

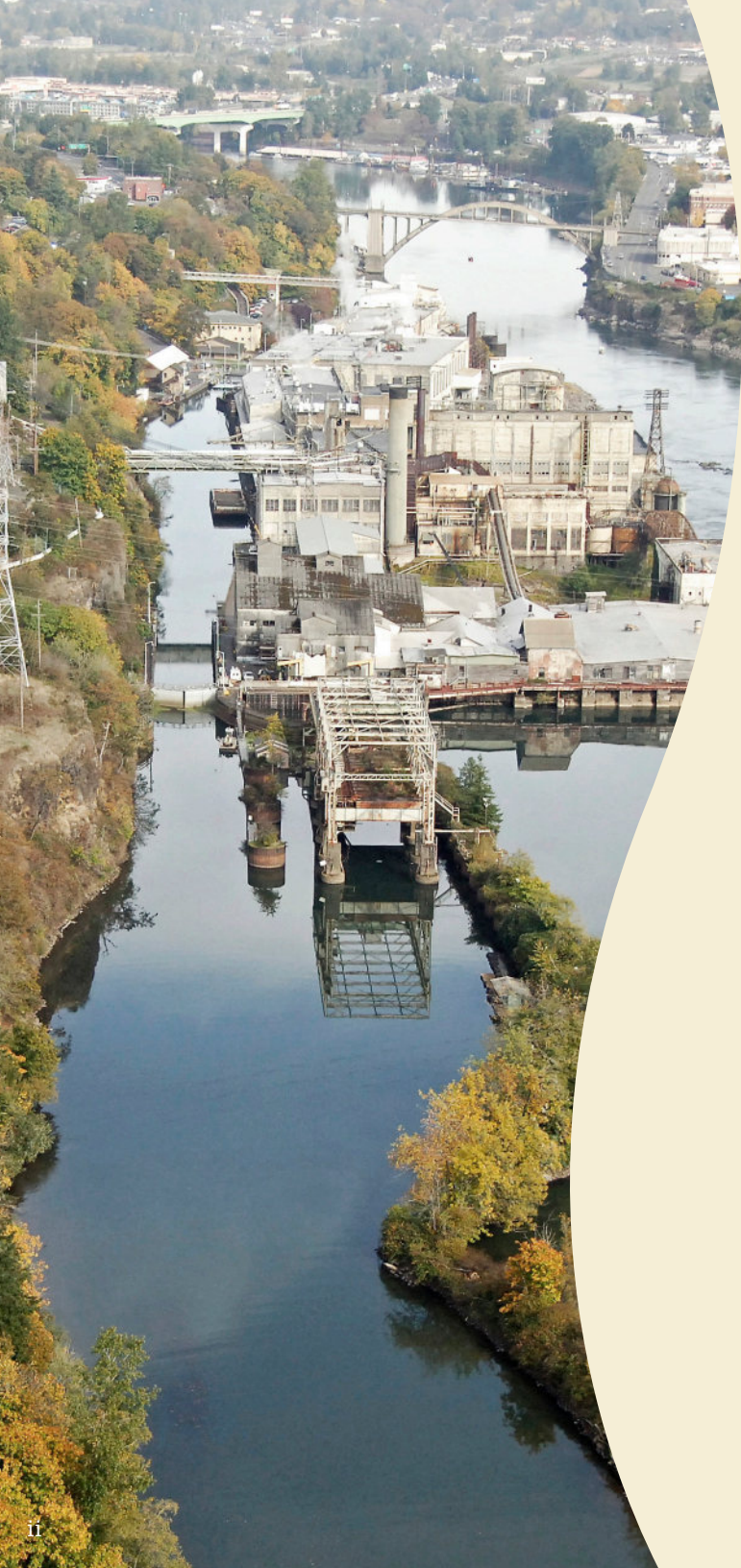


WEST LINN
WATERFRONT
PROJECT

Community Vision Plan

August 2024

Draft



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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01

Introduction



WHAT IS THIS VISION PLAN?

The goal of this Vision Plan is to present an inspired and achievable framework for the transformation of West Linn's Waterfront into a vibrant place that provides new opportunities for residents and visitors to access and experience the natural beauty and cultural richness of the area.

The complexity of the site provides challenges, but recent public investments, private property owner initiatives, and a groundswell of community support have marked a turning point in the City's renewal efforts.

To capitalize on this moment, the City of West Linn restarted an 18-month planning process that continues a transparent and collaborative community-driven effort that started prior to the pandemic. The Vision Plan puts the community's interests at the center of the process and aligns their thoughts with analysis of the area's physical, economic, and regulatory issues to develop a physical plan for realizing the potential of the Waterfront.



GOALS

The Waterfront is a key piece in the economic development of West Linn. Building on decades of past planning efforts and public input, the desired outcome of the Waterfront Vision Plan is the creation of a revitalized area that provides a diverse mix of land uses, increases access to the river and recreational opportunities, and celebrates the Indigenous and industrial heritage of the site.

The goals of the Vision Plan are to:



PROCESS

This Vision Plan signifies the restart of the City's effort to reimagine the waterfront, a process that began in 2016 but was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Vision Plan was guided by a Project Working Group (PWG) who represent a diverse group of stakeholders whose input, advice, and feedback has helped shape the planning process. This Vision Plan document has undergone review and approval by the PWG.

Previous planning and community engagement were used to develop a Draft Vision Plan that was shared with the community in Spring 2024. Refinements were made based on community input to develop this Final Vision Plan. It includes a comprehensive vision for the site and each of its districts.

Subsequent phases, including Legislative Adoption, will identify the steps needed to materialize the plan, and update City policies to formally adopt the plan into regulation.

Fall/Winter 2023/24

- » Preliminary Vision Plan
- » Guiding Principles
- » Planning Framework
- » District Planning
- » Public Consultation
- » Option Testing

Plan Development

Summer/Fall 2024

- » Vision Plan Refinement
- » Option Refinement
- » Public Review
- » Final Vision Plan

Preferred Plan

Fall/Winter 2025

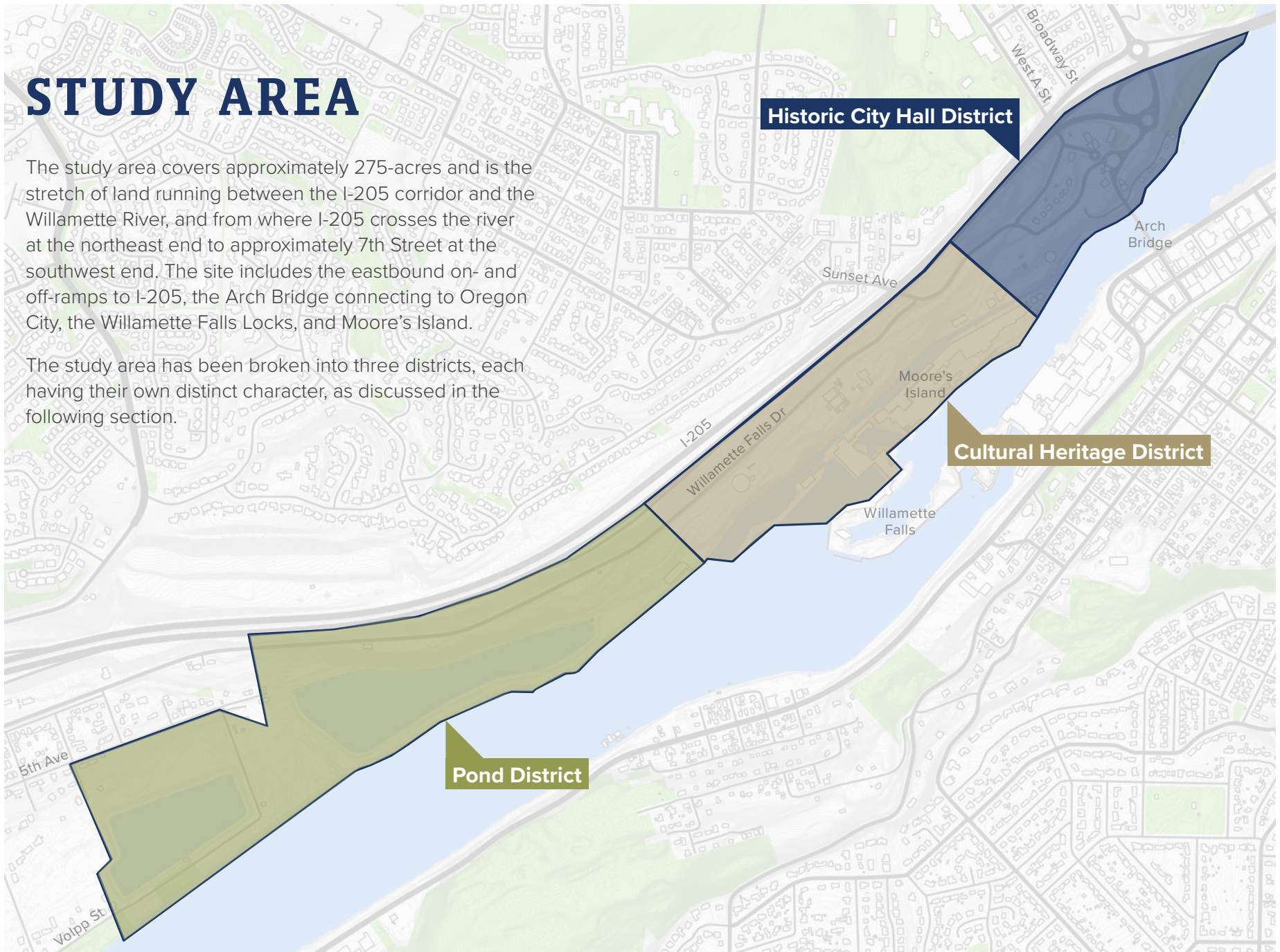
- » Zoning/Code Updates
- » Implementation Strategies
- » Financing Plan
- » Public Review
- » Final Documentation
- » Legislative Adoption

Legislative Adoption

STUDY AREA

The study area covers approximately 275-acres and is the stretch of land running between the I-205 corridor and the Willamette River, and from where I-205 crosses the river at the northeast end to approximately 7th Street at the southwest end. The site includes the eastbound on- and off-ramps to I-205, the Arch Bridge connecting to Oregon City, the Willamette Falls Locks, and Moore's Island.

The study area has been broken into three districts, each having their own distinct character, as discussed in the following section.



ALIGNED PROJECTS AND PLANNING EFFORTS

Planning for the study area has been ongoing for almost 40-years. Most recently, there have been numerous planning efforts and projects that will help inform the larger vision for the site.

-
- 1 Willamette Falls Inter-Tribal Public Access Project (Ongoing)
 - 2 Willamette Falls Locks Seismic Upgrade (2023)
 - 3 Oregon City-West Linn Pedestrian-Bicycle Bridge Concept Plan (2023)
 - 4 Willamette Falls Drive Concept Plan (2021)
 - 5 Willamette Falls Portage Trail Concept Study (2019)
 - 6 West Linn Mill Site & Willamette Falls Tour Feasibility Study (2019)
 - 7 PGE West Linn Waterfront Redevelopment Study (2019)
 - 8 West Linn Upland Site Development Work Session (2019)
 - 9 West Linn Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (2019)
 - 10 West Linn Comprehensive Plan (2017)
 - 11 West Linn Transportation System Plan (2016)
 - 12 West Linn Waterfront Project Assessment and Roadmap (2016)
 - 13 Blue Heron Aerated Stabilization Sludge Management Project (2015)
 - 14 Arch Bridge Concept Plan (2014)
 - 15 A Vision for the Willamette Falls Legacy Project (2014)
 - 16 Comprehensive Trails Master Plan (2013)

ENGAGEMENT

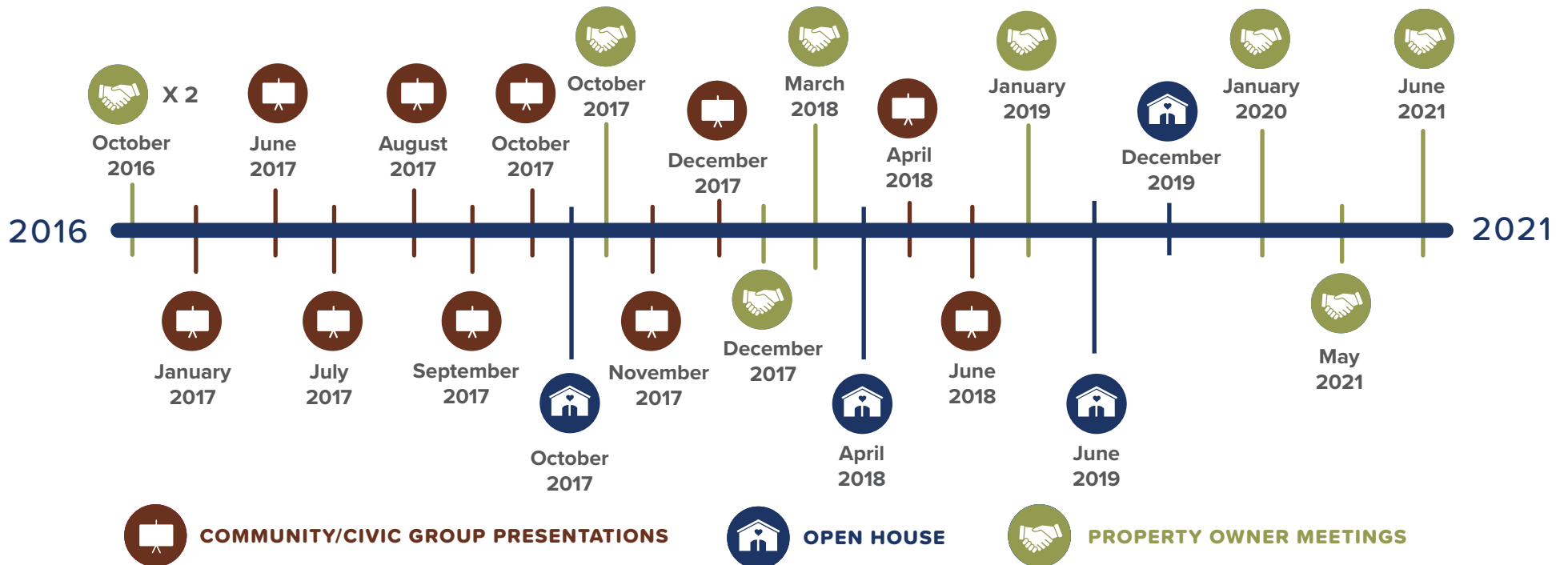
This Vision Plan builds on decades of thoughtful work conducted by City staff and the community to reimagine the Waterfront.

Planning conducted between 1986 and 2016 included several neighborhood and redevelopment plans within and nearby the project area. These were used by City staff to develop a set of preliminary

guiding principles that were taken out to the public as part of the City’s 2016 and 2021 engagement with the community.

Considerable community engagement – including open houses, community group presentations, and property owner meetings – resulted in refinements to the guiding principles and the preliminary identification of land uses and amenities that the community would like to see on the Waterfront. Out of the process, the City also developed a concept plan for Willamette Falls Drive that was adopted into the City’s Transportation System Plan. Some of the key stakeholders

2016–2021 PRELIMINARY ENGAGEMENT

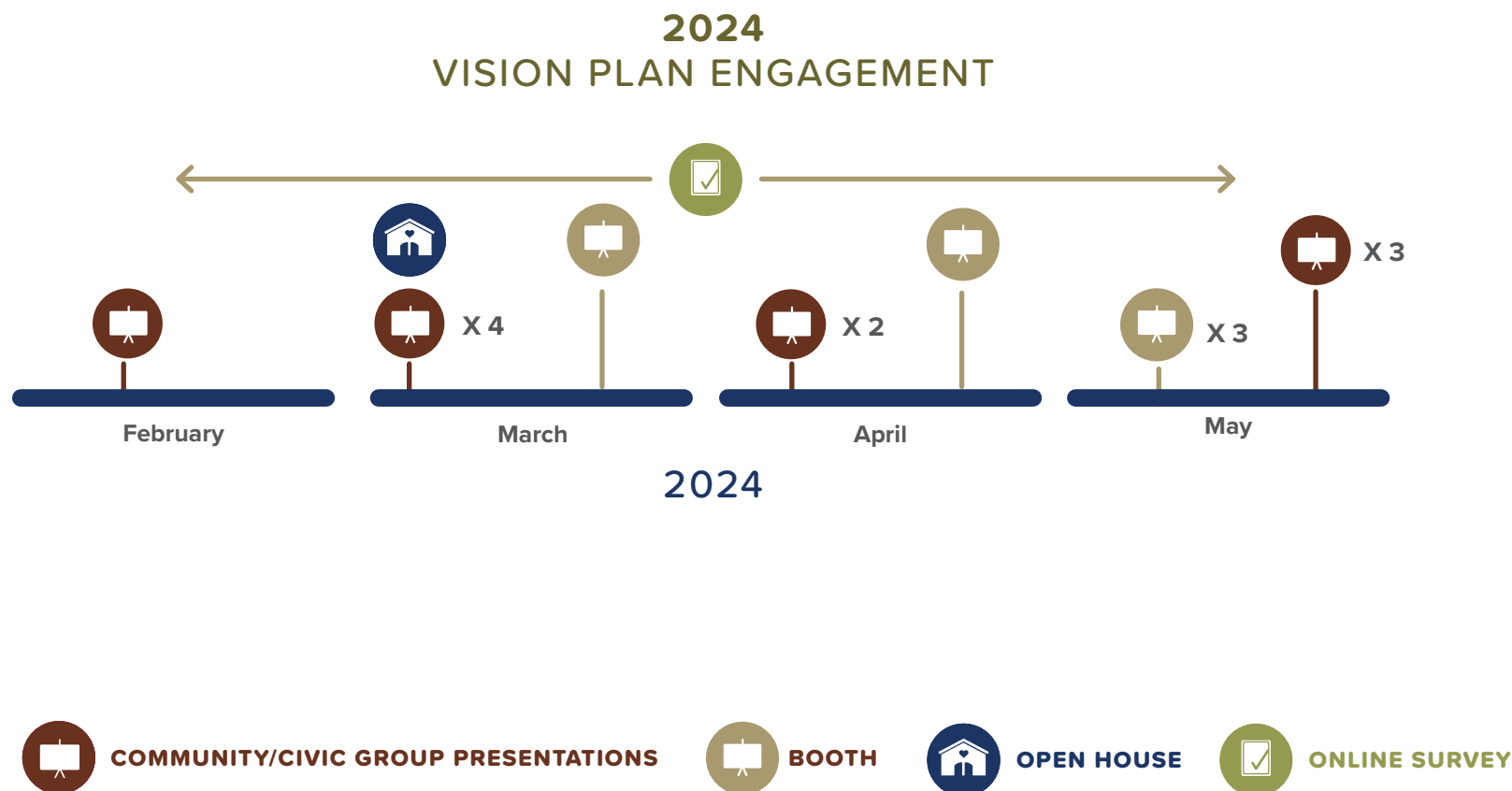


and property owners have also conducted their own planning to understand how they can best realize the potential for the Waterfront.

The launch of this Vision Plan led to the City’s most recent 2024 engagement efforts which obtained input on the Draft Vision Plan and confirmed the planning framework for each district. The input received was used to revise the final Vision Plan and will inform future phases of implementation including zoning, land use, transportation, and code development.

Public engagement included both virtual and in-person activities. Virtual engagement was facilitated through a project website, online surveys, an interested parties sign-up link, social media, city newsletters, and a comment form. In-person engagement included a public open house, presentations to community organizations, and tabling events. Future community engagement will continue to provide opportunities for partners and the public to comment on the next stages of implementation.

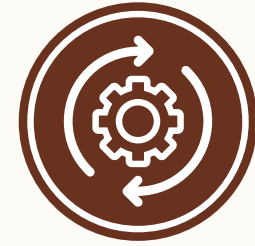
For more information on the key outcomes and findings from recent engagement efforts, see Appendix A..





GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Four guiding principles were developed from extensive public consultation. These represent the community's priorities for the West Linn Waterfront and were used to shape the design concepts presented in this Vision Plan.



REINVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The area will maintain its long history as a working waterfront, while creating opportunities for reinvestment in the historic heart of the community.

KEY ELEMENTS

- Provide opportunities for reinvestment in the three planning districts.
- Accommodate access, parking, and security for the paper mill and electric utility sites.
- Land use decisions support community vision and market principles.
- Set expectations and parameters through market-feasible zoning and design guidelines.
- Encourage and enable private sector investment to build high quality places.
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
- Public and private owners work together on timing of land use transitions.



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Through public and private investment, the Waterfront will safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and truck traffic through improved facilities and turning movements, while reducing conflicts and supporting land uses.

KEY ELEMENTS

- Balanced land use and transportation design.
- Livability and accessibility of nearby neighborhoods.
- Preserve truck access as needed to support commercial and industrial activity.
- Leverage public funds with private investment for safety and capacity improvements.
- Improved local access through the area.
- Creative solutions for multi-modal improvements.



RIVER ACCESS

The community and visitors will have enhanced visual and physical opportunities to enjoy the river and falls through trails, open spaces both natural and within the built environment, and aquatic recreation.

KEY ELEMENTS

- Public and private spaces woven together in a singular experience.
- Views of the Willamette River and Falls.
- Water quality and fish habitat protections.
- Continuous trail network.
- Physical access to the river's edge.



HISTORIC CHARACTER

The community and visitors will experience a revitalized and vibrant Waterfront, while experiencing and celebrating the working and historic industrial uses and important natural, historic, and cultural resources of the area.

KEY ELEMENTS

- Natural, historic, and cultural values are protected and embraced.
- Honor Native American Treaty and restore and respect Indigenous traditions along the Willamette River and Falls.
- Collaboration with other regional efforts.
- Collaboration with efforts to repair and reopen the Willamette Falls Locks.
- Support business viability and vitality.
- Maximize economic connections to the Willamette Historic District.





02

Planning Framework



TOWARDS A PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Planning Framework serves as a blueprint to safeguard natural and cultural resources while identifying ongoing work and potential new development areas along the Waterfront. It is grounded in a comprehensive physical analysis, covering floodplain areas, shoreline access and conditions, and steep slopes, among other overlays.

Appendix B includes a more detailed physical analysis that shaped the development of the Planning Framework.

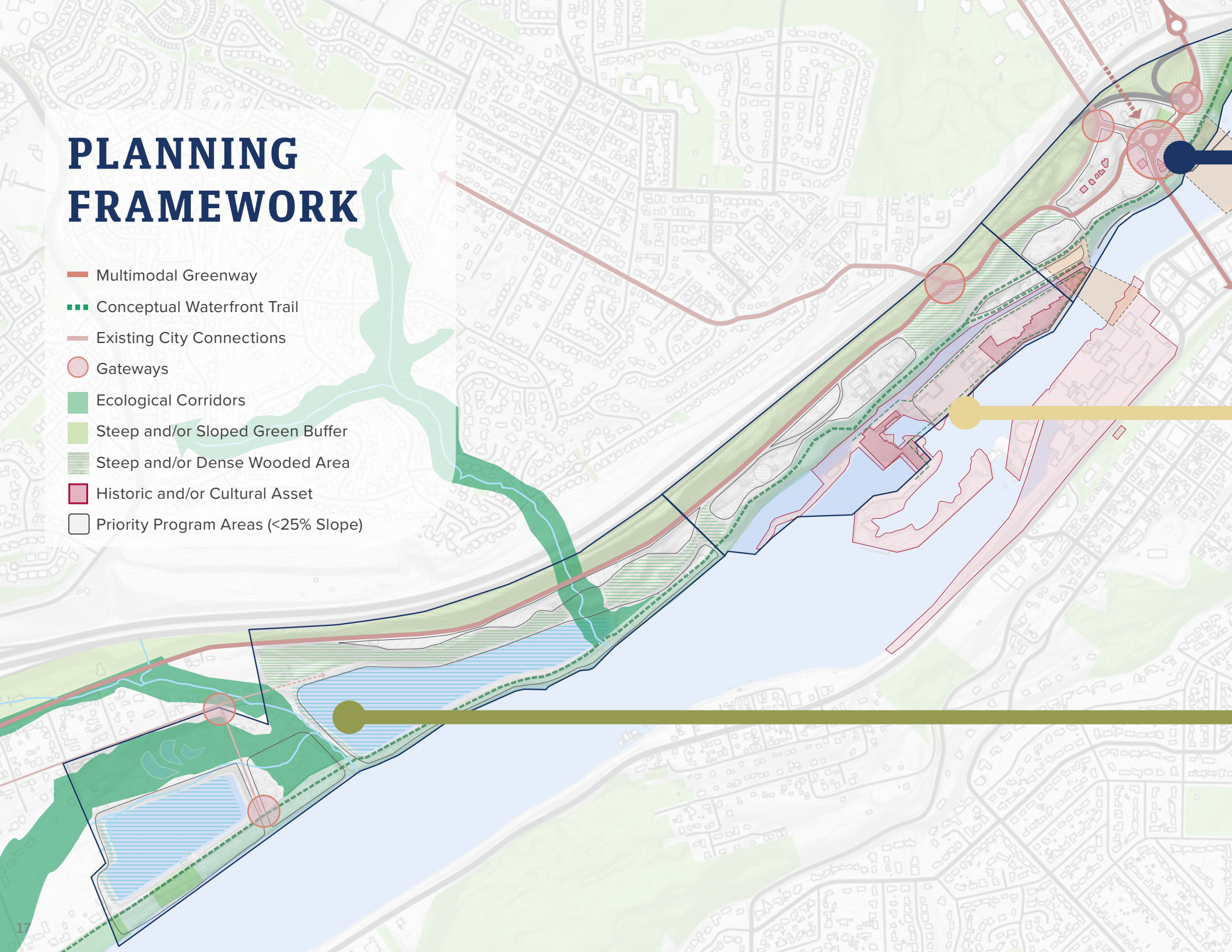
**THIS FRAMEWORK
PLACES THE NATURAL
AND CULTURAL ASSETS
OF THE SITE AT ITS
CORE.**





PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- Multimodal Greenway
- Conceptual Waterfront Trail
- Existing City Connections
- Gateways
- Ecological Corridors
- Steep and/or Sloped Green Buffer
- Steep and/or Dense Wooded Area
- Historic and/or Cultural Asset
- Priority Program Areas (<25% Slope)



KEY PLANNING ISSUES

Historic City Hall District:

- Highest elevation with terraced views of the river, falls, and larger region.
- Location of Historic City Hall and other historically designated buildings.
- Most connected area with key entrances to the riverfront and connections to the Arch Bridge, I-205, and the Bolton Neighborhood.
- Location of proposed ODOT bike/pedestrian bridge.
- Existing structures are a mix of commercial and single-family residential.
- Existing waterfront access with public fishing docks and a private boat dock.
- River access is available via steep slopes south of the bridge.
- West Bridge Park is on the north edge of the district and includes paths which lead to an accessible river edge.

Cultural Heritage District:

- Steep slopes up from the river leveling out in several places on the upper bench closer to Willamette Falls Drive.
- Significant potential to repurpose existing infrastructure and commemorate the historic uses of the Hydroelectric Plant and the Willamette Falls Paper Company on Moore's Island.
- PGE will continue operating its hydroelectric plant through its current license and will seek relicensing in 2035.
- Provides the closest access and best views of Willamette Falls.
- Culturally significant site for a number of Indigenous Tribes.
- Potential to connect physically and programmatically to Tumwata Village across the river in Oregon City.
- Shoreline adjacent to the locks is defined by a hard edge with limited accessibility to the water.
- Potential connections to proposed ODOT bike/pedestrian bridge.

Pond District:

- Lowest elevation and most of site is in the floodplain.
- Relatively flat compared to other districts.
- Shoreline is easily reachable, with soft edges, generally gradual slopes.
- Location of two ecological corridors and creeks.
- Includes two settling ponds that would need remediation to convert to other uses.
- Provides closest views of the river at the lowest elevation.
- District has limited access and entry points with no connections across I-205.

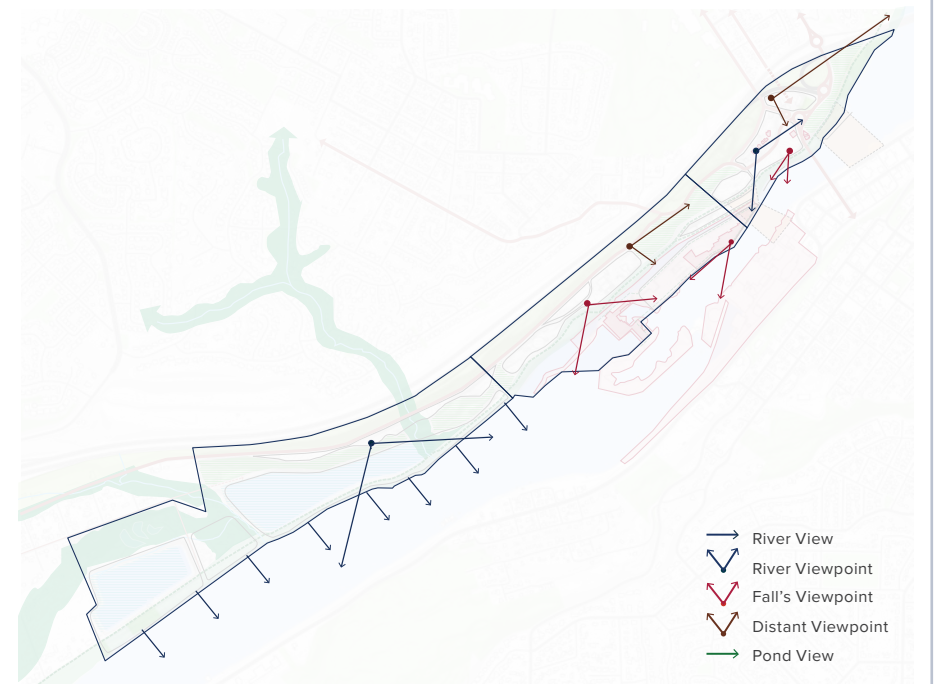
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Aligned with the Planning Framework, the Design Principles aim to ensure design integrity and consistency throughout the development of Waterfront. The Design Principles should inform design and planning decisions for the Waterfront and be used to evaluate the degree to which any future development proposal is consistent with Vision Plan.

These Design Principles build on the Vision Plan's Guiding Principles of Reinvestment Opportunities, Transportation Improvements, River Access, and Historic Character.

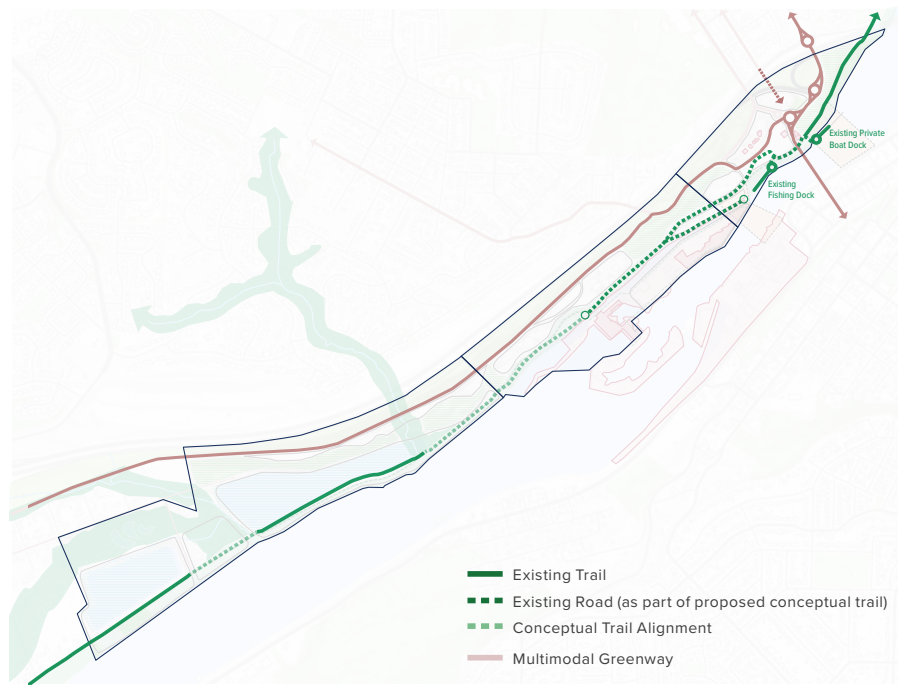
Placemaking and Form

- Ensure that public space appears public (this applies to streets, trails, and public spaces throughout).
- Preserve important sightlines to the river and falls and position new development and open spaces to maximize views. Establish clear gateways to create a sense of arrival and identity of a district or special place.
- Plan for a series of connected and public open spaces that celebrate each district while connecting the waterfront as a whole.
- Plan for new development on either side of waterfront streets to be similar or complementary in design, function, and scale.



Mobility and Access

- Leverage the Willamette Falls Multimodal Greenway and the Waterfront Trail as the two primary circulation spines of the site upon which to build a larger circulation plan.
- Create clear and direct access to the proposed Waterfront Trail from Willamette Falls Drive.
- Establish shoreline access as integral to the overall circulation network.
- Avoid unnecessary dead ends and minimize excessive confluences.



Environmental Stewardship

- Ensure resiliency with land uses that can withstand flooding and are appropriate within the 100-year flood plain.
- Design with topography to guide a strategy toward built form and avoid building in extremely steep areas.
- Safeguard natural and sensitive areas through wetland, habitat, and shoreline restoration and the reuse of industrial infrastructure.
- Leverage the area between the trail and shoreline as a natural buffer zone to serve as a protective barrier and preserve ecological diversity.
- Do not over program districts and adversely impact natural areas and wildlife habitat.







03

Market Analysis



MARKET ANALYSIS (DISTRICT WIDE)

This analysis includes an assessment of the feasibility of various land uses given the current and near-term market conditions of West Linn, the surrounding area, and other waterfront sites. Site considerations also inform the feasibility of land uses and are factored into the broader analysis.

**AN ASSESSMENT
OF THE FEASIBILITY
OF PROGRAMMING
ELEMENTS GIVEN
THE CURRENT AND
NEAR-TERM MARKET
CONDITIONS.**

HOUSING

Opportunities:

Multifamily housing is in high demand throughout the Portland Metro Area, including Clackamas County.

While Lake Oswego and Oregon City have built housing recently, West Linn has not seen new multifamily housing construction over the past decade, indicating unmet demand.

Rental vacancies are relatively low.

While floodplain challenges may not make parts of the Waterfront ideal for housing, housing combined with ground floor retail or parking in floodplain areas is likely feasible.

Though current high interest rates have suppressed construction in the entire housing market, multi-family housing is likely to remain a desirable development type as interest rates ease.

Unique location and views are a potential draw for tenants.

Challenges:

Construction of housing would have to be balanced with maintaining public access to the river as well as preserving valuable riparian and wetland habitats.

Access and lack of connectivity is a challenge/deterrent for potential tenants.

Financing affordable housing on land with substantial development expenses may be challenging.

RETAIL

Opportunities:

Small-format retail, such as restaurants or recreation-based businesses, that accentuate the site's natural and place-based features, such as riverfront and waterfall views, are likely feasible.

Public-facing light industrial that incorporates retail, such as a brew pub and restaurant that contains its brewery operations on-site, are likely feasible.

Annual rent per square foot in the Lake Oswego-West Linn submarket is significantly higher than the Portland Metro Area overall, and is expected to continue rising.

Other destination retail that could be feasible on-site are outdoor amphitheaters or other event venues.

Challenges:

Retail is likely to be most feasible in conjunction with another use rather than as a standalone.

Retail is out of favor with the popularity of e-commerce and there is a lack of connectivity with other retail centers in West Linn.

OFFICE

Opportunities:

Rent in the Lake Oswego-West Linn submarket is above the Portland Metro Area average and appears to have recovered since 2020.

Challenges:

Due to the COVID-19 evolution of work-from-home, new office construction is not likely within the next 5-10 years.

Rent is expected to flatten over the next few years.



Lake Oswego, OR - Windward, Multifamily + Ground Floor Retail



Hood River, OR - Pfriem Family Brewers

INDUSTRIAL

Opportunities:

Light industrial (like breweries, wineries, distilleries, and coffee roasters) and/or maker space could add jobs while being compatible with other waterfront uses.

The vacancy rate is extremely low and is expected to stay low in the near term.

Rents have been growing substantially both in the market and submarket.

Improvements to connectivity with I-205.

Challenges:

Industrial may not be compatible with plans to bring people back to the river as a natural area.

Increased truck traffic could be a challenge given the constrained and steep street network.

Conventional industrial uses are not advisable due to the need for access through residential areas and the presence of steep streets.

CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL

Opportunities:

Civic amenities like green space, parks, waterfront access, and event space can help strengthen community and catalyze commercial development.

Civic spaces that host events, festivals, and recreational activities can increase foot traffic and benefit new local businesses.

Developer requirements, incorporating offsite enhancements, have the potential to finance the creation of new civic spaces and public facilities.

Anchor tenants such as large trusts may be interested in financing the construction of larger civic spaces.

Challenges:

ADA access and integration into the larger site will be challenging given steep slopes and limited existing access. A collection of smaller civic and green spaces may be appropriate given steep topography and access issues.

HOSPITALITY

Opportunities:

Destination or experience-based hotel could be a major draw to the waterfront.

Travelers seek authentic, locally immersive experiences. Alternative lodging options that are combined with other experiential uses such as a concert venue or similar amenities may be feasible.

Easy access to I-205 helps to serve the area as a destination.

Challenges:

Many consumers seek unique and personalized experiences that may not be offered by traditional hotels.

Hospitality occupancy and average daily rates (ADR) are low in West Linn's surrounding areas.

The lack of a sizable business travel sector in the submarket makes traditional hotel difficult.



Vancouver, WA - Waterfront Park



Kalama, WA - McMenamins Kalama Harbor Lodge







04

District Planning



DISTRICT PLANNING APPROACH

Planning for each waterfront district adopted a three-fold approach: the overlay of the Planning Framework, a thorough market analysis that aligns development goals with economic viability, and an integration of community identified interests and considerations. This strategy is instrumental in identifying each district's overarching identity and character, laying the groundwork for land-use and program decisions.

Planning Framework + Design Principles

A comprehensive roadmap that defines site-wide opportunities while providing an understanding of the planning issues specific to each district.



Market Analysis

An assessment of the feasibility of programming elements and land uses given the current and near-term market conditions of West Linn.



Community Feedback

Identification of desired land uses and amenities for the waterfront, based on public engagement from 2016-19 and feedback on the Draft Vision Plan in Spring 2024.



DISTRICT APPROACH

A thorough understanding of the district's identity and character form the basis for context-sensitive planning and land-uses.

IDENTITY + CHARACTER

The unique qualities, attributes, and cultural significance of a District distinguishes it from other locations. These elements are essential in shaping how residents, visitors, and stakeholders perceive and connect with the place.

LAND USE FOCUS

Aligning the types of activities, developments, and amenities with the unique characteristics, needs, and aspirations of the District.

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS

Proposed programs align with the District's identity and land use focus while meeting community needs and contributing positively to the overall vision for the Waterfront.



HISTORIC CITY HALL DISTRICT

A walkable, dynamic waterfront hub with a strategic emphasis on new development opportunities and transportation improvements.

IDENTITY + CHARACTER:

Dense, active, and diverse

LAND USE FOCUS:

Higher density and diversity of uses.

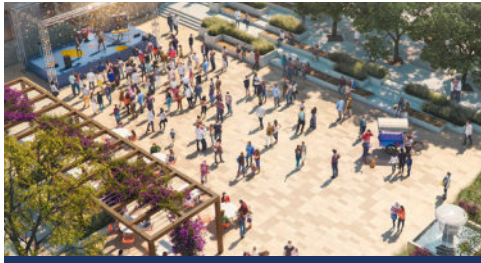
A mix of residential, commercial developments, and a reimagined Historic City Hall centered around a central square and Main Street.

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS:

- Central / public square
- “Main Street” with street facing cafes/ restaurants
- Low-rise apartments with ground floor commercial
- Enhanced fishing and boat docks – with watercraft access
- Reuse of Historic City Hall as a theater, museum, or community center
- Structured parking



Framework Plan



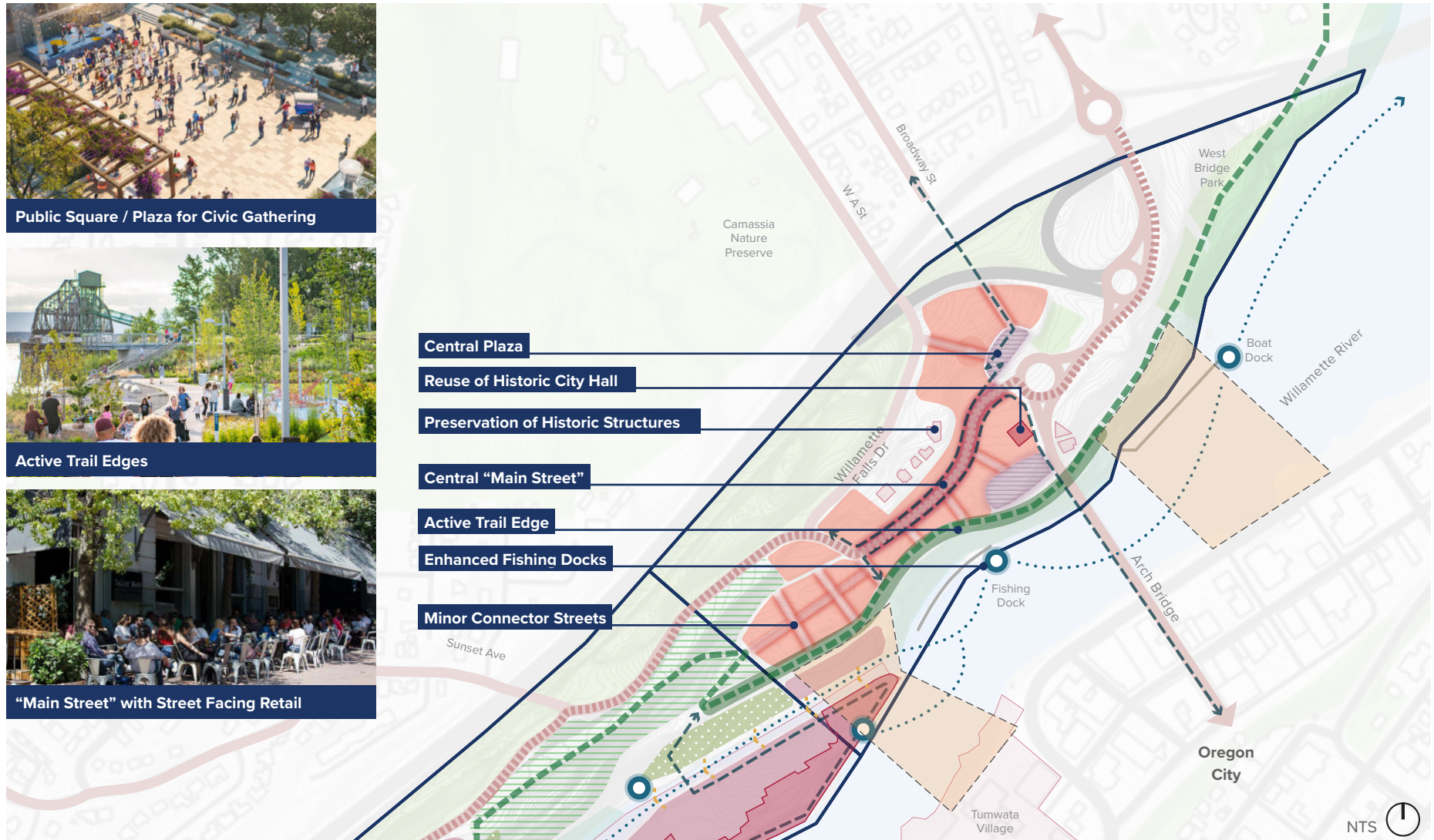
Public Square / Plaza for Civic Gathering



Active Trail Edges



"Main Street" with Street Facing Retail



- Parks/Open Space
- Steep and/or Sloped Green Buffer
- Steep/Dense Wooded Area
- Historic and/or Cultural Asset
- Public Gathering Area

- Existing City Connections
- Multimodal Greenway
- Waterfront Trail
- Willamette River Water Trail
- River Access Point

- Primary Pedestrian Path
- Active Street Frontage
- Locks
- ODOT Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Alignment Option

- Development Area**
Density + Diversity of Uses
- High
 - Medium
 - Low

CULTURAL HERITAGE DISTRICT

Centered on the Falls, this District focuses on elevating Indigenous culture, and the adaptive reuse of industrial structures.

IDENTITY + CHARACTER:

Iconic and history-focused

LAND USE FOCUS:

Medium density and diversity of uses. The Willamette Falls Inter-Tribal Public Access Project anchors the District. The reuse of historic and industrial infrastructure enables new light industrial uses on the island and uplands..

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS:

- Inter-Tribal Public Access Project and associated Tribal specific spaces
- Reuse of buildings for a public market, light industrial, and/or event spaces
- Locks to provide access to the water and unprecedented access to the Falls
- ODOT Bridge from Moore's Island to Tumwata Village
- Trails with viewing platforms to the river and falls
- Low-rise apartments limited to the uplands area
- Mix of field and structured parking



Framework Plan



Tribal Specific Spaces



Trails with Viewing Platforms



Market / Maker Spaces

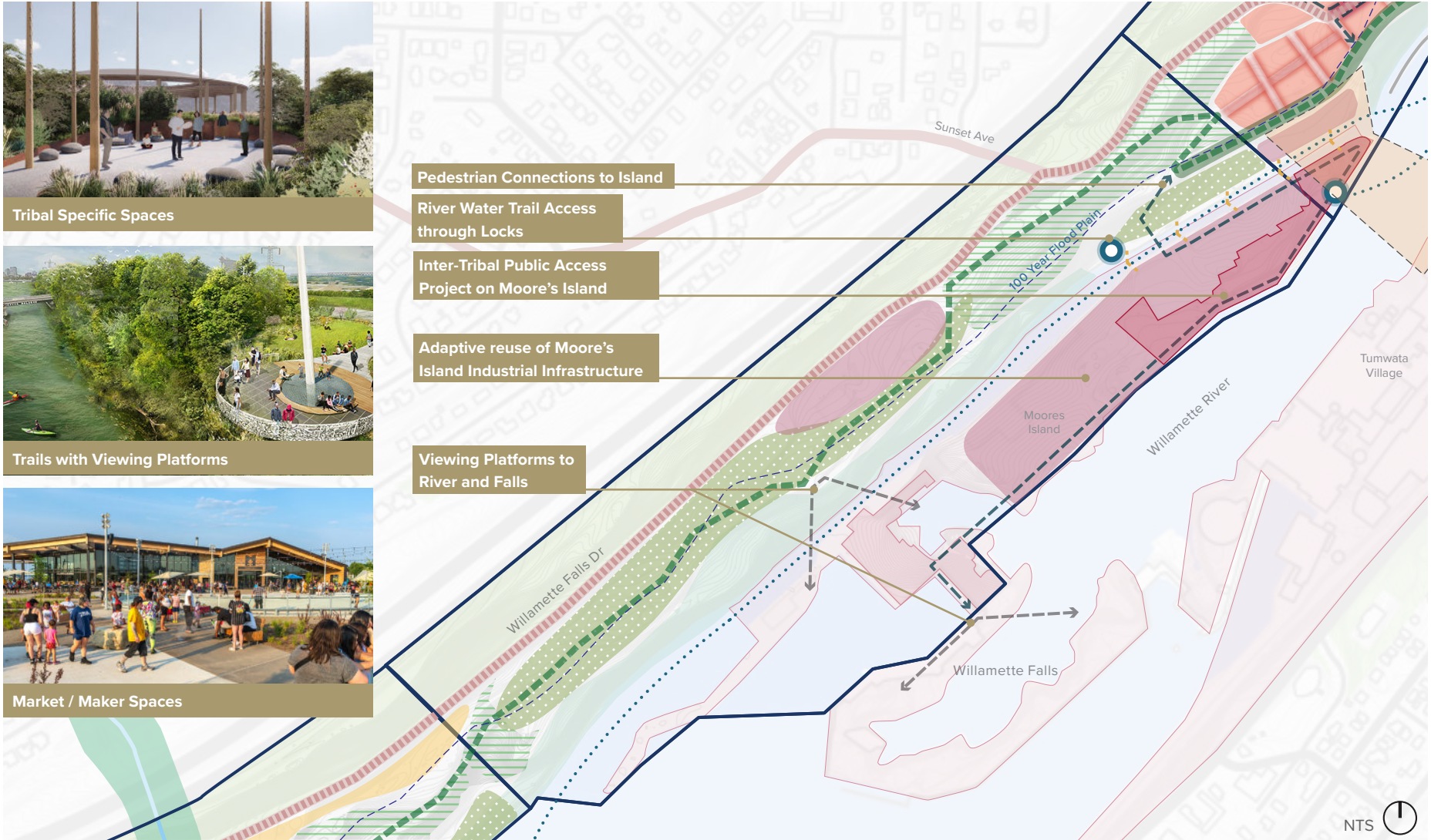
Pedestrian Connections to Island

River Water Trail Access through Locks

Inter-Tribal Public Access Project on Moore's Island

Adaptive reuse of Moore's Island Industrial Infrastructure

Viewing Platforms to River and Falls



- Parks/Open Space
- Steep and/or Sloped Green Buffer
- Steep/Dense Wooded Area
- Historic and/or Cultural Asset

- Existing City Connections
- Multimodal Greenway
- Waterfront Trail
- Willamette River Water Trail
- River Access Point

- Primary Pedestrian Path
- Locks
- ODOT Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Alignment Option

- Development Area
Density + Diversity of Uses
- High
 - Medium
 - Low

NTS

POND DISTRICT

The Pond District, with its lower elevation, easily reachable shoreline, and natural aquatic environments, will emphasize river access and the preservation of natural areas.

IDENTITY + CHARACTER:

Eco and community-focused

LAND USE FOCUS:

Medium density and diversity of uses.

Lower density and diversity of uses.

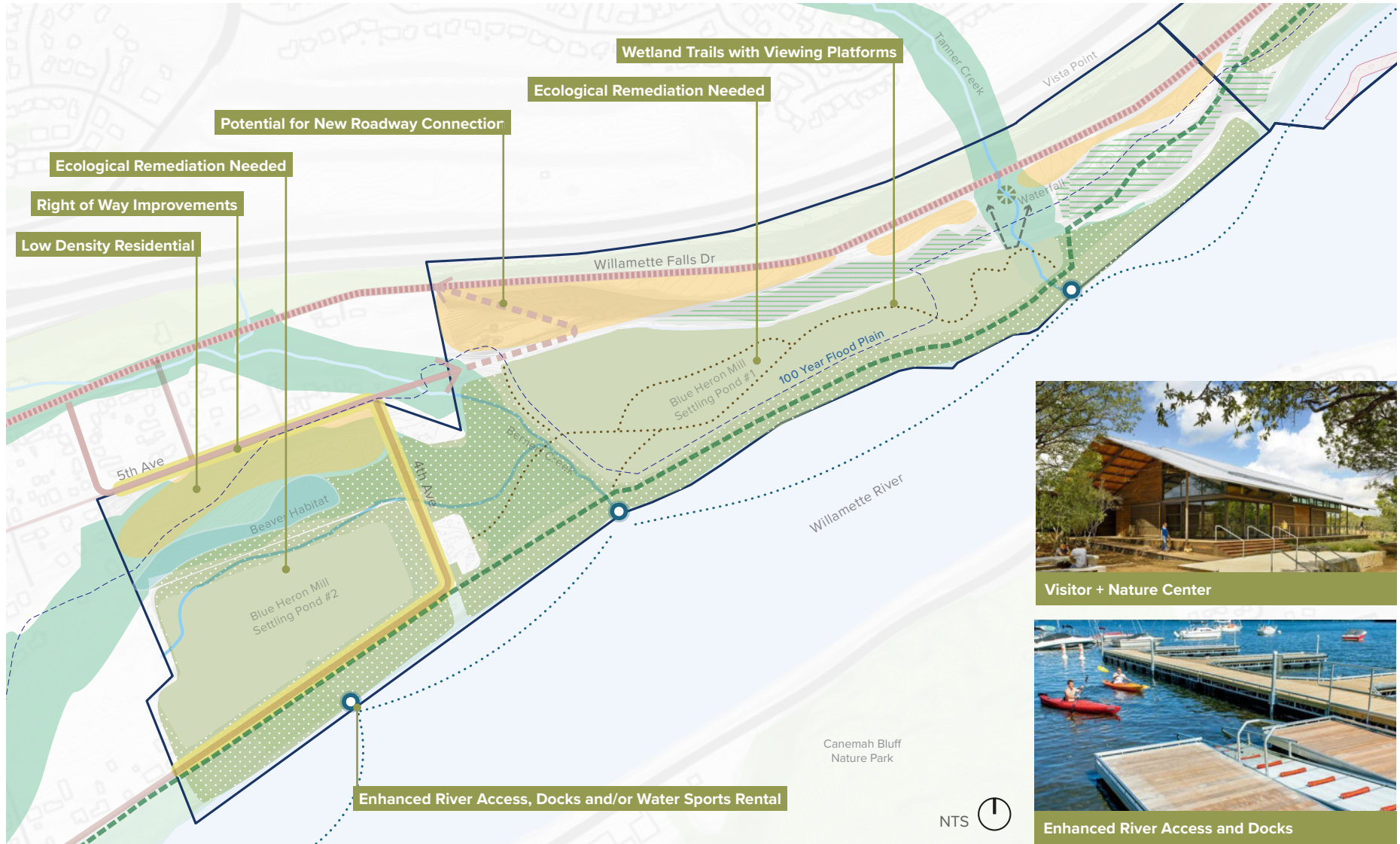
Preservation and rehabilitation of natural areas with low-intensity residential development.

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS:

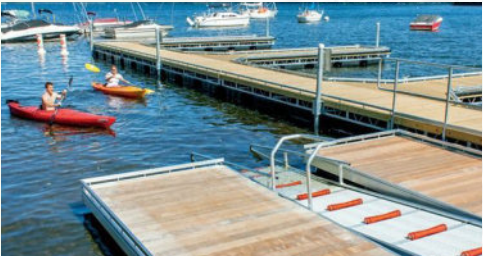
- Wetlands restoration
- Wetland trails
- Visitor or Nature Center
- Enhanced access to the river for paddling, swimming, fishing (low intensity)
- Single family or townhomes on far northwest end of District
- Permeable surface/field parking



Framework Plan



Visitor + Nature Center



Enhanced River Access and Docks

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Parks/Open Space | Existing Roadway | Development Area |
| Steep and/or Sloped Green Buffer | Multimodal Greenway | Density + Diversity of Uses |
| Steep/Dense Wooded Area | Waterfront Trail | High |
| Ecological Corridors | Willamette River Water / Wetlands Trail | Medium |
| | River Access Point | Low |

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