

PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

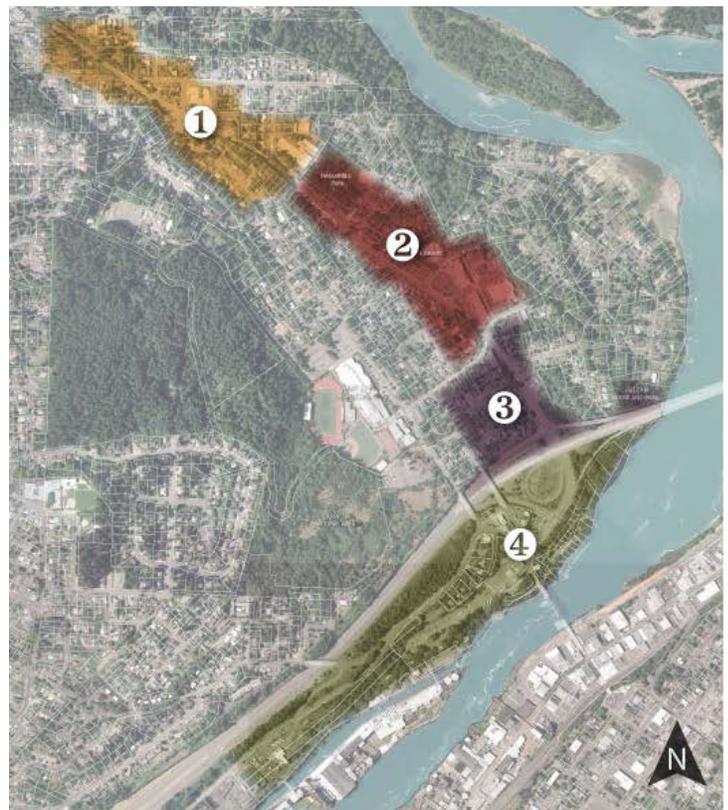
During the past month, we have used a variety of methods to solicit and understand public opinions about the future possibilities for the Arch Bridge/ Bolton Town Center. We employed a survey, invited people to comment on line, held a series of all-day working sessions where people could drop in, and hosted two evening forums where people could give us ideas and comment on preliminary concepts. This document summarizes all these activities.

SURVEY

Public outreach for the Arch Bridge / Bolton Town Center Plan process began with an on-line survey to compare the objectives established for the plan with resident priorities. In crafting the survey we recognized the diversity of uses, infrastructure, topography, and different opportunities across the primary and secondary study areas.

Recognizing the diversity of uses, infrastructure, topography and design opportunities across the primary and secondary study areas, public outreach for the Arch Bridge / Bolton Town Center Plan process began with an on-line survey to help match plan objectives with resident priorities. Development of the survey was completed and the link made “live” on March 26th. Notice and link access to the survey was provided using the City’s main webpage, as well as through the City’s Facebook™ and Twitter™ feeds. In addition, a paper version of the survey was prepared and provided to the City for distribution. This same paper survey, adjacent to a poster showing current results, was made available to participants each day of the storefront studio. As of the survey’s close on April 23, 481 individuals began the survey, with 424 completing it.

The survey presented respondents with a map of the entire study area, broken down into four key sub-zones. In general, these areas followed the Highway 43/Willamette Drive corridor, with the first area running as far as the southern face of the Bolton Primary School; the second from Hammerle Park to the McKillican/Garden Street intersection; the third to the centerline of the I-205 right-of-way, and the fourth



area including the former city center and shoreline area from West Bridge Park to the southwestern-most edge of the West Linn Mill property, excluding the island upon which the mill sits. For each area, respondents were asked to prioritize six identical design considerations, ranging from the need for civic spaces to the potential for increased development intensity. Respondents were also asked which of the four areas they lived closest to, followed by the opportunity to provide general comments.

In general terms, results indicated strong preference for “pedestrian-friendly design” across all subareas. Design features and qualities associated with walkability were given top priority in all subareas except area four, where “river views” were seen as most important. Design features comprising “civic spaces” received the next-highest level of support across the entire planning area. Key concepts including “retail/commercial activity” and “increased development intensity” were generally seen as low priorities by respondents, though these considerations were given higher-priority scores in zones two and three, where such features are already present and appreciated.



COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS

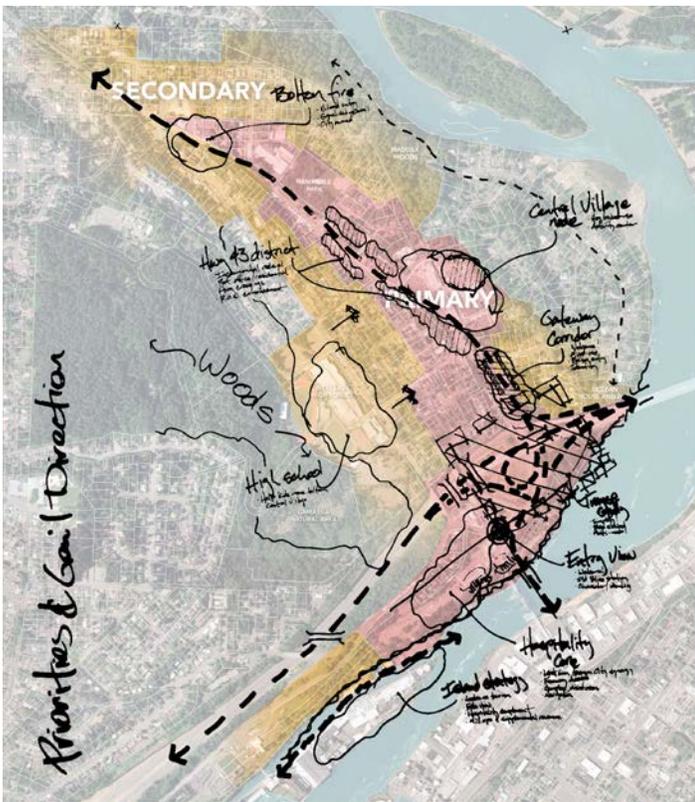
In addition to work with the project advisory and technical committees, a three-day community workshop/open house was held in a vacant storefront in West Linn Central Village. The event, called a “storefront studio” by organizers, was extensively publicized using the City’s website, Facebook™ and Twitter™ feeds; articles in the West Linn Tidings and Oregonian, flyers also were posted in numerous shops and restaurants, at City Hall, and in the library.

All three days of the storefront studio included ample information on past and relevant plans; current results of the on-line survey; large-format maps of the study area; a poster-sized version of the goals and objectives developed by the advisory committee; historical photos and background information, and schematic drawings developed by the design team.

Each day focused on listening and interacting with individual community members, describing overall goals for the plan to visitors, and gathering ideas and feedback on process materials from visitors. Scores of notes, many posted by individuals on the study area map, were gathered and included in the development of the master plan’s recommendations.

Days one and three included an evening workshop structured to present background and current findings to attendees, then gain insights as to where key project objectives might best be accommodated. In addition to the “open studio” times and workshops, several groups were invited to meet and provide input, including the City’s Sustainability Committee, the Economic Development Committee, West Linn High School students and members of the Youth Leadership Academy. City staff and several members of the consultant team were also given a tour of the West Linn Paper Company mill and Portland General Electric facility, providing first-hand views of these important economic drivers and the various opportunities they may provide for the plan and its various goals.

Walk-in participation during all three studio days was high, with over 100 attendees signed in and many others visiting but not signed in. Staff and consultant facilitators were kept busy at all times, whether meeting face-to-face with visitors, preparing for workshops, or developing actual plan concepts. Workshop participation was less robust, with 25 attending, but exercise results were highly informative and participant feedback on the quality and overall value of the workshop was uniformly positive.



WHAT WE HEARD

Preliminary results from the on-line survey illustrated strong desire for a more walkable, full-featured West Linn, but a lower interest in major changes close to the established neighborhoods. Given this, staff and the consultant team worked to develop presentations and exercises to achieve the following:

1. Articulate goals and policies from existing and past plans adopted by the City.
2. Express emerging economic and demographic trends supporting the need for increased housing diversity and density, an improved in-town job market and future development more strongly oriented toward the Willamette River.
3. Help identify areas where residents feel future growth is most appropriate, in terms of overall use and formal building type.
4. Help identify other opportunity areas and long-term project concepts.
5. Test emerging plan concepts with residents and representative groups, providing a solid basis for development of the master plan.

Results from these workshops may be summarized as follows:

- Participants generally supported a higher-density, mixed-use future for that portion of the study area south of I-205. Results from the April 14 workshop showed this in terms of building type, dwelling unit density and job location. Results from the April 16 workshop demonstrated this through strong support for the concept of a mixed-use center in this same general location.
- Participants strongly support the concept of an improved access ramp / roadway interface with I-205, particularly as might mitigate the current disconnect between areas north of I-205 and areas south, and might improve opportunities for a future town center along the Willamette.
- Participants generally considered infill along and near Willamette Drive a low priority.
- Participants strongly supported streetscape improvements including crossings, contiguous sidewalks and bike lanes like those offered in the Highway 43 Master Plan.
- Participants strongly supported improvements to parks and trails abutting the Willamette River, particularly an enhanced park under the I-205 bridge.

OUTCOMES

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

During the three-day series of events and interactions, the consultant team identified a number of directions that seemed to have merit to pursue. Most of these seem to have considerable support in the community. Clearly, the greatest opportunities for creating a town center lie south of I-205. But even in that area, there are places where change could happen more easily in the short term, while other areas would require a longer term commitment and set of actions. In the area north of I-205, change could still occur, but the scale and intensity would be considerably less, given its stable, more mature pattern of development.

The following represents the key directions we will pursue in more detail as the planning progresses:

1. Encourage Development of the Parking Area at the West Linn Paper Mill for Mixed Use

The Mill has already been exploring this possibility as a more economical use of its property. We suggest introducing a small grid of streets, including a “Main Street” along which shops, services and restaurants would occur. Above the ground level, there would be a mixture of uses including office, residential and a hotel – the latter recalling the hotel that had been located there decades ago. There would also be public spaces and overlooks so that people could enjoy the views of the river. Parking would be located in one level underground. The redevelopment of this would necessitate finding a different way for large trucks to access and leave the mill.

2. Re-Purpose a Segment of Broadway to be a Linear Parkway

This segment would include the overpass and the approximately 400 foot long portion of road between the overpass and Willamette Falls Drive. It would eliminate the current oblique intersection, but there may be a narrow serve lane for local traffic. Its primary use would be to provide trees and other vegetation, along with a path for bicycling and walking.

3. Build a Roundabout at the Intersection of Willamette Falls Drive and Willamette Drive

The current condition of curving and angled streets presents a confusing and array of movement directions as one approaches it, especially from the Arch Bridge. It is not a welcoming or gracious entry into West Linn. The roundabout would make use of some part of City-owned property in this location, but it might also impact privately-owned parcels, depending on its footprint. The size and design of the roundabout will need to allow use by trucks accessing the mill, as well as emergency vehicles. So the footprint could be large. It would also need to be located 300-400 feet from a potential new signalized intersection of Willamette Drive and configured freeway on/off ramps. A roundabout might have an oval shape, rather than a circular one, which is sometimes known as an “eggabout.” It would require some property acquisition, as well as using current right-of-way and some portion on City-owned land.

4. Work with ODOT to Reconfigure ON-Off ramps of I-205

ODOT staff previously looked at a preliminary design for reconfiguring the ramps that involved closing the northern-most northbound ramp and a portion of the cloverleaf on-ramp. Their design indicated a signalized intersection on Willamette Drive for the existing off-ramp and a new on-ramp that uses some of the cloverleaf. This is a direction we recommend, with a slight modification. Moving the signalized intersection slightly northward, could allow for sufficient distance on Willamette Drive to allow the roundabout described above.

5. Enhance the Open Space beneath I-205

This could include several components. First, the grounds of the McLean House would be improved to allow it to accommodate more events. This would include a grassy, auxiliary parking lot under the bridge, in a location and design that does not intrude upon the natural surroundings. The pathway would be improved, with the view that it would be extended both directions. A better connection to the commercial center along Willamette Drive would also be explored. A launching area for canoes and kayaks should also be included. The open space should also be greatly enhanced with the involvement of artists in elements such as freestanding art works, creative lighting of the freeway structure, and graphic elements on the structure. This might require securing a lease from the state for some portion.

6. Improve Willamette Drive

The previously completed plan for Highway 43 includes a number of excellent concepts for retrofitting the roadway to make it friendly for pedestrians and cyclists. This includes lighting, enhanced sidewalks, a planted center median, and additional crosswalks. The City should work with ODOT to secure grants that can accomplish this project in the segment that can most strengthen the town center.

7. Encourage Gentle Infill

The neighborhoods that flank Willamette Drive and surround the town center are largely stable and mature. Public comments suggested little interest in seeing major changes in the portion of the town center north of I-205. However, the City should encourage forms of subtle change. These can include small “cottage” developments and Accessory Dwelling Units as well as townhouses that could replace some of the older houses along Willamette Drive that are in decline. Over time new development could also replace the gas stations with mixed use development that would better fit with the idea of a town center. The old fire station is also a possible candidate for mixed use development.

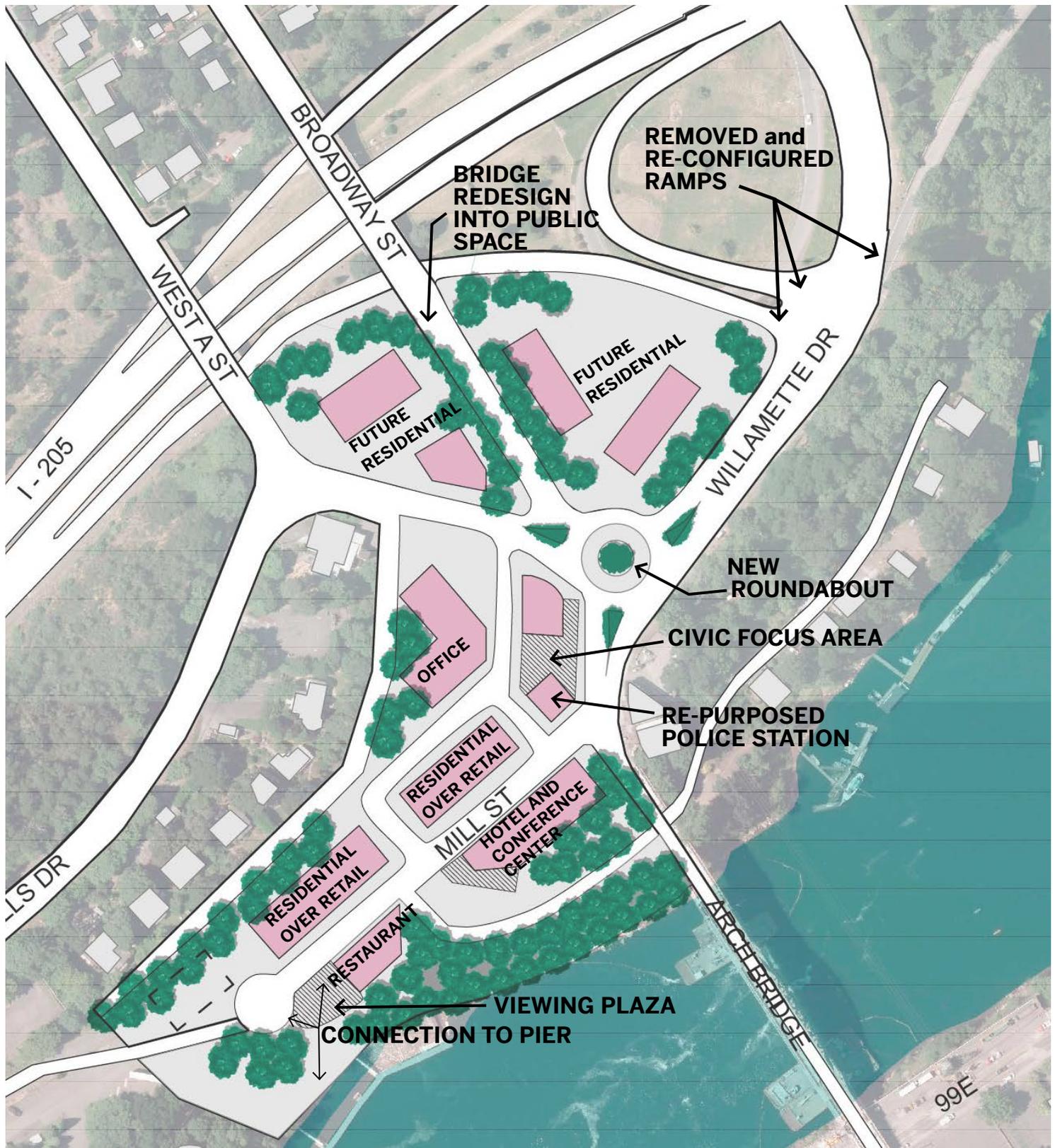
8. Craft a Zoning Regulations Appropriate to a Town Center

Create a special new zoning district for the town center that reflects concentrations of mixed use, pedestrian connectivity, parking, and transitions to surrounding residential areas. Replace the patchwork of different zoning districts with this new district. This set of regulations would direct the form, scale, uses, and intensity of development.

9. Craft Design Standards for Infill and Development

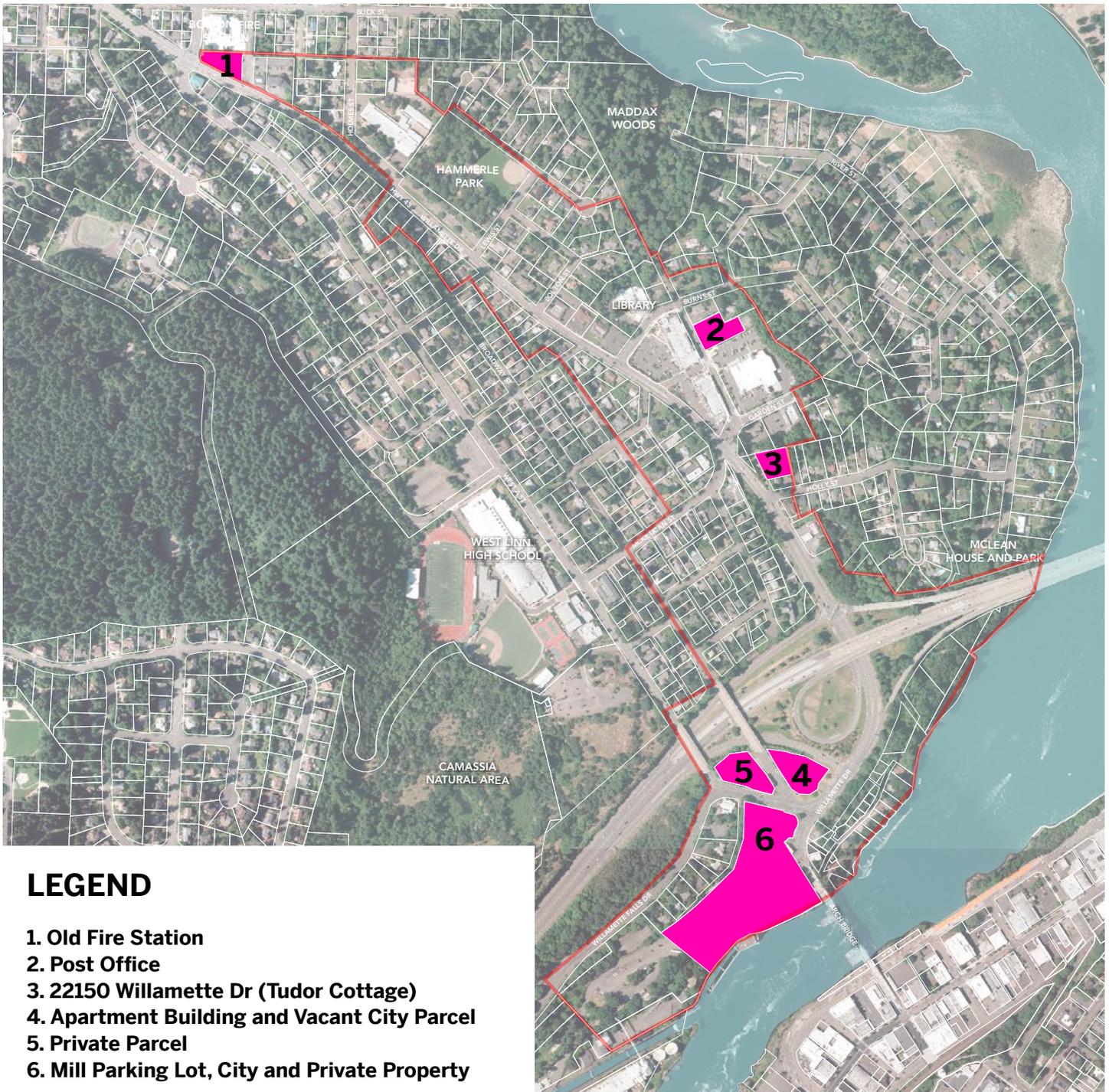
A new town center zone can benefit greatly from design standards and guidelines that address the quality of development. These would focus on orientation to the street, façade elements, public spaces, and rooflines. They should be illustrated and assist development teams in meeting community expectations for the town center.

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT FOR AREA SOUTH OF I-205



CATALYST SITES

The scope of work for the Town Center includes examining three sites that can serve as catalysts for development over time. LMN would craft and depict likely development concepts for each of the three sites. ECO Northwest would then assemble pro formas for each to compare costs and income. The map indicates the candidate sites that we have identified along with City staff. It should be mentioned that, already, certain property owners have expressed an interest in having their properties included in this analysis. Our inclination is to select sites for which there are willing owners.



1. Old Fire Station
.45 acres (Owned by City of West Linn)



2. Post Office
.93 acres (Privately owned)



3. 22150 Willamette Dr (Tudor Cottage)
.63 acres (Privately owned)



4. Apartment Building and Vacant City Parcel
.87 acres (City and Privately owned)



5. Private Parcel
.83 acres



6. Mill Parking Lot
6.9 Acres (City and Privately owned)

