



CITY OF  
**West  
Linn**

*Imagine West Linn*

*Updated 9/08/08*

## **WEST LINN CITY COUNCIL (2008)**

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## **STAFF SUPPORT FOR 2008 UPDATE**

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## **CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT FOR 2008 UPDATE:**

The City Council implemented a comprehensive public outreach program for the 2008 Imagine West Linn Update to solicit input and encourage recommendations to be made to the 1994 Imagine West Linn document. Specific components of the City's outreach efforts for the 2008 Update included:

- Media – Two detailed articles were included in the Tidings newspaper describing the project, with quotes from Councilors including specific requests for public input. Additionally, a formal notice of the item was included in the Tidings Public Notice section.
- Advisory Boards – the City's Citizen Advisory Committees (e.g. Parks & Recreation Board, Historic Resources Advisory Board, Transportation Advisory Board) were provided the 1994 Imagine document with a questionnaire to provide their recommendations back to the Council. The project was included as a separate agenda item by these Committees at their public meetings.
- Planning Commission – the Commission and City Council held two joint worksessions on the matter. Also, the Planning Commission has held two additional public hearings reviewing and editing the document.
- City Council – The Council held numerous public meetings on the update and received progress reports from the Staff as well as the consultant.

- Neighborhood Associations – The Associations were notified of the project from its initial stages with a specific request to provide input. They were sent the numerous agendas complete with background packages for review, via email and in hard copy format.
- Direct citizen involvement - An announcement was placed on the first page of the City's website with a link to the document and a specific request for comments from any resident on recommended changes. Additionally, numerous postings of the project that included a means to provide feedback to the City was provided at various City buildings including the City Library and City Hall.

If you have any questions about this document or would like to request copies, please contact the City of West Linn Planning Department at 656-4211 or visit the City's website <http://westlinnoregon.gov/>

**PROJECT TITLE: *Imagine West Linn Update***

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

*Imagine West Linn* (2008) defines West Linn’s future vision in a proactive and constructive manner. Building on the good work of West Linn’s citizens, the updated vision reaffirms our commitment to a sustainable future, embracing West Linn’s unique community spirit and sense of place.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

1. To reaffirm our commitment to a unified West Linn vision.
2. To clarify the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.
3. To establish guiding principles for decision making.
4. To further develop the leadership and organizational capacity necessary to reach our goals.
5. To develop an action plan that will enable us to arrive at our vision.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Sense of Community
- Land Use and Quality of Life
- Sustainability
- Community Institutions
- Cultural Diversity, Education, and the Arts

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## INTRODUCTION

Imagine **West Linn in the year 2040**. What will it be like? What could it be like? When we first asked this question in the early 1990s, the world was a different place. In 1994, the City of West Linn had a population of 18,860, now the population is estimated to be 24,771 people. Fifteen years ago, our region was in the throes of a major development boom; growth pressures have since stabilized. There has been a demographic trend toward an aging society locally and nationwide. Our lifestyles have changed as well, with more dual-income households, smaller families on average, more home-based businesses, and far more awareness of the environmental problems our planet faces.

These changes have both negative and positive implications. In the 1990s, the internet was gaining traction. Today, it is a principal form of personal communication and commerce. This is a good development in light of our ever-increasing energy costs, global warming, and the region's extensive backlog of transportation and other infrastructure needs. In such a rapidly changing world, the questions – “*What will West Linn be like? What could it be like, in the year 2040?*” – are impossible to answer with any degree of certainty; so what are we to do? We can choose to cower under the weight of uncertainty, or embrace it. West Linn citizens are adventurous and brave. We are not ones to sit idly by and wait for change to wash over us. We are proactive.

This “vision statement” is an outline of what may happen to West Linn if we do nothing, what *could* happen to West Linn with some planning and foresight, and *how* we might get there. It is an evolving product. *Imagine West Linn* was chartered in 1992 and led by committed group of our fellow citizens who worked with each other, their neighbors, and City staff. Their goal, and our ongoing commitment, is to plan a future for West Linn that we can be proud to leave as a legacy for our children. The original Visioning Committee collected information through community workshops, interviews with citizens young and old, and from city and state data sources. Their work has been updated in this document to reflect some of the challenges, opportunities, and new realities of the first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

It is intended that *Imagine West Linn* continue to serve as an instrument guiding City decision making. The vision statement is not a new vision. It is an update to the vision that has served West Linn so well for two decades. It is significant because it will be used for drafting new City policy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, including needed updates to the West Linn Comprehensive Plan, as well as planning, community partnerships, and budgeting for future projects. Without a vision, the City would be like a ship without a compass and rudder, carried by the currents of change, unable to steer away from hazards; no true direction. History confirms that our actions can make a difference. (For examples of what we have accomplished since 1994, please refer to the Appendix.) We are in gratitude to West Linn's citizens for defining a vision that, at its core, remains sound after all these years. The updated vision ensures that we will be prepared for the changes ahead. We have a rudder and reliable compass for our future.

## **TRENDS**

The following trends have been identified as significant forces affecting West Linn that will impact its future.

### ***Growth Trends***

- Although the City is projected to run out of vacant buildable land (i.e., lands that are not constrained by steep slopes, floodplains, etc.) by the year 2020, regionally required “minimum” density and potential expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary could cause West Linn to reach a population of about 40,000 by the year 2040.
- West Linn is likely to continue growing at about one percent (1%) annually. Under the City’s state-acknowledged Comprehensive Plan, a maximum population of about 30,000 could be accommodated within the City’s Urban Growth Boundary.
- By 2040, the four-county Metro area will likely increase from 1.5 million to 2.7 million persons for an annual growth rate of about one percent (1%).
- The growing population is expected to be more ethnically and culturally diverse. This diversity will enrich our region but also increase the demand and need for a wider variety of services.

### ***Traffic Trends***

- The private automobile (not necessarily powered by the internal combustion engine) will continue to be the dominant mode of transportation within the metropolitan area.
- With increasing population and a diversifying employment base, there will be phenomenal growth in traffic throughout the metropolitan area.
- Twenty-four hour traffic volumes on Highway 43 will continue to increase. This will force people to find alternate modes of travel and routes resulting in greatly increased use of the City’s arterial and collector road network.
- By 2010, traffic volumes on I-205 are expected to increase substantially, with significant delays at the Highway 43 and 10th Street interchanges. Beyond 2010, traffic volumes on I-205 remain relatively constant due to major facility limitations.
- As roadway congestion increases and the cost of automobile use rises, more trips will be made by alternative modes such as walking, bicycling and transit; however, the vast majority of intercity trips will be made by automobile. We are already seeing a reversal in the size of personal automobiles from SUVs and trucks to smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles and vehicles using alternative fuels. Whether these trends will continue is unknown at this time.

### ***Environmental Trends***

- Global climate change, including rising temperatures and limitations on water, energy, and other resources, will require a more sustainable approach to land use planning, development, and resource management.
- As the effects of climate change and resource limitations become more severe, intergovernmental cooperation will become critical in solving regional problems and

meeting the needs of our citizens.

- Concerns about diminished potable water supplies and degraded water quality may require alternative forms of resource management, including conservation and higher levels of treatment for municipal waste water systems and storm water runoff.
- There will be an increased effort to further define the value of natural areas and assure their protection as the metropolitan area becomes more densely populated.
- The provision of open space for both active and passive recreational use will become even more important than it is today as the region becomes more densely populated.
- Local food production may become more important as fuel prices continue to rise and dietary preferences shift toward healthier foods.
- All parks within the City will experience greatly increased use which could result in their overuse if not properly managed.
- The relationship between the natural and built environments will become increasingly important as new technologies in sustainable planning and green development emerge. The City has already taken steps toward becoming more sustainable by adopting the *Sustainable West Linn Strategic Plan*.
- The trends described above necessitate action by the City, for example, through policy-making, adoption of new or updated development standards, and other public or public-private projects and programs.

### ***Trends in Government***

- New state and federal laws, and court decisions of all types, will continue to erode the home rule powers of local elected officials and limit local discretion in many areas.
- Tax limitation measures such as Measure 50 have resulted in less revenue for local taxing districts and their ability to provide public services. In conjunction with these limitations on revenue, less federal financial support is provided for local services. With gasoline prices continuing to rise, and if the federal fuel tax remains unchanged, local and state governments could receive less gas tax revenue (per capita) in the future.
- As the scale of environmental and social problems becomes larger geographically and more severe, different types of governmental institutions may be needed requiring more intergovernmental cooperation. The move towards regional coordination, consolidation, and provision of some services will accelerate.
- Demands on the Willamette and Tualatin rivers for recreational and domestic water uses will increase as the urban area continues to develop.
- Due to the limitations on local revenues and increasing demand for a more diverse range of services, there may continue to be a shift from government provided services to the private sector and volunteers; however, the shift may be slowed due to growing concerns about the quality and equitable distribution of public services.



### **Education Trends**

- With an increasingly diverse population, there will be a demand for greater flexibility in educational opportunities serving more people at all ages and income levels.
- Schools will provide “life-long learning” opportunities, both on-site and through online technology, to meet changing occupational and career needs.
- As land within the Urban Growth Boundary becomes more expensive, educational institutions may find it difficult to acquire suitable land for building new facilities.
- Some schools may experience declining enrollment as the general population becomes older and individual neighborhoods change in their demographic makeup.

### **Community Development Trends**

- As urban land values continue to increase, West Linn’s neighborhoods and town centers will experience significant redevelopment pressure. West Linn is already transitioning from a developing city to a redeveloping city.
- National and regional development trends indicate a shift away from suburban forms of development – i.e., neighborhoods primarily consisting of automobile-oriented subdivisions with large single-family homes – to more mixed use neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and lot sizes within walking distance of parks, schools, and neighborhood-oriented commercial services. The concept of the mixed-use neighborhood is no longer “a vision”; it is a reality in the marketplace. West Linn’s planning program will be called upon to find better ways to interconnect the town’s older subdivisions, while guiding new development and redevelopment.
- With the regional trend towards mega-stores subsiding, and more shopping occurring online or in small specialty stores, retail activity will become more neighborhood focused. This trend favors the layout of West Linn with its small neighborhood centers arrayed within walking distance of most residents.
- While convenience sales and services will continue to dominate West Linn’s commercial centers, rising transportation costs and congestion will drive these uses to locate near the highest concentration of residents, preferably within walking distance of neighborhoods.
- The market shift toward infill and redevelopment will place pressure on existing neighborhoods to accept residential development at higher densities, and it may lead to more frequent zone change requests in established neighborhoods; e.g., from single family residential to commercial or mixed-use.

### **Arts and Cultural Trends**

- Portland will continue to serve as the regional hub for major arts and cultural activities; however, sub-regional programs may become more important as events in downtown Portland become ever more crowded.
- Overall, participation in arts and cultural activities will increase, but with greater diversity due to a variety of interests.
- The planning of sub-regional events will require more coordination and cooperation

among local arts and cultural organizations, and between West Linn and its neighboring communities.

- The library will experience greatly increased use as a diversified arts and cultural information source. The continued development of on-line user services, including interlibrary loans and transfer of materials throughout Clackamas County, will allow the West Linn library to serve an even wider customer base.
- Both governmental and corporate financial support of arts and cultural activities may decrease, making it difficult to find stable funding sources for maintaining cultural and arts programs.
- Non-governmental, religious and private businesses are increasingly relied upon to provide services historically provided by the government. As these non-governmental institutions are called upon to deliver community services, their associated infrastructure needs and land use impacts will require special consideration.

## **PROBABLE FUTURE IF NO ACTION IS TAKEN**

Given the current and future trends, we can foresee what our city might become if we sit back and let life take its course.

In the year 2040, West Linn is still characterized as a bedroom community and remains a collection of neighborhoods with limited commercial services. Its population has grown to nearly 40,000 with its boundaries extending to the Stafford Road area on the west and along Rosemont Road to Carriage Way on the north. The complete, albeit low-density, build-out of this area (i.e., all vacant land developed) has prompted City officials to consider a proposal to expand the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to include the Pete's Mountain area and the area southwest of the Tualatin River known as the Tualatin loop. Low-density development on this terrain makes the extension of utilities difficult and costly.

West Linn continues to draw new residents searching for a safe and quiet haven from the crime and clamor of the inner city. These newcomers put upward pressure on housing costs and inevitably add to the congestion of our streets, a problem which has defied a solution. Most citizens still commute to jobs outside the city, and the public transportation system fails to serve West Linn's needs. Consequently, local service workers cannot afford to live in West Linn and our residents must drive farther to attend to daily needs, such as shopping, school, day care, and recreation, due to the sprawl development pattern.

Nearly all of the land within the City's UGB has been developed to capacity featuring upscale homes and some condominiums. Many trees within the City have fallen to make room for additional homes. Some development has occurred in the established neighborhoods. There is no plan for the West Linn Paper Mill site, a "missed opportunity" in terms of creating a more sustainable city.

The overriding issue impacting all aspects of life in West Linn is growth. Mandated housing densities have eroded the natural beauty and rural character praised by long-term West Linn residents and newcomers alike. Growth has outpaced the ability of institutions to meet human service and infrastructure needs. Growth has also reduced green spaces which could have served as gathering places and enhanced the community's sense of place and identity. Continued reliance on the automobile has guaranteed gridlock on the five-lane Highway 43 and six-lane I-205. People who once considered West Linn home feel that the community has lost its sense of place and community identity.

Families choose to alleviate the stress of modern life and the increased crime rate by "cocooning" (withdrawing socially) rather than becoming involved in community events. Their changing lifestyles, including financial demands, two-parent incomes, longer work hours, and in-home offices, have all taken away from the social interaction that is the foundation for community spirit and support. Small businesses are reluctant to locate here because of the town's diminished quality of life, shortage of affordable housing, and the apparent lack of planning and foresight.

The highly regarded West Linn schools have continued to be a magnet drawing families to relocate here. As a consequence to limited funding, however, the already supportive parents have had to keep increasing their contribution of time and money for sports, arts, culture, music, clubs, and other activities. The lack of cooperation between the City and School Board to be proactive in land use planning has left the Board with limited land for building new schools to accommodate the increased population. Agencies and other potential partners that could pool their financial and volunteer resources to help the schools have not stepped forward.

Governmental agencies have continued to be pressured by special interest groups who have little concern for the quality of life of future generations in West Linn. Tax limitation measures remain in effect which stymie the City's ability to provide anything beyond the most basic services such as police, fire and public works; and even those services are quickly eroded by inflation. The same limitations have forced even basic services to be funded through bonds and fees; which are not supported by tax weary citizens. West Linn is burgeoning with empty-nesters and families alike, but community services are inadequate, unable to adapt and meet the needs of our citizens.

The 11 neighborhood associations, historically adversarial to public institutions, are now adversarial with each other and compete for the limited public services. Neighborhood associations are threatening to use block voting to get services and concessions without regard for city-wide concerns. City codes have been amended to allow gated subdivisions and neighborhoods are patrolled by private security services.

West Linn has experienced a continued fragmentation of the arts and culture, both in terms of interest and finances. West Linn and other metro area suburban communities have been called upon more and more to share in the expense of providing major regional arts and cultural opportunities. In short, without a vision, West Linn is adrift and unable to sustain a high quality of life.

## **PREFERRED FUTURE WITH A VISION**

The following describes what West Linn could look like in forty years if we choose to accept a different course and guide future growth based on a more sustainable vision.

In 2040, West Linn has evolved into a full-service city of nearly 40,000 population. Our town is a beautiful, safe, and peaceful place where individuals and families of all types feel a sense of belonging and connectedness with their neighbors and their city government. It is a place where people live in an environment that nurtures and respects both individuality and diversity. West Linn is a community where growth has been thoughtfully managed through citizen-developed guidelines and a policy of consensus. A balance has been established between responsible growth and preservation of the city's history and rural identity.

West Linn is a place people choose as “home” for a variety of reasons: outstanding educational opportunities for all ages; cooperation between community institutions; respect for green spaces and natural beauty, including parks, wild spaces, and a river walkway or esplanade; healthy lifestyles nourished by a healthy environment; the City’s commitment to sustainability; a flourishing arts scene; and opportunities for citizens to participate in and to influence the government at the neighborhood, city, and regional levels.

Many have made West Linn their home because the citizens and the government have made a commitment to value community spirit and cooperation. City government sets policy and takes action based on one question: *Will this policy or action foster or hinder the vision we have for West Linn?*

The heart and spirit of the community are readily apparent. The network of sidewalks, pathways, public meeting places, community gardens, and accessible public transportation connect people within and between neighborhoods. Ongoing community events and service projects encourage citizens to contribute to the betterment of each other and the city.

Adamant that there should be a definable edge between urban and rural areas, West Linn has rejected any overtures to the extension of services across the Tualatin River toward Pete’s Mountain and the Tualatin Loop area. As evidenced by the City of West Linn Comprehensive Plan, the City has taken a proactive stance in managing growth and ensuring land use decisions are made based on locally defined sustainability principles. Likewise, West Linn plays a constructive role as a regional partner in guiding regional transportation and Urban Growth Boundary decisions, and has earned the respect and gratitude of neighboring communities, both urban and rural.

Through a participatory process that includes the property owners, the surrounding neighbors and the City, a master plan was created for the mill site that supports the existing business and provides for effective transitions to the surrounding uses. As a result, the site is now a successful gathering place with offices, civic facilities, commercial buildings and multifamily housing, known as the “Willamette Falls Center.” The Center houses City Hall, several large meeting spaces and exhibit halls and a large public plaza, opening out to the activities and beauty of the river. The Center also features river taxis which link Portland and Salem via the Willamette River. Trailheads radiate out from the center and along the river. The new center coincides with the old West Linn downtown that existed before the I-205 construction.

The notion that there should be some singular core commercial area that would provide for all the needs of the City was quickly put aside out of deference to the distances involved and, in particular, the varied topography of West Linn. Consequently, the mixed-use commercial centers of Willamette, Robinwood, Bolton and Tanner Basin provide neighborhood services at a “village-scale” that is compatible with the adjacent neighborhoods. A variety of housing is provided to meet the full range of housing needs in the community, with higher density housing clustered around the village centers. In recognition of the value of having seniors remain in the City, close to their families, the community provides housing opportunities for the elderly and those on fixed incomes.

The increased commercial development and employment in the Wilsonville 1-5 corridor has rerouted a large portion of traffic away from Highway 43. To maintain the livability of West Linn, Highway 43 is improved only to three lanes its entire length through the City, consistent with the Oregon Highway 43 Conceptual Design Plan. Tri-Met bus service is complimented by an inter city jitney service which links West Linn with the regional bus and rail lines, including connections to rail transit in Milwaukie, Oregon City and Lake Oswego. An improved West Linn web site connects citizens to City Hall, as well as to one another, and delivers educational and civic services to home-bound residents and the large number of in-home businesses in the City.

West Linn continues to earn the most livable city award, in part due to its commitment to sustainable city operations and development practices. The area of the paper mill reflection ponds has been redeveloped, if no longer needed for industrial operations, into a riverfront park, plaza, and high-end office center, with easy access to I-205. Waterfront public places abound and a network of multi-use pathways and trails provide linkages between the City's neighborhood centers and the Willamette Falls Center.

While some services traditionally offered by the City are now being provided by regional governments, West Linn and other metropolitan jurisdictions have adopted the philosophy that services provided by those closest to the citizens (i.e., city government) are the most effective and responsive. Through a series of cooperative agreements with other community institutions, new partnerships have been formed, creating new options for mutual support and the benefit of the community. The City government, school district, businesses, neighborhood associations, land trusts, community supported agriculture, churches, and other institutions have joined efforts to help identify the needs and desires of the community, and are working cooperatively to meet them. These institutions accept the responsibility of their inter-dependency and consistently use the "big picture" approach to problem solving.

The City Council continues to be comprised of members elected at large. Councilors act as local representatives to other community and regional service boards. These positions provide enhanced cooperation and networking within the current system of elected boards and commissions and connect West Linn citizens to all that the Portland region has to offer. They have also become actively involved in the state legislature, serving as effective advocates for the citizens of West Linn.

The City government operates under a Code of Public Involvement (CDC 98 and 99), whereby government officials, staff, community groups and citizens participate under adopted principles of behavior. The previous 'win/lose' product of the public hearing process that lacked flexibility has been replaced by a more inclusive roundtable negotiations process earlier in the process where 'win/win' solutions are commonplace. Here differing values and points of view are considered through a give-and-take process that balances the concerns of project proponents and neighborhood advocates, with the government serving as the prime facilitator and protector of the public good. This approach is reflected in the approach the City uses for making plans, reviewing development proposals, and establishing new policy. "Task forces" are appointed, whereby the City Council taps into the knowledge, experience, and skills of its citizens in making plans and developing policy.

The City supports its eleven neighborhood associations by providing timely information, opportunities for citizen involvement, and technical expertise for addressing local issues. Public meeting rooms are provided in each of the neighborhood community centers, and a civic center has opened in the Bolton area citywide forums. Neighborhood-level planning is promoted to create plans and regulations unique to the respective neighborhoods while serving the community as a whole. A League of Neighborhood Associations has been formed to address citywide issues from the grassroots level. Neighborhood associations must meet similar tests for public notice and inclusive citizen involvement as is in place for city government. Neighborhood associations are no longer just watchdogs of public institutions; through partnerships, they identify needs of the community and develop and implement plans to meet those needs. Neighborhood associations take an active role in emergency response planning and crime prevention through programs like ‘Neighborhood Watch.’”

Local centers catering to all age groups have been established in each neighborhood as well as at the civic center complex to facilitate this new partnership for the common good. Each local center provides services such as education, recreation, childcare, volunteer services, and other opportunities, based on identified needs and resources. Senior citizens serve as mentors and role models for adolescents, and our teen population is supported by and engaged in various community service activities. Through volunteerism, human service needs are being met, in part, without increased cost and in ways that mutually support the participants. These centers foster a spirit of openness and cooperation, and enhance feelings of security within the community.

Both public and private schools draw nationwide respect for quality and affordable education. The school district has redefined the role of schools as lifelong learning institutions. Schools also serve as vital neighborhood centers that complement local community centers and provide ample areas for recreation, culture, and the arts for all ages.

Strong demand for the arts and cultural activities and facilities has resulted in the development of alternative sources of financial support. This has led to the formation of a comprehensive network of multi-interest ‘partnerships.’ Single source financial support has become a thing of the past. Corporations, recognizing the role that culture and the arts play in local quality of life, have taken a greater role in providing financial support for continued growth in arts and cultural activities. West Linn’s partners for arts and culture recognize that cultural activities are based on the concept that ‘to get a say, we must join together and pay.’

The library continues to play a greatly expanded role in arts and cultural activities by providing a vast array of interactive opportunities. Through a more entrepreneurial approach in providing these services and opportunities (e.g., renting meeting and exhibit halls for private weddings, parties, etc.), the library system has developed a coordinated approach to reliable, ongoing funding.

Home access to arts and culture has become virtually unlimited through a wide array of internet and other digital technology. High-speed, worldwide access is the norm and wireless access is available throughout much of the community. Coverage of local city events has expanded with a greater diversity and quality of programming, and more national and international coverage is provided. At times, local viewership of such events exceeds that of

the commercial networks.

Public art projects and exhibits are a permanent element of the community's public facilities such as at the schools, parks, library, and neighborhood and community centers. Reflecting the diverse arts and cultural interests of the City, a number of mini-festivals celebrating a wide variety of cultural and arts activities has become a highlight of the community. These mini-festivals culminate in a grand festival during the fall.



## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES & ACTION ITEMS**

*Guiding Principles* and *Action Items* have been developed in five significant areas to illustrate some possible steps to move West Linn toward its Preferred Future.

### **SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

To create and sustain a spirit of community where there is a sense of caring, openness, inclusiveness, goodwill and connectedness to one another that ensures that present and future needs are met; where differences of opinion are welcome and there is an atmosphere of consensus; where disagreements can be aired and resolved respectfully; where cultural and ethnic diversity are embraced as community assets; where the focus is not on ourselves, but on giving something to the greater whole of our community, and giving more than we take; and where there is a deep appreciation for our natural and built environments and a strong commitment to sustainability.

#### **Sense of Community Action Items**

- 1 Assure that all decisions are weighed, among other considerations, as to whether or not the action will foster or hinder a sense of community and the social sustainability in West Linn.
- 2 Continue to build on the network of parks, natural areas, walkways and bike paths in the community, and create a river walkway or promenade, a town square, community center, a permanent farmer's market space, community gardens, an amphitheater and a multitude of parks connected by greenways.
- 3 Implement the City's Parks and Open Space Plan, and periodically review and update the plan to address demographic changes.
- 4 Implement the Comprehensive Pathway and Trails Master Plan to assure all eleven neighborhoods, schools, city parks, neighborhood centers and the Willamette Falls Center are all interconnected by safe pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
- 5 Establish programs for the celebration of community spirit. Organize monthly civic and cultural events for all ages, celebrating the diversity of cultures, talents and personalities in our community. Summer plays and concerts, parades, fun runs, gardening contests, and more all add to the City's festive atmosphere. The Summer Concert Series, Willamette Centennial Celebration, and Farmer's Market are exemplary of the types of programs that promote community spirit.
- 6 Consider developing wide sidewalks that are dotted with public benches, bright flowerpots, sculptures and fountains and banners proclaiming upcoming events that exist along tree-lined streets. The City should adopt a common design motif which will be visible at the City's gateways, along our major road and pathways,

and at public spaces. Trees, flowers, views, and our waterways should be the focus of our plans and designs.

- 7 Promote the Adult Community Center as a hub for community service. Engage “young-seniors” (e.g., 55+) as well as the elderly in community activities that promote lifelong learning, community service, and quality of life.
- 8 Continue to offer opportunities for the young, and young-at-heart, to participate in service projects such as organized sports, and volunteer work on trails and invasive plant removal.
- 9 Initiate new projects where there is a strong volunteer base. Project examples may include neighborhood beautification, neighborhood watch, constructing trails and public plazas, building neighborhood parks and centers, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, greenway maintenance and enhancement, teen mentoring, meals on wheels, helping elderly citizens in home maintenance or transportation needs, and managing youth community projects. Neighborhood associations are a vital tool for initiating and completing these projects. They should be involved in all phases of this effort and should be encouraged and supported by the City.
- 10 Pursue establishing a local jitney transit system that maintains a 15-minute interval schedule, providing transportation to destinations within the City and connection to the regional transit systems. Encourage ridership through positive incentives such as free trips in exchange for two driver-issued or business-issued script. Jitney stop should be no farther than 1/4 mile from any resident. Jitneys may also be called by telephone, with the possibility of allowing riders to be picked up and dropped off as desired. Neighborhood associations could be called upon to assist in the education and ridership programs.
- 11 Encourage ride sharing and carpools by pairing up commuters. Similarly assist those in need of transportation to after-school events and senior programs.
- 12 Encourage and nurture the City’s neighborhood associations. The City should provide timely information about city business, as well as staff support and grant opportunities for neighborhood enhancement and special events.
- 13 Encourage and nurture the formation of a League of Neighborhood Associations to serve as a body to address issues of citywide concern.

## **LAND USE AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

To shape the physical design of West Linn so that citizens feel a sense of pride and are rooted to the community; where the human scale, history, centers, edges, patterns, textures, styles and visual reference points define the uniqueness and magic of a special place; where the City’s heritage is strengthened and where the quality and abundance of its public spaces are the focus of the community.

## **Housing Action Items**

- 1 Periodically update the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land for needed housing.
- 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.
- 3 As the community transitions from a developing city to a redeveloping city, encourage the design of housing to be sympathetic to surrounding homes.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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*.
- 7 Consider adopting land use policy and code amendments supporting an incentive- or performance-based approach to housing density bonuses and affordable housing.
- 8 Continue to maintain and improve the City’s tree preservation and permitting requirements in concert with other sustainability measures.

## **Commercial Development 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.
- 2 Continue to plan for mixed use development and increased development densities along transit corridors.
- 3 Continually review and update its regulations, as needed, to help address the needs of home occupations while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.
- 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.
- 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*.

- 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).
- 7 Implement the recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Task Force.
- 8 Maintain a conservative sign code to protect community character and aesthetics.

### **Historic Resources Action Items**

- 1 Maintain the City's eligibility as a Certified Local Government under the U.S. Department of Interior's Historic Preservation Guidelines.
- 2 Support the Historic Resources Advisory Board in its efforts to protect and enhance the city's historic resources. Encourage the adaptive reuse and preservation of historic structures.
- 3 Work jointly with Oregon City in promoting the Willamette Falls Heritage Site; pursue landmark status for the property.
- 4 Continue to support programs relating to the Willamette Historic District; support a National Register listing of the district and pursue the acquisition of a historic centerpiece for the Willamette Historic District to provide a focal point.
- 5 Provide appropriate training for staff and the Historic Review Board.
- 6 Investigate funding opportunities for documenting and protecting other historical districts and historic landmarks.
- 7 Pursue a permanent home for a West Linn Historic Museum.

### **Recreation Action Items**

- 1 Continue to collect system development charges, as well as other funds, and acquire suitable open space and parklands ahead of development or concomitant with development.
- 2 Work with other jurisdictions (Lake Oswego and Tualatin) and school districts, to investigate the possibility of building an aquatics center.
- 3 Continue requiring dedication of trail corridors in an aggressive fashion. Developers should be required to construct the trails in those corridors and obtain UO easements from existing property owners. Trails along Willamette and Tualatin Rivers in the Master Plan should be a priority.
- 4 Plan landscaping projects in parks with drought-tolerate plant species and implement water-conserving irrigation systems (e.g., rain gardens, grey water reuse, etc.).
- 5 Continue City-School District cooperation in planning playfields, parks and scheduling uses of those facilities.

## **Public Facility Action Items**

- 1 Assure that all public facilities and services can meet adopted level of service standards for water, sewer, storm water, police, fire, parks, and other City services; coordinate with other service providers (e.g., surface water management) and make sure that City plans, policies, development standards and administrative procedures support their efforts.
- 2 Promote water conservation to maximize the public investment in existing water and sewer infrastructure and to reduce the City's impact on the Clackamas River watershed.
- 3 Where it is in the City's interest, pursue local and/or regional partnerships for water treatment and delivery to meet the needs of a growing population.
- 4 Establish neighborhood centers featuring public plazas, meeting rooms, and more.
- 5 Continue to monitor the space needs for City office facilities and manage existing City assets to ensure the highest return on the public investment in such facilities.
- 6 Work with the School District to maintain the presence of neighborhood schools. Encourage any new schools to be built in the center of the population they are intended to serve, with access to collectors or arterial streets and, where possible, along transit lines.

## **Open Space Action Items**

- 1 Periodically review the City's land use policies and codes and ensure that building setbacks around wetlands, drainage ways, heritage trees, and forested areas are protecting natural resource functions and values.
- 2 Implement the Parks and Open Space Plan, and periodically review and update the plan relative to acquisition and improvement of open spaces and trail corridors.
- 3 Identify additional means by which open space may be more readily dedicated as part of the development permit process.
- 4 Encourage the compatible development of vacant, past-over lots prior to expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) as one way to protect open space outside the UGB.
- 5 Continue to pursue and maintain West Linn's status as a "Tree City USA." Develop plan to encourage conservation of urban forest resources.

## **Transportation Action Items**

- 1 Review and update the City's street standards, consistent with sustainable development practices. Implement green street technology as a means of slowing stormwater runoff and improving water quality in area streams.
- 2 Continue to make improvements in the planning and design of streets, trails and buildings to promote alternative modes of transportation and to reduce the miles

traveled by automobile.

- 3 Coordinate with the Oregon Department of Transportation in implementing the Oregon Highway 43 Conceptual Design Plan.
- 4 Encourage the expansion of transit in the West Linn area and the development of links along the periphery of the City and metropolitan area. Advocate for West Linn's interest in transit connections to Milwaukie and Lake Oswego as those communities pursue enhanced bus, light rail and/or street car service.
- 5 Support a transit link with the proposed Willamette Valley high-speed rail line station in Oregon City.
- 6 Establish plans to provide for convenience services and public meeting places within easy walking distance of each residence.
- 7 Promote grid pattern street development with context-sensitive design standards to help interconnect City neighborhoods. Where hillsides preclude a grid pattern, obtain pathway connections between hillside neighborhoods.
- 8 Implement the transportation-related action items under Sense of Community.
- 9 Reduce vehicle miles traveled through mixed use development in planned centers and regulations that encourage home-based businesses that are compatible with residential areas.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

*Meet the present needs of West Linn's citizens without compromising our ability to meet the needs of future generations.* We recognize that there are multiple dimensions to community growth, which are both positive and negative. While citizens may view physical growth in negative terms, growth is likely to continue. How we manage it is key. There should be assurances that growth is in fact sustainable; that it does not do irreparable harm to the social fabric, environmental quality, and economic base of the community, and that it preserves and enhances West Linn's quality of life.

In addition to the action items described in preceding sections of the Vision, the action items recommended in *Sustainable West Linn* should guide the City in its decision making. The top three action items for each component of West Linn's sustainability action plan are summarized below. (For additional recommendations and detail, please refer to the full text.)

The following items should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure consistency with regional and statewide initiatives and to reflect best practices with the emergence of new technologies.

## **Sustainability Action Items**

In addition to the following items, the City should review and update its Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to implement sustainability. See also, “Land Use and Livability”.

### **City Government**

- Adopt a green building standard for all new City facilities.
- Conduct an energy audit of all facilities and act on the findings.
- Implement a green purchasing policy that includes environmental criteria along with such traditional criteria as quantity, price, performance, and convenience.

### **Local Businesses**

- Reduce energy associated with buildings and transportation.
- Assess the sustainability of all practices, inventory existing green practices and promote your successes in the community; identify at least one sustainability area to improve.
- Integrate sustainability elements into your business plan to improve your competitiveness and foresight.

### **Neighborhoods, Schools and other Civic Organizations**

- Make sustainability a standing agenda item when you meet.
- Schools become more involved in the Oregon Green Schools program [www.oregongreenschools.org](http://www.oregongreenschools.org) and purchase local, organic food.
- Neighborhood associations incorporate sustainability into neighborhood plans; create a vision for a sustainable neighborhood and identify goals to act on.
- Chamber of Commerce: Promote West Linn as a “green marketplace,” i.e. create a niche market.

### **Citizens and Households**

- Reduce energy consumption in buildings by using alternative modes of transportation.
- Use the power of purchases; buy local whenever possible, give preference to certified ‘green’ or organic products with minimal packaging.
- Learn about sustainability (e.g., by attending community events, participating in Northwest Earth Institute discussion classes, reading, etc.).

## **COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS**

To shape our city government, school district, and other West Linn institutions so that as a whole our community fosters trust, respect, courage and cooperation.

### **Community Institutions Action Items**

- 1 Maintain inter-agency agreements between city government, school district, neighborhood associations, and other community institutions.
- 2 Continually review and improve the performance of West Linn’s city government, including its departments, council, and volunteer boards and commissions.
- 3 Implement the ‘Code of Public Involvement’ (CDC 98 and 99) for all public meetings.
- 4 Establish a negotiation/mediation process for dispute resolution.
- 5 Maintain neighborhood plans and establish a Commission on Citizen Involvement charged with developing Citizen Involvement Guidelines and monitoring their implementation. Assist in the funding of neighborhood publications.
- 6 Establish a year-around community education program utilizing existing school facilities for all ages.
- 7 Promote resource conservation through waste-reduction and recycling programs, in cooperation with Metro, neighborhood associations, and area waste management companies.
- 8 Support a “West Linn Vision Alliance” composed of representatives from the City Council, School Board, Neighborhood Associations, Chamber of Commerce, churches, arts organization, and others to oversee and carry out the West Linn vision.
- 9 Update the West Linn Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to reflect and support the West Linn vision.

## **CULTURAL DIVERSITY, EDUCATION, AND THE ARTS**

To celebrate the creative, innovative, and inspirational works of nature and humankind while exposing citizens to other cultures and viewpoints.

### **Cultural Diversity, Education, and Arts Action Items**

- 1 Consider establishing an Arts Council to identify potential funding sources and coordinate fund raising activities for arts and cultural activities.
- 2 Encourage community education in the arts through community schools with an expanded program of artists and volunteers.



- 3 Identify corporations that would have an ongoing interest in West Linn arts and cultural activities.
- 4 Establish an entrepreneurial approach to funding library activities (e.g., renting meeting and exhibit halls for private weddings, parties, etc.).
- 5 Establish the role of arts in our community and determine how West Linn will participate at the regional level.
- 6 Maintain a city communications program (e.g., web site and West Linn public access programming) and create the position of Community Events Coordinator to promote local productions and events.
- 7 Build and establish facilities, or identify willing community partners with facilities, where cultural and art events and exhibits can be staged (e.g., Willamette Falls Market, Museum, venues for the arts, etc.).
- 8 Identify and establish partnerships with non-governmental institutions that provide important cultural, recreational, and educational services to the community (e.g. shared use of religious or private facilities).

**APPENDIX: Specific Achievements to Recommended Action Measures from the Original *Imagine West Linn* document**

1. City adopted Parks and Open Space Plan.
2. Summer Concert Series, Willamette Centennial Celebration, Farmers' Market, and addition of a Special Events Coordinator.
3. City-support of volunteer work on trails and invasive plant removal.
4. Adult Community Center open.
5. Community Development Code (CDC) Chapter 43 created to address design compatibility with surrounding homes.
6. CDC 85.200(J) amended to require minimum densities, per Metro.
7. CDC amended to allow reduced setback for front porches.
8. CDC amended to encourage garages built behind or on the side of and recessed behind dwellings.
9. CDC 19 allows mixed use, as does the Willamette Falls Historic Overlay Zone (CDC 58).
10. CDC 34 amended to permit and regulate accessory dwelling units (mother-in-law apartments).
11. CDC 55 amended to require pedestrian-friendly and accessible development with emphasis on designing at a human scale.
12. CDC 55.100 & 85.200 amended to strengthen tree protections.
13. 10<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Task Force.
14. Home occupations are permitted by Code and are used extensively in the community.
15. CDC 58 contains Willamette Falls Drive Commercial District Design Standards.
16. New commercial center added to the Tanner Basin neighborhood, which includes the Willamette Corporate Plaza and River Falls Plaza.
17. Public Arts program (percent for arts) established.
18. 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.
19. City administrative offices are now located in one building.
20. Required setbacks from wetlands revised from 25 feet to 57-65 feet.
21. Ongoing work to revise drainageway setbacks.
22. Parks and Open Space Plan updated.
23. City has strengthened the incentives for dedicating natural areas and open spaces to the City through development review.
24. Revised street widths forthcoming in Transportation System Plan (TSP).
25. TSP to include CDC changes required to ensure state rule (TPR) compliance.
26. Adoption of OR 43 Conceptual Design Plan.

27. Transit master plan and bus turnout areas required in new development through updated Design Review process.
28. CDC amendments limit the use of cul-de-sacs and requires stub streets where appropriate.
29. Inter-agency agreements exist between neighborhood associations and the school district which are continually updated.
30. The Code of Conduct for public meetings is found in CDC 98 & 99.