



Memorandum

To: Chris Kerr, Senior Planner
From: Scot Siegel, Principal, AICP, LEED AP
Date: August 25, 2008
Re: *City of West Linn – Imagine West Linn Update*

Siegel Planning has been retained by the City of West Linn to assist in updating the city's vision statement, *Imagine West Linn*. The City Council established the project as a top priority in 2007-2008. The vision update will lay the groundwork for subsequent amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan. As requested, we have also prepared a list of existing Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that should be reviewed and updated for consistency with the vision.

Background

In 1994, the City engaged in a major undertaking to create a vision for the future of West Linn. Although much of the document is still relevant today, the Council would like to review it and modify it to reflect changes in the community and its goals 14 years later. An updated *Imagine West Linn* will help inform future amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan. (See page 3.)

In February of 2007, the city asked its citizen boards and commissions to respond to a questionnaire regarding *Imagine West Linn*. The questionnaire asked for points of agreement, disagreement, and desired changes to the document. Written responses were provided by the Historic Resources Advisory Board (HRAB) and the Planning Commission.

Comments on Existing Vision

As evidenced by the attached list of comments (pages 5-7), *Imagine West Linn* is still generally representative of the City's vision for the future. The comments are summarized as follows. Responses are indicated in *italics*:

1. Minor changes are needed throughout the document to update statistical data and to reflect accomplished goals. *The updated vision incorporates these changes.*
2. "Historic understanding and appreciation has spread across the City to include areas *beyond the core of old Willamette and the Falls.*" (HRAB) *The vision update expresses a broader view of historic preservation.*
3. Several historic preservation action items have been completed – archives and historic resource inventories. (HRAB) *The vision contains an appendix listing "items completed" since 1994.*

4. There is still a need to link the vision to implementation and monitoring of supporting plans and codes. *The vision contains specific language linking it to future city planning and code updates; the vision also recommends regular review of city operations, including city departments, council goals, and volunteer boards and commissions.*
5. Emerging issues (Planning Commission):
 - The transition from a developing city to a *redeveloping city*
 - Increasing housing costs – the vision should address affordability and housing choices (alternative housing, aging in place, etc.)
 - The vision should support effective citizen involvement vis-à-vis neighborhood associations and project task forces (e.g., Dock’s Code)
 - Foster local and regional partnerships (e.g., drinking water)
 - Technological changes (e.g., web sites, blogs and other tools)

All of the above issues raised by the Planning Commission are reflected in the updated vision.

In addition, the Planning Commission expressed an interest in addressing infill development, mixed-use, 10th Street traffic¹, and planning for the Stafford area, among other issues, in future Comprehensive Plan updates (Periodic Review). *The vision addresses these issues.*

Draft Imagine West Linn Update

The existing vision statement has been reformatted to make it easier to read. The new format provides page numbers, subject headings, and a single column layout to facilitate subsequent editing and draft reviews. Both a clean copy of the reformatted version (no substantive edits), and the proposed vision update (new content), are attached. The following outlines our approach for updating the vision document:

1. Update the vision document to correct factual information, such as demographic data and trends, and delete action items that the city has completed since 1994; incorporate comments received from City boards and commissions.
2. Amend the goals to read as “Guiding Principles,” with specific items to be listed as “Action Items.”
3. Elaborate on “sustainability” and provide examples of sustainability best practices, consistent with the vision.

¹ 10th Street Corridor is subject to its own Task Force as a subset of the Transportation System Plan effort. Comprehensive design solutions are of primary importance to the Task Force.

Recommended Comprehensive Plan Updates

In several places, the updated vision recommends amending the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to removing from the plan those policies and action measures that have already been implemented, or are no longer relevant, the following action items are recommended; suggested Comprehensive Plan changes are in *italics*:

Urban Growth Boundary Discussion, page 12 – Amend Goal 14 to clarify West Linn’s position relative to lands south of the Tualatin River including Pete’s Mountain.

Housing Action Items, page 18 – Amend Chapters 2 and 10 to address the following items:

- 1 Periodically update the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for needed housing. *Amendments should be based on a buildable lands analysis and housing needs assessment prepared pursuant to Oregon Revised Statutes 197.296. Any code amendments would have to conform to the Portland Metropolitan Housing Rule (OAR 660, Division 7) and Oregon Revised Statutes 197.303-307.*
- 2 Respond to increasing housing costs with proactive land use planning and regulatory tools, as well as incentives to meet the full range of housing needs in the community. *The Comprehensive Plan should include housing types other than those currently listed. Add assisted living (group care) homes and facilities, including those for seniors and those with disabilities; cottage housing; accessory dwellings; live-work units; and government assisted housing; among others.*
- 3 As the community transitions from a developing city to a redeveloping city, encourage the design of housing to be sympathetic to surrounding homes. *The Housing policies should define infill development and provide enabling text for infill code standards.*
- 4 Adopt land use policies and regulations that allow for flexibility in housing types to meet the needs of the elderly with alternative lifestyle needs. These policies should provide for affordable housing, close to needed services and should encourage modes of transportation beyond the single occupancy vehicle. *See comments under #2.*
- 5 Consider establishing form-based land use codes that respond to the scale and character of existing neighborhoods while adding predictability in the development review process for projects that achieve context-sensitive design requirements. *See comment under #3.*
- 6 Adopt land use policies and regulations that support residential green building practices (e.g., energy efficiency, resource conservation, housing choices, pollution prevention, indoor environmental quality, innovation in design, etc.), consistent with the Sustainable West Linn Strategic Plan. *There are several good models for drafting green building supportive policies and codes. The Comprehensive Plan update should draw on these models in crafting a policy position that is uniquely tailored to West Linn.*
- 7 Consider adopting land use policy and code amendments supporting an incentive- or performance-based approach to housing density bonuses and affordable housing. *Some communities use a combination of clear and objective standards (as required under ORS 197.296) and performance-based standards to achieve greater affordability in new housing developments. The cities of Ashland and Newberg encourage affordability with density bonuses in newly annexed areas and areas subject to upzoning or PUD approval. The incentives can be tied to design standards (open space, architecture, green technology, etc.) that require more than what the base code provisions typically require.*

Commercial/Mixed-Use Redevelopment Discussion, pages 12-13; and Commercial Development Action Items, pages 18-19 – Amend Chapters 2, 5, 9, and 12 to address the following action items:

- 1 Periodically update the City's Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for employment uses. *Update existing policies under Goal 9 and add text to acknowledge West Linn's existing commercial and mixed-use centers, and to further define what is desired in new centers, including areas that are likely to redevelop.*
- 2 Continue to plan for mixed use development and increased development densities along transit corridors. *See comment under #1 and discussion on pages 12-13.*
- 3 Continually review and update its regulations, as needed, to help address the needs of home occupations while maintaining neighborhood compatibility. *Update existing text pertaining to home-based businesses under Goal 9.*
- 4 Continue to enforce the special historic standards that apply to the Willamette District, and support the neighborhood's efforts to receive National Register designation of the area. *Update Goal 5, Section 1 Historic Areas.*
- 5 Continually review and update the City's design standards to ensure they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and promote green building practices. Adopt land use policies and regulations that support green building practices in commercial and mixed-use centers (e.g., energy efficiency, resource conservation, housing choices, pollution prevention, indoor environmental quality, innovation in design, etc.), consistent with the Sustainable West Linn Strategic Plan. *Update Goals 2 and 9. There are several good models for drafting green building supportive policies and codes. The Comprehensive Plan update should draw on these models in crafting a policy position that is uniquely tailored to West Linn.*
- 6 Enforce landscape standards for arterials and commercial centers, while promoting energy and water conservation goals (e.g., shade trees in parking lots and over sidewalks, and water-conservation landscaping and irrigation practices). *Update Goals 2 and 9.*
- 7 Implement the recommendations of the 10th Street Corridor Task Force. *Update Goals 9 and 12.*
- 8 Maintain a conservative sign code to protect community character and aesthetics. *Update Goal 9.*

Recreation, Public Facilities, Open Space, Transportation, Sustainability Action Items, pages 19-22 – Update the provisions under Goals 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, and 15 to address the action items on pages 19-22 of Imagine West Linn, paraphrased as follows:

- *Analyze existing level of service and capacity remaining for transportation, sewer, water, storm drainage, parks, police, fire and other city services based on projected population. Recommend needed capital improvements and mitigation measures through Comprehensive Plan update.*
- *Promote water conservation for landscaping, parks, business and household use; promote sustainable water use alternatives*
- *Local partnerships for water treatment and delivery*
- *Monitor assets and space needs for City services and facilities*
- *Further define City-School District partnering opportunities (e.g., community*

centers, open space and recreation facilities)

- *Local partnerships for aquatics center*
- *Trails master plan implementation, including Willamette River trails and connections from neighborhoods*
- *Urban forestry*
- *Street standards to support green technology*
- *Highway 43 Conceptual Design Plan*
- *Transit improvements and linkages to regional bus and rail service*
- *Neighborhood mixed-use centers*
- *Street connectivity and hillside development standards*
- *Implement Sustainable West Linn action items, including those related to city government, local businesses, neighborhoods, schools and other civic organizations, and citizens/households.*

After adoption, this updated vision will be used as a guide in preparing a work program for updating West Linn's Comprehensive Plan.

Working List of *Imagine West Linn* Technical/Housekeeping Updates

The following is a working list of technical and housekeeping revisions to *Imagine West Linn*. The following revisions are limited to factual changes, such as statistical data and projects completed since 1994, and editing. The revisions follow the general order in which they appear in the vision document. *For other substantive changes, please refer to the updated vision:*

1. Change the heading “Vision Team Members” to “Original Vision Team” and add a heading for new team members, as needed.
2. Add new City Council members’ names.
3. Update Metro 2040 population projections.
4. Update traffic volumes.
5. Update number of neighborhood associations (eleven), and add information on how the city supports neighborhood events and planning.
6. City adopted Parks and Open Space Plan.
7. Update information regarding Comprehensive Pathway and Trails Master Plan (forthcoming).
8. Update on Summer Concert Series, Willamette Centennial Celebration, Farmers’ Market, and addition of a Special Events Coordinator.
9. Updates regarding volunteers working on trails and invasive plant removal.
10. Adult Community Center is now open.
11. Community Development Code (CDC) Chapter 43 created to address design compatibility with surrounding homes.
12. CDC 85.200(J) amended to require minimum densities, per Metro.
13. CDC amended to allow reduced setback for front porches.
14. CDC amended to encourage garages built behind or on the side of and recessed behind dwellings.
15. CDC 19 allows mixed use, as does the Willamette Falls Historic Overlay Zone (CDC 58).
16. CDC 34 amended to permit and regulate accessory dwelling units (mother-in-law apartments).
17. CDC 55 amended to require pedestrian-friendly and accessible development with emphasis on designing at a human scale.
18. CDC 55.100 & 85.200 amended to strengthen tree protections.
19. 10th Street Corridor is subject to its own Task Force as a subset of the Transportation System Plan effort. Comprehensive design solutions are of primary importance to the Task Force.
20. Home occupations are permitted by Code and are used extensively in the community.
21. Add narrative on Bolton Neighborhood Plan vis-à-vis discussion of City Center. Consider rephrasing of term City Center.
22. CDC 58 contains Willamette Falls Drive Commercial District Design Standards.
23. New commercial center added to the Tanner Basin neighborhood, which includes the Willamette Corporate Plaza and River Falls Plaza.
24. Update regarding Public Arts program.
25. Update regarding establishment of Historic Resources Advisory Board, West Linn’s status as a Certified Local Government, and efforts to obtain national register listing for the Willamette Historic District.

26. See previous comment regarding Adult Community Center (now open).
27. City administrative offices are now located in one building. Note any other space planning needs.
28. Note: required setbacks from wetlands are currently 57-65 feet (more than the 25 feet noted in the vision statement).
29. Note ongoing work to revise drainage way setbacks.
30. Update Parks and Open Space Plan completed.
31. Note City has strengthened the incentives for dedicating open space to the City through development review.
32. Note revised street widths will be adopted into the TSP.
33. Note the TSP will include CDC changes required to ensure TPR compliance.
34. Update regarding City's adoption of OR 43 Conceptual Design Plan; should regional transit projects, such as bus/trolley connection to Lake Oswego and Tri-Met extension to Milwaukie, also be noted?
35. The requirement for a transit master plan and bus turnout areas in new development is addressed as part of the Design Review process.
36. CDC limits the use of cul-de-sacs and requires stub streets where appropriate.
37. The city considered acquiring local control of Highway 43 and Willamette Falls Drive, but it was not supported by ODOT.
38. Inter-agency agreements between neighborhood associations and the school district, which are continually updated.
39. The Code of Conduct for public meetings is found in CDC 98 & 99.
40. See previous comment on 11 neighborhood associations.
41. Update the Comprehensive Plan to reference the updated vision, as applicable.