similar analysis finds that just over a quarter of homeowners are either cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened based on those statistics.

As of 2020, Troutdale’s population aged 20-39 is the highest of any age group. Troutdale’s 2020 Housing Needs Analysis found that Millennials and younger populations may have increasing incomes as they age and may desire owner-occupied single-family housing, but affordability concerns may delay or prevent them from obtaining that type of housing. This is especially pronounced if they are unable to adequately save for down payments for mortgage rates due to a high percentage of income going toward rents. As of 2020, historically low interest rates have also contributed to an increased

demand to buy homes, increasing the opportunity for housing payments to be more affordable. However the number of properties for sale is comparatively low, thus resulting in a sellers' market.

Of particular interest for the Town Center district is the surveyed housing preferences of the Millennial generation. According to the *2014 Metro Residential Preference Survey* conducted by Davis, Hibbits, & Midghal Research, Millennials:

- Prefer single-family detached housing
- Consider housing price the most important factor
- Favor housing in an urban neighborhood or town center (more than any other age group)

Concerns about affordability go beyond housing. Transportation costs also contribute to a household's overall cost of living. As of 2017, only six percent of the nearly 7,400 people who work in Troutdale live within Troutdale. This figure does not include Troutdale's largest employer Amazon, whose ZIP code study reveals that less than 10 percent of their workforce resides in Troutdale.

By not having ample affordable housing nearby, workers spend additional time and expense commuting back and forth to Troutdale. The total expense of having a car also can add up when fuel, insurance, repairs, and financing are factored into a sticker price. The ability to walk, bike, or take reliable transit to work is one that can help minimize those costs and boost general affordability. Having a substantial majority of workers commuting from places beyond the city also contributes to traffic congestion that could be somewhat relieved by having people live closer to where they work.

All of these factors related to affordability are exacerbated for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations that have historically been marginalized. Although Troutdale's BIPOC population is smaller than its surrounding communities, there are still trends and statistics that should be considered for future policy and development implications. The growing trend to tie state, regional, and county appropriations to projects and initiatives that address equity concerns need to be recognized by city policymakers.

Of particular interest to Troutdale is the expected continued growth of the Hispanic/Latino population. Nearly 45 percent of Hispanic/Latino workers in Oregon are employed in low-wage jobs, yet represent the fastest growing demographic in Troutdale. According to the Pew Research Center's *2017 State of Hispanic Homeownership Report*, housing preferences of Hispanic/Latino communities are focused on multi-generational housing typologies that are shaped by household size and affordability. The Town Center's existing housing stock may not be adequately suited as of 2020 to accommodate these trends and may seek to find development opportunities that can meet them.

HIGHER INCOME HOUSING

The City of Troutdale’s Housing Needs Analysis from 2019 showed as significant a housing need for higher-income households as lower-income households. Typically housing strategies required by the state will require cities to focus on lower-income housing strategies since there is not typically an incentive or subsidy required to encourage higher income housing. However, it is appropriate for this Plan to consider how the placement and type of higher income housing can affect the Town Center District and the finite amount of land available to develop this needed housing.

The Confluence site appears to be a logical candidate to encourage higher income housing due to its natural beauty, proximity to Downtown amenities, and the demands on the Urban Renewal Agency to have a sufficient return on investment for needed infrastructure to support site development. Other identified opportunity sites could also attract higher income housing due to their advantageous geography and required infrastructural investment to make development financially worthwhile. This type of housing could include condominiums, townhomes, and upscale apartments, with a preference towards home ownership opportunities on this site.





A concept Amazon physical storefront opened in Seattle in 2019. Merchandise is for sale and pickup is available at the store. (Photo: The Motley Fool)

ONLINE RETAIL

As of 2020, online retail (also referred to as e-commerce) makes up a small portion of overall commerce, accounting for roughly 16 percent of all retail sales in the United States. However, this sector is growing in importance and is already affecting brick and mortar storefront operations.

It will become increasingly important for both new and existing businesses to embrace a situation where both online and physical storefronts are available to potential customers. The COVID-19 pandemic in particular has demonstrated the importance of retailers being able to be nimble in how they provide product to customers.

A spillover effect of online retail will suggest that the amount of retail space needed for customers within commercial spaces may not need to be as large. Conversely, the amount of storage space for inventory that can be shipped may need to be increased. Commercial property owners should be aware of the changing retail dynamics of their tenants and may need to consider future improvements to existing spaces for more efficient use of space. Lastly, exclusively online retailers may seek entry into the brick/mortal retail world by establishing outposts for frequently bought items or convenient locations to pick up merchandise, often within hours after ordering items online (see image above).

Another spillover effect of increased online retail will be additional traffic generated by delivery vehicles. As a result, competition for curbside space at or near retail establishments with parked vehicles will increase. Troutdale will need to consider these factors and future trends in balance with the strong public perception that parking availability is already limited.

SHARED ECONOMY

The so-called shared economy is increasingly important for many people. At its core shared economy relies on person-to-person interactions that offer a shared asset for use. This is usually accomplished with an online platform or service. It provides a means of primary or secondary income generation for individuals and households.

As of 2020, the primary methods of shared economy that are most familiar to people include car sharing or online vacation rentals, though other business sectors are increasingly becoming part of the shared economy. The concept of shared workspaces for offices, commissary kitchens, studios, or fabrication/assembly have become increasingly popular, as contracts or agreements to use these spaces are often less expensive than typical rental or property use agreements.

Troutdale should seek to strike a balance between welcoming shared economy trends while remaining watchful of potential unintended side effects that could be produced.

The Town Center district may be particularly susceptible to these trends compared to other areas of the City, particularly with the popularity of short-term vacation rentals. While they offer the ability for additional accommodations and can bring additional visitors to the City that typically bolster certain types of commercial businesses, they may take away from the intentions to have in-town year-round residents residing in owner-occupied units that can benefit other businesses that are not as tourism-reliant. The prospects of an increase in car sharing options could also impact the Town Center, particularly if automation impacts the automotive industry.





A larger corner commercial building divided into four separate micro-retail spaces in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Each unit contains separate kitchen and loft spaces. (photo: SG Properties)

MICRO-RETAIL

Historically, micro-retail has been viewed by many as a simple, low-overhead way for certain niche businesses to come into existence. As of 2020, micro-retail comes in many forms. The most widely understood form in the United States is in market-based specialty vendors and mobile food vendors (food carts).

The Portland region was an early pioneer within the country in creating a culture that embraced this type of retail, which had historically been popular in other parts of the world. Portland's Saturday market and the corresponding farmers markets in the area became popular places for artisans and other merchants to start and build their businesses. The rise of online retail has allowed for many artisans to establish virtual storefronts.

Mobile food vendors also became increasingly popular since 2000, with many of them congregating in food cart pod clusters that have become destinations in their own right. Since 2010, these pods have gone beyond vacant properties within larger cities and are now found across suburban landscapes and in small towns.

Increasingly though, micro-retail has expanded to other facets of the economy and sometimes out of necessity due to start-up costs making it cost-prohibitive for some businesses to establish a commercial presence. The ability for buildings to be designed or retrofitted to accommodate smaller leasable areas may lower the barriers to establish businesses.

The Town Center district should consider the existing built environment and evaluate new proposals to determine if there are flexibilities afforded to prospective businesses that may desire an ability to start small. This would involve reviewing regulations to determine unnecessary roadblocks that restrict micro-retail and investigating possibilities to assist existing buildings to transition or retrofit spaces to accommodate these uses.

AUTOMATION

Automation refers to the trend for work or tasks to be accomplished with minimal human assistance. This includes in areas of life where increased technology in robotics can improve efficiencies in work, but also in other fields.

For the purposes of long-range community planning and the built environment, the prospect of automation in transportation could fundamentally redefine how cities think about the use of transportation, the need for parking, and general mobility.

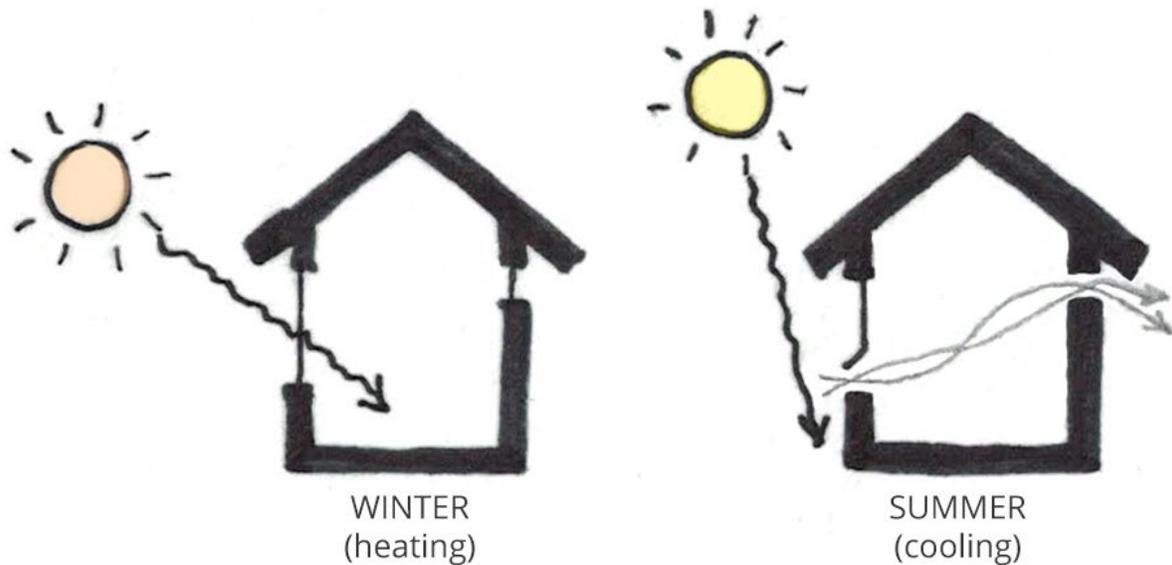
Driverless cars—or more specifically vehicles that do not require a human to operate—may still be a future item to consider and could likely impact larger cities before arriving in suburban settings. However, society has already witnessed certain levels of automation within transportation. Features like cruise control, variable lane adjustments, and self-parking vehicles are basic or intermediate steps of automation that already exist as features within the vehicle market in 2020. The next leap will be to allow for vehicles to operate largely unassisted by motorists, which has been occurring for several years in the 2010s to various degrees of success and concern.

Automation in public transit and specifically “last-mile” or shuttle-based routes appears to be a trend that could impact Troutdale. Suburban communities generally have less reliable transit availability and options due to the overhead costs of running a bus and having a driver. A driverless shuttle bus on a regular route or programmed to run in a specific geographic area could allow for additional transportation flexibilities that current transit options lack.

Troutdale should be careful to not eagerly pursue one advancement in automation but should be open to working with companies, regional entities, and other stakeholders to determine if there are particular solutions that could be solved through technology. At the same time, Troutdale should also be cautious to not over-invest in infrastructure or technologies that could be functionally obsolete or unnecessary within a few years due to advancements in automation.

Reviewing this Plan at least every five years will allow for more sound judgments in policies and investments based on available and trending technologies for those times.





A simple example of energy conservation through home design. (Image: YR Architecture + Design)

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Oregon's original statewide land use planning goals were established in 1974, just as the United States was going through its first so-called "energy crisis". One of the effects from implementing land use goals during that time was an emphasis on energy conservation. In creating the goal, the state was less concerned about communities addressing the production of energy, but rather efforts to conserve it through the built environment.

The intentions of the goal remain valid nearly 50 years after its creation. Beyond making considerations for solar orientation or building insulation standards, communities are also encouraged to create strategies to lessen dependency on fossil fuels and to encourage renewable energy sources to offset or supplement other methods of energy production.

Reducing energy usage also factors into mobility choices, as transportation is among the leading contributors to energy usage. By their nature, town centers were conceived as areas where reducing the need for cars or other vehicular forms of transportation could be achieved, thus contributing to the overall goal of energy conservation.

The Town Center district should continue to fulfill this general legacy and intent by encouraging a mixture of land uses that can be developed in such a way where people's day-to-day energy footprint can be reduced due to convenience and circumstance. This can include but is not limited to:

- Reducing the frequency or intensity for heating and cooling systems within a building
- Encouraging utilization of electric vehicles and alternative mobility options
- Reducing cost and regulatory barriers for small-scale solar or wind energy installations

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Communities pursue green infrastructure to improve stormwater quality and minimize runoff impacts to infrastructure and natural waterways. This can be accomplished in a wide range of installations, including intentional plantings or permeable pavement being the ones most typically used. However, simple actions such as installing rain barrels for downspout connections or more complex ones such as creating green streets or building green roofs can also be considered. Adding to the overall tree canopy can also contribute positively to stormwater management.

Given the general sloping terrain of the area and the positioning of the Sandy River and Beaver Creek, the Town Center will continue to be mindful of stormwater management issues. Both waterbodies are home to salmonoid species of fish which is tied to the general natural ecosystem of our region. Ensuring that water quality standards are maintained or improved upon in the future is important, as federal and state standards will require communities to uphold environmental protection laws.

Larger scale infill or new development should be encouraged to consider green infrastructure solutions. As environmental stewardship becomes an increasingly important societal value, future development can be seen as more attractive to investors, clients, buyers, or renters if green infrastructure is highlighted as an important component of the development. Green roofs in particular work well in denser urban environments as they could allow for more efficient use of property.



A green roof and solar panel installation. (Image: STRI Group)

CLIMATE CHANGE

As with any other community around the world, Troutdale will be impacted by climate change. Although contemporary politics may question the scale that man-made impacts are contributing to climate change, it is nearly universally accepted that change is occurring.

According to the 2013 publication *Climate Change in the Northwest*, the key regionally consequential risks in the region include but are not limited to:

- Snow accumulation and melt
- Coastal sea-level rise, river flooding, and coastal storm formation
- Cumulative effects of fire, insects, and tree disease in forest ecosystems.

The trends for Troutdale suggest an increase in year-round temperature averages which have immediate impact on weather conditions and potential hazards that result from it. According to the publication, temperature averages from 1971 to 2011 across the Northwest have generally exceeded the 20th century average. During that same period, there were significant fluctuations between extremely wet and dry years, which can contribute to increased flooding or fire concerns, respectively.

Variations of temperature between areas can dramatically affect atmospheric pressure which can contribute to general wind conditions. Troutdale is renowned for having particularly strong east winds during colder months of the year, due in part to the dynamics of the Columbia River Gorge and the climatic differences between western and central regions of Oregon and Washington. Troutdale is also especially prone to winter icing, seasonal flooding, and wildfire threat. All three situations have negatively impacted Troutdale and the Town Center area in both direct and indirect ways in the past 30 years. In 2017, the Town Center had a particularly close scare as the Eagle Creek fire advanced westward through the Gorge and affected rural communities just east of the district.

Climate change has shown that extreme weather events and conditions could increase in coming years, resulting in more days where the threat of inclement weather or natural disasters are higher than what people may be familiar with.

While policy or programmatic suggestions within this Plan will not end or limit the impacts of climate change, the Town Center has particular risks that are associated with climate change. As a result, the focus of climate resiliency efforts should be to encourage sustainable development, limit development in sensitive areas subject to flooding, and embark on strategies to limit the potential aggravation of forest fires that stem from dryer conditions.

Embarking on a city-wide climate adaptation and resiliency plan will help prepare the City for the impacts of climate change and may lead to further policy or programming recommendations. It will also ensure the City is in compliance with anticipated state, regional, and county policy actions that will affect funding resources and program eligibility.

2.3 THE PHYSICAL ELEMENT

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place that ensures the common good through prudent growth management and preservation of our community resources.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Troutdale’s natural setting and general environment reflects a community at the intersection of urban characteristics and pure nature. The Town Center District is situated primarily along a sloping hillside and in the lower portions of the slope that lead towards the Sandy River to the east and low lying alluvial plains from the Sandy River’s confluence with the Columbia River to the north.

The District has retained a significant amount of tree cover since initial clearing from the original settlement of the townsite, though there are areas that have not had significant tree growth from newer development.

The climatic conditions of the Town Center are dramatically affected by its proximity to the Columbia River Gorge. Fierce east winds can often occur in colder months, leading to several days of moderate to severe conditions that have affected the community in a variety of ways: from how trees grow to how the community is perceived as a regional weather station.



Beyond the wind though, the Town Center has some dramatic areas of steep hillsides, hidden creeks, and significant spots for fauna to congregate, nest, or wander around. Most in the community appreciate this connection to nature, despite the occasional beaver dams or coyote sightings.

In short, the built environment should complement the natural environment.



RECREATION & OPEN SPACES

Future planning for a city should always take into account the value of retaining open space and recreational opportunities. In Troutdale, proximity and access to open space areas is a hallmark of the community and one that must be maintained. The Town Center District already retains several recreational facilities within and adjacent to the District. The varying degrees of popularity and interest are worth contemplating.

Glenn Otto Park—among the City’s most popular—sits just beyond the District boundary but is profoundly impacted by potential development and an increase in resident and visitor traffic. Seasonal influxes of visitors to the park in the summer have created capacity and public safety concerns for a long period of time. The popularity of the Sugarpine Drive-In restaurant which opened in 2019 adjacent to the park has added to parking capacity and queuing concerns for the park. Finding management solutions for the park should be considered in an update to the Parks Master Plan.

At the same time, Helen Althaus Park, Depot Park, Harlow House Park, and Mayors Square do not see significant utilization in comparison to Glenn Otto Park. These park facilities—all located within the District—have their specific charms and utilizations but may have opportunities for improvement. Helen Althaus Park in particular may be unique given that it can be seen more as a natural conservation area. Harlow House Park has historic attributes that must also be considered.

An additional concern is the lack of a park or recreation facility open to the public in the Halsey neighborhood west of 257th Drive. Incidentally, most of the recent and future residential growth of the Town Center District is occurring in this neighborhood. It would be wise to consider recreational lands or dedicated open spaces within future developable areas, provided that there are staffing and equipment capacities to regularly maintain any future facilities.

Multi-use trails could offer a solution for low-impact, low-maintenance recreational facilities. Although also seen as transportation facilities, there are equally important quality-of-life benefits to trails that are often associated with parks. Seeking opportunities to establish or expand trail networks to all corners of the Town Center will help connect residents to Downtown and the other neighborhoods. It can also help to connect other areas of the City to the Town Center itself.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Public facilities and services include sufficient capacity to handle existing and future growth on transportation and utility networks.

Streets

The Town Center's street network contains arterial and collector roads maintained by Multnomah County and neighborhood collector and local streets maintained by the City of Troutdale. Generally, the street pavement on these facilities are in acceptable condition. The City has a pavement preservation program in which City-owned streets are on a rotation to have certain treatments applied to extend the lifetime of asphalt paving.

Deficiencies in the street network do exist. In certain areas, there remains inadequate sidewalks or pedestrian access. Typically the influx of new development will require developers to install "half-street improvements" to bring right-of-way up to standard. Particular concerns are focused on compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for full accessibility, especially at intersections. The City in 2020 finalized details of an "ADA Transition Plan", indicating deficiencies in public facilities where investments will be required to be made. The seasonality of winter storms or other hazards also can be concerning due in part to the steep terrain in parts of the District.

Also of long-term concern are ongoing maintenance issues related to landscaping along County-owned roads. While existing or prospective volunteer programs such as "adopt-a-highway" can help to a degree, there appear to be diminishing resources available to regularly maintain existing infrastructure. Troutdale will need to work regularly with Multnomah County to develop and implement strategies for ongoing landscaping to occur along certain rights-of-way. Additionally, future street improvements should be mindful of potential long-term maintenance obligations and seek design solutions which do not overburden the City (or other agencies') maintenance responsibility.

Utilities

Troutdale is fortunate that there generally are good levels of service on water and sewer lines, though areas exist where piping is aging or will require "up-sizing" to accommodate future demand on the system. The City regularly monitors the system through a regular inspection protocol.

The ability for an existing utility system to adapt and grow with a community is reliant on having financial support from new development through system development charges (SDC). Many cities in Oregon will often reduce or even suspend SDC payments for new development as an incentive for growth. Troutdale should be cautious to pursue SDC reductions, as oftentimes they require supplemental payments from a city's general fund to fulfill the obligation.

Having denser development patterns allows for more efficient utility layouts despite the larger size of pipes and related infrastructure. It is ideal to plan for specific areas of the District where denser development can be planned for and where systems may be in place to serve. This should be balanced with a desire to retain a built environment that respects the existing built environment.



SCENIC & HISTORIC AREAS

The Town Center Vision specifically addresses the desire to be the most scenic and historic hub in the region, meaning that an emphasis on preserving and embellishing these areas is of chief importance.

Troutdale’s unique geography sets it apart from any other suburban community in the Portland region. As a result, the City should commit itself to doing what it can to preserve scenic viewpoints, vistas, and natural areas for generations to come. Land use regulations can help in doing so, but extra care should be taken to make sure new development will not overwhelm or fundamentally change the scenery of this place.

In addition, Troutdale has a strong legacy of caring about its history. Within the Town Center District exist several historic landmarks with code protections and at least two dozen historic resource properties that are referenced as contributing to history. Specific attention should be given to development proposals that occur on or adjacent to both landmark and resource properties. Opportunities to consider adaptive reuse of historic structures or properties should be properly evaluated by Staff and applicants.

Additional work should also be undertaken by the Historic Landmarks Commission to determine if more historic resources exist in the Town Center beyond the initial investigatory work that was completed in the past 20 years.

COMMUNITY DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE

Although Troutdale does not have an abundant supply of historic buildings of significant architectural value to warrant a landmark historic district like Hood River, Oregon City, or Aurora, the principles of good community design have been introduced and carry significant weight. Historic buildings have influenced design solutions and regulations to help curate the community's small town feel.

For commercial uses, the Central Business District zoning district already has relatively direct design standards, though there has been concern that these standards have not been uniformly applied with certain development. The north side of the street in particular has a distinct mandate to have an early 20th Century architectural style, which was largely accomplished in the late 1990s and early 2000s as development was constructed. Commercial standards in other areas of the District do not need to adhere to those standards.

For future single-family residential uses, incorporating the principles of traditional neighborhood design are seen as a desirable fit in the Town Center. This type of development often relies on the following design principles:

- Narrower lot widths (30 to 50 feet for single-family detached; 20 or less for attached)
- Expansive front porches
- Rear loading or detached garages that access to an alley, where terrain allows
- Wider sidewalks and planter medians for larger trees
- Narrower streets to slow traffic
- Allowance of accessory dwelling units on lots
- A mixture of single-family detached and middle housing typologies

The Town Center zoning overlay district has some of the above points already established, though additional standards could be considered. While existing design standards often harken back to an early 20th Century design template, there should be allowances for contemporary design to be incorporated, as one day those design patterns will be historic themselves. This is provided that their scale and positioning are consistent with the community's expectation of maintaining its character.

The concept of having a design review committee to evaluate future commercial or mixed use development proposals was discussed by the Committee at times. Arguments in favor suggest that a design review committee would be better equipped to evaluate and defend a zoning or zoning overlay's design standards and provide a formalized approval process that leads to predictable architecture. Arguments against suggest that it could cool development interest by adding a regulatory barrier and that architects and developers should have some creative liberties to demonstrate how their proposals match the spirit and intent of the code.

A compromise could involve having a committee evaluate certain development proposals as a review entity during the land use process. This would allow for Staff or Planning Commission to retain decision-making authority without adding an additional time burden for development. Such a review would better ensure that development proposals take community design and adherence to the Town Center Vision seriously. It would also provide a committee with the rights to appeal a land use decision of Staff or Planning Commission that it disagrees with.

Building height restrictions for areas outside of the Urban Renewal Area are arguably the most controversial topic of the entire Plan. On one hand, aesthetics and architecture contribute to a small town feel, and a small town feel does not necessarily mean small buildings. Those who support this statement believe that the city should work with developers to create awe-inspiring buildings in statement-making places, encourage developers to incorporate building facades that reflect the historic vernacular of the Town Center.

On the other hand, a notable number of committee members and community stakeholders have made equally valued arguments that suggest retaining existing standards. Those arguments can be found in a minority report within this Plan.

LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place that will conserve what is good and ensure that future development patterns are complementary to the small-town feel and theme.

CONSERVATION AREAS

Previous long-range planning efforts have already established general conservation areas. As a result, there are no significant additions to these areas that this Plan could offer.

Of the 270 acres located within the Town Center, roughly 20 percent of the total land is effectively constrained to development. Conservation areas include the Vegetation Corridor and Slope District, a zoning overlay district that incorporates Metro Title 3 and Title 13 standards to protect wetlands, sensitive soils, steep slopes, and other natural constraints.

An additional conservation area includes special flood hazard areas (SFHA), commonly referred to as flood zones, 100-year flood zone, or A-flood zones. In the Town Center District, they are typically found along low-lying areas along the Sandy River and Beaver Creek. They are typically overlaid in similar locations as low-lying VECO areas, but are technically separate areas.





EXISTING BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Town Center's existing built environment features a mixture of older and newer development that often reflected a particular generation's style and preference for construction.

The commercial storefronts in the Downtown district largely fall within an architectural style that evokes early 20th century typology, with a mixture of one to two story buildings (when fronting Historic Columbia River Highway).

Residential properties are a little less consistent. Hungry Hill properties have the largest allotment of older homes that pre-date 1970, with a scattering of older homes also existing in the Eastside neighborhood. Most of the development in the Halsey neighborhood reflect more recent development, particularly since 1990.

Since 2000, newer development has tended to reflect the general goals of town center planning, which typically encourage smaller and narrower lot development for detached single-family homes or middle-housing typologies. Townhome development in particular has been a popular addition to the built environment, with residents enjoying the benefits of home ownership with lesser property upkeep and responsibility.

The approval of House Bill 2001 in 2019 has brought forth new concerns about the possibility of larger "underdeveloped" lots being converted into more dense residential property that could fundamentally alter the architectural style of certain blocks or streets in the Town Center. Most areas of the Town Center will not have restrictive covenants in place that could exempt properties from seeking denser development if desired.

In the spirit of ensuring that new development won't overwhelm existing development, it will be important to highlight development opportunities within the Town Center where investors can look to pursue residential construction on greenfield lots or blighted areas.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

Adaptive reuse refers to the maintenance or preservation of a property and/or structure for the purposes of a new land use or building on a site. Similar to historic preservation efforts, adaptive reuse is particularly popular in communities that seek to promote the general conservation of their built environment by encouraging creativity in design and in some cases offering financial incentives to investors looking for opportunities.

Adaptive reuse already has precedence in Troutdale. The most obvious example is the conversion of the Edgefield estate from a variety of community service-based uses to a significant visitor and entertainment destination over the past 30 years. The preservation of campus buildings including the manor and many of the outer buildings is among the great success stories not only in historic preservation, but also in adaptive reuse.

A more recent example of adaptive reuse is within the Town Center and occurred in 2019, with the conversion of a former gas station located adjacent to the Troutdale Bridge into the Sugarpine Drive-In dining facility, which has proven to be immensely popular.

An examination of other older or historic assets finds that there may be other opportunities to consider adaptive reuse. It appears clear that the community places a value on investments and efforts that seek not to change what's here, but to work within the walls or property lines of what's available. The City should consider ways to encourage adaptive reuse when financially feasible and consider strategies or programs that reward those who pursue these efforts.





Above: The former Handy Brothers Gas Station in 2020, used as a main base for a plumbing contractor.

Below: The same location with a potential adaptive reuse for micro-retail and small-scale dining establishments, with cosmetic treatments being the only visible change. (Rendering: Randy Wilson)



TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT

The Town Center is a place where a 10-year-old, a 90-year-old, or anyone in between can get around the District in a safe and accessible manner.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

“Transportation is something you do and mobility is something you have.”

– Jordan McKay

This particular subsection makes a distinction between transportation and mobility, though both are inter-related. Transportation refers to the physical movement of people or goods across a system. Mobility refers to the ability for people (or goods) to be moved. Historically, long-range plans have only focused on transportation needs, but increasingly, mobility considerations have also been added to these plans to bring a human-focused element to future decisions and actions.

A place where families thrive, businesses prosper, and visitors return is one that will need to ensure that people and goods have sufficient ability to get around in a reasonable and safe manner. Although future transportation funding can be limiting, determining key corridors for future improvements to mobility can help to better link the Town Center neighborhoods and improve the integration of the district with the rest of Troutdale.

This subsection addresses the following transportation and mobility topics:

- Vehicular (private cars)
- Parking & loading
- Active transportation (primarily pedestrians and bicyclists)
- Transit
- Alternative transportation

These topics largely match the categories identified in Troutdale’s Transportation System Plan (TSP) which is the regulatory document used for long range transportation planning and decision-making. The following pages will address the status quo of the above topics and point toward future ideas to improve transportation and mobility within the Town Center District.



VEHICULAR

The predominant method of accessing the Town Center and getting between places in the District is by car. This has generally been the case for nearly a century, particularly with the establishment of the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Troutdale's suburban pattern of development over the past 50 years reflects similar trends witnessed across North America, in which residential neighborhoods are typically established at lower densities and residents rely on private vehicles to get to and from destinations. In Troutdale, reliance on the car is further supported by climatic conditions in the winter and by steep hillsides in portions of the city, particularly in the Town Center.

Some communities have attempted in recent years to deliberately discourage or even prohibit cars from entering or accessing portions of a particular district or neighborhood, often described as "declaring war" on cars. The Town Center's street pattern and interconnectivity with surrounding areas suggest that this would not be an appropriate method for encouraging other methods of mobility.

For the next 20 years, personal vehicles are still seen as the most convenient option for mobility for a great majority of residents and visitors to the Town Center. Policymakers need to consider options that improve mobility choice. This can be accomplished in productive ways through land use policy and capital improvement investments, though attention should also be given to automation.

PARKING & LOADING

Parking

Parking was listed as the biggest weakness within the Town Center (and specifically Downtown) by the public. It was also seen as an opportunity for expansion and as a threat for not having enough. These concerns appeared to be acutely focused on Downtown, as most of the surrounding neighborhoods appear to have ample off-street parking and sufficient on-street parking when available.

Having a “parking problem” is in some ways a good thing. It suggests that a particular area is popular and that there is a demand to be in a location for a period of time. Many of the most successful downtowns and small centers in North America have parking problems, including many within the Portland metropolitan region.

A count of available public parking spaces in 2019 revealed that the Town Center had close to 320 publicly available parking spaces just within the Downtown district. Upon observations during lunch hour during a typical weekday, it was found that several areas had ample parking, including a lesser-used parking lot on the eastern end of downtown.

The City has added close to 20 additional parking spaces in the Downtown area since 2015. This came through the conversion of one block length of Dora Avenue and Harlow Avenue to one-way streets in 2018 and the completion of the Mayors Square parking lot surface improvements in 2020. Also of note is that since 2008, Troutdale has not actively patrolled for parking violations based on how long a vehicle is parked in a space, unless the vehicle is considered hazardous or abandoned.

Two key questions then emerge. First, is there a parking supply issue or a parking management issue? Second, is the perception due to lack of convenience or wayfinding to other parking spots?

These questions are typically answered through a parking study, and it is a critical recommendation of this Plan to commission a comprehensive report that looks at parking and loading considerations. A study had been planned for 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the commissioning of this effort as restrictions and limitations on commercial service affected parking demand.

Loading

Increasingly important to the Town Center is to handle loading. Providing space for loading is not only of goods and freight, but also for people entering/exiting vehicles. Current loading areas in Downtown are not sufficient or conveniently located. On a daily basis, trucks, delivery vans, and private vehicles are often stopped in unsafe situations, often blocking or restricting traffic in travel lanes. This causes safety concerns for drivers and pedestrians.

With the rise of online retailing and the increasing popularity of merchandise pickup and food takeout, it appears that loading situations and conflicts will increase in the coming 20 years. A future parking study must take loading into account and offer strategic solutions that improves the status quo.



Above: A lightly used public parking lot off of Kibling Avenue during a mid-week lunch hour in 2018.

Below: Delivery vans for food/beverage vendors block travel lanes for up to five minutes at a time along the Historic Columbia River Highway in 2019. This causes both vehicular and pedestrian safety issues.



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

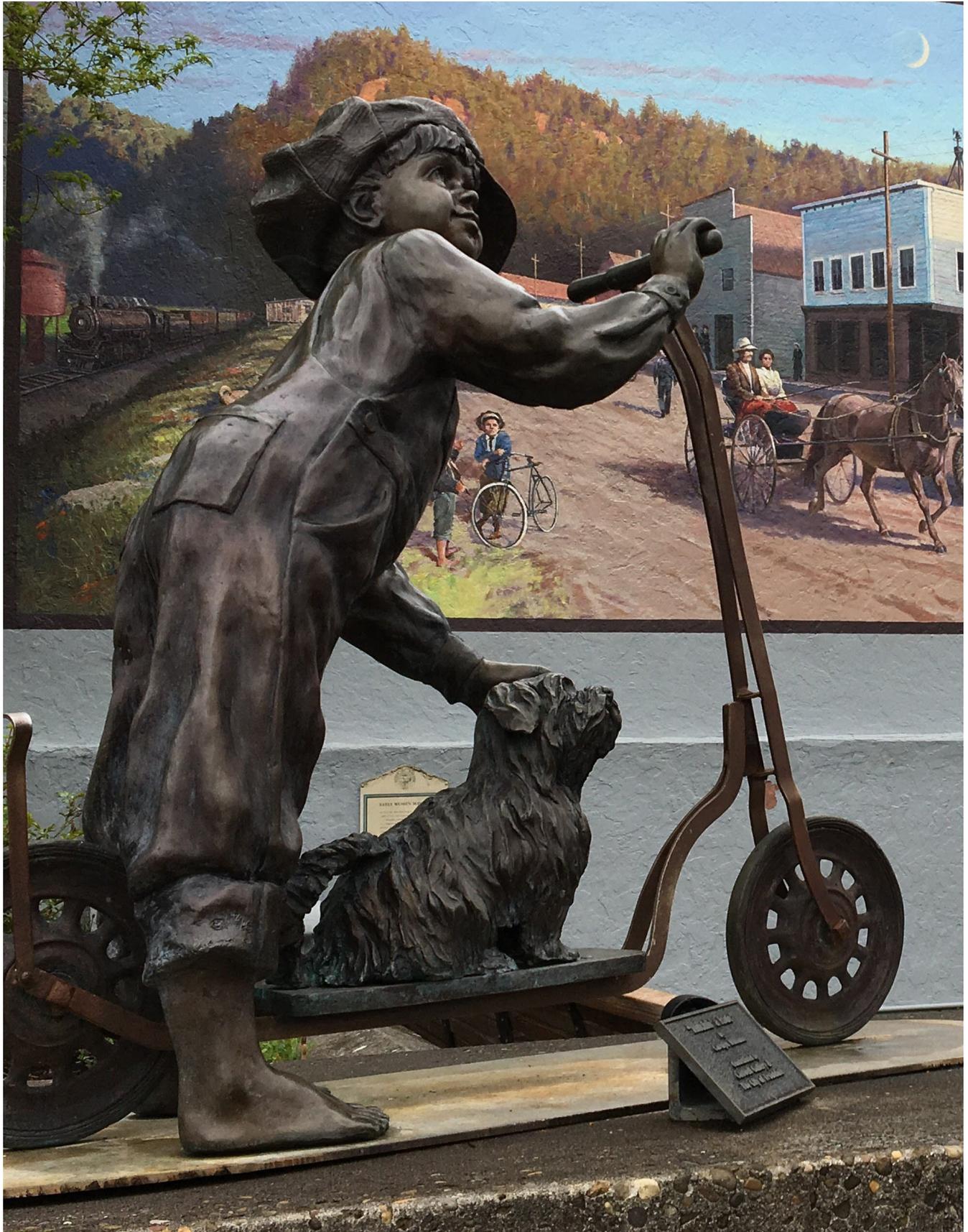
From their concept in the Metro 2040 Regional Framework, town centers were intended to be districts which encouraged walking and bicycling between residential and commercial uses. As of 2020, Troutdale's Town Center has had some success in fostering active transportation for some, but more can be done to improve this form of mobility to a broader section of the population.

Many of the streets in the Town Center contain sidewalks on at least one of the street, though there are some areas where network gaps remain.

On-street bike lanes currently exist along portions of 257th Drive, Halsey Street, and the Historic Columbia River Highway. In some areas, short components of off-street alignments exist as well. Although these lanes have had some success for some users, a significant number of residents report a level of discomfort in using bike lanes that are adjacent to travel lanes.

A preference for sheltered lanes (those that have a physical barrier or a parking strip in between) or an off-street multi-purpose trail is seen as a preferred improvement that could lead to greater comfort in considering biking, particularly for children and seniors. Another solution that some communities have employed are the designation of preferred bike routes or streets (often called greenways) that parallel busier collector or arterial roads and offer a less busy street for bicyclists.

The goal of improving the walking and biking experience for residents and visitors should be tempered with an understanding that the district's topography and climate will likely limit potential users from fully embracing improvements to active transportation facilities. The goal of improved mobility and safety however will increase the prospects for mobility and improve travel choice for those who need to get around town.



TRANSIT

As of 2020, the Town Center District is served by three TriMet bus routes:

- Line 77, which connects the Town Center with points west of Troutdale, including Edgefield, Wood Village, Fairview, northern Gresham, and east, northeast, and northwest Portland.
- Line 80, which terminates at Glenn Otto Park and connects the Town Center with Gresham Transit Center via Buxton Road.
- Line 81, which connects the Town Center with the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park (TRIP) to the north and Gresham to the south along 257th Drive.

Of these three lines, line 77 has the most consistent service, running at near 20 to 30 minute intervals during peak weekday traffic and near hourly service on weekends. Line 80 is less frequent, but runs seven days a week. Line 81 has had frequency improved since the opening of the Amazon facility in 2018 and the rerouting of the terminus to TRIP, but lacks weekend service. A supplemental shuttle service has provided peak-time weekend service since 2020.

Because of the lower density built environment and the positioning of Troutdale on the edge of the Portland metropolitan region, transit service has never been sufficiently reliable for many of Troutdale's residents. Transit agencies must consider "farebox recovery" when planning for or adjusting routes to justify service to a particular area or destination.

Allowing for increased residential densities of 15 dwelling units an acre or more is typically seen as a threshold to justify regular transit service. It is unlikely that the Town Center will see any new bus routes, however with new development possibilities, it will be possible to maintain or expand existing services, particularly if they can be tied to job centers. City leadership has repeatedly expressed a desire for lines 77 and 80 to have their routes be extended to TRIP and called for weekend service on line 81. This could help reduce car trips and encourage workers in TRIP to consider commuting by bus.



There have been previous efforts in the Town Center to consider more localized transit options, often called "last mile" services that can branch from an existing transit stop to serve destinations not along a bus route. Several on the Committee discussed a possibility of a downtown trolley or shuttle that could help ferry residents, visitors, and workers to and from destinations within the Town Center and just beyond, including Edgefield or Glenn Otto Park.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Future transportation funding in the state and across the Portland metropolitan region will be dependent on three critical goals for the foreseeable future:

- **Equity:** Having transportation and mobility solutions address systemic inequities and provide solutions and improvements for historically marginalized communities and groups
- **Safety:** Having transportation and mobility investments be tied to efforts to reduce traffic and pedestrian deaths and severe injuries.
- **Climate:** Having transportation and mobility investments reduce carbon footprints and greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

Although Troutdale maintains local streets and has some localized funding sources for future transportation funding, it relies on state and regional funding allocations for maintenance and capital improvement projects. With the community having been largely built in a car-centric manner, it may be difficult to accommodate these three goals in future applications for funding.

In an effort to bridge the convenience and flexibility of personal vehicles with the above goals, Troutdale should consider the following alternative transportation solutions.

- Golf carts or neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV)
- Low-speed vehicles (LSV)
- Electric bikes
- Electric scooters

The Town Center District is especially conducive to implement these ideas, given the terrain challenges which has made mobility somewhat difficult. Each of the above solutions offer a level of mobility that is convenient and can be operated at low speeds. Except for 257th Drive, most other streets within the District can allow for these modes to legally operate on existing infrastructure.

Some communities have developed purpose-built multi-use trails that not only accommodate bicycles and pedestrians, but also low-speed alternative transportation modes. This can greatly reduce potential conflicts with car and truck traffic. Golf carts in particular have proven especially popular with senior citizens in age-restricted communities, as the vehicles generally are easier to maneuver. Some states have also reduced the age limits so that children as young as 13 can operate a golf cart, improving mobility options.

The costs of acquiring and maintaining these vehicles is also less than that of a typical car, and many models now come with electric motor options. Some golf carts even have solar panel installations.

In short, alternative vehicle promotion can improve mobility choice for the Troutdale Town Center while positively contributing to the laudable goals to advance equity, safety, and climate solutions.

2.4 OPPORTUNITY SITES & CORRIDORS

OPPORTUNITY SITES

GUIDING STATEMENT

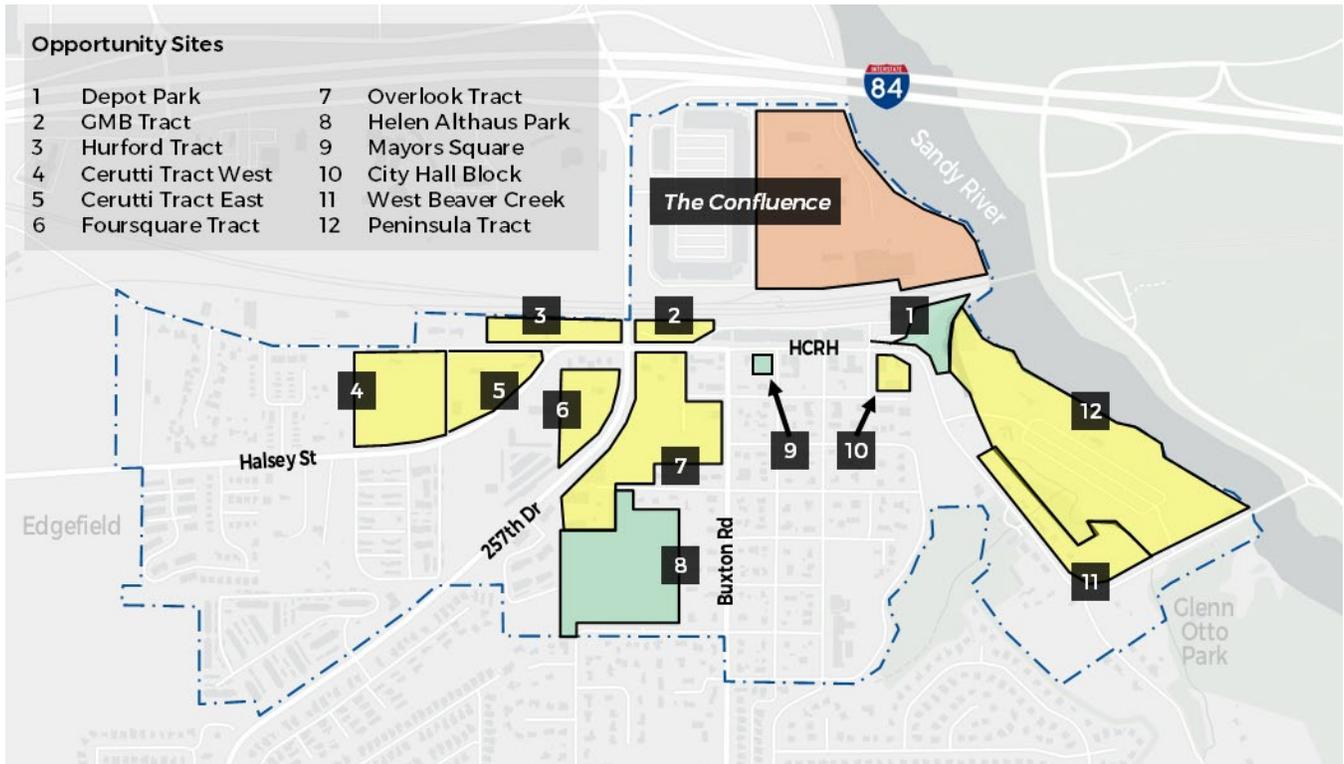
The development (or redevelopment) of an opportunity site has a positive impact not only on the site or its surroundings, but on the Town Center as a whole.

IDENTIFYING THE OPPORTUNITY SITES

How can needed or desired development be added to Town Center without fundamentally changing the characteristics of the district? This is a difficult question that the Committee wrestled with over time. Without a clear strategy on how to deal with the effects of density, the existing built and natural environment would be subject to development that would alter what people appreciate about the District. A strategy to be intentional about how and where development should go began to emerge.

The Plan identifies **12 opportunity sites** and **the Confluence Site** with the Urban Renewal Area where development and investment should be focused to help fulfill the Vision, optimize those parcels to their highest and best use, and conserve the existing built environment.

An opportunity site as defined by this Plan is a property (or collection of properties) where development or redevelopment could be transformative across the entire Town Center district.



LAND USE CATEGORIES

In considering future development or redevelopment opportunities for these sites, the Committee went through a comprehensive exercise that looked at seven broad land use categories to determine the optimal land uses, based on community feedback, site characteristics and surrounding land uses. The following categories were used:

- **Medium density residential**, which averages 8 dwelling units an acre and includes small lot single-family detached dwellings and middle housing types.
- **High density residential**, which averages 24 dwelling units an acre and includes apartment (rented) and condominium (owned) style development.
- **Mixed use**, which averages 16 dwelling units an acre and presumes multi-story structures with ground floor commercial or flexible space and upper floor residential dwelling units.
- **Commercial service**, which do not contain residential uses and are for service uses (including dining establishments), smaller offices (less than 25 employees) indoor entertainment, lodging facilities, and smaller office uses.
- **Commercial office**, which consider offices for 25 or more employees.
- **Community service**, which are for civic-related uses such as educational facilities, government offices, and human services (library, daycare, senior center, etc.), but excluding parks and plazas.
- **Open space & parks**, which include active parks with amenities, passive parks, plazas, recreational and sports facilities, and natural areas.

To determine the carrying capacity of each site for each improvement, a regression model was developed which would help determine the impact that the site could have on the available land left.

In establishing these sites and assigned preferred land uses to each of them, the Plan is not demanding when (or how) a site should develop. Instead, the Plan sets a preference for development when a site is under consideration. The Plan also sets an expectation that development is respectful of surroundings and will not fundamentally change the character of the surrounding areas and is consistent with the Town Center Vision.



Although the Committee arrived at a general consensus on preferred land use types, there were strong concerns from some members about the impact of certain development options based on land use, scale, or some combination thereof on opportunity sites 3 and 7. Please refer to those site details in the plan and the corresponding minority report in Appendix A.

Preferred Land Use Tabulation

Each Committee member evaluated the identified opportunity sites along with the feedback provided by the public and attempted to prioritize land uses for each site. They inputted their data into a regression model which provided an estimate on the carrying capacity for each site based on the acreage of the site and the impact of each use. The following results show an aggregated average of the Committee’s responses.

PREFERRED LAND USES		Land Use Classifications (in acres)		
Site #	Opportunity Site	First Preference	Second Preference	Third Preference
1	Depot Park	Open Space & Parks	Community Service Use	
2	GMB Tract	Commercial Service	Community Service Use	
3	Hurford Tract	Commercial Service	Community Service Use	Mixed Use
4	Cerruti Tract West	Med Density Residential	High Density Residential	Mixed Use
5	Cerruti Tract East	Commercial Service	Mixed Use	Med Density Residential
6	Foursquare Tract	Community Service Use	Commercial Office	Mixed Use
7	Overlook Tract	Community Service Use	High Density Residential	Mixed Use
8	Helen Althaus Park	Open Space & Parks		
9	Mayors Square	Open Space & Parks		
10	Block 4 Tract (Old City Hall)	Community Service Use	Mixed Use	Hi Dens Res / Com Serv
11	Beaver Creek West Tract	Mixed Use	Med Density Residential	Commercial Service
12	Peninsula Tract	Mixed Use	Open Space & Parks	Community Service Use
URA	The Confluence	Mixed Use	Commercial Service	Open Space & Parks

General Development Preference

In taking the results of the above table, a calculation was made on how the preferred land uses would be distributed across the available land (roughly 77 acres) among all the opportunity sites. About 25 percent of the available land is removed from the gross acreage as constrained, due to natural conditions like steep slopes, wetlands, or sensitive areas not conducive to development.

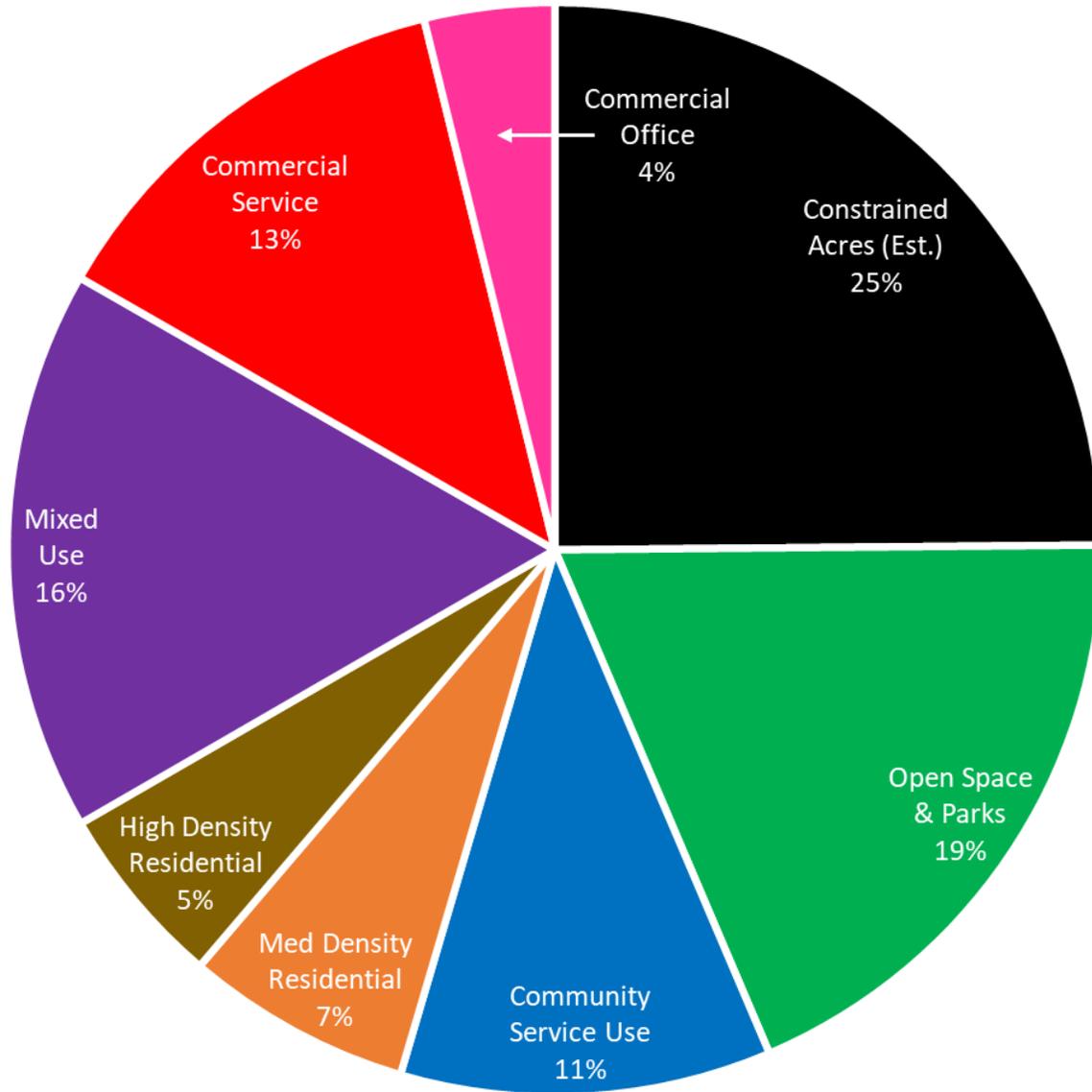
The chart above helps underscore the general development preference of the Committee across all the opportunity sites and the Confluence site.

SITE-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS AND PREFERENCES

The following pages go into detail for each opportunity site, listing benefits and drawbacks for considering future development. They also list specific concepts and ideas that were shared with the Committee during public outreach. The listing of preferred land uses or particular ideas should not preclude other ideas or concepts that can emerge over time.

Some of the opportunity sites also have specific details or unique ideas tied to them that prompted general interest and further discussion from the public. Those details are expanded upon herein.

Opportunity Sites - Town Center Committee Average



Open Space & Parks (left) and Mixed Use (right) are the most preferred land uses identified in the Committee analysis. (Images: American Planning Association)



SITE 1 – DEPOT PARK

As of 2020, Depot Park is a City-owned property located at the east end of the downtown core. The primary structure on the site is the 1907 Troutdale Rail Depot, which is the historic railroad station of the community. The Depot was relocated to the site in the 1970s and has served as a cultural and historic landmark for the community. The City of Troutdale committed to renovating the Depot in 2017 and began renovation work in 2020 in coordination with the Troutdale Historical Society. The grounds of Depot Park have also had long-term plans for improvement and relocation of existing fixtures, though some will require approval from other entities, including a Blue Star Memorial Byway marker.

Surroundings

The site is bound by the Sandy River and Beaver Creek waterways to the east, the Union Pacific Railroad to the north, and commercial service uses to the west.

Advantages

- Critical location at the nexus of Downtown, The Confluence, and the East End neighborhoods
- Tremendous visibility
- Future City investments to the site and the trail connecting to The Confluence site

Challenges

- Traffic patterns and a sloped curve do not allow for a safe bike and pedestrian environment when entering and exiting the property
- Limited investment in park furnishings
- Limited size and constrained acreage due to slope and floodplain

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Parks & Open Space
- Community Service Uses

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Installation of park and wayfinding signage
- Completion of the Depot building renovations
- Establishment of the visitor center and re-establishment of the museum in the Depot
- Creation of the bike depot and associated installations
- Relocation of the caboose to establish a mini plaza
- Three-way stop intersection where E HCRH turns at the intersection with parking lot
- Creation of a “veterans plaza” with flagpoles at a terminal vista point
- Dropping the name “Depot Park” if tied to a larger waterfront park (see Opportunity Site 12)



Above: Depot Park in fall 2019, looking northeast from the Historic Columbia River Highway
Below: The Depot Park Opportunity Site (Image: Metro RLIS)





Concept rendering of the Columbia River Gorge Bike Hub at Troutdale (Image: Shapiro/Didway LLC)

Bike Hub

In 2015 the West Columbia Gorge Chamber of Commerce received grant funding to begin planning for a bike hub on the property. The hub, which would be one of six located throughout the Columbia River Gorge would serve as a launch-off point for recreational distance cyclists who would head on expeditions into the Columbia River Gorge or would access the 40 Mile Loop trail network.

The improvements to the grounds include the creation of a plaza, the relocation of the Union Pacific caboose, and the establishment of a more formal parking area on the east and north sides of the Depot. They would include restroom facilities and locker storage.



Regular cyclists in Downtown Troutdale



Changes to the road may help with traffic calming and overall safety. The concept shown above and below imagines a three-way stop that also creates a “veterans plaza” and bus parking zone adjacent to the visitor center and bike hub. This plaza, with a large flagpole can also serve as an eye-catching fixture on a centerline for travelers going either direction on the Historic Columbia River Highway.



SITE 2 - GMB TRACT

The GMB Tract is a 1.05-acre lot that is strategically located on the northeast corner of the Historic Columbia River Highway and 257th Drive. The original history of the building is that it served as a warehouse for produce. In more recent history, the building has served as a gallery, studio, and fabrication shop for local artists. Since about 2012, the building and the grounds have sat empty.

The building is one of the largest existing structures in Downtown, covering approximately 16,000 square feet under roof with significant roof clearance. The property also contains an ample amount of off-street parking, lending itself to a future use that could benefit from that supply.

Surroundings

The property is bound by the Union Pacific railroad to the north, 257th Drive to the west, the Historic Columbia River Highway to the south, and the downtown commercial businesses to the east.

Advantages

- Prominent location at main intersection in Town Center
- Significant off-street parking which is unique in the downtown setting.
- Existing structure with large enclosed area

Challenges

- Direct vehicular access to the lot is awkward for vehicles and not especially safe for pedestrians
- Property ownership has turned down numerous recent efforts to consider future uses
- Building may be too big for a single user
- Grade differential (not directly along the Historic Columbia River Highway)

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Commercial Service
- Community Service

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Coordination with City on improved driveway access and pedestrian safety
- Reconfiguration of western parking area
- Indoor farmers/makers market with central food hall or congregation area
- Small-scale grocery store or produce market
- Museum, meeting, or exhibition space
- Railway station for intercity or tourist train service



Above: A bird's eye view of the GMB Tract Opportunity Site, looking northeast (Image: Google Earth)

Below: The eastern façade of the building on the site as of spring 2020, looking west. The building has enormous potential to maintain its footprint yet be resourceful for a variety of uses.



SITE 3 – HURFORD TRACT

The Hurford Tract is a long and somewhat narrow 2.35-acre collection of properties at the northwest corner of the Historic Columbia River Highway and 257th Drive, stretching westward for about 700 linear feet along W HCRH. The majority of the tract is undeveloped, with the exception being a building located right at the intersection of W HCRH and Halsey Street. Most of the properties of the Hurford Tract are owned by the Hurford family. (Disclosure: a member of the family, Dean Hurford, served on the Town Center Committee) The remaining structure on the site was previously a sauerkraut producer.

As of 2020, the Hurford Tract was also listed as an opportunity site by the *Main Streets on Halsey Site Readiness and Code Audit* project and has been subject to further analysis to determine the economic feasibility and regulatory constraints for potential development projects.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by the railroad to the north, commercial services to the east and south, and low density residential to the west.

Advantages

- Prominent location at two main intersections
- Dramatic views of Downtown, Broughton Bluff, and into the Columbia River Gorge
- The property is generally flat

Challenges

- Wider right-of-way at intersection limits buildable area
- The depth of the parcel may limit flexibility in terms of placement of buildings and parking
- The proximity of two major intersections may limit driveway spacing to enter and exit the tract
- Nearby railroad tracks may deter certain land uses from considering development interest

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Commercial Service
- Community Service Use

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Right-of-way reduction and up-to-date street improvements along the road frontages
- A civic-use corner building with a rooftop plaza, park, or gathering space
- A boutique hotel
- Senior housing facility
- Educational facility



Above: The site borders on the most prominent intersection in the community, at the northwest corner of the Historic Columbia River Highway and 257th Drive.

Below: The Hurford Tract Opportunity Site (Image: Google Earth)





Traditional community planning principles often suggest a signature building should anchor a major corner and can help establish (or extend) a feel for downtown. The rendering below shows a hypothetical proposal for commercial and civic uses on site but one that would be controversial due to a need to increase height limits. (refer to minority report in Section 3.4). (Rendering: Randy Wilson)





The Hurford Tract was seen by several Committee members as an appropriate area to have a building exceed 35 feet in height, due to its distance from the downtown core (see above). A taller building may allow for impressive views of downtown from a rooftop (see below). Other committee members have expressed concerns contained in a minority report (see Section 3.4). *(Renderings: Chris Damgen)*



SITE 4 - CERRUTI TRACT WEST

The Cerruti Tracts are positioned with dual street frontages on the north (the Historic Columbia River Highway) and south (Halsey Street) and have the potential to be key to strengthen and better define the Halsey neighborhood.

The western tract is comprised of two lots totaling 5.76 acres and are both owned by the Cerruti family. A house sits on the smaller lot (0.28 acres) while the balance of the property is used for agricultural purposes. The tract is generally flat and would appear to have few natural constraints for future development possibilities.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by industrial and low-density residential to the north, commercial and community service uses to the east (Cerruti Tract east), and medium and high density residential to the south and west

Advantages

- Generally flat terrain with few site constraints (easy to develop)
- Double frontage on arterial streets (optimal street/parking layouts)
- Transition between residential and commercial uses

Challenges

- Property ownership has historically shown little interest in developing or selling site

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Townhome style development with a small pocket park
- Small lot residential subdivision - neo-traditional style with alleys
- Condominiums
- Grocery store



Above: The Cerruti Tract West Tract as of summer 2019 looking across the tract in a southwest direction from the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Below: The Cerruti Tract West Tract Opportunity Site (Image: Google Earth)



SITE 5 - CERRUTI TRACT EAST

The Cerruti Tracts are positioned with dual street frontages on the north (the Historic Columbia River Highway) and south (Halsey Street) and have the potential to be key to strengthen and better define the Halsey neighborhood.

The eastern Cerruti Tract is comprised of two lots totaling 3.25 acres. It has all the geographic advantages of the western tract, including direct frontage at the intersection of Historic Columbia River Highway and Halsey Street. Unlike the western tract however, this tract has existing development upon it; including the Pounder Oil gas station (Shell and CFN branded facility) and a maintenance shed and lot owned and operated by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by low density residential and undeveloped lots to the north, commercial uses to the east and south, and undeveloped areas to the west (Cerruti Tract West).

Advantages

- Double frontage on arterial streets (optimal street/parking layouts)
- Transition between residential and commercial uses

Challenges

- Existing development already exists, including a public agency (ODOT)
- Existing fuel station use may have environmental concerns if redeveloped.

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Commercial Service
- Mixed Use
- Medium Density Residential

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Grocery store
- Pharmacy
- Traffic circle
- Civic use - city hall or library specifically mentioned



Above: The Cerruti Tract East Tract as of fall 2019, looking west from the intersection of Halsey Street and the Historic Columbia River Highway. The site contains the service station and ODOT facility.

Below: The Cerruti Tract East Tract Opportunity Site (Image: Google Earth)



SITE 6 - FOURSQUARE TRACT

The Foursquare Tract is a triangularly shaped undeveloped four-lot tract of 2.8 acres positioned on the inside curve of 257th Drive in the southwest quadrant of its intersection with the Historic Columbia River Highway. Although gently sloped, the site has a long frontage along the arterial and could be large enough to have certain property uses be positioned without too much grade being affected.

Surroundings

The site is bound on the north by smaller commercial development, on the east and southeast by 257th Drive, and on the west by a self-storage facility and utility company.

Advantages

- Relatively flat property with lengthy frontage and visibility along 257th Drive.
- Sewer reservations on the property may reduce upfront cost of system development charges

Challenges

- Despite the frontage, full turn access in and out of the site from 257th Drive will be difficult, given the proximity of the intersection of Historic Columbia River Highway, the slope profile of the road, and the speed at which vehicles are typically accustomed to traveling.
- No other obvious road access options exist unless easements or additional acquisitions are made by a development interest.

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Community Service Use
- Commercial Office
- Mixed Use

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Partial usage of property for future circulation improvements (see image on the right)
- Potential trail access point to connect a trail to downtown via 2nd Street (see image)
- Satellite/overflow parking facility for downtown employees or event attendees
- Public Works facility (moved from current location)
- Relocated ODOT facility (from Cerruti Tract East)
- Fire station
- Food cart pod
- Community garden or foodbank garden
- Outdoor equipment shop and rental facility
- Golf cart hub/rental facility



Above: A birds-eye view of the Foursquare Tract, looking southwest. (Image: Google Earth)

Below: A hypothetical solution to improving access to the site. This concept would use an alley access to allow for full-turn circulation. The site also benefits from a bike/ped bridge to/from downtown.



SITE 7 – OVERLOOK TRACT

The Overlook Tract consists of several public and private-owned lots situated in between 257th Drive, Historic Columbia River Highway, and Buxton Road. Comprised of nine lots totaling 3.25 acres, only a small portion of the site is developed. The largest parcels in this tract (the so-called “Windust property”, named after the former property owner) are undeveloped and publicly owned by Multnomah County as of 2020.

Surroundings

The site is bound by commercial uses to the north, community service uses to the east and south, and 257th Drive to the west.

Advantages

- Gently sloping terrain on Windust property in compared to other properties in the vicinity
- High visibility along 257th Drive and at intersection with the Historic Columbia River Highway
- Adjacent to the police facility
- Future development has limited visible impact to residential properties to the south.

Challenges

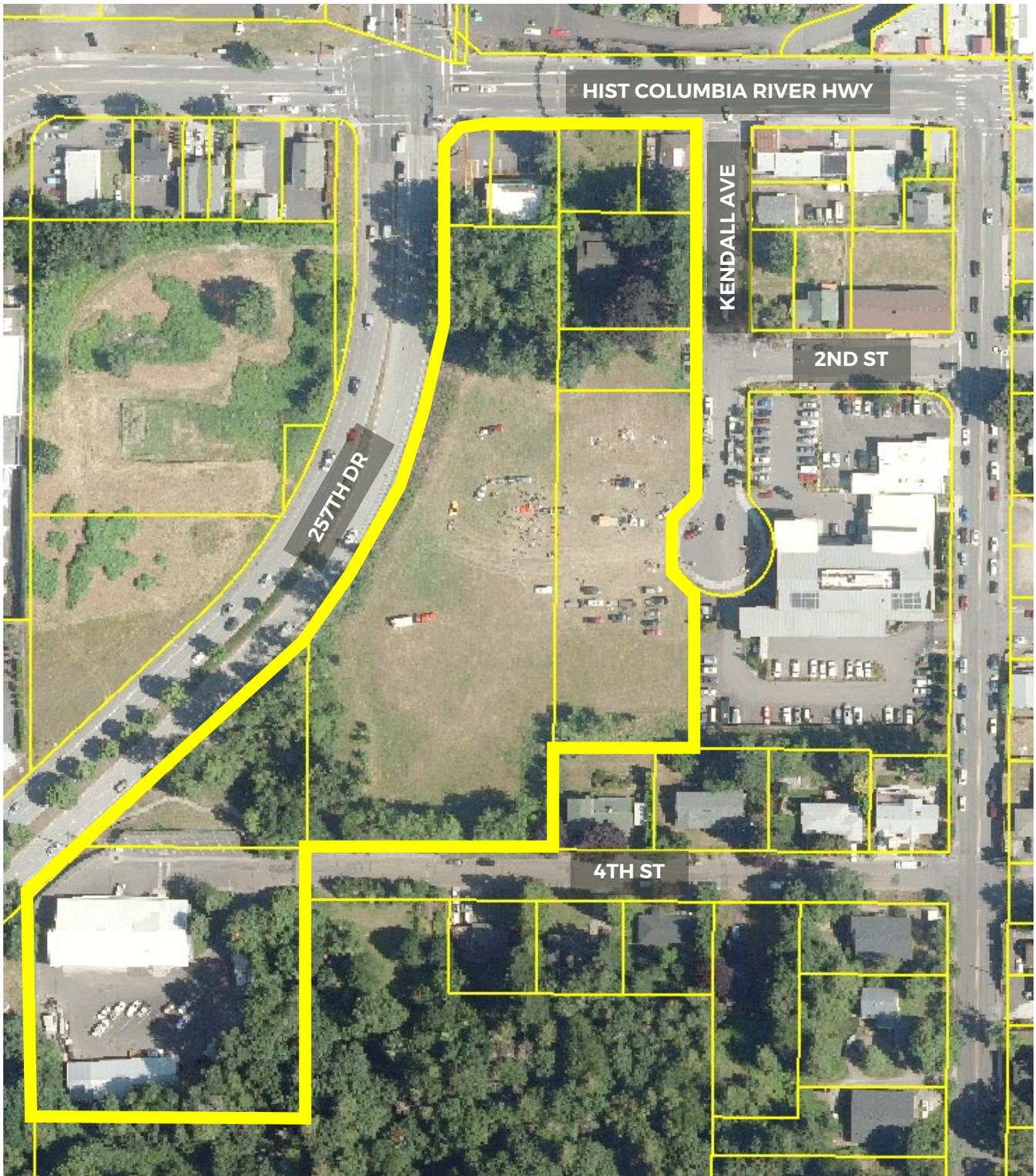
- Development already exists on site, potentially limiting options
- Direct vehicular access off of 257th Drive may not be possible or would limit developable area
- No parking frontages would be allowed along the Historic Columbia River Highway
- Removal of existing trees for development would change site character

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Community Service
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Civic buildings – city hall, fire station, library, senior center, youth center specifically referenced
- Senior housing
- High-end condominiums
- Affordable housing (see next pages)
- Satellite parking lot for downtown overflow, events, or commuters by transit
- Grocery store – potentially mixed use with residences above
- Indoor entertainment center or concert venue
- Bike/ped bridge over 257th to connect to Opportunity Site 6



The Overlook Opportunity Site includes developed parcels and undeveloped lots, The City of Troutdale Public Works Facility is at the bottom left (southwest) corner of the site. (Image: Metro RLIS)



The Windust property at the Overlook Tract, looking west. (Image: Amber Shackelford)

Affordable Housing at this Site

In 2019, Home Forward signaled its particular interest in developing affordable housing on the site to fulfill its regional requirement from the voter-approved affordable housing bond from 2018. While affordable housing has been identified by the Housing Needs Analysis as a critical need for Troutdale, the potential for this site to be developed into it has caused concern for many.

There are several advantages to the site for the purpose of developing affordable housing, including proximity to downtown, transit service, and nearby jobs centers which lend itself well to reducing commutes and auto dependency, which contribute to housing unaffordability. The site is also adjacent to the police facility utilized by the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office and has a limited number of adjacent residential uses, limiting concerns about crime or property values that are often made against apartment proposals.

Still, the site has prominent visibility, and concerns from the Committee about architectural fit and the carrying capacity of the site to accommodate between 100-120 residential units as suggested have merit. Those concerns are articulated in a minority report offered in Appendix A of this Plan. The City Council stated in 2019 a general preference to tie affordable housing (particularly senior housing) to community service uses that could be co-located on site rather than a standalone housing project.



The Overlook Tract commands significant visibility from multiple directions. Two examples include vantages looking south (uphill) on 257th Drive at the intersection with the Historic Columbia River Highway (image above) or looking east on Halsey Street approaching Downtown (image below). Development at three stories or more (in yellow) could be noticeable due to terrain and positioning.



SITE 8 - HELEN ALTHAUS PARK

Helen Althaus Park is one of the largest properties in the Town Center and is largely undeveloped. Access to the site is off 7th Street on the south and 4th Street on the north.

The 9.51-acre city-owned park was at one time a portion of the city's watershed and was originally named Watershed Park. The park is now named after Helen Althaus who served on the City Council and Parks Advisory Committee for almost 20 years from the mid-60's to the 80's. She worked towards establishing a parks and greenways system in the city. The city named it in her honor in 1982.

Currently, the park is only partially developed. Facilities include a full-court basketball court that sits on top of an underground water reservoir, a small open grass area, and about a mile of trails that connects 4th Street to 7th Street. The trail has been extended from the edge of the forest to the sidewalk on 7th Street.

Surroundings

The site is bound by community service, low density residential, and undeveloped lands to the north, low density residential uses to the east and south, and high density residential to the west.

Advantages

- Large undisturbed natural area will likely remain due to environmental and slope constraints

Challenges

- Park is little known and underutilized based on citizen feedback
- Park fixtures and amenities are older and require replacement or refurbishment

Preferred Future Land Use

- Parks & Open Space

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

A full determination of future ideas and potential investments will be documented in a future update to the Parks Master Plan. Citizen feedback offered the following items for consideration:

- Preservation of the property for natural conservation with low-impact park amenities
- Regular forest maintenance to reduce fire risk
- Regular trail maintenance
- Improved directional signage within the park and along streets
- Renovate the basketball courts
- Relocation of the public works facility could allow for future lower-level parking area



Above: The playground equipment at the top of the park from 7th St.

Below: The layout of the park from a birds-eye view, showing the dense forest canopy and the degree of the hillside when compared to the Hungry Hill neighborhood. (Image: Google Earth)



SITE 9 - MAYORS SQUARE

The heart of Downtown, Mayors Square is a small public plaza (0.17 acres) that provides a relaxing area for pedestrians to sit, dine, and enjoy the streetscape of Downtown.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by commercial services to the north, west, and east and parking to the south.

Advantages

- Center of Downtown
- Attractive plantings and public art displays, including statues and murals
- Parking is immediately adjacent to the square

Challenges

- The park is typically underutilized
- Different elevation tiers do not lend itself to a larger gathering area
- Limited tree canopy

Preferred Future Land Use

- Parks & Open Space

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

A full determination of future ideas and potential investments will be documented in a future update to the Parks Master Plan. Citizen feedback offered the following items for consideration:

- Additional dining tables and seats
- A splash pad for children, perhaps re-purposing the existing fish sculpture
- A small playground or play area on the sides
- A regular farmers or crafters fair that sets up around the perimeter of the block
- A small-scale food stand, particularly for ice cream
- History displays and panels telling Troutdale's story.



Above: Mayors Square as of 2014, looking north to the shops on the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Below: Diners using temporary outdoor seating in Mayors Square during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Additional places to picnic or dine outside proved popular and may have staying power.



SITE 10 - BLOCK 4 TRACT

One of the original blocks that was created when the original community was created, the Block 4 Tract today contains the former city hall, a residential property, and two vacant parcels.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by commercial and community service uses to the north, a steep hillside to the east, medium density residential to the south, and commercial services to the west.

Advantages

- Excellent visibility and situated across the street from Depot Park
- Multiple street frontages

Challenges

- Controversy over the fate of the former city hall structure
- Steep hillside

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Community Service Use
- Mixed Use
- High Density Residential Use
- Commercial Service Use

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

Opinions for future development of the site varied, depending on the ultimate direction the City of Troutdale will intend to take regarding the status of city hall. A bond referendum to stabilize and renovate the building and return its use to a city hall was soundly rejected by voters in 2019. Listed below are considerations for adaptive reuse of the building or future use of the entire site if the city hall building and residential use are demolished and cleared for new development options.

Adaptive Reuse:

- Community service uses (including library, senior center, youth center, daycare)
- Outdoor equipment shop and rental facility (across the street from bike hub)
- Event space, movie theater or black-box theater
- Food/beverage establishment, including brewpub

New Development:

- Mixed-use development (similar to Discovery Block: commercial & townhome residential)
- Civic building (including city hall, library, community center)



Above: The Block 4 Tract, containing the old City Hall building, looking southeast from the corner of Kibling Avenue and the Historic Columbia River Highway

Below: The Block 4 Tract Opportunity Site (Image: Google Earth)





Adaptive reuse efforts to repurpose the old city hall building could be explored and can also be mandated through deed restrictions as a condition of sale if the city intends to sell the property to private development. Other communities have successfully repurposed or newly constructed replicas of older downtown civic-use buildings for commercial purposes. *(Rendering: Randy Wilson)*





Much like other blocks between the Historic Columbia River Highway and 2nd Street, the north-south streets have steep hillsides making some land uses more challenging. If the former city hall were to be demolished, new development should consider a layout similar to the Discovery Block mixed use development (below) where an alley created efficient off-street parking and multi-story level access.



SITE 11 - BEAVER CREEK WEST TRACT

This site contains 14 mostly residential lots situated between the Historic Columbia River Highway and the western edge of Beaver Creek totaling 5.74 acres. Just over half of the lots are developed, though several of the properties could be considered favorable for redevelopment opportunities. The site is also critical in helping continue the visual connection of Downtown with the amenities of the East End neighborhood, including Glenn Otto Park and Harlow House Park.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by Site 12 to the northeast, medium density residential and commercial services to the south; and low density residential and community service uses to the west.

Advantages

- Adjacent to scenic, historic, and culturally significant sites in Troutdale
- Attractive views
- Positioned in between Downtown, river access and Glenn Otto Park

Challenges

- Natural constraints (flood, slope, soils, wetlands) limit certain types of development
- Limited public infrastructure and connectivity with Downtown
- No cohesive or consistent built environment (lacks a sense of place)

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Mixed-Use Development
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial Service

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Wider sidewalk on both sides of the street or bike/ped trail on/near road
- Continue downtown street lighting and other streetscape features
- Live/work or live/make units, with ground floor non-residential and top floor residential
- Use certain floodplain areas for permeable parking or garages under residential units
- Progressive public art (art that encourages walking down a street – scavenger hunt)



Above: A birds-eye view of the opportunity site. The western edge of the street has a more defined edge and contains community assets like Harlow House (left) and Visionary Park (lower right corner).

Below: The opportunity site outlined. Beaver Creek forms the northeast edge. (Image: Google Earth)



SITE 12 – PENINSULA TRACT

This site contains properties located on the peninsula in between the Sandy River and Beaver Creek, with the Historic Columbia River Highway forming the southern boundary. The site is largely developed, with the biggest property containing an RV resort with other properties being undeveloped or residential in character. It is a large area at just over 17 acres in size, but much of it falls within natural constraints which limit the true developability of the site.

Surroundings

The site is surrounded by the Sandy River to the northeast, community service and commercial service to the southeast, and Beaver Creek (Site 11) to the west.

Advantages

- The natural surroundings of the site are incredibly attractive.
- Is well positioned in between Downtown and Glenn Otto Park

Challenges

- The site is largely constrained due to flooding concerns and sensitive soils given the location at the confluence of Beaver Creek into the Sandy River
- Erosion issues on the Beaver Creek frontage may restrict full utilization of the site
- An under-constructed bridge that connects the northern part of the Tract would either need to be expanded or replaced for full circulation of the site.

Preferred Future Land Uses

- Mixed-Use Development
- Open Space and Parks
- Community Service Uses

Future Ideas and Potential Investments

- Create a connector park to Glenn Otto Park and the Confluence site – mile long riverfront park
- Dog park
- Additional launch area for Sandy River access
- Outdoor sports complex, potentially a small stadium for a school or travel team
- Outdoor concert venue
- Luxury end housing – condominium development with ground floor retail
- Cottage housing and vacation rentals
- Improve existing bridge on northwest corner to allow for two-lane traffic
- Additional parking for Glenn Otto Park and Sugarpine Drive-In



Top: A birds-eye view of the opportunity site looking southeast. The site is intimately located between hillsides and creeks for an attractive natural setting. The RV resort makes up over half of the site.

Bottom: The opportunity site outlined. Beaver Creek forms the southwest edge. (Images: Google Earth)





A Mile-Long Waterfront Park

An attractive idea that came from several people during public outreach was the concept of connecting current park areas with future or potential parks to create an effective mile-long waterfront park and/or waterfront trail system.

This would link up Glenn Otto Park to the south with the existing Depot Park (Opportunity Site 1) by establishing a portion of Opportunity Site 12 as a future use for parks and open space. An alternate could be to use parts of Opportunity Site 11 to have a multi-use trail connect the two park areas on the west side of Beaver Creek.

The park would be further connected to The Confluence site via the trail that has already been called for in the redevelopment plan for the site. The park area at The Confluence site would be mostly linear but tie in with development opportunities on the site. The trail would then connect with existing regional trail networks. The first connection would tie into the 40-Mile Loop trail network that connects to existing trail on the Columbia River levee north of the city. The second connection would go across the Sandy River along the Interstate 84 bridges east to the Sandy River Delta, Lewis & Clark State Park, and areas in the Columbia River Gorge.



Opportunity Sites 11 and 12 can play a crucial role in seeing this exciting vision come to life and add substantially to the recreational and mobility possibilities for the Town Center and the city as a whole.

OPPORTUNITY CORRIDORS

The eight corridors identified in this Plan represent an opportunity to enhance mobility options in support of the Town Center Vision. They are designed to connect the four neighborhoods together with the Downtown, support the development of the identified opportunity sites, and improve connections with other areas of Troutdale.

As of 2020, six of the eight corridors are already constructed transportation facilities, with two hypothetical connections being called out. Five of the eight corridors are Multnomah County-owned right-of-way facilities.

The corridors as listed are:

- A. Halsey Street
- B. Historic Columbia River Highway – Halsey Neighborhood Segment
- C. Historic Columbia River Highway – Downtown Segment
- D. Historic Columbia River Highway – Eastside Neighborhood Segment
- E. Buxton Road
- F. Secondary Access: Buxton Road to 257th Drive
- G. Sandy Avenue
- H. Downtown/URA Connections

Further details on each corridor are found on the subsequent pages.



CORRIDOR A - HALSEY STREET

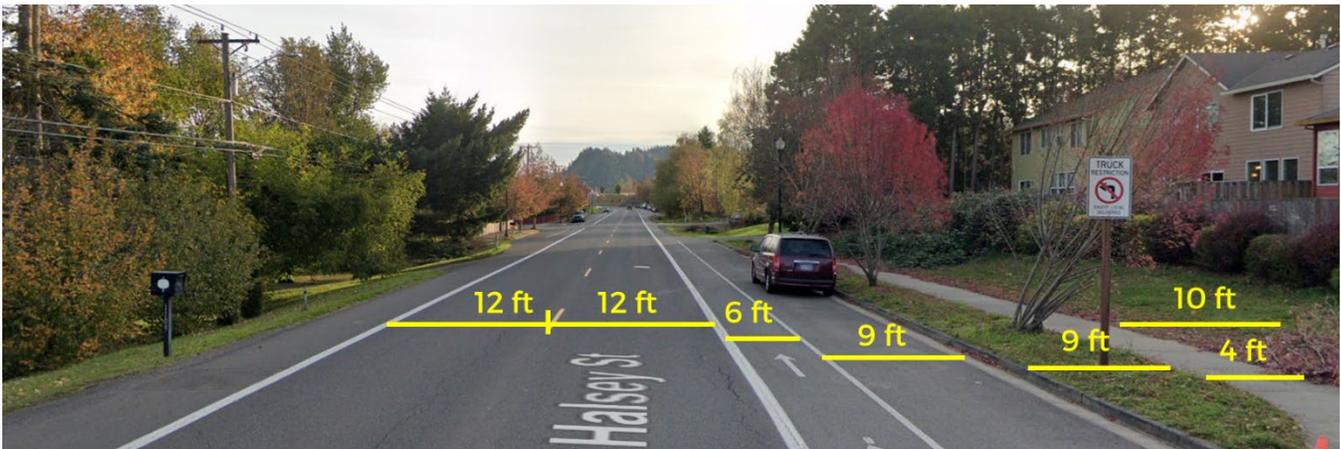
This corridor is the primary arterial that connects residential areas in the Halsey neighborhood with Downtown, consisting mostly of Halsey Street within the Town Center District and a small portion of Historic Columbia River Highway between the Halsey Street terminus and 257th Drive. The corridor is about 3,000 feet in length.

Corridor A is owned and maintained by Multnomah County and is primarily a two-lane road that has shoulder and pedestrian improvements along most of the frontage. The road has a generous right-of-way for most of its length, measuring between 85 to 100 feet in width.

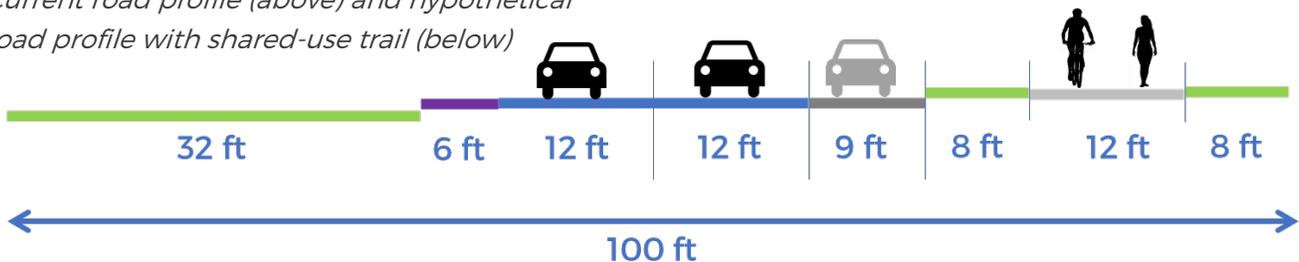
Halsey Street serves as a de facto Main Street that connects Troutdale with the cities of Wood Village and Fairview to the west in addition to the McMenamings Edgefield campus.

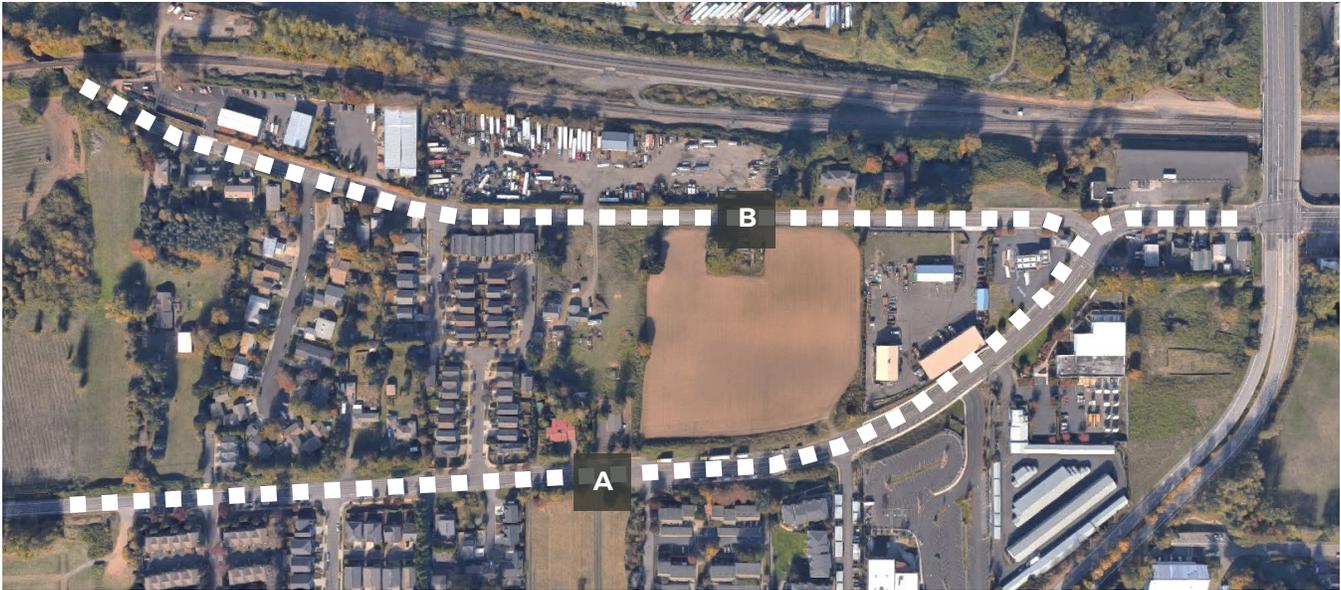
The major challenge for Halsey Street has been continuous pedestrian and bicycle access to better connect the Town Center with the areas to the west. Long-range planning efforts between the three cities through the Main Streets on Halsey corridor plan have indicated a desire to have a continuous and consistent connection that improves mobility choice along the corridor while still recognizing the importance of private vehicle traffic.

The corridor’s wide right-of-way may lend itself to an off-street bike/ped trail that parallels the vehicular travel lanes. This path could also in turn connect with a potential bicycle greenway that is being contemplated for 2nd Street (see Corridor C)



Current road profile (above) and hypothetical road profile with shared-use trail (below)





CORRIDOR B - WEST HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY - HALSEY NEIGHBORHOOD SEGMENT

This corridor serves as a secondary access route or collector for some of the residential areas in the Halsey neighborhood as well as access for some industrial properties just outside of the Town Center district. It also connects to the Multnomah County Animal Services shelter and 244th Avenue once passing underneath a railroad trestle. It is about 2,500 feet in length.

Corridor B is owned and maintained by Multnomah County and is primarily a two-lane road that lacks shoulder improvements along a large section of frontage (see below). Corridor B also has a tighter right-of-way than Corridor A, due in part to a lack of substantial development on both sides of the road that would typically require dedication. The right-of-way varies between 55 to 70 feet in width.

Unlike Corridor A, this corridor has not been viewed as a major three city corridor investment. The traffic level of service on this corridor is less than that of Halsey Street. In the event opportunity sites 3, 4, and 5 are developed, there is a possibility that this corridor could take on a heightened role in overall circulation patterns in the Halsey neighborhood. As a result, this corridor has been listed, as future public improvements should be complimentary of development patterns in those opportunity sites.



CORRIDOR C – HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY – DOWNTOWN SEGMENT

This corridor is effectively Troutdale’s “Main Street”, stretching roughly 1,600 feet from the intersection of 257th Drive to the west to Depot Park (Opportunity Site 1) to the east.

Corridor C is owned and operated by Multnomah County and is primarily a two-lane road that is mostly improved to current road standards. It includes turn lanes at the intersections of 257th Drive and Buxton Road (eastbound only). The street’s right-of-way is 70 feet wide for most of the corridor.

The Town Center Committee spent a significant amount of time on contemplating long-range improvements and changes to Corridor C. The prevailing consideration is to make Troutdale’s main street become not just a street, but a place. As a result, improving the right-of-way to have it be more pedestrian friendly and reducing the actual speed of vehicles through direct design and visual cues should be the considerations moving forward.

Of significant interest to the Committee include the following possibilities for capital investments and street programming:

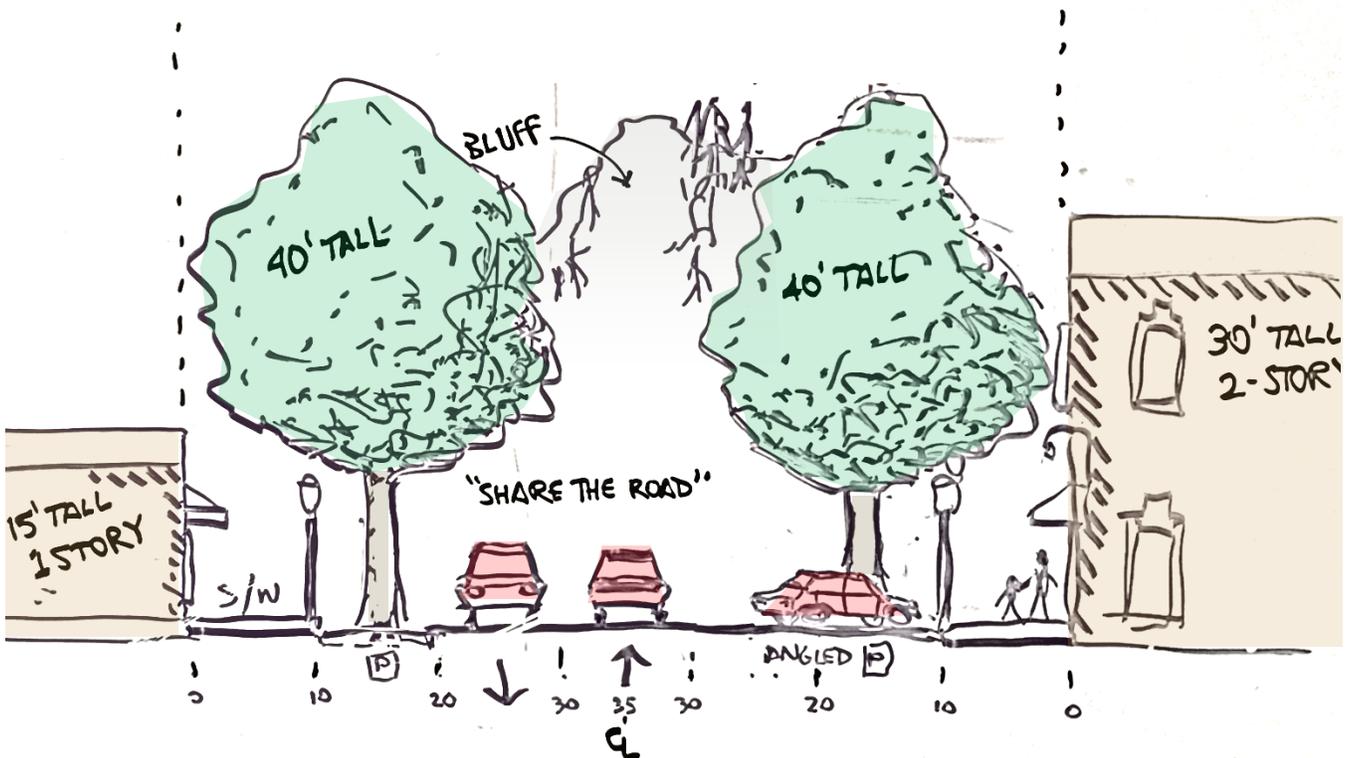
- Reducing the through travel lane width from 12 to 11 feet
- Removing dedicated on-street bicycle lanes (requires bicycles to be in standard traffic lanes)
- Establishing a parallel bicycle “greenway” along 2nd Street
- A potential bike-ped bridge spanning 257th Drive to connect 2nd Street with a potential off-road path identified in Corridor A.
- Installing a three way stop at Opportunity Site 1 or potentially at an intersection with Corridor H
- Providing extended pedestrian bump-outs to shorten distances crossing streets
- Increasing the sidewalk width where allowed
- Allowing for potential angled parking (standard or rear-end) on one side of the street
- Enlarging the tree wells to establish a larger tree canopy (potentially use parts of parking strip)
- Establishing convenient loading and drop-off zones

The aforementioned items will require coordination and endorsement from Multnomah County. In the event that the agencies are unable to agree on future improvements the City should investigate if assuming ownership of the road is in the best long-term interest of the community, given the specific level of interest of these investments and the strong belief they will positively contribute to long-term place-making for the Town Center.



Above: The Historic Columbia River Highway as of 2020. (Credit: Kevin Mooney)

Below: A hypothetical street profile of the Historic Columbia River Highway, looking east. This concept removes the bike lanes, allowing for angled parking on one side of the street and expanded sidewalks and tree basins, thus allowing for a larger tree canopy. Narrowing the road and allowing for a larger tree canopy provides a psychological cue for driver to slow down in an area. Slowing (but not eliminating) vehicle traffic can help with pedestrian safety, with wider sidewalks and shorter crossing distances at intersections contribute to creating a more pedestrian friendly environment. The eastbound lane is centered on the street to maintain an unobstructed view of Broughton Bluff.





CORRIDOR D - HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY - EASTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SEGMENT

This corridor is the primary arterial that connects residential, local commercial uses, and community assets in the Eastside neighborhood with Downtown. The corridor is about 2,600 feet in length.

Corridor D is owned and maintained by Multnomah County and is primarily a two-lane road that has shoulders along most of its frontage with pedestrian improvements along its western and southern frontages. The road has a 60-foot wide right-of-way for most of its length.

Placemaking will also be somewhat important to this corridor, as there is a desire by the Town Center Committee to have the community assets along this corridor be better connected with those in Downtown. As a result, improving streetscaping and bringing in appropriate infill development along Opportunity Site 11 can provide a better visual cue that the Eastside is a distinct and important part of the Town Center district.

Of particular interest is the possibility for a bus pullout area that could be located at the northwest portion of the corridor closest to Downtown. It could provide an area for tour buses, shuttles, or even standard transit the ability to load and unload passengers who can then walk north and west to Downtown, east towards the river, or south along the street towards the Harlow House park and Visionary Park/Caswell Gardens area.

The possibility to extend an off-road path in Corridor D could occur, however a narrower right of way and additional environmental constraints may require that path to cross Beaver Creek into Opportunity Site 12 and connect back with the street closer to Glenn Otto Park. Therefore, improving pedestrian connectivity, particularly for properties along the north and eastern frontage will be important to improve the streetscape and general safety.

CORRIDOR E – BUXTON ROAD

This corridor is the primary arterial that connects a large portion of Troutdale with the Town Center in general and Downtown in particular. The corridor which is quite steep for much of its length runs through the Hungry Hill neighborhood and is roughly 1,800 feet in length.

Corridor E is owned and maintained by Multnomah County and is primarily a two-lane road that has wide shoulders and curb-edge sidewalks (no planting strips) along its frontages. The road has a consistent 60-foot wide right-of-way for its entire segment.

Buxton is one of the original platted streets of the town and its first addition and has served historically as a Downtown’s connection with the balance of the community for generations. The steep slopes of the road do not make it a friendly road for bicycles or pedestrians to use, particularly in winter months when the risks of icing and heavy winds persist. Along certain segments, the slope exceeds standards from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

For that same reason, most of Buxton Road has not been used heavily for on-street parking, as most of the street fronts along residential properties which largely contain on-site parking.

Buxton has at times been contemplated as a corridor for improved bicycle and pedestrian access, though terrain would be challenging. Buxton has also been a street that is considered for improved streetscaping treatments, similar to efforts made along Halsey Street in the past. The possibility to extend those streetscaping improvements further south to Troutdale Road offer a wonderful chance to link the Town Center to other parts of Troutdale with a consistent streetscape pattern.

Buxton could also serve as an experimental street to encourage alternative transportation including electric-powered bicycles or golf carts that could help non-vehicular travelers go up (or down) Hungry Hill in a safe manner.





CORRIDOR F – SECONDARY ACCESS: BUXTON ROAD TO 257TH DRIVE

Corridor F is not specifically tied to geography, but rather a future access consideration to establish a second connection between Buxton Road and 257th Drive. The main purpose would be to potentially relieve congestion concerns at the intersection of 257th Drive and Historic Columbia River Highway and provide a secondary access point for travelers to reach destinations within the Hungry Hill neighborhood in a more direct way.

The City of Troutdale would likely be the agency tasked with owning and maintaining any future connection, however coordination with Multnomah County will be required, as it would involve the potential for a future intersection at 257th Drive and increased traffic movements at Buxton Road, both of which are owned and maintained by the County.

The likeliest location for this access could be an extension of 4th Street from its current terminus near the City's Public Works Facility, however this would require significant rework of the parking area and a likely widening of 4th Street to accommodate a heavier load of traffic. It would also impact several residences along the street.

Another possibility could be 2nd Street, however the proximity of the intersection with the Historic Columbia River Highway might limit it to a "right-in right-out" intersection, thus limiting potential traffic movements. Further studies should be conducted to evaluate these (and other) possibilities.

CORRIDOR G – SANDY AVENUE

This corridor is a neighborhood collector within the Hungry Hill neighborhood that serves as a secondary route to navigate between upper and lower portions of the neighborhood. The street also serves as an alternate or emergency route for vehicles who may have access issues navigating Buxton Road due to icy conditions on the much steeper slope.

Corridor G is owned and maintained by City of Troutdale and is a two-lane road that has no shoulders and a narrow curb-edge sidewalk on the western frontage of the street.

The major concerns for the corridor revolve around maintenance and the long-term durability of this road being able to accommodate automotive traffic on a hillside that has had previous stabilization issues. There will be little ability to widen the road without significant expense and impact to the hillside, which could further aggravate the concerns for erosive conditions or landslides.

The concept the City would consider would be to either reduce Sandy Avenue to a one-way access road or to close the road to automobile traffic altogether, with exceptions for emergency vehicles or during weather events. This would reduce the wear and tear of the road and provide a safer means for pedestrians and cyclists to move up and down Hungry Hill.

Closing streets for vehicular access is not an easy nor popular proposition, and it may involve design considerations such as gated entry points and changes to the endpoints of 4th Street and 5th Street, which currently terminate at Sandy Avenue.



CORRIDOR H - DOWNTOWN/URA CONNECTIONS

This corridor is loosely defined geographically. It calls for two likely locations for future access considerations that would directly link Downtown with The Confluence site within the Urban Renewal Area. The two most likely connection possibilities include:

- A bike/ped bridge that begins at the intersection of Harlow Avenue and Historic Columbia River Highway, spans over the rear parking area and railroad tracks, and ends in the Confluence site; potentially on the top floor of a parking structure or an elevator shaft.
- A vehicular connection that extends Kibling Avenue over the existing driveway to the rear parking area and crosses the railroad tracks at-grade and continues into The Confluence site.

Both corridor improvements are expected to be owned and maintained by the City of Troutdale, with coordination required from Multnomah County (for connecting with Historic Columbia River Highway) and Union Pacific Railroad, as they will impact the railway's right-of-way.

A vehicular bridge that extends Kibling Avenue northward could be achieved through engineering, though would appear to be unlikely for several reasons. First, it would be expected to be cost prohibitive for public or private investments. Second, it would require a reconfiguration of the rear parking area, and third, it would likely take up significant land on The Confluence site in order to return the roadway to an at-grade level, given the terrain differential between Downtown and the site.



The Town Center Committee concurred that having both connections would be most optimal solution for ensuring that The Confluence site is well integrated with Downtown. The lack of any direct connection apart from the planned riverfront trail would be harmful to both areas and lead to disjointed or competitive growth that would jeopardize the District as a whole.

The at-grade railroad crossing will be a difficult proposition due to permitting standards with Union Pacific Railroad. Although similar permits would be required for the bridge, that connection will be easier to come by from an approval standpoint but is limited in allowing for full mobility choice without allowing cars on the span. The City would need to prepare for the likelihood that securing this access could take years and that approval is not guaranteed. Lastly, development proposals for The Confluence site should not be singularly reliant on a direct vehicular connection from Downtown.



Above: The location of a bike/ped bridge landing connecting from Downtown over the rear parking area and railroad tracks to a hypothetical connection point in The Confluence site.

Below: The location of an extension of Kibling Avenue to cross the railroad tracks into the site.



URBAN RENEWAL AREA / THE CONFLUENCE SITE

The Troutdale **Urban Renewal Area** (URA)—also known as the Troutdale Riverfront Renewal Area in other plans—is a 48-acre collection of properties of primarily north of the Union Pacific railroad tracks within the Town Center District. It includes the Columbia Gorge Outlets, a railroad-owned siding lot, and Depot Park (Opportunity Site 1 as identified in this Plan).

Also contained within the URA are roughly 20 acres of city-owned properties that have become known as **The Confluence at Troutdale**, also known as **The Confluence site**. For the purposes of this Plan, most of the analysis and ideas for future development will focus on The Confluence site, though several development concepts and resulting impacts will affect the entire URA.

The **Troutdale Urban Renewal Agency** (“the Agency”) is a separate legal authority that was established to oversee future planning and public expenditures. The Agency is led by a Board, which is the same body of people as the Troutdale City Council. City Staff provide technical support to the Agency.

HOW URBAN RENEWAL WORKS

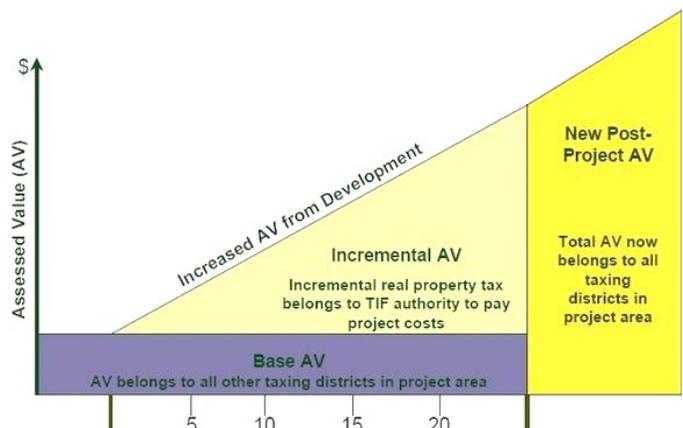
Voters within a jurisdiction formally establish an urban renewal area in a certain geographic area. To oversee the future development and financial responsibilities of the URA, a separate legal authority is also established by the City.

Portions of a city that are designated as URA are considered blighted and/or underdeveloped and are targeted for private redevelopment. An **urban renewal plan** is adopted by a City to establish goals and objectives, list potential projects, and highlight ways of using tax increment financing for future capital projects to serve development.

Within the boundaries of the URA, a **tax-increment financing** (TIF) district is established. TIF consists of using annual tax increment revenues collected by the Agency to make payments on debt incurred by the Agency, usually in the form of tax increment bonds. The proceeds of the bonds are used to pay for the urban renewal projects authorized in the urban renewal plan. Debt, including bonds, may be both long-term and short-term, and does not require voter approval.

Tax increment revenues equal most of the annual property taxes imposed on the cumulative increase in the total assessed value within the URA over the total assessed value at the time an urban renewal plan is adopted.

Upon the conclusion of an urban renewal plan’s tenure, the total assessed value is returned to eligibility for all taxing districts as it was prior to the establishment of the URA.





Above: A map showing the boundaries of the Troutdale Urban Renewal Area (URA)

Below: The Bissinger & Co. Wool Pullery was once a major employer in Troutdale and was located on site. The site fell into disrepair after the company left, making it eligible as a URA site. (Image: Hu Nhu)



PREVIOUS PLANNING & PREPARATORY EFFORTS

In 2006, the City of Troutdale adopted an urban renewal plan (The Troutdale Riverfront Renewal Plan). The original plan had a duration of 10 years, meaning no new debt was to be incurred. However, that was amended in 2014 by the Agency and 2015 by the City Council to extend an additional 10 years, thus a total duration of 20 years. The maximum amount of indebtedness (the amount of TIF for projects and programs) that may be issued for the Renewal Plan is seven million dollars (\$7,000,000).

The goals that were established by the Renewal Plan help set the parameters for concepts outlined in the Town Center Plan. Future development in the URA should:

- promote the redevelopment of the area for a mix of retail, office, residential and public uses.
- provide a greater level of goods and services for Troutdale.
- increase the awareness of the development community of the opportunities within the area.
- create employment opportunities for Troutdale residents.
- improve transportation linkages.
- improve access to and enjoyment of the Sandy riverfront.
- provide public spaces for events and other uses by Troutdale residents, patrons of area businesses and tenants and residents within the area.
- preserve and enhance Troutdale's natural, cultural, and historic resources.

In the first ten years of the Renewal Plan, there were several development concepts that had emerged, but economic instability, political differences, and changing priorities on public expenditures had resulted in no significant advancement of future development. One exception was the commissioning of a concept plan for a future linear park and trail along the riverfront that was adopted in 2014.

Property Acquisition & Clean-Up

In 2018, following an unsuccessful effort to coordinate development tasks in support of a development scheme proposed by Eastwinds Development, the Agency purchased an additional 7.72 acres of land from the company. This land would complement 11.87 acres of already-owned public property to create nearly 20-acre site for redevelopment, which has since become known as The Confluence site.

In late 2018, the Agency contracted to have the site be largely cleared of all previous development; much of which was in decrepit condition. This site cleanup also removed contaminated material and soils and sought certification from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) that the site could be redeveloped for commercial and residential uses. The work was completed in 2020 with DEQ certification expected in early 2021.

The Agency has also commissioned surveyors to establish separation of The Confluence site between a 16.1-acre parcel to be sold for private development purposes, with remaining acreage for the future park and trail as envisioned in the 2014 concept plan.



Top: The Confluence site looking north in April 2018, shortly before cleanup of the site began.

Bottom: The Confluence site looking south in October 2020 with a temporary disc golf course placed on the site, six months after cleanup was completed (both photos: Chris Damgen)



THE CONFLUENCE SITE

The Confluence site is a collection of Agency-owned parcels within the Urban Renewal Area. The site provides Troutdale with the most exciting and challenging opportunity site of all; a once-in-a-lifetime chance to transform roughly 20 acres adjacent to Downtown and along the banks of the Sandy River into someplace special.

To the south across the railroad tracks is Downtown Troutdale, which sits roughly 30 to 35 feet higher than the prevailing elevation of the site, which is generally flat. This could allow for taller development that could attract a higher caliber of investment potential through mixed-use opportunities.

To the east is the Sandy River, of which the City has long planned to have a riverfront park and trail along the embankment to connect Downtown with the larger recreational trail networks in the Portland region and the Columbia River Gorge.

To the north is Interstate 84, providing excellent freeway frontage and visibility for future development. And to the west is the Columbia Gorge Outlets, which provide commercial services adjacent to the site along with future redevelopment ideas and possibilities for future expansion or cohesion.

The site is strategically situated to take advantage of its surroundings, though is also hamstrung in some cases by them in terms of access restriction. The major public amenity will be a four-acre linear park along the embankment of the Sandy River, with a multi-use trail connecting the site to Downtown and regional trails to the north and east.

Expectations for Development

Beyond the difficulties of access considerations and cost, perhaps the main community concern remains that this location should complement Downtown, rather than compete with it. As a result, the Committee established certain development expectations that it hopes will be considered as the Urban Renewal Agency engages in solicitation and prospective developers create proposals.

- The **street grid** should be carried over from downtown as an organizing principle
- The **water tower** should be retained as an iconic feature of the site and future development
- The **exchange of property** with the ownership of the outlets should be allowed to provide more direct access to/from the west
- A centralized **parking facility/garage** should be considered
- A direct connection with downtown via a **pedestrian bridge** should be built
- A direct **vehicular connection** with downtown should be studied and pursued
- A consistent and specific **architectural style** should be established
- Building heights should be limited to 55 feet but may go as high as 75 feet but should be **stepped-back** or terraced to lessen visual impact from adjacent public spaces and streets
- Residential development should prioritize **home ownership opportunities**



Above: The Confluence site, shortly after site cleanup was completed in 2020 (Image: Marv Woidyla)

Below: The Confluence site at the southeast corner, looking upstream at the Union Pacific trestle. While most of the site is situated on a bluff, this area is low-lying and susceptible to flooding.



Developing an Initial Concept

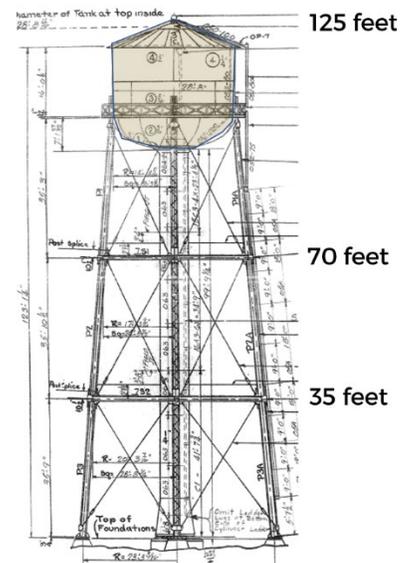
As with the 12 opportunity sites elsewhere in the Town Center District, the Committee sought to establish preferred land uses to The Confluence site, but added an additional exercise to help articulate development expectations and better understand the uniqueness of this site.

An **initial concept** can be used as a starting point for prospective development to consider future development patterns and opportunities that already received a level of community endorsement. It can also lead to additional concepts that can be created and studied from a numbers perspective, as it provides a calculation on available square footage for residential and commercial land uses in determining the economic feasibility of a project.

The **preferred land uses** that were established included mixed-use development as a first preference, followed by commercial service uses and parks & open space. Other major factors that influenced the creation of the initial concept was a desire to improve access points to the site, consider taller height allowances for buildings, and provide options for a centralized parking structure to benefit the site and Downtown. The initial concept addresses all these items (see upper-right image on the next page).

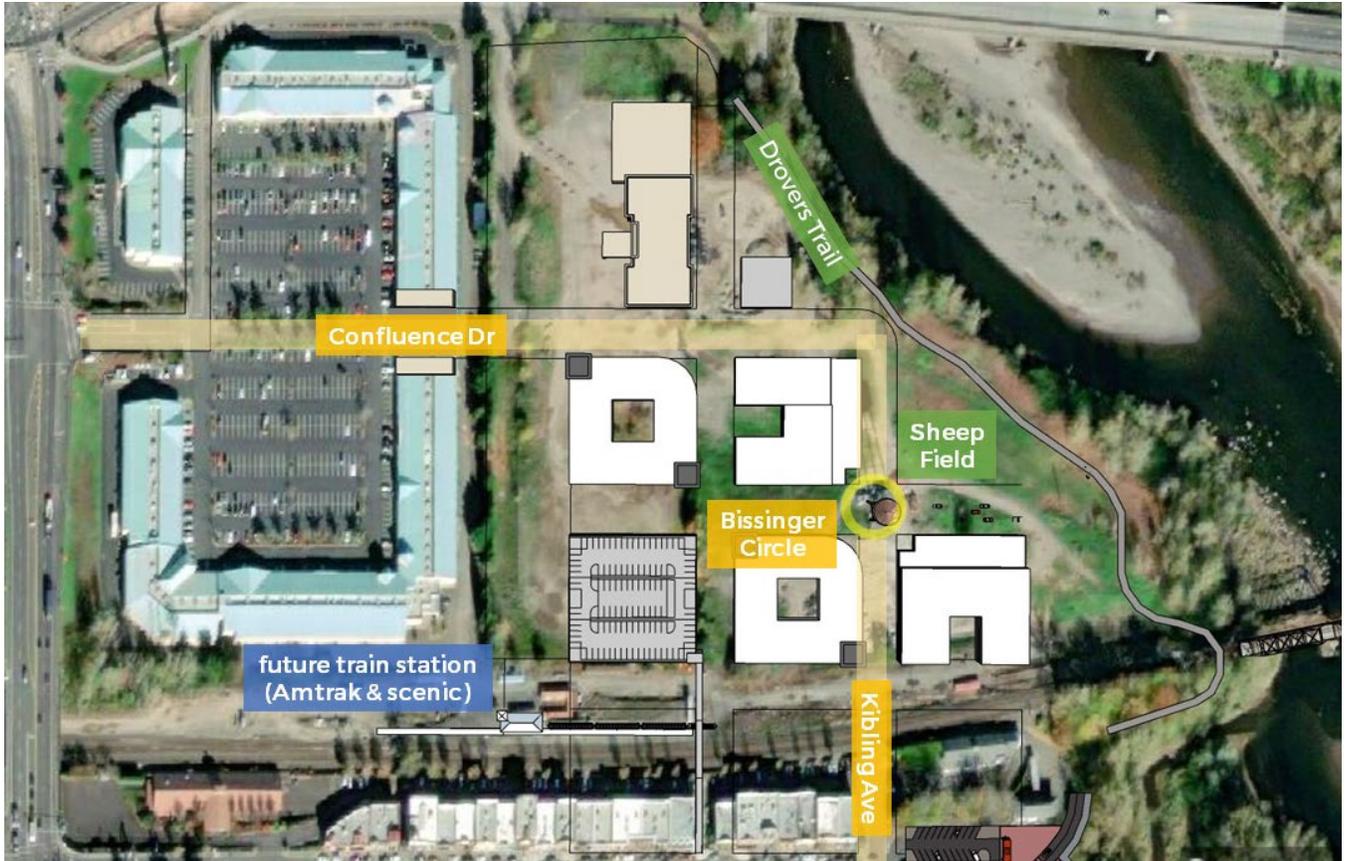
An idea to secure **enhanced access** from the west suggests a property exchange between the outlet mall property owner and the Agency. In exchange for direct access, a portion of property could be exchanged with mall ownership to develop additional commercial property, such as a hotel (which is shown on the concept). It also allows for creating endcap units within the existing layouts of the mall, which may be conducive to enhanced dining options at the facility.

Due in part to the size and positioning of The Confluence site, development can be at **higher densities** and structural heights than what would be appropriate for Downtown or other areas of the District. Site visits to the site by the Committee were conducted in 2018 to help bring these ideas to visual context. The water tower provided a useful “ruler in the sky” in that its features provided a good mark for scale of building heights.



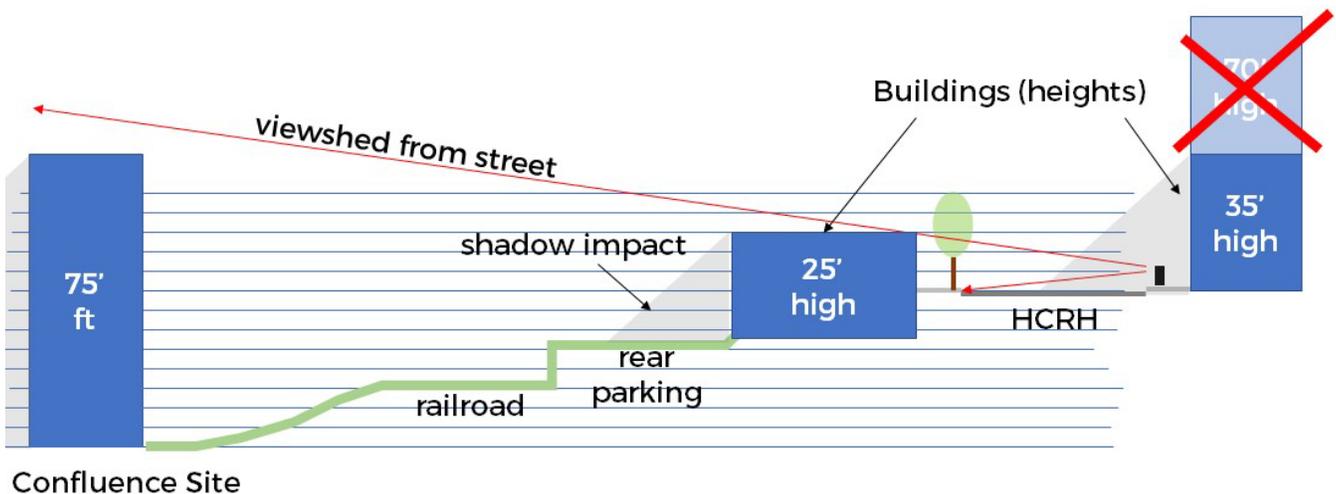
The Committee agreed that it could be appropriate for taller buildings on this site, which are often required for mixed-use projects to be financially successful. This also provides an “out-of-sight but not out-of-mind” approach to increasing residential density near Downtown while allowing Downtown to maintain a small-town feel through the built environment (see lower-right image on the next page).

The **parking** solution offered would consider a centralized parking garage that could directly connect with a bike/ped bridge crossing to Downtown, allowing the Confluence site and Downtown to benefit, in addition to the Outlets which would see through traffic going to and from the garage. It could also tie into a future train station for intercity or scenic rail purposes, increasing visitor traffic and commercial engagements on both sides of the tracks.



Above: An initial concept developed by the Town Center to determine scale and capacity for the site. Actual proposals from development interest could utilize this concept as a starting point.

Below: A scaled profile view looking east shows the terrain differentiation between the Confluence site (left) and downtown (right). The graphic shows that taller structures are not desirable in Downtown due to negative scale and shadow impacts. By using terrain and placement as an advantage in allowing buildings to be taller in the Confluence site, a significant increase in residential density can be achieved without visually disrupting the streetscape in Downtown, thus preserving a small-town feel.



Riverfront Park & Trail

The 2006 Renewal Plan called for continuous public access along the Sandy riverfront, ideally integrated with proposed development on the lot to be sold to private development interests.

In 2014, the City of Troutdale approved the **Sandy River Access Plan** (“Access Plan”), a park and trail concept plan prepared by consultants and funded by a Metro grant as part of the agency’s Nature in Neighborhoods program. The program seeks to improve access to nature, particularly for underserved communities to connect people to their watershed.

The Access Plan had several public outreach efforts through charrette workshops in 2013 to determine specific interests from the public. A multi-use trail was of chief interest, along with play areas and gathering spaces for social activities.

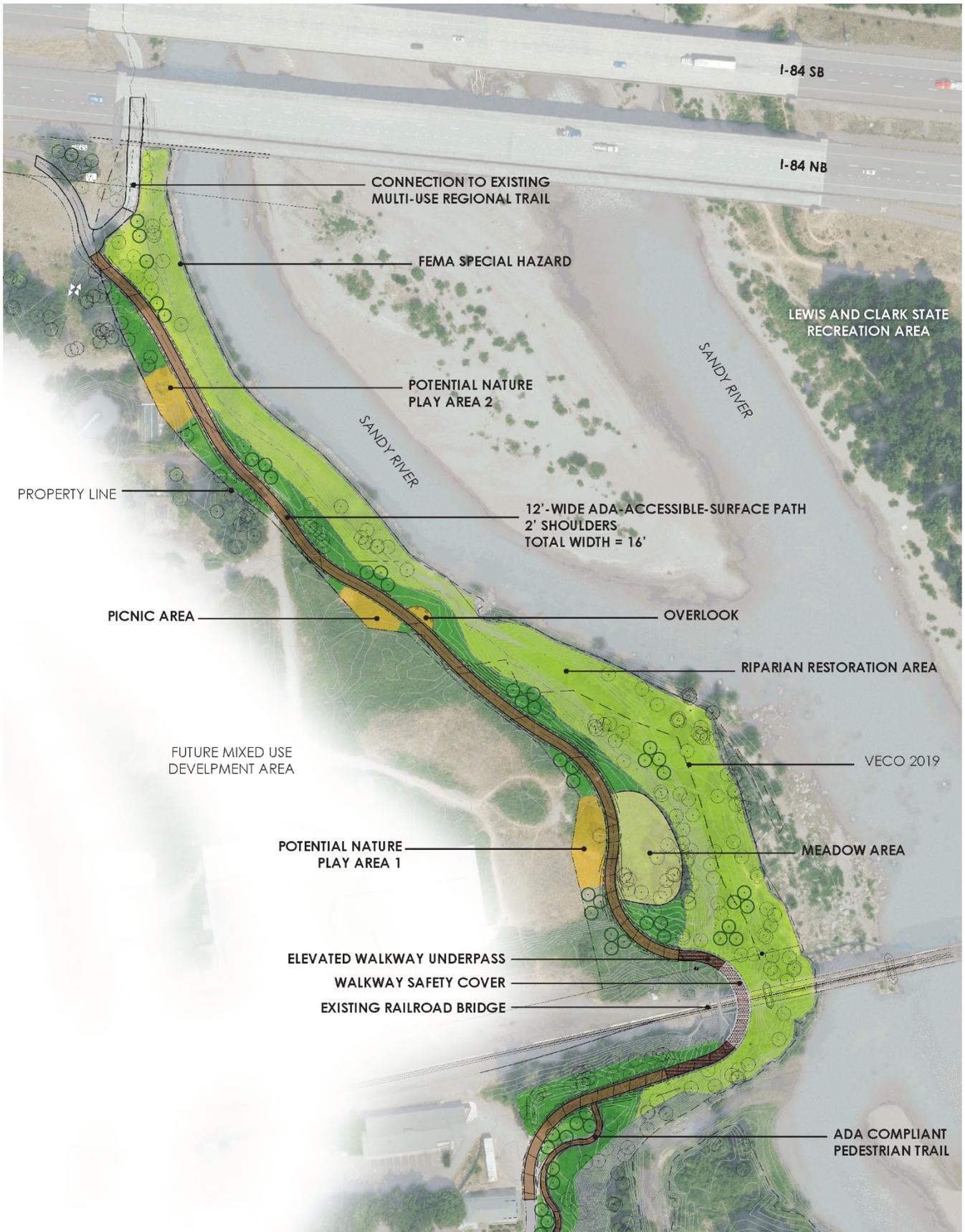
The Access Plan called for a significant riparian shoreline restoration plan and the establishment of a multi-use trail that would be an essential component of the regional 40-Mile Loop trail system. The Access Plan also called for certain park embellishments, including the possibility of a cantilevered overlook for park users to enjoy the surroundings of the area and to add flourish to the site.

Upon the acquisition of the Eastwinds properties and the passage of the Metro Parks and Nature bond in 2018, the City—along with its consultant team for this project—began work to fulfill the general scope of the Access Plan and began moving towards finalizing a fully engineered design for future construction. This would allow the City to be in a formidable position to compete for competitive grant funding from the Metro bond as well as other public, private, or nonprofit funding sources.

The first stage of planning for construction involved obtaining “**30 percent plan**” (shown on the right). An additional round of public engagement occurred with the Town Center Committee and the Parks Advisory Committee in 2019 to further refine ideas and details from the Access Plan. Along with additional engineering and surveying, this design respects the original intentions of the Access Plan and provides an updated trail layout and further design inspiration for park features (shown below).

As of 2020, the City is in pursuit of “**60 percent plan**” design for the project, which will further solidify plans and add engineered drawings to the undercrossing of the Union Pacific Railroad, which requires an elevated pathway component to achieve slope standards and limit flood zone impacts. It is expected that the City will have full construction plans by 2022 when competitive grant applications are to be applied for from a regional bond program and other potential sources.





2.5 THE BRANDING & MARKETING ELEMENT

COMMUNITY BRANDING

Marketing is often about taking your message to an audience. For cities this can be to attract talent, tourism or investment. Good branding will certainly support your marketing efforts by helping shape that message and ensuring that it is authentic. However, branding does not just support external marketing efforts—it supports and shapes so much more than that. Branding isn't about only trying to speak to tourists and outside audiences. Instead it's about understanding who you are, who you are not, and then packaging that in a way that people can buy into, can use as a decision lens, can help get credit for the work they are doing and can simply be a part of.

When there is a shared vision, shared values, and a defined way to see that and communicate that, it creates pride. This is why sports teams have such die-hard fans. By having colors and logos, teams make it easy for their fans to buy in and show their support for their team. This is no different for cities. When you define a brand, you are creating something that people can be a part of. Everyone longs to belong and be part of something bigger than themselves.

– Ryan Short

The above quote speaks to the essence of community branding and the differentiation between it and what most understand marketing to be. It became very apparent early in the Town Center planning process that many people took some level of pride in living or working in Troutdale, but that there was no real graphical identity to promote that. Similarly, the community at large lacked a coordinated, cohesive identity that could help with the eventual marketing of this civic pride.

Community branding efforts seek to provide the spark that can allow civic pride to begin. Although nested within the Town Center planning effort, the community branding effort is a story about Troutdale and its surrounding environs. It underscores pride in place. In most communities, downtowns are where this marketing – through graphics, merchandise, and promotion – take place.

PROCESS

The City secured the services of Arnett Muldrow & Associates, a leading firm that helped to pioneer the concept of a community branding effort into a planning process. Oftentimes, Arnett Muldrow works directly with communities engaged in downtown, town center, regional, or corridor based planning efforts, making their contribution a natural fit for the Town Center Plan efforts in Troutdale.

The firm began working with the City in late 2019 by touring the community, meeting with civic leaders, and attending a Town Center Committee meeting to hear feedback from the Committee on a variety of topics that relate to the development of a community brand. Shortly thereafter, the firm launched a public survey to gain additional feedback. Much of the feedback received confirmed many of the same things that Staff and Committee members had heard from public engagement efforts over the previous year.

The firm returned to Troutdale in early January 2020 to conduct stakeholder meetings with several focus groups. From these interactions, a first draft of a branding statement and branding deliverables was revealed to the Town Center Committee for an initial round of feedback. During this time, the firm suggested using the name “The Confluence at Troutdale” as a new moniker for the urban renewal area property. The name proved popular, though the logo and colors for it were modified.

The firm made a final visit to Troutdale in late February 2020 to provide an update on refinements made to the initial presentation. The deliverables package was completed in May 2020.

DELIVERABLES

The deliverables created by Arnett Muldrow are a reflection of feedback received from the Town Center Committee, several stakeholder focus groups, a collection of written public feedback throughout the Town Center Plan’s public outreach efforts, and the general observations of the consultants themselves.

The deliverables included:

- A branding statement, that tells Troutdale’s story and establishes certain themes
- A variety of interconnected logos, wordmarks, colors, and fonts
- A specific branding statement and logo for The Confluence site
- Extensions of the brand to city functions, events, festivals, signage, and potential initiatives
- Starting templates for print and online advertising
- A comprehensive branding style guide and implementation strategy

The subsequent pages show the highlights of these deliverables.

Branding Statement

In the approach used by Arnett Muldrow and often used by marketing firms, there is a branding statement that sets the tone of the products and can also be used for advertising. The branding statement is as followed:

*We are **shaped** by powerful forces of water, wind, and land. It is here that the Sandy River carries rushing waters from the glaciers of Mount Hood to the mighty Columbia. It is here where flood and fire formed Broughton Bluff – standing sentinel as a stunning backdrop to our downtown. It is here that land rich with flora and fauna sustained Native Americans, early settlers, and a growing region.*

*We are **rooted** in history. It is here that the Chinookan Peoples hunted and fished the lands along the rivers and mountains. It is here that explorers like Vancouver, Lewis, and Clark charted a path for European settlement in the region. It is here where enterprising businesses launched to serve a growing region with food, timber, wool, and hides. It is here where aluminum provided for World War II. It is here that character is preserved in museums and homes.*

*We are **transported** over time. The Union Pacific Railroad crossed our continent and the station here gave birth to a town of commerce and industry. Decades later, the Columbia River Highway, the first planned scenic highway in the nation, brought cars through Troutdale to explore the iconic wonders of the Columbia River Gorge. To this day, Troutdale is a place where the movement of people and goods is evident all around us.*

*We are **connected** in dramatic ways. To our west is the metropolis of Portland, a city that embodies the urban dynamics of the Pacific Northwest. To our east is the Gorge, a stunning reminder that this place is a product of natural forces far stronger than our own, forces we can feel as the wind blows. We embrace our exceptional role as the transition between nature and city.*

*We are **grounded** in community. We preserve and enhance our historic downtown, we embrace our natural setting, we envision a future that honors our past. We cherish our role as the Gateway to the Gorge. But we are more place than passage. We are a place for families, a place of friendships, a place of gatherings, a place of creativity, and a place of opportunity. We look to the future with bold vision.*

We invite you to experience our place, feel the warmth of our people and the power of our surroundings.

We are Troutdale, Oregon – Our Nature Will Move You



Branding Themes

Within the branding statement are five general branding themes that serve as the backbone to how the brand is expected to be marketed. The transported theme takes its cues from Troutdale’s legacy of being a nexus of transportation and takes the iconic design of the stone guardrails of the Historic Columbia River Highway for inspiration. The connected theme underscores the connection between city and country and appropriately uses the Troutdale Bridge (and bridge color) to illustrate that point. The shaped theme pulls on the natural forces that have affected the community, using a river (or stream) as the manifestation of those elements. Grounded and rooted take the inspiration from Broughton Bluff and the Douglas-fir forests to personify our people and the community at large that make Troutdale a unique place amongst a beautiful setting at the gateway to the Gorge.



Logos

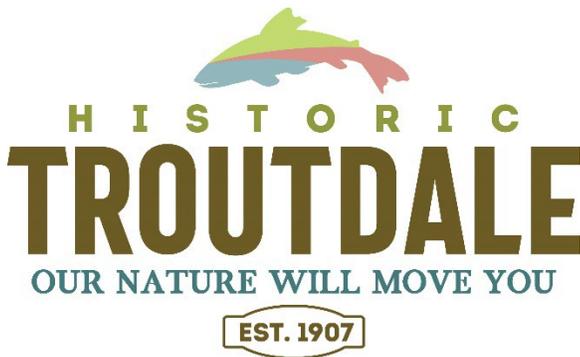
The logos shown below are the primary samples of nearly 400 unique files of different file types, sizes, and colors that were developed as part of the branding charette and refinement efforts.



This is the **primary** full color logo. An alternate logo with a brown background and cream lettering can also be utilized. The logo takes its inspiration from rainbow trout and the shape patterns from the centennial arch which spans the Columbia River Highway. Adding the word historic underscores the community's desire to have the Town Center be known as a historic hub, but other adjectives can be used in its place.



This is the **simplified**, one color logo derived from the primary logo. This is especially good for circumstances when smaller images are required due to space limitations or technical requirements, such as stitching for apparel.



A **frameless** variation of the primary logo which includes the new slogan "Our Nature Will Move You" (a variation of this file also uses the historic "Gateway to the Gorge" moniker).



The **wordmark** is simple and clean. It takes historic cues from the early 20th Century and has unique lettering details (observe the slants of the T and the E). But the mark is also a contemporary font. It can be used to evoke either history or modernity.



The branding efforts concentrated on Troutdale and specifically the Town Center as a destination for materials, however Arnett Muldrow also designed several files for the City to utilize for official purposes. This logo shows the full city seal along with the city wordmark, to be used in stationary, vehicle decaling, and other uses. Variations of this logo have been created for departments and initiatives.



Arnett Muldrow was encouraged about the desire for the Town Center Committee to recommend a Main Street model for future planning and promotion. They suggested the title “Town Center Alliance” and created a logo that can be utilized if and when the Alliance is established.



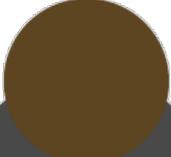
The Urban Renewal Area site was also of particular interest to Arnett Muldrow and they established a unique brand identifier for the site for future marketing of the site for prospective development. They suggested the name “The Confluence at Troutdale”, which was warmly received by the Town Center Committee and has thus been incorporated into this Plan.



These simplified **rounded** logo files work well for social media profile pictures or other treatments. They can also work well for certain types of merchandising, including stickers. As the general appearance on the brand grows, the image alone can become synonymous with Troutdale.

Colors

Arnett Muldrow chose to take inspiration from colors that were already in existence within the community. They identified two general color schemes for the city: an “official” color palette for the City that relies primarily on darker colors and earth tones, and a “destination” color scheme that has similar colors but with some added bright and pastel colors for accents and highlights of graphics or fonts. The added destination colors took specific inspiration from hues found on a rainbow trout.

				Colors for both official uses and destination uses
PANTONE 7553 C	PANTONE 455 C	PANTONE 7475 C	PANTONE 9060 C	
RGB 90 70 33	RGB 108 90 36	RGB 65 121 123	RGB 240 239 217	
HEX/HTML 5a4621	HEX/HTML 6c5a24	HEX/HTML 41797b	HEX/HTML f0efd9	
CMYK 49 59 92 46	CMYK 48 52 100 33	CMYK 77 38 47 11	CMYK 5 2 16 0	
100%	100%	100%	100%	

				Added colors for official uses
PANTONE 447 C	PANTONE 7407 C	PANTONE 574 C	PANTONE 7495 C	
RGB 55 58 54	RGB 205 160 84	RGB 77 91 49	RGB 143 153 61	
HEX/HTML 373a36	HEX/HTML cda054	HEX/HTML 4d5b31	HEX/HTML 8f993d	
CMYK 69 60 64 55	CMYK 20 36 78 1	CMYK 65 44 90 36	CMYK 47 27 97 5	
100%	100%	100%	100%	

			Added colors for destination uses
PANTONE 7606 C	PANTONE 345 C	PANTONE 5503 C	
RGB 218 145 137	RGB 146 208 170	RGB 145 182 186	
HEX/HTML da9189	HEX/HTML 92D0AA	HEX/HTML 91b6ba	
CMYK 13 50 39 0	CMYK 44 0 42 0	CMYK 44 16 24 0	
100%	100%	100%	

Fonts

Although not as obvious as logos or colors, fonts can help define a brand, particularly if it is distinctive from other ones in the area or if they can harken back to historic precedence. Arnett Muldrow’s proposal for Troutdale was able to accomplish both feats, in that the primary and secondary typefaces closely match fonts used in a vintage visitor guide to the Historic Columbia River Highway. They also included additional fonts for modern, artistic, and standard typeface purposes.

Primary Typeface: “TheBartender”

TROUTDALE

Secondary Typeface: “Rasoav”

OREGON

Modern Typeface: “Intro”

TOWN CENTER

Artistic Typeface: “Eyes Wide Open”

Art Walk

Standard Typeface “Montserrat”

(the body font used in the Troutdale Town Center Plan)

Place-Making and Wayfinding

Cities that have successfully incorporated community branding into their visual identity often rely on place-making and wayfinding opportunities. This typically involves signage but can also be manifested through public art or infrastructure installations. Shown below are several examples produced by Arnett Muldrow and further extended by others on how the brand can be incorporated; through typical treatments like city limit signs or street intersection toppers (top row) or through uniquely designed and placed wayfinding pole and monument signage at key landmarks and intersections (bottom row). Cities often rely on a wayfinding signage program to begin work on these types of improvements.



MARKETING

INTEGRATING THE TOWN CENTER WITH TROUTDALE AT-LARGE

The feedback received from residents and confirmed by the analysis done by Johnson Economics revealed a disconnect between the downtown core and a balance of the city. While marketing is typically understood to be an effort to attract external attention, community branding suggests that internal marketing is as important in developing civic pride. Special effort should be made to ensure that marketing efforts are not exclusively geared for visitors, which has been a traditional way of handling community promotion.

VISITOR & TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Internal promotion should not completely jettison the need for external marketing to attract visitors. This is not an either-or proposition.

In July 2020, the City took over destination marketing organization (DMO) responsibilities from the West Columbia Gorge Chamber. The City will intend to operate the visitors center, develop a tourism plan, begin creation of a marketing plan incorporating the new branding items, and intend to either outsource the DMO responsibilities to an external entity or consider retaining that authority if a Main Street organization is established in-house.

MEDIA, ADVERTISING, & OUTREACH

The City will expect to improve its outreach efforts through an improved media presence. A media and campaigns strategy should be incorporated within a tourism plan. This includes traditional advertising in logical publications but also includes developing a travel website that is uniquely distinct from the City's official government website. An increased focus on social media and a heavy reliance on photography and videography will play an important role in marketing Troutdale.

Innovative
Diverse
Creative

- 1. More large-scale signage on I-84. — like the huge billboard for Bare Naked Winery.
- 2. The strict linear layout of the one & only main street that also acts as an artery to the HCRH does not lend itself to stopping. Major attractions such as the new wine-tasting facility, the Barn Museum, Harlow House, Depot, Mayor's Square need to be heavily promoted in online sites, Portland newspaper, TV ads, etc.

3. We need a brew pub (purple, purple ☺)
COFFEE (Badst)

4. ^{large} Kinetic sculpture at 25th/HCRW intersection ●●●●●●●●

- 5. CONSIDER EXTENDING RETAIL/MIXED USE UP TO 3RD? ●●●●●
- 6. Many towns designate a "theme" for their city — antiques, spas, museums, children's attractions and gear their energy in that direction.

7. Part of the joy of Troutdale is surprise in finding it when you get off the freeway to go to the historic hwy.

8. AS A "HUB" OF RECREATION, WE NEED SOME SHOPS THAT SUPPORT THIS THEME (↑ DIVERSIFIES APPEAL) ●●●●●●●●

9. HEAVILY LEVERAGE W. COL. GORGE CHAMBER — TOURISM PROMO, STATE

.. More things for kids / Add a swinging bench / picnic table
something for kids at the hub etc.....
mayor

- 3 -

IMPLEMENTATION

Ideas are useless unless used. The proof of their value is in their implementation.

— Theodore Levitt

3.1 HOW TO APPROACH IMPLEMENTATION

The Town Center Plan was a significant three-year effort that has high hopes and basic expectations for how it is to be implemented. Simply put, this is not a Plan that should sit on a shelf and only be used as a reference for a land use application. This is a plan that offers recommendations which into motion policy and staff actions that occur on a regular basis.

This chapter was originally intended to provide a major project rubric. However, the complications of future planning efforts and fiscal impacts that might stem from effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have shifted the expectations. The Plan now calls for a series of “getting started” actions that should be considered or accomplished within a five-year window. It provides then suggestions for continued plan maintenance and updating of priorities in pursuit of the vision. The actions are organized into the following six categories and are expanded upon within this chapter:

- A. Oversight actions
- B. Regulatory actions
- C. Policy actions
- D. Programmatic actions
- E. Urban Renewal actions
- F. Future studies and parallel efforts

While not every action may be undertaken within the first five years, there are three (3) significant actions that the Committee believes should be pursued, as many of the other actions will be reliant on these to be completed or at least underway early on in this Plan’s tenure:

- Designate a City Staff member to carry out the Plan (Action A.1)
- Create a permanent Town Center Alliance Board (Action A.2)
- Create a sanctioned Main Street program (Action A.3)

REMAIN ENGAGED

The Town Center Vision can be achieved best if those who care continue to remain engaged. While it is impossible to predict the future, it is within the control of the community to be intentional in its decision-making.

Unlike many other planning documents, this Plan has already begun to set the tone for future expectations of implementation. Listed below are several items that have already occurred in 2020 or are in the process of establishment at the time of the Plan's adoption.

- Aligning **Council Goals** to support planning efforts within the Town Center, particularly with the Urban Renewal Area
- Creating an **economic development role** within the Community Development Department
- Assuming short-term responsibility for **tourism promotion**.
- Implementing **community branding**, ranging from merchandise to city limit signage.

EMPOWER THE VISION

Every idea, project, consideration, or recommendation within this Plan—in addition to future decisions that affects the Town Center—**should adhere to the Town Center Vision** that has been established.

The adoption of this Plan shall not compel or require the City of Troutdale to fulfill these actions within a certain timeframe. Instead, they provide guidance on suggested actions to fulfill the Town Center Vision, understanding that politics, budgets, and circumstances may change over time.

FOCUS ON OPPORTUNITY SITES & CORRIDORS

In seeking to bridge the balance of maintaining a small town feel while expanding residential density, the concept of establishing opportunity sites is seen as vital to the District's long-term economic sustainability while preserving to the extent practicable the scale of the already-built environment.

By encouraging development on these sites—along with improvements to adjacent corridors—the City can strategically direct new development to these areas while enabling the preservation of the existing built environment that contributes to the small-town feel.

Focusing on these sites should not preclude development or redevelopment interest on other sites, and the City in particular should be careful not to over-prioritize or over-incentivize development in a manner that is fiscally reckless or competitively unfair to other properties where opportunities exist. In those situations, however, it is appropriate for the City to hold firm to its vision statement and ensure that opportunity does not categorically change the district's sense of place.

ESTABLISH TIMEFRAMES

Imagine attempting to plan for a downtown retail environment for 2020 back in 1998. At the time, cell phones competed with pagers for mobile connectivity and were not handheld computers of empowerment. Online retail was just in its infancy and not a disruptive force in commerce. Neo-traditional storefronts were quite the trend but securing a major big box retailer was still the primary economic development strategy.

This underscores the difficulty of establishing a comprehensive plan of action for a generation.

For a district plan like the Town Center Plan, trends in housing preference, retail patterns, and technological innovation can be disruptive if the Plan is not flexible or allow for revisitation. As a result, this Plan calls for a two-step approach to planning for the future while maintaining a 20 year vision for the district.

GETTING STARTED (2020-2025)

A five-year horizon is convenient in that it matches up generally well with a mayoral term of the City Council and is more digestible in projecting financial considerations. In addition, a five-year window gives deference to technological and societal changes that are too difficult to forecast 20 years out.

The next section lists several actions that should be considered in the first five years to help the Plan be set in motion.

MAINTAINING AND REVISING

Long-range planning, particularly over a 20-year period is a difficult to get right. Circumstances and preferences can change. Plans must be able to do so as well, provided they are anchored to a vision and tended to on a periodic basis by people who care.

For the Town Center Plan, it is suggested that the Plan is revisited in 2025, 2030, and 2035 to provide necessary updates to projects and policies that reflect community expectations and economic realities at those times. It also provides an opportunity to re-assess priorities and pivot to new challenges. The Plan should be replaced in its entirety by 2040 to allow for the next generation of growth opportunities and challenges to be addressed.

3.2 GETTING STARTED (2020-2025)

A. OVERSIGHT ACTIONS

Suggested **oversight actions** are put forth to ensure the Plan’s implementation comes to life and prevent it from becoming just another plan on a shelf collecting dust. Through these actions, the recommendations of the Plan can come to life and become integrated into the City’s general workplan over a five-year period.

Listed below are the oversight actions identified:

- Designate a City Staff member responsible for **carrying out the Plan** on a day-to-day basis
- Create a permanent **Town Center Alliance Board (TCAB)** as a successor entity to the Town Center Committee for implementation oversight and advisory functions
- Empower TCAB to provide **feedback on community design**. This includes for public sector investments and private property development during a land use application process.
- Improve coordination with **stakeholder partners** that contribute to civic life. These include but are not limited to the community organizations, nonprofits, and regional tourism entities in addition to organizers of festivals, activities, and events

Further details of each action can be found on the subsequent pages.



A.1. DESIGNATE A CITY STAFF MEMBER TO CARRY OUT THE PLAN**Description**

A City staff member (hereafter referred to as the **Plan Coordinator** role) will be designated to effectively have this Plan be regularly worked upon as a significant portion of their job description. They will serve as the primary point-of-contact for any inquiries about the Town Center or this Plan. They will work to inform those charged with oversight of the Plan and their work responsibilities and establish relationships with key stakeholders.

Fiscal Impact

The City budget would be updated to accommodate this position and the department or division that the Plan Coordinator would be within. As of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget, that responsibility is within the Economic and Tourism Management division of the Community Development Department.

Responsible Entity

- City Manager (appointment of Staff)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- City Council (budget oversight)

A.2. CREATE A PERMANENT TOWN CENTER ALLIANCE BOARD (TCAB)**Description**

A successor entity to the Town Center Committee should be chartered to regularly review the progress of this Plan, oversee the actions of the Plan Coordinator, and promote the Town Center Vision. The proposed name is the **Troutdale Town Center Alliance Board** (TCAB, spoken as tee-cab). Board members would be appointed by City Council and serve on staggered terms similar to existing citizen boards. It is anticipated that if the City pursues and obtains Main Street designation (Action C.1) that TCAB would carry out the responsibilities of a Main Street board. If the Main Street responsibilities were to be spun off from the City into a separate non-profit, TCAB could become the nonprofit board.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal annual costs to accommodate for board expenditures, particularly training and attendance at local and regional gatherings.

Responsible Entities

- City Council (establishment of the Board)
- TCAB (service on the Board)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Plan Coordinator (staff liaison to the Board)

A.3 EMPOWER TCAB TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON COMMUNITY DESIGN

Description

TCAB would be tasked with providing official written comments/testimony on certain types of land use applications on private and public property or capital improvement plans within the Town Center district. Comments or testimony could allow for conditions of approval to be placed on an application that impact the design of a site or structure so that it is reviewed through the prism of the Town Center Vision. Although providing comments/testimony will not result in a legally binding decision, the Board would obtain appeal rights with a land use decision they might disagree with. This responsibility could evolve into a future design review committee or further codifying design standards.

Fiscal Impact

None; this would be incorporated within existing workflows.

Responsible Entity

- TCAB (review and provide comments/testimony)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation of Development Code changes)
- City Council (provide authority to act as a commenting agency, approve Code changes)
- Community Development Department (prepare and present case files and staff reports)

A.4 IMPROVE COORDINATION WITH ORGANIZATIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CIVIC LIFE

Description

Have more regular City engagement to entities and individuals who help promote Troutdale and the Town Center in particular. These include but are not limited to community organizations, nonprofits, and regional tourism entities in addition to organizers of festivals, activities, and events.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal annual costs within the city budget to provide dues, sponsorship support, or other related efforts that benefit both the City and the stakeholder organization.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator (outreach)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- TCAB (potential affiliation)
- Community Organizations (coordination)



B. REGULATORY ACTIONS

Suggested **regulatory actions** are proposed that would help to advance suggested development standards and long-range plans for future consideration.

All of the changes listed herein will require the involvement of City Council action, with significant review and deliberation from the Planning Commission. Several of the actions will also require feedback from TCAB and from external agencies. Most of the changes will require the full involvement of city staff, particularly the City's Community Development Department.

Listed below are the regulatory actions identified:

- Update the City's **Transportation System Plan** and **Capital Improvement Plan** to consider new investments in the eight corridors identified in the Plan
- Review and revise **development code standards** for the Town Center zoning overlay district and Central Business District zoning district, with particular focus on the Opportunity Sites
- Review and revise **residential and commercial design standards** for the Central Business District and Town Center. Residential standards will have to be revised due to the passage in 2019 of House Bill 2001. Commercial standards could be reviewed simultaneously
- Establish workable standards for **food carts, food cart pods, micro-retail**, and other pop-up commercial investments and land uses to expand business opportunity.
- Revise **sign design standards** for downtown businesses
- Require the use of **decorative street lighting** in all new developments

Further details of each action can be found on the subsequent pages.



B.1 UPDATE THE CITY’S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Description

The Transportation System Plan (TSP) and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) are the two main regulatory documents that reference future transportation improvement projects. These plans will need to be updated to address potential improvements along the eight corridors identified by the Plan.

Fiscal Impact

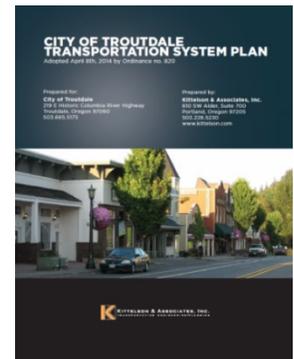
Up to \$50,000. Consultants will likely be required to assist the City in analysis, costing estimates, and document preparation.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (assembly)
- Public Works Department (review)
- Multnomah County Transportation Division (review)



B.2 REVIEW AND REVISE DEVELOPMENT CODE ZONING & OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS

Description

The Troutdale Development Code will require amendments to update the Town Center Zoning Overlay District and several zoning districts to help encourage opportunity site development. This effort runs parallel to the establishment of a new zoning district for The Confluence site (Action E.2)

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development’s Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (assembly)
- TCAB (review)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)



B.3 REVIEW AND REVISE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Description

The Troutdale Development Code’s sections covering residential design standards will need to be revised due to the passage of House Bill 2001 in 2019. Commercial standards could be reviewed simultaneously to potentially incorporate design recommendations identified by the Main Streets on Halsey plan or through other methods of feedback.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development’s Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (preparation)
- TCAB (review)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)



B.4 ESTABLISH WORKABLE STANDARDS FOR FOOD CARTS, FOOD CART PODS, MICRO-RETAIL, AND OTHER POP-UP COMMERCIAL INVESTMENTS TO EXPAND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

Description

This effort would improve or clarify standards for food carts, food cart pods, micro-retail and other pop-up commercial investments and uses that are not within traditional definitions of retail or service uses.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development’s Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (preparation)
- TCAB (review)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)



B.5 REVISE-SIGN DESIGN STANDARDS FOR DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

Description

This effort would seek to improve signage quality within Downtown through a code amendment process. Standards cannot regulate content, but could regulate material, lighting, placement, and other dimensional or performance-based standards to help improve the look and feel of the streetscape and help curate a sense of place.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development’s Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (preparation)
- TCAB (review)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)



B.6 REQUIRE THE USE OF DECORATIVE STREET LIGHTING IN ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Description

The City would require decorative street lighting to be installed for all new development in lieu of standard “cobra head” streetlights. The standard models shall be determined by the Mid-County Lighting District. This will require an amendment to the Development Code.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal to prepare an amendment. Development typically pays for street lighting installations.

Responsible Entities

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (preparation)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)
- Multnomah County Mid-County Lighting District (approval of plans)



C. POLICY ACTIONS

Suggested **policy actions** are typically involving goals, directions, and decisions made by the Troutdale City Council that deal with setting up frameworks to accomplish a desired outcome. In some cases, these efforts may require coordination with other agencies or citizen committees. They often carry a fiscal impact or significant commitment on behalf of Staff to prepare or carry out.

For all policy actions, there will be a requirement for public engagement to solicit feedback and contribute ideas that can shape policy.

Listed below are the policy actions identified:

- Create a sanctioned **Main Street program** that is affiliated with the Main Streets America model and Oregon Main Street statewide program
- Consider implementing a **Business Improvement District (BID)** or **Economic Improvement District (EID)** to capture funding that can be reinvested within the Town Center for allotted purposes, particularly for Downtown
- Evaluate the potential for **jurisdictional transfer** of Corridors C and D (Historic Columbia River Highway's downtown and Eastside segments)
- Develop a **community signage and wayfinding system** in concert with the community brand
- Evaluate the feasibility of **civic uses** at appropriate opportunity sites
- Establish a consistent standard for **streetscape and park fixtures** made by the City
- Evaluate the methodology behind **System Development Charges**

Further details of each action can be found on the subsequent pages.

C.1 CREATE A SANCTIONED MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Description

The City of Troutdale should work towards establishing a sanctioned Main Street program affiliated with the Main Streets America model and Oregon Main Street statewide program. The program should be established by the City and should be evaluated by 2025 for the potential to spin off into a separate non-profit organization, remain within the City's responsibility, or some combination thereof.

Fiscal Impact

The activities of the Economic & Tourism Development division are budgeted annually beginning with the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget. There could be specific budget items within this division's budget that may change on a year-to-year basis in order to prepare for and submit documentation to establish the program, plus additional training or programming required.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator (preparation)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (support)
- TCAB (oversight and training)
- City Council (budget oversight)



C.2 CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) OR ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (EID)

Description

Establishing a business improvement district (BID) or economic improvement district (EID) can help to capture funding within an identified geographic area that can be reinvested within that area. Several downtowns across the state and around the country use this as a local funding source mechanism.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 for consulting services to evaluate options and make policy recommendations. The costs of an assessment would be borne on the property owners within the geographic area.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (establishes district)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Plan Coordinator (works with consulting firm on preparation)
- Finance Department (reviews plans and works with assessor)

C.3 EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL FOR JURISDICTIONAL TRANSFER OF ROADS

Description

This study would seek to understand the benefits and drawbacks for pursuing a jurisdictional transfer of portions of the Historic Columbia River Highway; specifically the downtown segment (most of Corridor C) and the Eastside segment from downtown to the Troutdale Bridge (Corridor D). The study should be done in concert with efforts to update road profiles along Multnomah County owned facilities (Action F.2)

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$10,000 to launch an engineering study that comprehensively studies the issue. If a jurisdictional transfer is contemplated and acted upon, it must be tied to demonstrable funding sources for long-term maintenance responsibility.

Responsible Entities

- Community Development Department (consultant management and preparation)
- Public Works Department (contribution)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Multnomah County Transportation Planning (contribution)
- TCAB (review)

C.4 DEVELOP A COMMUNITY SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING SYSTEM

Description

This effort would utilize the community branding elements and create a unified and consistent signage program in the Town Center District and across the City.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 develop a plan, identify sites, and create construction drawings and templates. Up to \$100,000 in one-time costs for sign manufacturing, assembly, and installation, of which \$50,000 would be within the Town Center District. Up to \$5,000 per fiscal year for maintenance or replacement costs.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator (works with consultant on preparation)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Public Works Department (review and right-of-way permitting)
- Multnomah County Transportation Planning (review and right-of-way permitting)
- TCAB (consultation and review)

C.5 EVALUATE THE FEASIBILITY OF CIVIC USES AT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY SITES

Description

Community service uses include numerous civic uses that can help to improve the usage and sense of place for the Town Center district. In the opportunity sites analysis, several sites showed promise to have civic uses be considered, including for a city hall, library, community center, and other similar non-commercial entities. This effort would generate a feasibility study that would consider current and future space requirements for a variety of uses and help agencies determine if their future needs can be met within one or more of the opportunity sites identified.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal; this would be incorporated within existing workflows.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (creation of report)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- TCAB (review)
- Public agencies (engagement)
- Non-profit organizations (engagement)



C.6 ESTABLISH A CONSISTENT STANDARD FOR STREETScape AND PARK FIXTURES

Description

This effort would seek to establish a standard design template with relatable material and color standards for all public installations or fixtures within a streetscape or park in the Town Center District.

Fiscal Impact

Regular costs that are typically built within the parks budget for new or replacement fixtures. Additional funding for new or replacement fixtures should be pursued via Community Enhancement Program grant funding.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator (selects and approves fixtures)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Parks & Facilities Division (engagement)
- TCAB (consultation and review)
- Community Enhancement Program Committee (funding source)



C.7 EVALUATE THE METHODOLOGY BEHIND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CHARGES**Description**

System Development Charges (SDC) are periodically evaluated to determine if the methodologies are reasonable and defensible for a City to charge properties on improvements to their properties. The most recent evaluation resulted in a significant escalation and increase in certain SDC rates, particularly in sewer and those types of businesses with high wastewater usages, especially dining facilities. A review of the methodology may suggest alternative ways to calculate SDC apart from the status quo.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$50,000 for consultant services. Evaluations and changes to SDC methodology follow a strict formula for analysis.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (approves SDC methodology and rates)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Public Works Department (works with consultant on report preparation)
- Community Development Department (review)
- Finance Department (contribution and review)

D. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIONS

Similar to policy actions, programmatic actions set into place city-supported programs that can help advance some of the community-based desires that were shared during public feedback. These are efforts that do not specifically relate to improving a property or geographically bound. Rather, they establish initiatives that could provide benefit not only to the Town Center, but also all of Troutdale.

Listed below are the programmatic actions identified:

- Consider specific incentives or programs to **attract development** within the opportunity sites and **encourage adaptive** reuse of properties listed as historic resources.
- Consider revising the **collection method** for System Development Charges (SDC).
- Consider a **dining facility investment program** to support commercial kitchen improvements in existing commercial spaces and reduce SDC burdens by revising methodologies for rates.
- Develop an **entrepreneur support program** to foster new ideas and investments, including but not limited to micro-lending, rental spaces (incubator), and educational partnerships.
- Provide management of “**adopt-a-planter**” or “adopt-an-intersection” programs.



D.1 CONSIDER SPECIFIC INCENTIVES OR PROGRAMS TO ATTRACT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE OPPORTUNITY SITES AND ENCOURAGE ADAPTIVE REUSE**Description**

Encouraging development in the Opportunity Sites will lessen potential redevelopment pressure of the existing built environment that contribute to the small town feel of the Town Center. At the same rate, encouraging adaptive reuse of properties listed as historic resources or with historic interest can further underscore the commitment to being a “historic hub” as referenced in the vision.

Fiscal Impact

To studying the issue, the costs would be minimal, as this would be incorporated within existing workflows. If initiatives or programs were to be considered and ultimately adopted, then the fiscal impact would be determined based on analysis and Council deliberation.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Community Development Department (preparation)
- TCAB (review)

D.2 RECOMMEND REVISING THE METHOD FOR COLLECTING SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CHARGES**Description**

As of 2020, System Development Charges (SDCs) are charged to new development and tenant occupancy to help account for future impacts and capacity improvements to the city’s infrastructure systems, including transportation, water, and sewer. Determining a method that changes when SDC payments are due (or if they can be spread out) could help new or expanding businesses get started.

Fiscal Impact

Will be determined depending on methodologies considered, but it could be considerable for year-to-year cash flows.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Public Works Department (preparation)
- Community Development Department (review)
- Finance Department (review)

D.3 CONSIDER A DINING FACILITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Description

This program could support commercial kitchen improvements in existing commercial spaces and reduce SDC burdens by revising methodologies for rates. Precedent has already been set on a sewer SDC subsidy program for dining establishments that went into effect in 2019 and remained active at the time of this Plan's adoption.

Fiscal Impact

This would be a program likely structured within the general fund budget that could be additionally supported by grant funding if available. Any SDC subsidies would not affect required reimbursements to SDC funds and would come out of the general fund. The amount to program into a future budget will depend on budget flexibility and policy preferences.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator

Other Stakeholders Involved

- City Council (adoption and budget oversight)

D.4 CONSIDER DEVELOPING AN ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORT PROGRAM

Description

This program would be inspired and closely modeled from the City of Gresham's "garage to storefront" program. It would be designed to foster new ideas and investments, including but not limited to micro-lending, rental spaces (incubator), and educational partnerships.

Fiscal Impact

This would be a program likely structured within the general fund budget that could be additionally supported by grant funding or other agency support if available. The amount to program into a future budget will depend on budget flexibility and policy preferences.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator

Other Stakeholders Involved

- City Council (adoption and budget oversight)
- Educational programs at Reynolds High School, Mount Hood Community College, and others

D.5 PROVIDE MANAGEMENT OF “ADOPT-A-PLANTER” OR “ADOPT-AN-INTERSECTION” BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAMS.

Description

Reinvigorate the adopt-a-planter program through direct City management and coordination. This would also include the potential to adopt an intersection to improve landscaping and general appearances in select corners of the district. The program could expand to consider additional intersections beyond the Town Center, particularly at city limit entry signs.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$5,000 in additional annual allocation beyond regular line item maintenance in parks funding for acquisition, maintenance, and replacement of planter boxes, gardening equipment and plants. Some of these funds could be recuperated, supplemented, or expanded through grant funding.

Responsible Entity

- Plan Coordinator

Other Stakeholders Involved

- City Council (budget oversight)
- Parks & Facilities Division (equipment and logistical support)



E. URBAN RENEWAL ACTIONS

Listed below are the urban renewal actions identified:

- Prepare **additional development concepts** that can be tested for site suitability, economic feasibility, and community embracement.
- Establish a **new zoning district and land use designation for the URA** that is better geared to match development opportunity with community expectations.
- Allow for TCAB the ability to hold public meetings and **make recommendations of development proposals** at The Confluence site to the Urban Renewal Agency or its successors.
- Finish plans and construct the **Sandy Riverfront Park** and trail connection.
- Study options for a more **direct connection** between The Confluence site with Downtown.
- Study the viability of constructing a **parking facility** and securing partnerships for cost-sharing.
- Engage with the Governor's Regional Solutions Team and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to consider future **rail service** for intercity and Gorge tourism purposes.

Further details of each action can be found on the subsequent pages.



E.1 PREPARE ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS THAT CAN BE TESTED FOR SITE SUITABILITY, ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY, AND COMMUNITY EMBRACEMENT.**Description**

This “action planning” effort will enlist the support of a consultant to interview stakeholders and prospective master developers, create additional development concepts, and provide economic analysis on the feasibility of development options.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$50,000

Responsible Entity

- Urban Renewal Agency Board

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultants
- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

E.2 ESTABLISH A NEW ZONING DISTRICT AND LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR THE URA.**Description**

Troutdale’s existing zoning districts do not sufficiently allow for the scale and impact of development that could occur on the site based on the Committee discussions. Changing the standards of existing zoning districts could have unintended consequences in other locations in the Town Center or the city in general. Establishing a new zoning district and land use designation is seen as a preferred option that is better geared to match development opportunity with community expectations

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development’s Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entity

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Urban Renewal Agency Board (authorization to agree to an application)
- Community Development Department (preparation)
- TCAB (review)
- Regional (Metro) and State (DLCD) agencies (review)

E.3 ALLOW FOR TCAB THE ABILITY TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AT THE CONFLUENCE SITE TO THE URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY OR ITS SUCCESSORS.**Description**

As the expected successor organization to the Town Center Committee, it is important that TCAB can adequately review and take comment on development proposals on the Confluence site.

Fiscal Impact

Minimal costs that are typically built within the Community Development's Planning Division budget for advertising and mailing of application notices.

Responsible Entity

- TCAB (review and conduct meeting(s))

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Urban Renewal Agency Board (referral acknowledgment)
- Community Development Department (preparation)

E.4 FINISH PLANS AND CONSTRUCT THE SANDY RIVERFRONT PARK AND TRAIL CONNECTION.**Description**

As of 2020, the Sandy Riverfront Park and associated trail connection has obtained 30 percent design. This item would seek to complete design work on the trail and park, with considerable attention towards a required elevated walkway component in a segment under the Union Pacific trestle.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$5,000,000 is anticipated to complete design work and construct the trail and basic park installations. A mixture of city, regional, urban renewal, SDC, and nonprofit/charitable funding support is anticipated.

Responsible Entity

- City Council and Urban Renewal Agency Board (budget oversight and authorization)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultants (design)
- Contractors (construction)
- Community Development Department (support and permitting)
- Metro and other state agencies (funding support)
- Union Pacific Railroad (permitting)

E.5 STUDY OPTIONS FOR A MORE DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CONFLUENCE SITE WITH DOWNTOWN.**Description**

This would create a feasibility plan to begin studying at-grade and above-grade (bridging) options to better connect Downtown to The Confluence site. This effort could lead to initial design options and costing estimates to determine future costs to construct and build the improvements.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$100,000, which can be funded by urban renewal, SDC, and other funding options. Some of these funds could be offset by grant funding from public or nonprofit sources.

Responsible Entity

- Urban Renewal Agency Board (authorization)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultant (analysis)
- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)
- Public Works Department (consultant coordination)

E.6 STUDY THE VIABILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A PARKING FACILITY AND SECURING PARTNERSHIPS FOR COST-SHARING.**Description**

Parking was listed as a major drawback and future concern by the public for the Town Center. A structured parking facility built at The Confluence site may provide relief. This could also benefit other stakeholders, particularly the State of Oregon which may seek to have long-term travel demand management issues within the Columbia River Gorge and might support such a facility.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 which can be funded by urban renewal or other funding options. If state involvement can be secured, there could be cost sharing options available.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultant (analysis)
- Urban Renewal Agency Board (review)
- Other agencies, particularly Oregon Department of Transportation (engagement)

E.7 ENGAGE WITH THE GOVERNOR’S REGIONAL SOLUTIONS TEAM AND THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) TO CONSIDER FUTURE RAIL SERVICE FOR INTERCITY AND GORGE TOURISM PURPOSES.

Description

Long-term traffic congestion in the Columbia River Gorge has become an increasingly urgent issue that the State of Oregon is seeking to solve. Troutdale’s position at the “Gateway to the Gorge” along the Union Pacific Railroad may provide a solution by allowing for future rail tourism options. This would be further supported by Troutdale being highlighted in an Oregon Department of Transportation study as a potential intercity rail service stop if regular passenger rail service between Portland, eastern Oregon, and Boise, Idaho is reinstated.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 to study and develop service concepts, which can be presumably cost shared with the state and further supplemented through grant funding from public or nonprofit sources.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultant (analysis)
- Urban Renewal Agency Board (review)
- State agencies, particularly Oregon Department of Transportation (engagement)
- Union Pacific Railroad

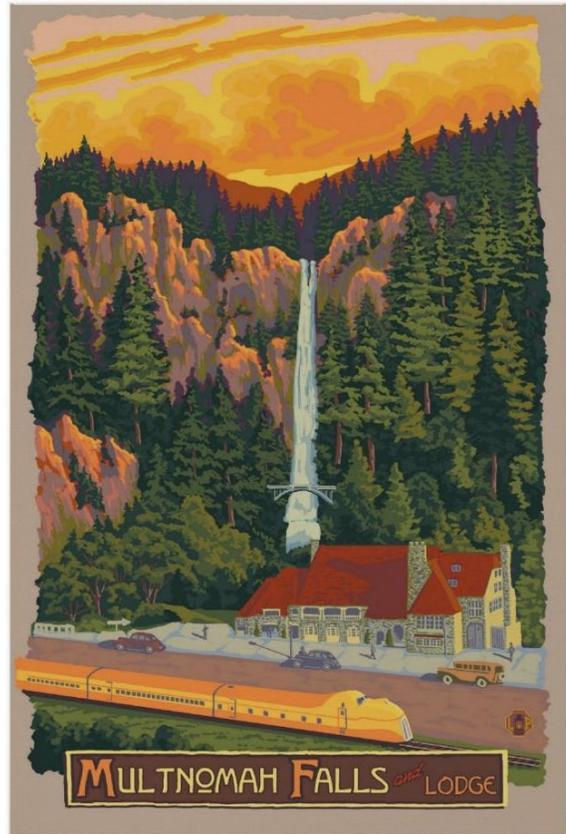


Image: Vintage Poster by LanternPress

F. FUTURE STUDIES AND PARALLEL EFFORTS

Within the Town Center are a number of potential projects that are expected to be addressed through standard workplans already outlined by Staff or part of a larger city-wide study or project in which the scope of work touches geographic areas beyond the District.

Listed below are the future studies and parallel efforts identified:

- Update the City's **Parks Master Plan** for specific plans to improve Opportunity Sites 1 (Depot Park), 8 (Helen Althaus Park), and 9 (Mayors Square) and create a public art master plan.
- Work with Multnomah County to **update road profiles** on County-owned corridors to improve future streetscapes and increase mobility options.
- Study reducing vehicular traffic on **Sandy Avenue** with improved bicycle-pedestrian facilities.
- Charter a new **economic and retail study** for Downtown to evaluate impacts of COVID-19.
- Charter a Town Center **parking and loading study**, with particular focus on Downtown and Glenn Otto Park and in concert with parking facility study (URA Actions).
- Develop a future **mobility plan** that can investigate alternative transportation methods (such as establishing a golf cart zone) and future trends in transportation and mobility.
- Develop a **tourism plan** that links promotion of amenities, activities and events with branding and marketing elements to fulfill destination marketing organization (DMO) responsibilities.
- Develop a **climate resiliency plan** that can incorporate suggestions to increase resiliency to climate change, improve hazard mitigation actions, and promote green infrastructure.

Further details of each study or parallel effort can be found on the subsequent pages.

F.1 UPDATE THE CITY'S PARKS MASTER PLAN.**Description**

An update to the City's Parks Master Plan should include ideas and plans to improve Opportunity Sites 1 (Depot Park), 8 (Helen Althaus Park), and 9 (Mayors Square) and establish a public art master plan.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$100,000 for the retention of consultants to assist with the effort. This item has been incorporated within the approved Fiscal Year 2020-21 city budget.

Responsible Entity

- Parks Advisory Committee (review and approval)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultants (preparation)
- City Council (budget oversight and authorization)
- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)
- Public Works Department (consultant coordination)
- TCAB (feedback)

F.2 UPDATE ROAD PROFILES ON COUNTY-OWNED CORRIDORS.**Description**

Work with Multnomah County to update road profile designs and templates on County-owned corridors within the Town Center District to improve future streetscapes and increase mobility options.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$10,000 on Corridor A for local share. Up to \$50,000 for a Corridor C profile (Downtown). Up to \$25,000 for Corridors B, D, and E. Funding can be offset through competitive grant funding by state, regional, and nonprofit entities. These figures are for consultant contracting and deliverables and are expected to be shared in part with Multnomah County.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultants (preparation)
- Multnomah County Transportation Planning (consultant coordination)
- Public Works Department (feedback)
- TCAB (feedback)

F.3 STUDY REDUCING VEHICULAR TRAFFIC ON SANDY AVENUE WITH IMPROVED BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES.

Description

Sandy Avenue (Corridor G) was identified as a potential area to reduce or close regular vehicular traffic due to long-term concerns about the road's resiliency at the edge of a steep hillside. Partial or full conversion of the road as an improved bike/ped facility has been previously brought forth, with this study finalizing the effort for the purpose of setting forth a future capital improvement project.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$10,000 for consultant services to provide technical analysis. Previous studies have already shown ideas and concepts. If a preferred option advances, then this goal should be refined to cover design and construction costs, which could have multiple funding sources.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (creation of report)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Public Works Department (contribution)
- Consultants (contribution)
- TCAB (review and recommendation)
- Adjacent and nearby property owners

F.4 CHARTER A NEW ECONOMIC AND RETAIL STUDY FOR DOWNTOWN.

Description

A new economic and retail study should be commissioned to better capture Downtown Troutdale's true market area, especially east of the Sandy River. The study should occur once the COVID-19 pandemic's daily impact has receded to better understand economic impacts and changes.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 for consulting services to perform the study.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Consultant (creation of report)
- TCAB (review and feedback)
- City Council (review and feedback)

F.5 CHARTER A TOWN CENTER PARKING AND LOADING STUDY.**Description**

A comprehensive parking and loading study should be commissioned with particular focus on Downtown and Glenn Otto Park parking management. The study should also evaluate future trends in transportation and ideally work in conjunction with action E.6 (Parking Facility in URA).

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$50,000 for consultant services. This action is listed as a capital improvement project and could secure funding from several sources and grants.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Public Works Department (contribution)
- TCAB (review and feedback)
- Downtown property owners (feedback)
- City Council (review and feedback)

F.6 DEVELOP A FUTURE MOBILITY PLAN.**Description**

A mobility study can investigate alternative transportation methods (such as establishing a golf cart zone) and future trends in transportation and mobility that are not adequately covered by existing transportation planning plans. This study could be incorporated as an addendum to the City's Transportation System Plan.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 in consultant services, though this could be an effort studied by a college/university course or as a capstone project for a student, thus lowering or removing costs altogether.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)
- Consultant (creation of the plan)

F.7 DEVELOP A TOURISM PLAN.**Description**

The City has taken over tourism management responsibilities and is seeking to develop a strategy for advancing tourism in the coming years. The creation of a tourism plan would link promotion of places, amenities, activities and events with branding and marketing elements to fulfill destination marketing organization (DMO) responsibilities. This carrying out of this plan and other tourism responsibilities could eventually be a responsibility of a Main Street program.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$25,000 for consultant services related to the development of the plan and website creation. These costs can be partially offset if the effort is partially performed by a college/university course or as a capstone project for a student.

Responsible Entity

- Community Development Department (consultant coordination)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- TCAB (review)
- City Council (review and approval)
- Travel Oregon (review and feedback)

F.8 DEVELOP A CLIMATE RESILIENCY PLAN.**Description**

A climate resiliency plan can incorporate suggestions to increase resiliency to climate change, improve hazard mitigation actions, and promote green infrastructure. It will serve as a critical document to ensure future compliance with state/regional mandates to address climate change at the local level. This plan could be incorporated within the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Fiscal Impact

Up to \$50,000 for consultant services related to the development of the plan. These costs can be partially offset if the effort is partially performed by a college/university course or as a capstone project for a student. Partnership opportunities with nonprofit organizations can further mitigate costs.

Responsible Entity

- City Council (review and adoption)

Other Stakeholders Involved

- Planning Commission (review and recommendation)
- Citizens Advisory Committee (review)

3.3 MAINTAINING & REVISING (2025-2040)

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The Town Center Alliance Board should perform an annual performance review of the actions identified in Section 3.2 to determine progress on each of the items. Such a review will help the TCAB determine that sufficient progress is being made within the first five-year window of the plan.

It is recommended that this annual review be conducted sometime in the fall months of a particular year. In doing so, this allows for the Committee to develop ideas on how to fulfill tasks with the responsible entities and can set the course for setting up an agenda for an upcoming fiscal year budget, which typically begins to be planned for in January and February. This also allows for the potential to set the table for future Council Goals that are established by the City Council, which have historically been tied to fiscal years but can also be adjusted to a calendar year schedule.

An annual performance review also allows for discussion on whether additional actions should be established or present goals require a level of modification. It is not recommended that goals that have not been fulfilled are removed until a comprehensive review can be undertaken at the five-year intervals (see below).

FIVE YEAR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEWS

Beginning in January 2025 and also occurring in 2030 and 2035, the TCAB should begin a year-long effort to fully review the entire Town Center Plan. This review should allow for the editing of the Plan to incorporate new information or data updates to the document. It should also allow for creating commentary and strategy to any particular economic, social, or technological trends that could impact the District. A full update and replacement of the 2020-2040 Plan should occur no later than 2040.

Direct public engagement will be an important component of the comprehensive review, so it is recommended that open houses or other outreach efforts are included in the workplan. Doing so provides an opportunity to revisit the Town Center Vision, though great efforts were undertaken by the Town Center Committee to establish a vision that can stand the test of a generation.

A five-year comprehensive review process would also require the establishment and potential prioritization of new actions, the editing of information on actions that remain underway, or the removal of completed actions (or those deemed no longer necessary).

The City of Troutdale may want to consider a planning consultant to help navigate these comprehensive reviews and to ensure that the reviews do not stretch out longer than a year in order to stay on top of the action items for implementation.

3.4 MINORITY REPORTS

The Town Center Committee worked together in a spirit of consensus and congeniality for three years to develop a Plan that is comprehensive in span and respectful of public input. Occasionally though, some issues proved to be difficult and controversial.

Plans often are presented in a manner that suggests unanimous endorsement of all ideas, concepts, and actions that are set forth. In certain cases, it is appropriate and fair to highlight topics that generated strong concern or disagreement from some Committee members during a planning process. These can be listed in minority reports. The Town Center Plan has highlighted three of these issues to provide context and balance for future decision-making.

The following topics are respectfully included in these reports:

- Building heights in opportunity sites
- Land uses in Opportunity Site 7 (Overlook Tract)
- Golf carts
- Town Center design standards and grant programs

BUILDING HEIGHTS IN OPPORTUNITY SITES

The Town Center Plan has gone to considerable lengths signaling the virtues and needs to increase residential densities. It justifies the need to increase density to support existing commercial services and to attract new commercial and community service uses to the District.

At the same time, the community of people that participated in public feedback at the open houses and other events has clearly expressed an appreciation for Troutdale's small town feel and a desire to maintain this status. Residents who have lived in Troutdale for years and new arrivals to our community choose to live in the community in part due to this dynamic.

The concern that some members of the Town Center Committee have is the pressure we see on the community from consultants and developers that suggest their projects cannot pencil out or be accomplished unless they are granted variances to build higher or if zoning codes change.

Some of the Committee members acknowledge and understand that flexibility in the code should be allowed on building heights but believe that the only place this is truly appropriate is within The Confluence site, given the site conditions and terrain differential. However, there have been other suggestions made that building height allowances should be increased in other opportunity sites to accommodate certain development.

This holds particularly true for Opportunity Site 3 (The Hurford Tract, located at the northwest corner of 257th Drive and the Historic Columbia River Highway. This opportunity site has had suggestions to allow for a building to approach or even exceed 55 feet in height. This suggestion is not only being made by the Plan, but also the Main Streets on Halsey Plan, claiming that these heights are needed to allow for a development to be profitable.

No matter how an architect or land planner may choose to site a building or disguise it with step-backs or landscaping, a five-story building is still a five-story building, which means a structure that is at minimum a 55 foot tall structure. Even if removed from the downtown core, the building would still be noticeable from other points in the Town Center, particularly driving into the Downtown core from the west along Halsey Street towards the intersection with 257th Drive.

Nothing about a five story or more building suggests small town feel, and Troutdale policymakers should exercise extreme caution in allowing for proposals to consider heights of this magnitude. If height allowances at one opportunity site are acceptable, what is to say that other opportunity sites may seek similar opportunities? It could cause an undesired chain reaction and fundamentally go against a development pattern that respects the Town Center Vision.

Troutdale is unique in that it is not like other places in the region. Just because other suburban communities and town centers in the region have allowed for higher buildings does not mean Troutdale should succumb to this trend.

LAND USES IN OPPORTUNITY SITE 7

Opportunity Site 7 (The Overlook Tract) is a critical and highly visible tract located in the literal heart of the Town Center District. The majority of the available land for development was for years owned by Frank Windust, with repeated efforts and overtures made to public agencies to purchase the property for community service uses. The City of Troutdale in particular was the most logical acquisition candidate, given that the City purchased land and developed the police facility just to the east of the lots in question.

Ultimately Multnomah County purchased the property and envisioned expanding the Sheriff's Office (MCSO) utilization of the site. When MCSO took over the operations of the Fairview Police Department, the need for space diminished. Budget cuts to MCSO further reduced the anticipated need to utilize the property.

Without significant consultation with the City of Troutdale or the community at large, Multnomah County determined that it would give Home Forward a right of first-refusal to use the land for affordable housing as part of the regional affordable housing bond that voters approved in 2018. Despite the fact that Troutdale voters had locally voted against the measure, the community is being forced to play ball in this effort, on a site where community feedback was not afforded, and where the community would prefer to see other uses at play.

Despite the Plan calling for the desire to co-locate community service uses on the property, there is nothing to compel Home Forward to work with the community to consider community service uses on the site. Multnomah County has indicated an unwillingness and an inability to locate any existing services on the site permanently, including the relocation of the Troutdale branch library or any senior or healthcare services. In addition, adding community service uses makes affordable housing projects cost prohibitive, as they would require prevailing wage requirements for construction.

All committee members can recognize the need for affordable housing development, but several members are extremely weary with having it be located on this site at a likely density that seems inappropriate for Downtown and without typical services nearby. Affordable housing has not had the best reputation in East Multnomah County, and there are concerns about construction quality and long-term property management. The visibility of the site from the west and the south will mean that architecture styles will need to reflect high standards. Building heights exceeding 35 feet should be discouraged.

Some committee members will have greater comfort with this effort if development is limited to senior housing or if market-rate housing would be incorporated within the development. To simply drop affordable housing as a singular one-size-fits-all solution to a regional problem is not a solution for the Troutdale Town Center and could actually result in more problems than solutions.

GOLF CARTS

There are two particular concerns that some committee members have with alternative transportation ideas that are being advanced by this Plan. Both relate to the idea of golf carts.

The first concern stems from the idea that the Town Center District should be designated as a golf cart zone. In the opinion of some members, there should not be a segregation of one area of the city from the other. Either designate the entire city as a golf cart friendly zone and plan for that accordingly or do not do it at all.

There is already an established disconnect between Downtown and the rest of the community. Establishing a distinct transportation zone might actually cause that disconnect to grow if other city residents are not afforded the same benefits and mobility choices as those that choose to live in the Town Center District.

The second concern stems for the idea of golf carts being considered in the first place. While Staff has provided some compelling evidence in meetings about the benefits of golf cart usage and particular how they tie in with state and regional goals for equity, safety, and climate considerations, there is insufficient information about the safety of these vehicles, how they can operate, and where they should operate. There are also no guarantees that drivers will follow these standards to begin with.

Golf carts are certainly appropriate in master planned communities or cities that have developed infrastructure in place to accommodate their use and to keep other vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The Town Center District, let alone the City itself does not have this infrastructure in place at this time and it would take years to develop. The particular use of 257th Drive as a major freight route for the region adds to additional safety concerns. How will carts adequately navigate the streets?

With limited resources for infrastructure funding, investing for infrastructure on what could be a niche mobility segment may need further consideration, particularly if safety concerns cannot be addressed.

TOWN CENTER DESIGN STANDARDS AND GRANT PROGRAMS

Design standards are often viewed differently by opposing factions. On one hand, design standards are established and defended in order to perpetuate a community's look or feel, or to compel a certain expectation for an intended look and feel for the present and future. On the other hand, design standards have been fought over by those who may consider them burdensome, an impediment to future development, or other reasons.

Some communities try the carrot approach rather than the stick, and that is to offer incentives for existing or future properties to improve themselves to fulfill a community's design expectations. These often come in the form of façade improvement programs, but in recent years have also expanded to general property restoration, historic repairs, and sign replacements.

To consider these types of programs, standards should be in place—preferably through code but perhaps through other sources—to better articulate what the community expectation truly is. Therefore, if Troutdale is considering revising, expanding, or replacing its design standards, it should wait until those standards are established and then consider future programs to encourage compliance of non-conforming existing structures via targeted incentives.

To start incentive programs without having those standards in place could be a recipe for disaster. Conversely, to mandate new design criteria without a “carrot” could also lead to frustration from property owners and developers who would be compelled to incorporate such standards. It is hoped that the Town Center Advisory Board will be actively reviewing these opportunities to provide program after regulatory action in the years ahead.

OPPORTUNITY SITE 12 – PREFERRED LAND USES

The Peninsula Tract opportunity site is a fantastic location within the Town Center where exceptional development opportunities ought to be considered. There is an understanding that the peripheral areas along the Sandy River and Beaver Creek contain sensitive areas that are impacted by predominantly by floodplain. However, the three preferred land uses that were envisioned for the site do not adequately capture the full range of development possibilities, particularly for high end housing and mixed-use development.

Even within special flood hazard areas, development can be accomplished for commercial spaces by floodproofing structures or by establishing utility spaces for prospective uses, like parking spaces underneath upper story residential units like townhomes, condominiums, or apartments.

The Confluence Site is not the only opportunity site in the City that has enormous redevelopment potential, and in some cases, the Peninsula Tract may be better suited and positioned to accommodate some of the development ideas and patterns that were envisioned for The Confluence site.

Ultimately, some of the committee members do not want to have the door shut on creative opportunities by suggesting that open space and parks are the likeliest or most inevitable outcome. We see residential and mixed opportunities, too. Let us see how the market might respond to the opportunity and tackle any challenges that the site presents.

MAPS

