



PLANNING COMMISSION
Draft Meeting Notes September 17, 2025

Commissioners present: Jason Evans, Joel Metlen, David D. Jones, Gary Walvatne, Kris Kachirisky, Kathryn Schulte-Hillen
Commissioners absent: Tom Watton
Staff present: Principal Planner Darren Wyss, Community Development Director Steve Koper, and Management Analyst Lynn Schroder
Public present: Dan Butler, Russ Axelrod, Nicole Jackson, Dan Kruse, Terence Schumaker, Jim Edwards, Sandy Carter,

The meeting video is available on the [here](#).

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Chair Metlen called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Principal Planner Wyss called the roll.

2. Public Comment related to Land Use Items not on the Agenda

None.

3. Public Hearing: [PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council to Adopt the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan](#)

Chair Metlen called the public hearing for PLN-25-01, a recommendation to the City Council on adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan to order. Metlen stated that the plan presents the community's vision for the waterfront and will serve as a guide for future zoning code updates and infrastructure improvements. He noted that the Planning Commission's role is to review the plan and provide a recommendation to City Council, which will subsequently hold its own public hearing and make the final decision on adoption. Because this is not a land use action, the Council's decision is not subject to appeal.

Principal Planner Wyss presented the staff report and provided Commissioners with a comprehensive packet for the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan, which included background materials, guiding principles, survey results, working group recommendations, links to prior meetings, and an outline of the adoption process. The waterfront study area, established in 2016, encompasses approximately 275 acres across three districts: the Historic City Hall District, Cultural Heritage District, and Pond District.

Wyss explained that the vision plan aims to establish a community-driven framework for the waterfront, focusing on economic development, river access, recreation, environmental protection, and recognition of industrial and Indigenous heritage. He emphasized that the plan does not alter existing zoning, comprehensive plan designations, development codes, transportation plans, or commit funding, but instead serves as guidance for future planning and implementation.

He highlighted the extensive community engagement conducted since 2016—including open houses, surveys, property owner meetings, civic group presentations, and online outreach—with additional input gathered in 2023–2025 to refine the plan. The final draft, shaped by public feedback, was reviewed by a working group, which recommended advancing the plan with five key suggestions related to affordable housing, smart growth, access, reuse of structures, and additional feedback opportunities.

Wyss noted that the plan provides detailed sections for each district, outlining their identity, land use focus, potential programming, and visual concepts, along with a market analysis for housing, retail, office, industrial, civic, and hospitality uses. Implementation memos addressing financing, transportation, and land use policy were also prepared.

Finally, Wyss explained that the Planning Commission's role is to review the plan and issue a recommendation to City Council, which will hold work sessions in October followed by a public hearing later this year.

Commissioner Schulte-Hillen noted that a key concern from citizens centers on the medium-density residential designation in the Pond District. She asked about why the area, currently zoned R-10 (low-density), is being treated as medium-density. Wyss explained that under the 2001 middle housing rules, most zones—including R-10—can accommodate medium-density development, allowing multiple housing units per lot, which effectively aligns the area with medium-density residential standards despite the R-10 zoning.

Commissioner Schulte-Hillen asked whether the Pond District should remain designated for residential development. Wyss responded that the Planning Commission could recommend removing it from the map, but doing so would not prevent private property owners from submitting development applications, since the area is still zoned residential. Environmental constraints—wetlands, floodplains, and habitat areas—would influence any proposals, but the map primarily indicates areas where development is potentially allowable, not guaranteed. The decision to remove it from the plan would be therefore advisory rather than prohibitive.

Vice Chair Walvatne raised his concern about development in the Pond District, primarily due to flooding risks, wetland locations, and the presence of the ponds themselves, which have not been fully investigated or remediated. He noted that developing in the Pond District would be extremely challenging due to the number of regulations and approvals required from multiple agencies. This complexity could discourage development. He expressed support for removing the Pond District from the waterfront planning map.

Commissioner Evans clarified that removing the Pond District from the vision plan map does not prevent development, since the area is still zoned for residential use. The vision plan only identifies potential development areas, rather than imposing restrictions.

Commissioner Jones asked about the pond continuation. Wyss responded that the settling ponds are privately owned, so any environmental testing or remediation is the responsibility of the property owners under Oregon DEQ regulations, not the city. The city's vision plan does not propose development but acknowledges the ponds exist. The plan reflects community input over the past decade, balancing private property rights with public interest, and includes features like riverfront trails, viewing platforms, and boardwalks. The vision plan is meant to guide future planning but does not authorize or promote any actual development.

Commissioner Schulte-Hillen brought up the comments from Jim Edwards and Jim Mattis suggesting stronger language on historic preservation in the plan. Wyss responded that the Commission does not need to draft specific language; they can simply recommend that the City Council consider more robust language emphasizing themes like preserve, restore, and repurpose.

Vice Chair Walvatne asked for clarification on the purpose of moving the road the northern portion of the Waterfront District onto what is currently a parking area. Wyss responded that the 2016 plan prioritized transportation improvements, identifying a second roundabout near historic city hall and rerouting the

street through the parking lot to ease congestion. This concept was adopted in the 2021 Transportation System Plan, with further study planned for access and alignment. Walvatne strongly disagrees with the proposed roundabout plan, arguing that closely spaced roundabouts don't effectively reduce traffic. The main issue is congestion from the bridge, which has a traffic light in Oregon City. He suggested the existing Willamette Falls Drive could connect to the roundabout without realigning through private property.

Chair Metlen opened public testimony. Dan Butler, representing Advocates for Willamette Falls Heritage, urged the commission to include more robust recognition of indigenous and industrial history in the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan. He emphasized that the plan should:

- Highlight Morse Island for Indigenous stories and visible artifacts.
- Preserve industrial heritage, including millworker history and architectural features.
- Incorporate adaptive reuse concepts to honor the 200-year industrial legacy.
- Ensure that future development respects both natural beauty and historical significance.

Russ Axelrod urged the Planning Commission to address outstanding comments and document deliberations. He opposed dense housing in wetlands and floodplains and called for its removal from the vision plan. He recommended reviewing and fixing loopholes in water resource protection code. He highlighted critical environmental concerns with the settling ponds and wetlands and stressed that the Commission should communicate these concerns to City Council when they forward the plan to the City Council.

Nicole Jackson testified that a 2014 DEQ report documenting PCBs, dioxins, furans, heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, and lack of a liner in the settling pond. She raised concerns about nutria presence, berm degradation, and water accumulation. She emphasized floodplain risk and wetland classification changes make development in the area inappropriate. She advocated to remove potential housing and development from the pond district to reflect public input, protect natural areas, and comply with comprehensive and strategic plans. She clarified that while the vision plan is advisory, it should mirror community priorities for preservation, trails, and wetlands. She recommended keeping the Pond District low-intensity, eco-focused, preserving habitat, and adhering to recommended buffers from wetlands.

Dan Krause supported the proposed changes to the Vision Plan related to the Ponds District. He emphasized hazard mitigation noting that disasters are more frequent and FEMA funds are unreliable. He wanted the plan to include proactive mitigation to reduce future damage and recommended integrating hazard awareness into all planning decisions.

Terence Schumaker specifically opposed a proposed development of 26 duplexes above the wetlands. For the Vision plan, he stated that the Pond District Wetlands are not suitable for residential or commercial development. He urged the PC to change the Vision Plan to prioritize wetlands rehabilitation.

Jim Edwards testified that current plan has improved from its first version, though it still has gaps. He stated that too much emphasis has been placed on financial feasibility and current conditions, rather than long-term vision. The plan should include examples of development on steep hillsides and Moore's Island, and explicitly encourage reuse and conversion of existing buildings and structures rather than using vague terms like "site adaptation." He noted that perspective matters: views of the Willamette Falls are a major asset, and the plan should highlight and preserve these experiences for the community.

Sandy Carter highlighted her long-term involvement in West Linn historic preservation, particularly of industrial heritage sites such as the locks, PGE power plant, and mill. She noted that these nationally significant sites could be creatively repurposed—for instance, as event spaces—while preserving craftsmanship and supporting local jobs. She recommended that the plan strengthen language on adaptive

reuse, emphasizing preservation over demolition of historic structures. Finally, she questioned why organizations like the Willamette Trust are listed as property owners in the vision plan, noting they do not currently own property; she urged the plan to prioritize a community-focused and inclusive approach.

Chair Metlen closed public testimony and transitioned into deliberations. Commissioners acknowledged that several issues were raised during public comments, and discussion focused on what actions or recommendations they could take within their scope.

Pond District / Wetlands: Commissioners expressed reservations about development in the Ponds District due to environmental hazards, liability, and flood risks. Consensus was that the city cannot fully prevent private development but can recommend removing references to development in the Ponds District to reflect community sentiment.

Cultural Heritage: Commissioners agreed on the importance of encouraging the reuse of cultural resources, including recognition of Indigenous and other historically significant uses of the site. Language in the plan should remain somewhat flexible to allow council and staff to refine definitions.

Environmental / Hazard Concerns: Discussion on whether to include references to contamination and hazardous elements in the motion. Conclusion: existing language in the plan already addresses environmental remediation, and further specificity could be handled by staff outside this recommendation.

Commissioner Evans moved to recommend to the City Council approval of Resolution 2025-13, adopting the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan with the following recommended changes:

- Use the 1996 flood elevation maps to correspond with a 75 ft special flood hazard area (100-year floodplain).
- Remove references to housing development in the Pond District.
- Strengthen or encourage language for reuse of cultural resources in the Cultural Heritage District.

Commissioner Kachirisky seconded. **Ayes: Jones, Kachirisky, Schulte-Hillen, Walvatne, Evans, and Metlen. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. The motion passed 6-0-0.**

4. Planning Commission Announcements

None.

5. Staff Announcements

Wyss reviewed the upcoming PC schedule. He reminded Commissioners to complete the annual Oregon Government ethics training.

6. Adjourn

Chair Metlen adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:40pm.



CITY OF
**West
Linn**

Planning Commission

Public Hearing
West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan

September 17, 2025

Public Hearing Materials

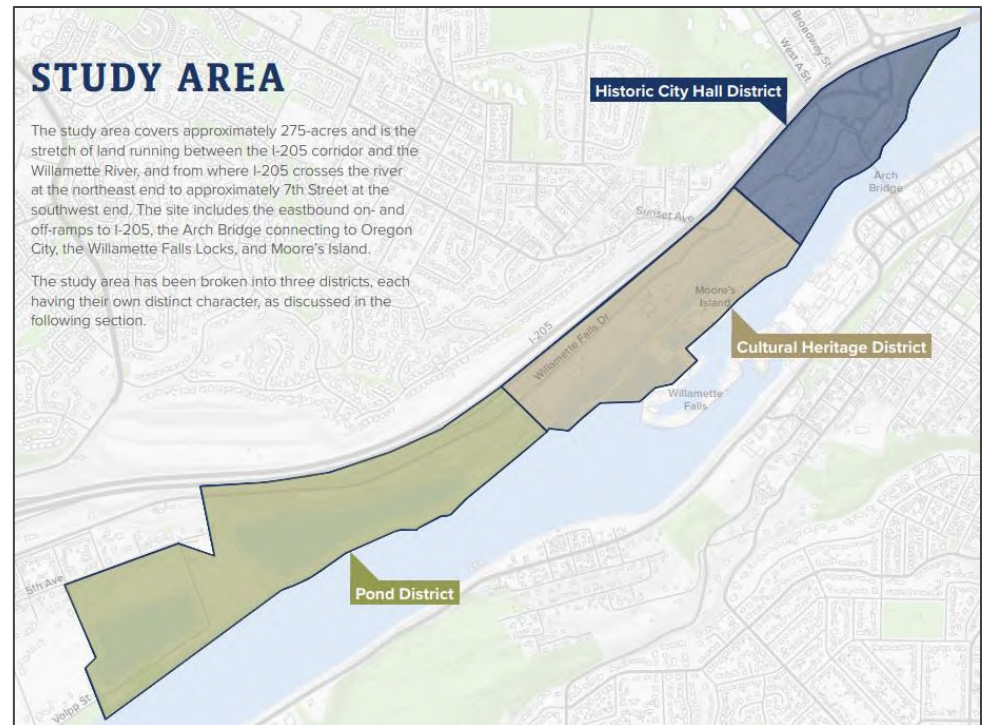


Memorandum

- Background
- Guiding Principles
- Survey Results
- Working Group Recommendation & Links
- Link to PC Work Sessions
- Adoption Process

Attachments

- WLWF Vision Plan
- Appendices A, B, and C
- Written Comments
- Comment Response Matrix
- January 2025 Survey Results



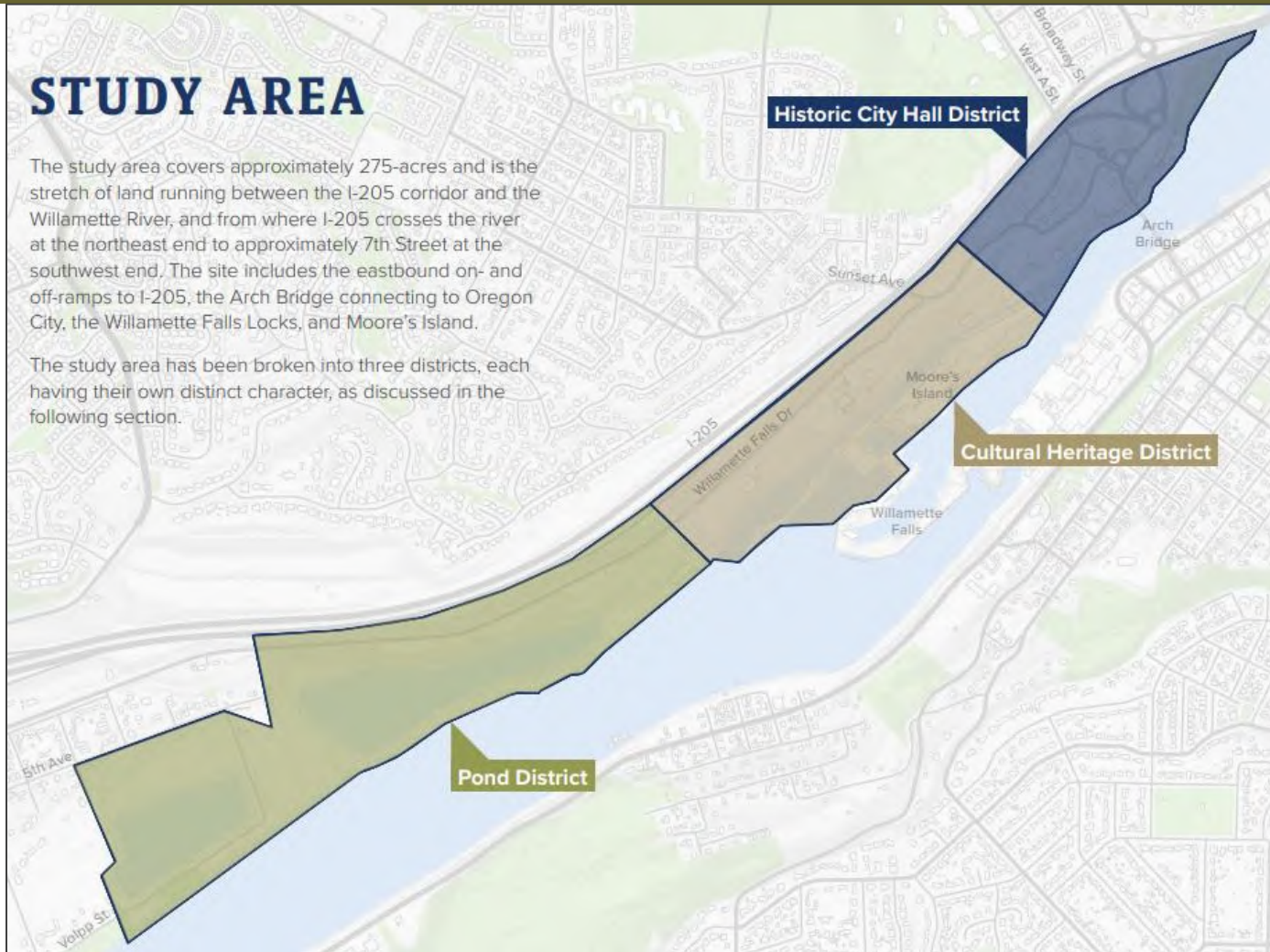
Scope of the Vision Plan



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.





What is the Vision Plan?

Community's Vision for the Future

- New opportunities for residents and visitors
- Key piece of economic development
- Creation of revitalized area with diverse mix of land uses
- Increased access to river and falls
- Recreational opportunities
- Natural resource protection/restoration
- Celebrate Indigenous and industrial heritage

Goals of Vision Plan

- Community-driven effort
- Property owner interests
- Analysis of area's physical, economic, and regulatory issues
- Balance community interests

The goals of the Vision Plan are to:





What's not in the Vision Plan and what's next?

❖ The Vision Plan Does Not:

- Change the comp plan/zoning/development code (current regulations remain intact for any potential development proposals)
- Change the TSP as future needs for WF Drive have already been adopted
- Develop a funding plan or commit to specific investments, resource protections, or historic preservation efforts

❖ Next Steps:

- Comp plan updates/zoning and code amendments
- Vision Plan as guiding document
- Additional community engagement efforts

The goals of the Vision Plan are to:





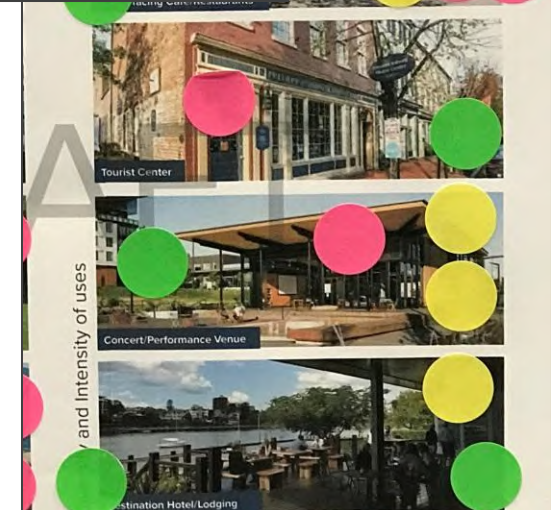
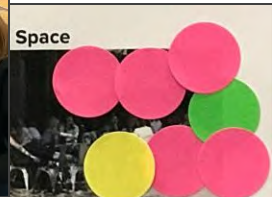
WLWF Project Community Engagement

Engagement 2016-2019

- Guiding Principles
- 3 Planning Districts
 - Historic City Hall
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Pond District
- Preferred Transportation Improvements
- Preferred Land Uses

WLWF Guiding Principles

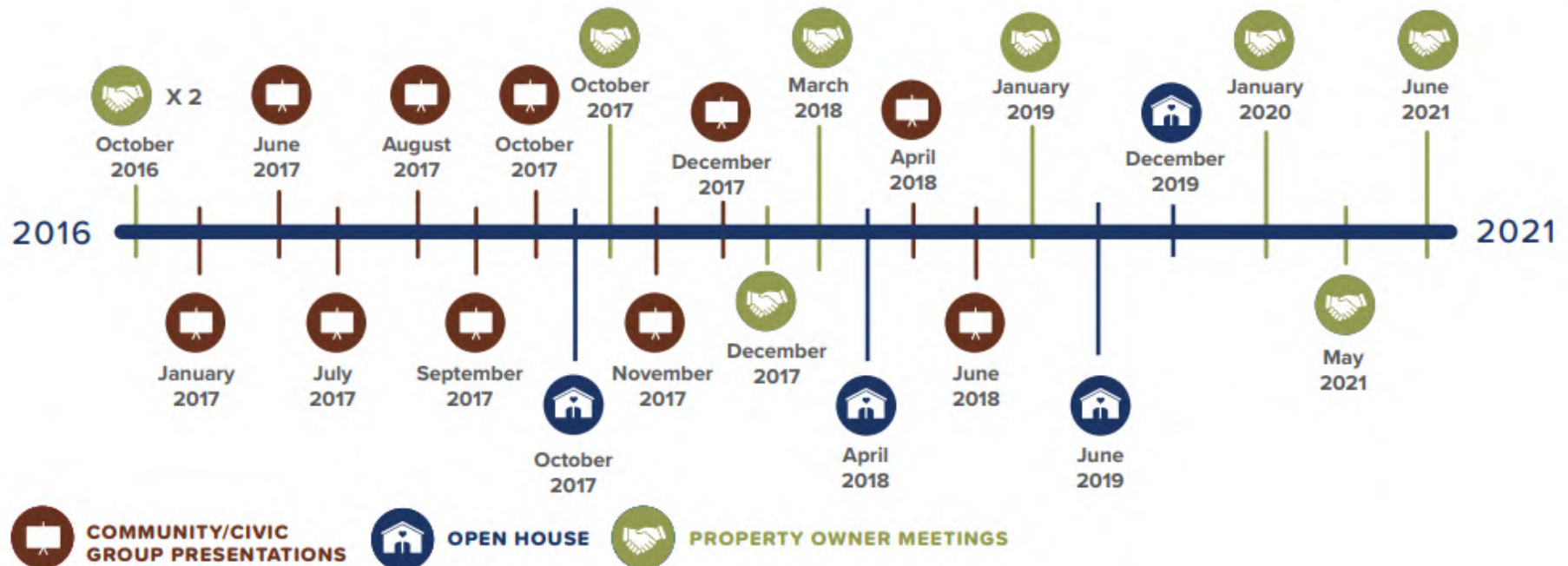
- Reinvestment Opportunities
- Transportation Improvements
- River Access
- Historic Character



WLWF Project Community Engagement



2016–2021 PRELIMINARY ENGAGEMENT





WLWF Project Community Engagement 2016 to 2021

Open Houses

- June 2017 (125 attendees)
- October 2017 (50 attendees)
- April 2018 (81 attendees)
- May & June 2019 (250 attendees)
- Dec. 2019 (48 attendees)



Property Owner Meetings (9)

Presentations

- Nine NA visits (169 attendees)
- Wednesday Market x 2 (51 contacts)
- Civic Groups x 5 (160 attendees)

Space



Tourist Center



Concert/Performance Venue



Destination Hotel/Lodging



WLWF Project Community Engagement



Engagement 2023-2025

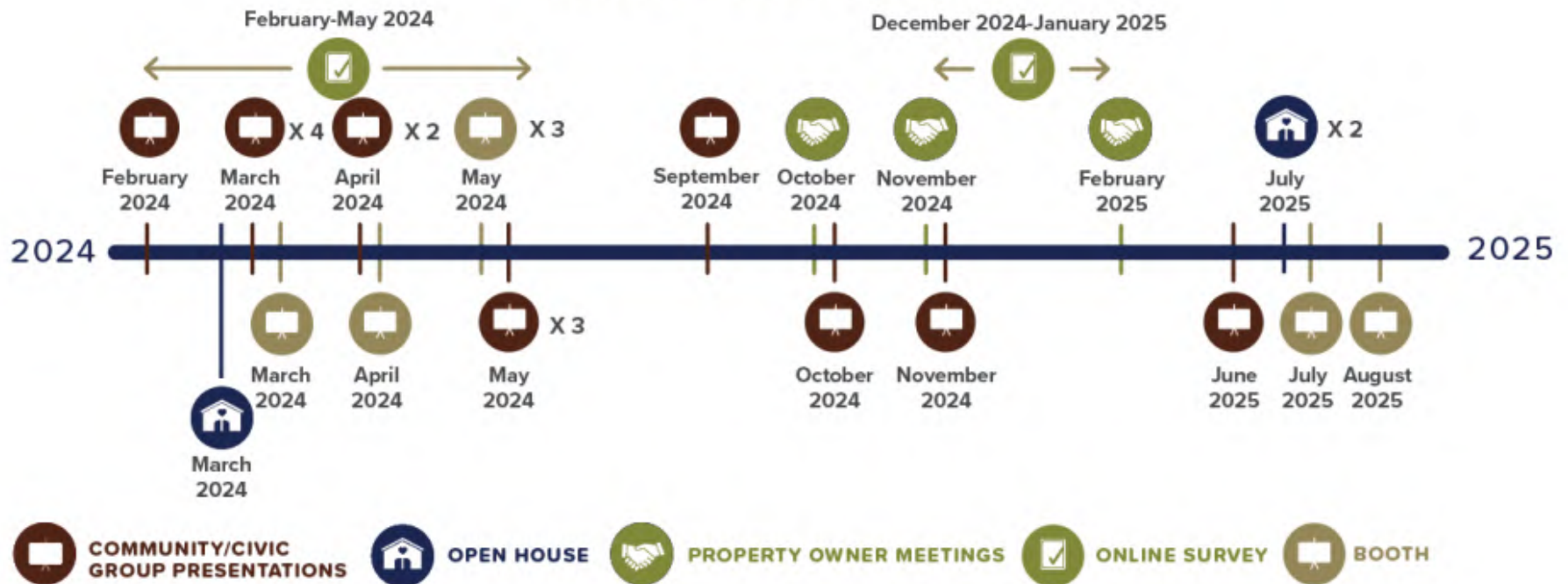
- Draft Vision Plan (Jan. 2024)
 - Public Events
 - Civic Group Meetings
 - Online Survey
 - Working Group Meetings
- Updated Vision Plan (Sept. 2024)
 - Public Events
 - Civic Group Meetings
 - Stakeholder Interviews
 - Property Owner Feedback
 - Working Group Meeting
- Final Draft Vision Plan (Dec. 2024)
 - Online Survey
 - Civic Group Meetings
 - Working Group Meeting



WLWF Project Community Engagement



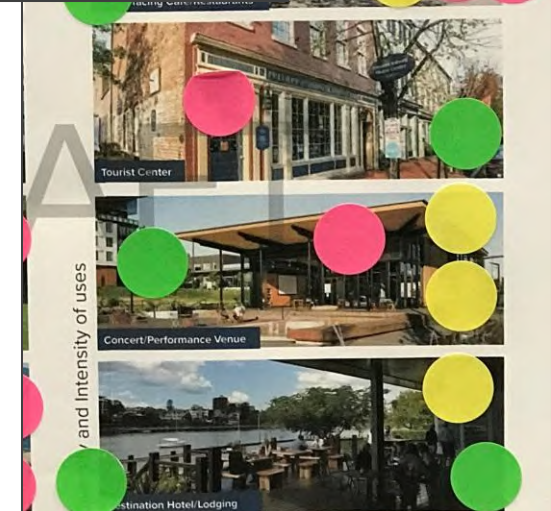
2024-2025 VISION PLAN ENGAGEMENT





WLWF Project Community Engagement 2024 to 2025

- 🍃 Open House March 2024
 - Draft Vision Plan
 - 100+ Attendees
- 🍃 Waterfront Website
 - 3,200 Visits (Jan-June 2024)
- 🍃 Online Survey
 - 573 Responses
 - 64% Not Engaged Previously
- 🍃 10 Presentations (Jan-June 2024)
- 🍃 Tabling Events (8)
- 🍃 Property Owner Meetings
- 🍃 Open Houses July 2025
 - Final Vision Plan
 - ~40 Attendees





- 🍃 Final Vision Plan (June 2025)
 - Final clean-up of text
 - Minor wording changes
- 🍃 Working Group Recommendation – Move Forward to City Council
 - Consider including affordable housing
 - Consider including Smart Growth concepts
 - Access is critical component of project
 - Consider including stronger language for reuse of existing structures
 - Provide additional time for more feedback
 - WG Member Schultz objected – wants more certainty on future use of property
 - WG Member Conf. Tribes of the Grand Ronde did not take a position

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 a 2-year 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 incorporates their thoughts along with property owner interests and an analysis of the area's physical, economic, and regulatory issues to develop a plan for realizing the potential of the Waterfront.

WLWF Vision Plan



- 🍃 Acknowledgements
- 🍃 Introduction
- 🍃 Goals

The goals of the Vision Plan are to:



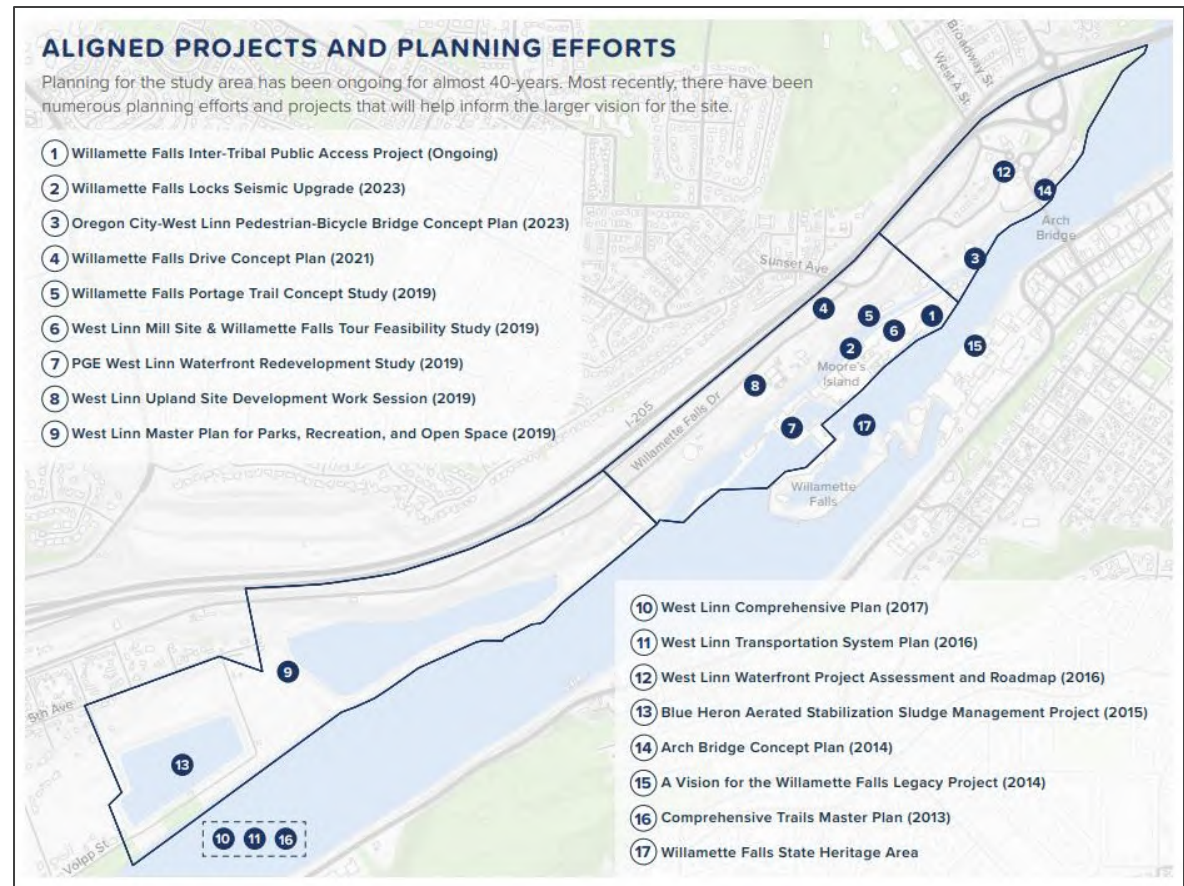
GOALS

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.

WLWF Vision Plan



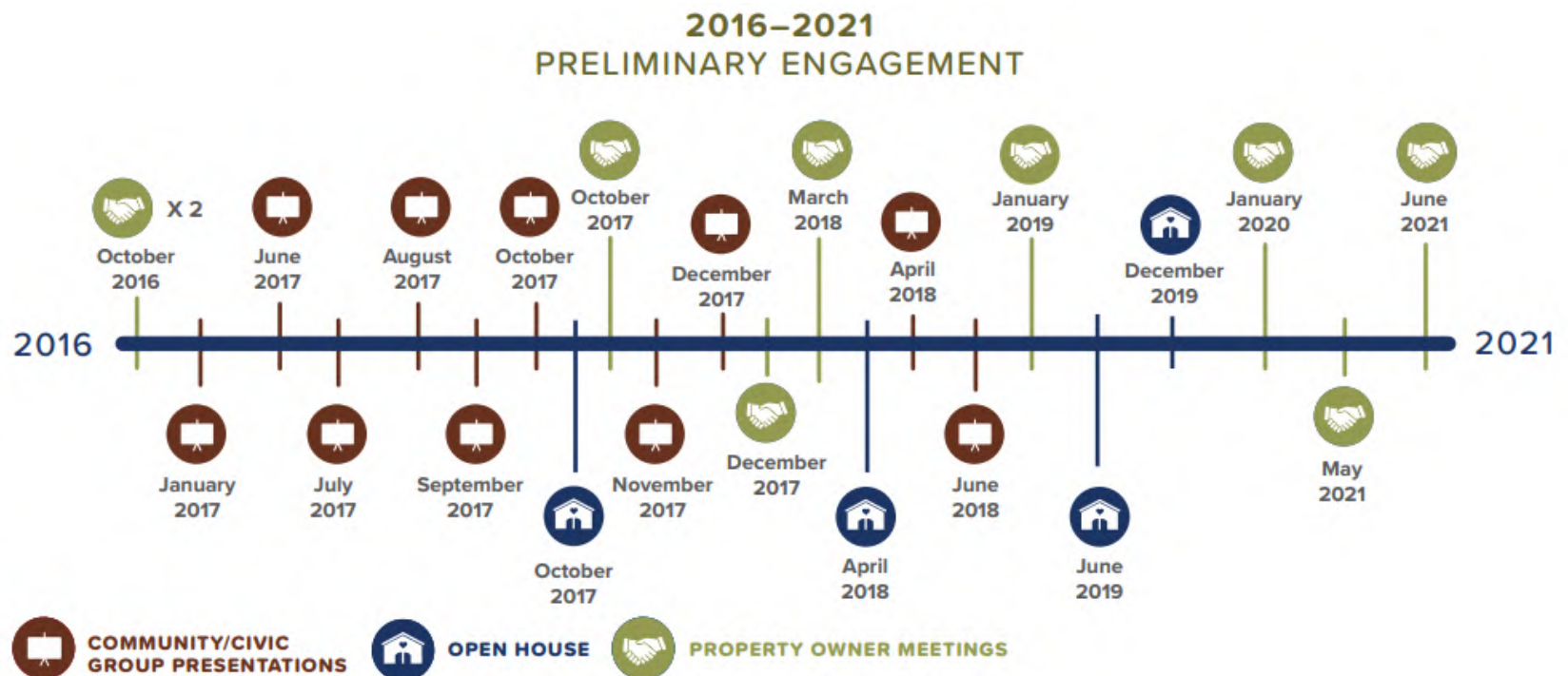
- Process
- Study Area
- Aligned Projects and Planning Efforts



WLWF Vision Plan



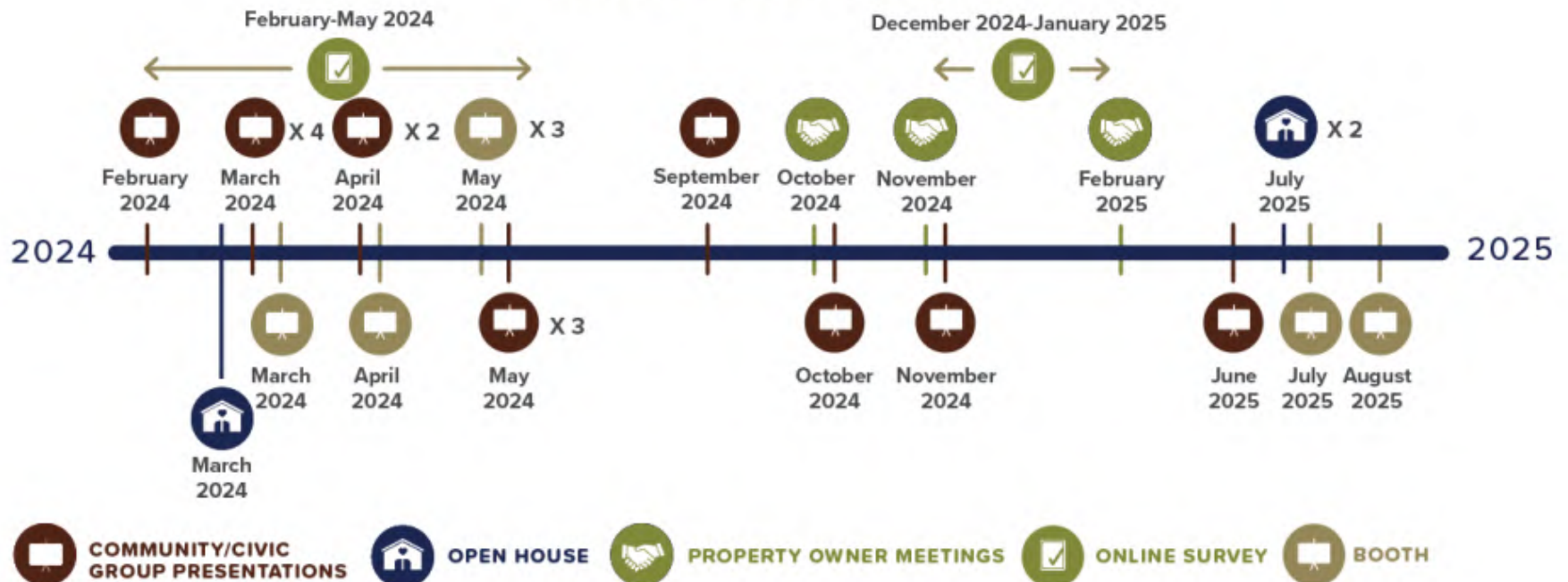
Engagement (more information in Appendix A)



WLWF Vision Plan



2024-2025 VISION PLAN ENGAGEMENT



WLWF Vision Plan



Guiding Principles

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 Moore's Island and electric utility sites.
- Land use decisions support community vision and market principles.
- Set expectations and parameters through zoning and design guidelines.
- Encourage and enable private sector investment to build high quality places.
- Reuse of Historic City Hall as a gateway to the Waterfront area.
- Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of historic structures.
- 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

- Coordinate land use, development, and transportation infrastructure needs.
- Livability and accessibility of nearby neighborhoods.
- Preserve access as needed to support commercial and power generation activities.
- Leverage public funds with private investment for safety and capacity improvements.
- Improved local access through the area.
- Creative solutions for multi-modal improvements including future consideration of regional transit corridors and river transportation.

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.
- Opportunities created by the reopening of the locks to river transportation.

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 Treaties and restore and respect Indigenous traditions along the Willamette River and Falls.
- Collaboration with other regional, state, and local efforts to recognize the history and heritage of the site.
- Collaboration with Willamette Falls Locks Authority to repair and reopen the Locks.
- Support business viability and vitality.
- Maximize economic connections to the Willamette Historic District.

WLWF Vision Plan



- 🍃 Planning Framework
- 🍃 Key Planning Issues
- 🍃 Design Principles
 - Placemaking and Form
 - Mobility and Access
 - Environmental Stewardship

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 and Sunset Neighborhoods.
- Location of bike/pedestrian bridge alignments studied by ODOT.
- 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.
- This area experiences traffic congestion. Changes will need to consider impacts to I-205 and Arch Bridge traffic to/from Oregon City.

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 for site adaptation to commemorate the industrial heritage of 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 align with development and programming on the east side of the river.
- Shoreline adjacent to the locks has limited accessibility to the water.
- Potential connections to bike/pedestrian bridge alignments studied by ODOT.
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) boundary protects power generating resources and public safety. Public access changes require FERC and stakeholder approval.

Pond District:

- Lowest elevation and significant portions of the site are 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 or other protective measures to convert to other uses.
- Provides closest views of the river at the lowest elevation.
- District has limited access and entry points and the existing street network is narrow and lacking sidewalks in many places.
- Current industrial zoning is inconsistent with the local neighborhood and environmental resources.
- Significant funding would be required for property purchase and ecological restoration of settling ponds.

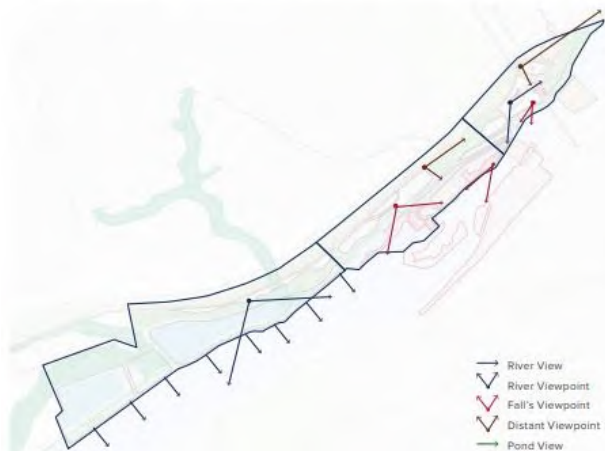
WLWF Vision Plan



Design Principles

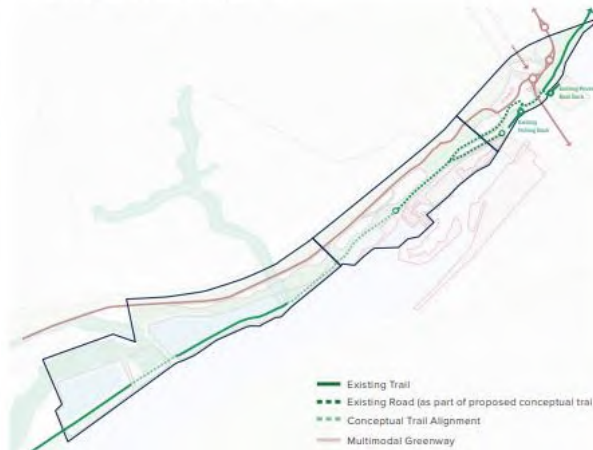
Placemaking and Form

- 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 pathways 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.



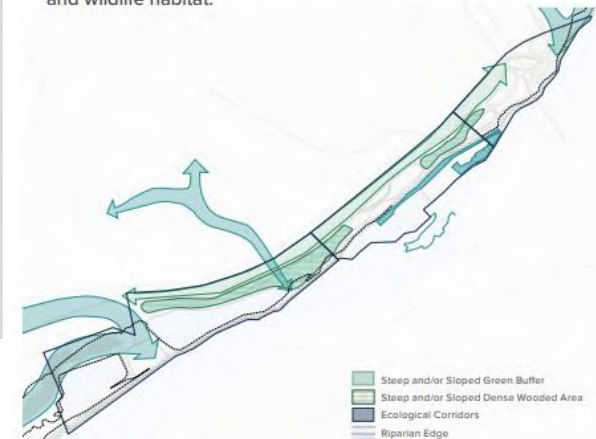
Mobility and Access

- 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.
- Ensure the future street network allows access to critical functions and addresses regional and local traffic concerns.
- Establish shoreline access as integral to the overall circulation network.
- Utilize the opportunities created by the locks being reopened to allow travel up- and downstream of the falls.
- Provide transportation infrastructure that supports land use changes and development.



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 materials where possible.
- Leverage the area between the trail and shoreline as a natural buffer zone to serve as a protective barrier and preserve ecological diversity.
- Balance development with opportunities to restore natural areas and wildlife habitat.





Market Analysis (Opportunities and Challenges)

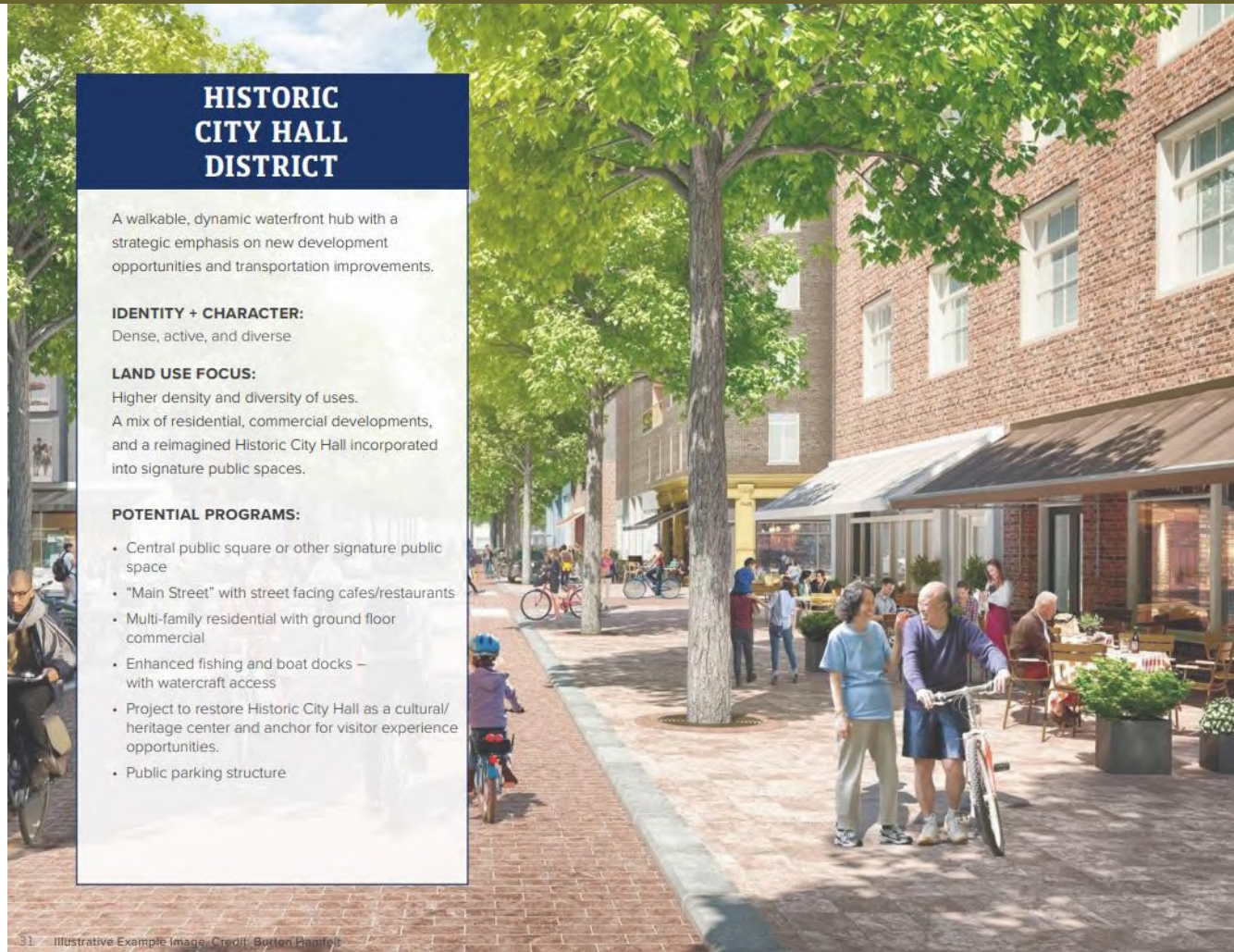
- Housing
- Retail
- Office
- Industrial
- Civic/Institutional
- Hospitality

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.**

WLWF Vision Plan – City Hall District Planning



WLWF Vision Plan – City Hall District Planning



Framework Plan



Public Square / Plaza for Civic Gathering



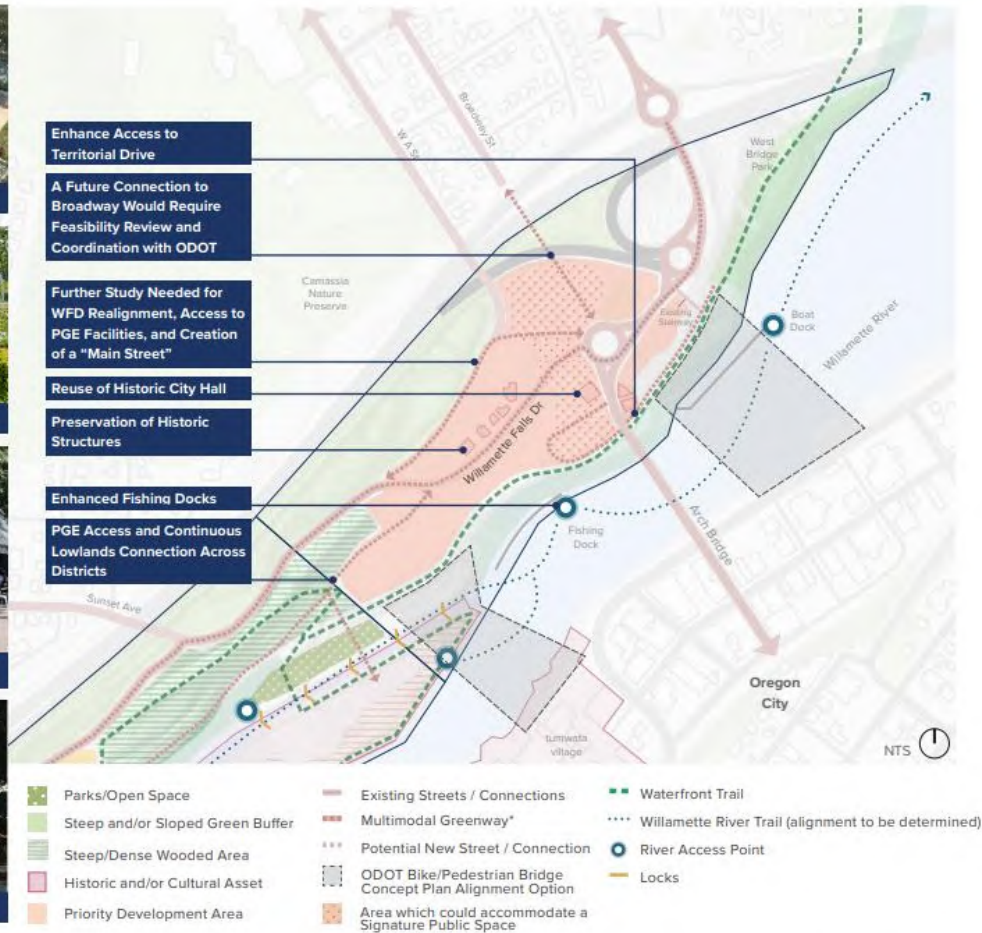
Active Trail Edges



"Main Street" with Street Facing Retail



Public Parking Structure



*Willamette Falls Drive alignment reflects alignment currently adopted in West Linn Transportation System Plan (TSP).
Proposed programs and circulation ideas are conceptual and will require further study and coordination with property owners. Zoning changes may be required to allow for proposed programs / compatible uses.

WLWF Vision Plan – Cultural Heritage District Planning



CULTURAL HERITAGE DISTRICT

Centered on the Falls, this district focuses on elevating Indigenous culture and celebration of the area's industrial heritage.

IDENTITY + CHARACTER:

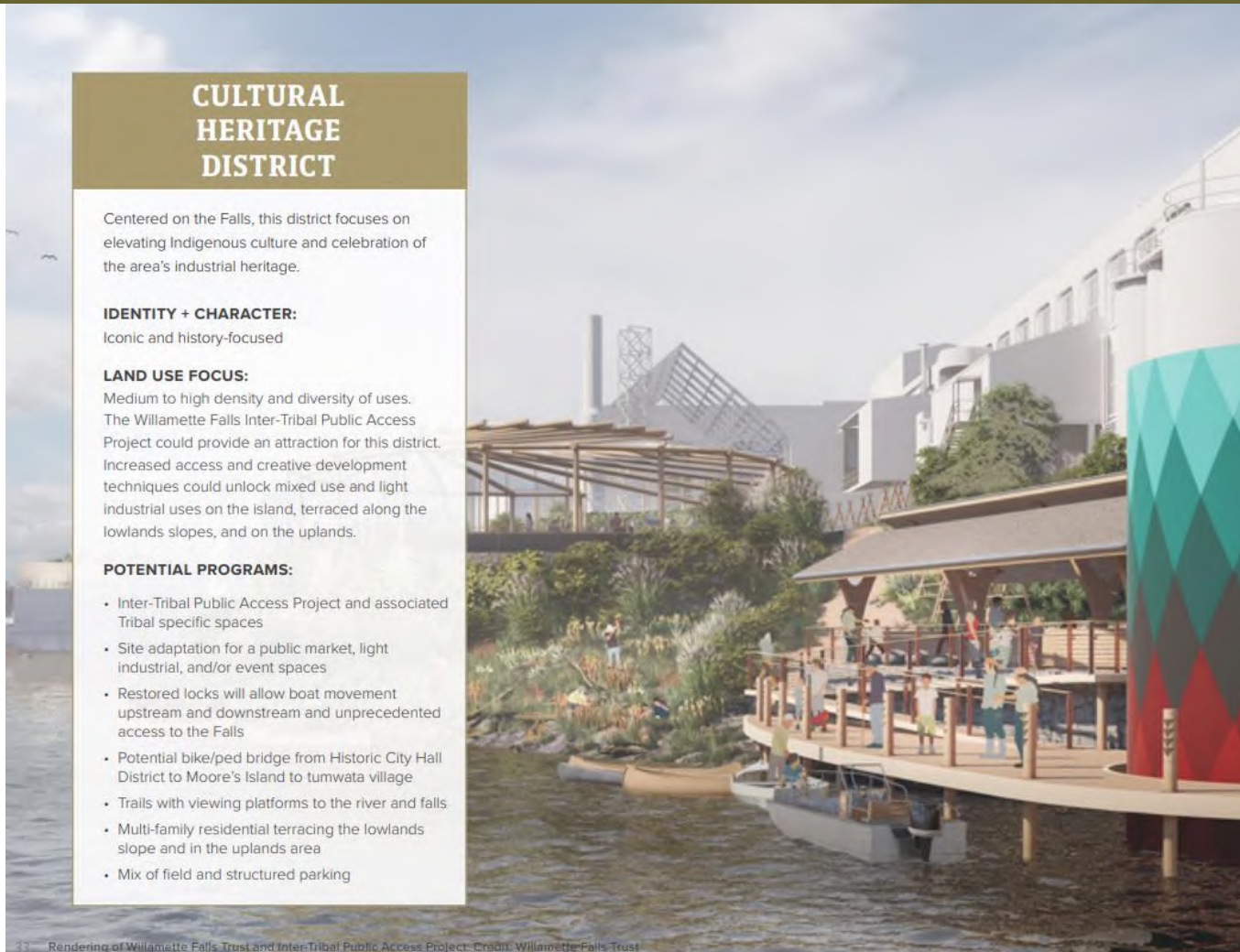
Iconic and history-focused

LAND USE FOCUS:

Medium to high density and diversity of uses. The Willamette Falls Inter-Tribal Public Access Project could provide an attraction for this district. Increased access and creative development techniques could unlock mixed use and light industrial uses on the Island, terraced along the lowlands slopes, and on the uplands.

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS:

- Inter-Tribal Public Access Project and associated Tribal specific spaces
- Site adaptation for a public market, light industrial, and/or event spaces
- Restored locks will allow boat movement upstream and downstream and unprecedented access to the Falls
- Potential bike/ped bridge from Historic City Hall District to Moore's Island to tumwata village
- Trails with viewing platforms to the river and falls
- Multi-family residential terracing the lowlands slope and in the uplands area
- Mix of field and structured parking



37 Rendering of Willamette Falls Trust and Inter-Tribal Public Access Project. Credit: Willamette Falls Trust

WLWF Vision Plan – Cultural Heritage District Planning



Framework Plan



*The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) sets a boundary to secure the power production functions of the T.W. Sullivan hydroelectric plant. There are restrictions on the access and uses allowed within the FERC boundary. Low-impact projects, such as trails, streets, and public access to the shoreline, may be acceptable; however, a more detailed assessment in consultation with FERC and PGE will be required.

**Willamette Falls Drive alignment reflects alignment currently adopted in West Linn Transportation System Plan (TSP).

Proposed programs and circulation ideas are conceptual and will require further study and coordination with property owners. Zoning changes may be required to allow for proposed programs / compatible uses.

WLWF Vision Plan – Pond District Planning



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:

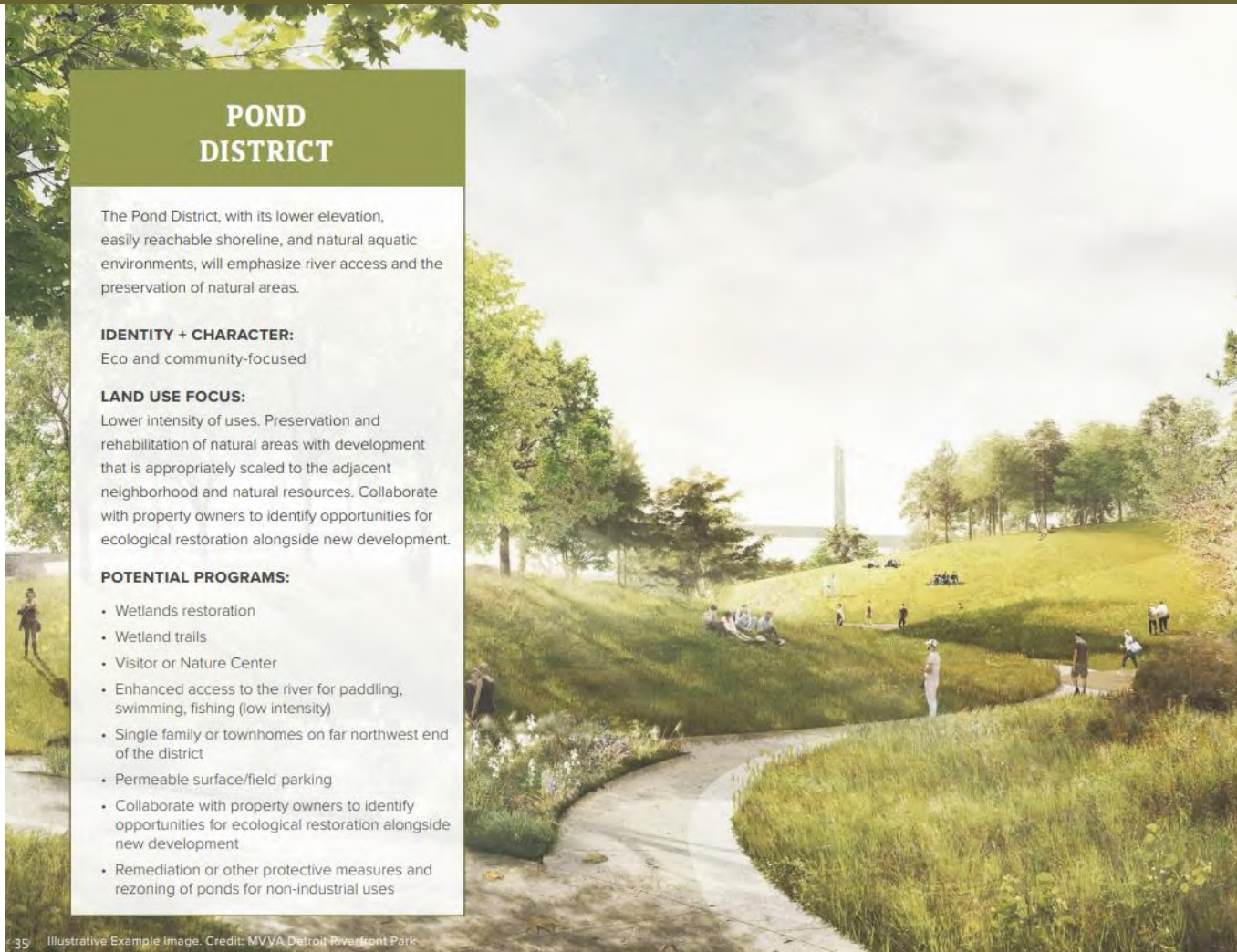
Eco and community-focused

LAND USE FOCUS:

Lower intensity of uses. Preservation and rehabilitation of natural areas with development that is appropriately scaled to the adjacent neighborhood and natural resources. Collaborate with property owners to identify opportunities for ecological restoration alongside new 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 the district
- Permeable surface/field parking
- Collaborate with property owners to identify opportunities for ecological restoration alongside new development
- Remediation or other protective measures and rezoning of ponds for non-industrial uses

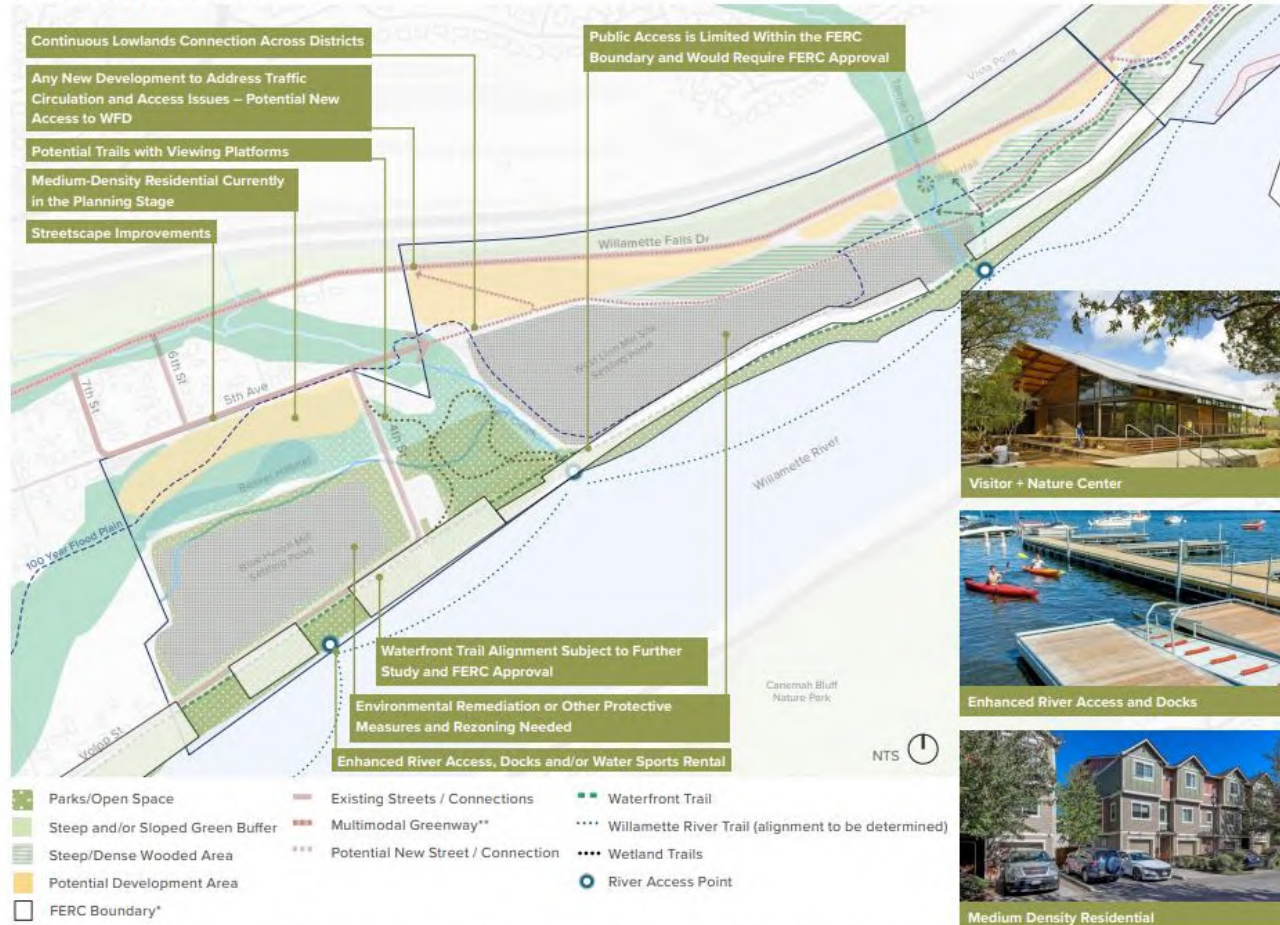


35 Illustrative Example Image. Credit: MVVA Detroit Riverfront Park

WLWF Vision Plan – Pond District Planning



Framework Plan



*The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) sets a boundary to secure the power production functions of the T.W. Sullivan hydroelectric plant. There are restrictions on the access and uses allowed within the FERC boundary. Low-impact projects, such as trails, streets, and public access to the shoreline, may be acceptable; however, a more detailed assessment in consultation with FERC and PGE will be required.

**Willamette Falls Drive alignment reflects alignment currently adopted in West Linn Transportation System Plan (TSP).

Proposed programs and circulation ideas are conceptual and will require further study and coordination with property owners. Zoning changes may be required to allow for proposed programs / compatible uses.



WLWF Vision Plan – Housing Density + Parking

<10 UNITS PER NET ACRE

Typologies with densities below 10 units per acre result in an inefficient use of land, given the cost of development and are **likely not appropriate for the Waterfront**. These developments often require large areas of surface parking.



2124 Eleanor Road
Detached Single Family

City: West Linn	State: OR
Units: 1	Year Built: U/C (2025)
Acres: 0.17	Du/acre: 6
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 2



19th and Graf Apartment Homes
Low-Rise Garden Apartments

City: Bozeman	State: MT
Units: 195	Year Built: 2023
Acres: 26.30	Du/acre: 7
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 3



Greenwood Avenue Cottages
Cottage Cluster

City: Shoreline	State: WA
Units: 8	Year Built: 2001
Acres: 0.78	Du/acre: 10
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 2

10-30 UNITS PER ACRE

Housing densities and typologies that can accommodate between 10-30 units per acre are well-suited for the **Pond District** and balance an efficient layout with the preservation of a strong residential character. Garage, tuck-under, and clustered surface parking are common for these development types.



Minnehaha Meadows
Low-Rise Townhomes

City: Vancouver	State: WA
Units: 49	Year Built: 2020
Acres: 4.24	Du/acre: 12
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 2



Meritage at Mill Creek
Garage-Parked Townhomes

City: Mill Creek	State: WA
Units: 24	Year Built: 2009
Acres: 0.86	Du/acre: 28
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 3
Parking: Garage (front)	Parking Ratio: 1/unit



Canemah Cottages
Cottage Cluster

City: Oregon City	State: OR
Units: 7	Year Built: 2023
Acres: 0.46	Du/acre: 15
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 2



WLWF Vision Plan – Housing Density + Parking

>30 UNITS PER ACRE

Housing densities and typologies that can accommodate over 30 units per acre are well-suited for the **Historic City Hall and Cultural Heritage District**, efficiently utilizing space while incorporating paired programming to support a mix of uses and residential development. Structured, tuck-under, and concealed parking courtyards may be appropriate for these development types.



Abernethy Flats

Mixed Use: Housing over Retail

City: Portland	State: OR
Units: 35	Year Built: 2019
Acres: 0.23	Du/acre: 152
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 4



1719 N 185th Street

Housing over Parking

City: Shoreline	State: WA
Units: 12	Year Built: 2021
Acres: 0.16	Du/acre: 75
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 3



SE 11th & Tenino Apartments

Low-Rise Apartments

City: Portland	State: OR
Units: 38	Year Built: 2023
Acres: 0.23	Du/acre: 165
Construction: Wood Frame	Stories: 3

WLWF Vision Plan



Planning Commission Work Sessions

- July 16th
 - Public Comments
 - Review of Vision Plan
- August 20th
 - Comment Response Matrix
 - Additional Public Comment
 - Appendix C – Implementation Memos

Planning Commission Public Hearing

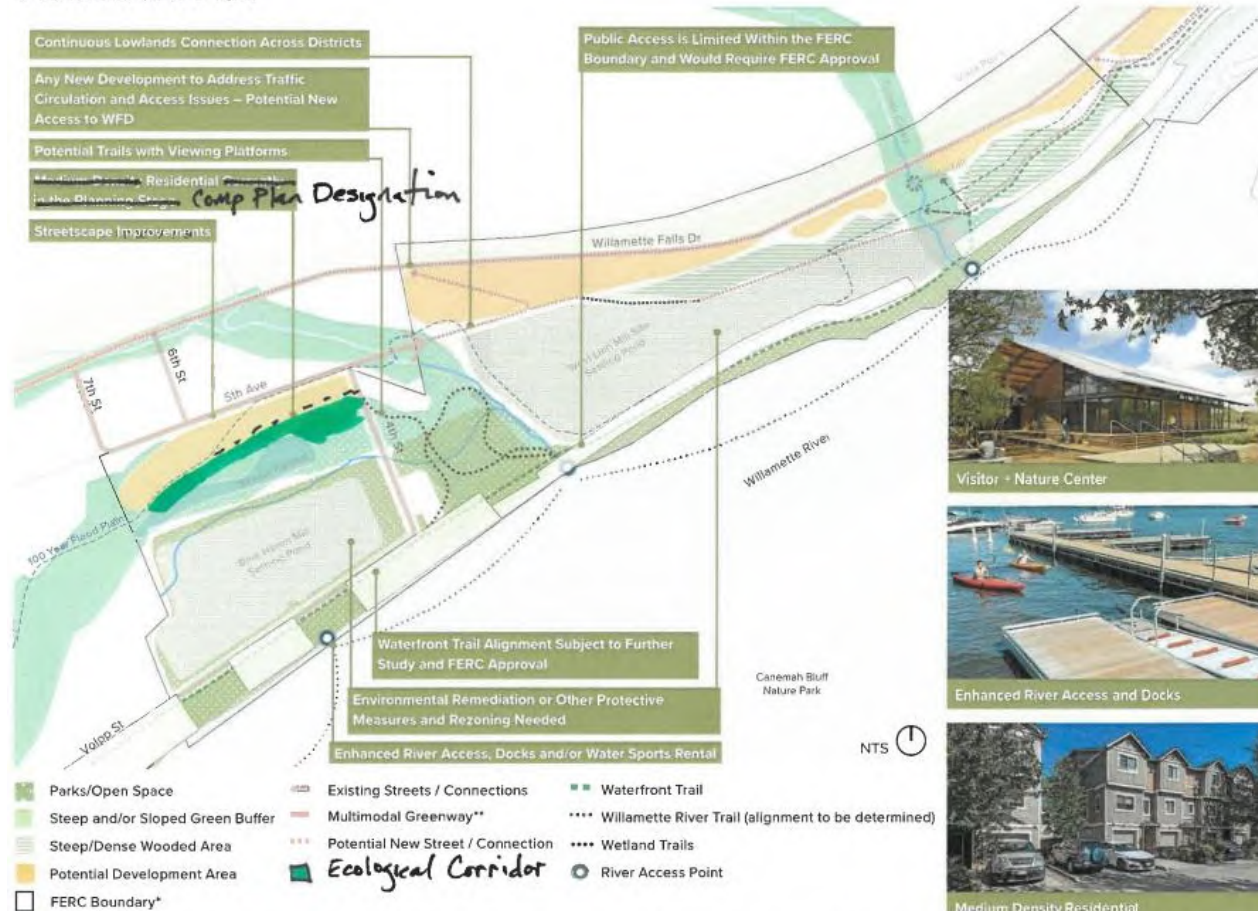
- September 17th
 - Additional Public Comment
 - Final Review/Recommendation



Potential PC Recommendations



Framework Plan



*The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) sets a boundary to secure the power production functions of the T.W. Sullivan hydroelectric plant. There are restrictions on the access and uses allowed within the FERC boundary. Low-impact projects, such as trails, streets, and public access to the shoreline, may be acceptable; however, a more detailed assessment in consultation with FERC and PGE will be required.

**Willamette Falls Drive alignment reflects alignment currently adopted in West Linn Transportation System Plan (TSP).

Proposed programs and circulation ideas are conceptual and will require further study and coordination with property owners. Zoning changes may be required to allow for proposed programs / compatible uses.

36

WLWF Vision Plan



Potential Recommendations

- Use the 1996 Flood Elevation on maps to better correspond to the 75-foot special flood hazard area elevation (100-year floodplain)
- Remove “in planning stages” from the medium-density residential area in the Ponds District
- Update map legends

City Council Schedule

- Work Sessions Oct. 7th and 21st
- Public Hearing November/December (tentative)





QUESTIONS OF STAFF?



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☒ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

VISION PLAN FINAL DRAFT

☐ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☐ In Support

☒ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: DAN BUTLER

Name of Organization (if applicable): ADVOCATES FOR COLUMBIETTE FALLS HERITAGE

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (optional): _____



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☐ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

☒ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☒ In Support *with needed modifications* ☐ Neither for nor against ☐ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support ☐ Neither for nor against ☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: Russ Axelrod

Name of Organization (if applicable): _____

Address: 19648 Wildwood Drive

City: West Linn State OR Zip 97068

Email (optional): raxelrod@yahoo.com



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☐ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

☒ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☒ **In Support**

*With needed
modifications*

☐ **Neither for nor against**

☒ **In Opposition**

*Requesting a change to the
draft plan*

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ **In Support**

☐ **Neither for nor against**

☐ **In Opposition**

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: Nicole Jackson

Name of Organization (if applicable): Friends of Willamette Wetlands

Address: 5185 Linn Lane

City: West Linn State OR Zip 97068

Email (optional): _____



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☒ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

Waterfront Vision Plan

☐ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☒ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: DAN KRAUS

Name of Organization (if applicable): FOWW

Address: 25633 Cheryl Drive

City: West Linn State: OR Zip: 97068

Email (optional): _____



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☒ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

☒ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☒ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: TERENCE STORMAKSEN

Name of Organization (if applicable): FDWW

Address: 25430 SWIFT SHORE DR.

City: WL State OR Zip 97068

Email (optional): _____



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☐ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (*required*):

☒ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☒ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: Jim Edwards

Name of Organization (if applicable): Member Working group

Address: 19890 Bellevue Way

City: West Linn State OR Zip 97068

Email (optional): jmedwards pdx@outlook.com



CITY OF
West Linn

Planning Commission Request to Speak

Any information provided may be considered a public record and subject to disclosure.

☒ I request to speak during **General Public Comments** – (3 minutes). Please specify topic (required):
Historic District vision - waterfront Plan draft

☒ I request to testify on: **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council on Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan** (not a land use hearing) (5 minutes for all speakers).

☐ In Support

☒ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

☐ I do not wish to speak however; I would like to state my position on **PLN-25-01: Recommendation to City Council concerning the Adoption of the West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan**:

☐ In Support

☐ Neither for nor against

☐ In Opposition

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL DECISION NOTIFICATION. PLEASE PRINT:

Name: SANDY CARTER

Name of Organization (if applicable): ADVOCATES FOR W.F. HERITAGE

Address: 13505 SE. River Rd, #247 Portland OR 97222

City: Portland

State

OR

Zip

97222

Email (optional): Sandy.carter@wordcount.biz

West Linn Waterfront Vision Plan final draft

May 1, 2025

In the opinion of the Advocates for Willamette Falls Heritage, the West Linn Waterfront Vision Final Plan should offer space on Moore's Island for indigenous peoples' stories and for its still-visible artifacts and solid architectural features: buildings representing the grand scale of former and present industry along the Willamette Falls Locks. The latest version of the Plan—which could have created a real, long-term legacy for the City's future—is quietly moving away from some important stories and aspects. In planning this amazing area, corporate and tribal neighbors' influence should not overshadow the heritage, interests and voices of West Linn residents. This planning process is for the present and future citizens of West Linn. It covers about 275 acres of natural beauty and bank-side history. Its purpose is to determine as best we can, with current knowledge, the brightest and best future for our waterfront, including how we will present our proud histories and love of place to the region and the State over the next five decades and beyond. It must embrace more, not less, of what the site has to tell future generations.

The Advocates is a group of local heritage supporters, most of whom are long-time West Linn residents. We value all history for the lessons it teaches us. We are dismayed to see the impending final product of the vision significantly scrubbed of references to preserving visible history through substantial reuse, which had been in previous versions. Such reuse could shine new light on the 200 years of industrial heritage that this district surrounding the Locks can share. Without doubt, the Falls area is rich in the heritage of indigenous people, but it was also the birthplace of industry and invention in the Oregon Territory.

This vision should not only celebrate the natural beauty of the Falls and the River—encouraging public viewing and access to both—but should include space for storytelling and seeing what both major cultures brought to the Falls area. The vision should boost the many possibilities of this dynamic place, soon to be highlighted again by the reopening of the iconic Locks. Instead, we are presented with a vision that scarcely mentions industrial firsts and the thousands of mill jobs that for decades provided employment for most of West Linn residents.

Somehow the more than two years of Advocates' extensive written feedback and significant participation in this planning process have not successfully been retained in the final version of this vision, which would have elevated adaptive reuse and industrial heritage and introduced some real vision and imagination into the final product. And yet it includes a tribal artists' concept showing an imaginary restaurant at low-water level that would block the entrance to the Locks and be swept away by winter's high waters. How that sketch made it into the vision is hard to imagine.

The Falls horseshoe looms above a deep canyon framed by the Arch Bridge and

visible for miles up and down river. The reach of the viewscape is unequaled at other historic American mill sites on rivers.

Massive foundations, muscular industrial towers and a sturdy sea wall still stand alongside the waterfall, demanding a discussion of adaptive reuse in this vision. It's easy to imagine dramatic future uses in creative development concepts. But there is little imagination in the vision. We need to respect and honor all histories to get this vision right. The vast sweep of indigenous settlement and trade and the industrial artifacts and histories at the Falls deserve a future that truly highlights the meaning and values of this special place. We can and must do better for the area where West Linn began.

Advocates for Willamette Falls Heritage

Troy Bowers
President

Board Members
Jim Mattis
Sandy Carter
Jody Carson
Alma Coston
Nancy Craushaar
Jim Edwards
David Taylor
Jeff Jones
Dan Butler
Aurelia Rohrbacker
Betty Folmbee

September 17, 2025

To: Planning Commission

From: Jim Edwards member of the Waterfront working group

The current version of the vision plan is much improved from the first version. I want to commend the staff and consultants for their work.

However, the current version of the plan is inadequate in two substantial elements.

1. Vision plan without a dramatic vision.

- **This is not a short-term plan nor just for the next 50 years. Whatever happens on this 275 acres will probably define it forever.**
- **Too much emphasis has been given on what is considered financially feasible.**
- **Too much emphasis has been given to current transportation conditions. The future may include light rail access and river transportation.**
- **Examples of housing types are ordinary, even boring.**

2. The plan does not explicitly encourage taking advantage of existing historic buildings or substructures or major industrial structures like bridges etc.

- **It does not assume or encourage explicitly any reuse of existing buildings or structures**
- **Heavy concrete and stone structures provide opportunities to build on or within very interesting walls.**
- **I have been told by staff that the use of the term “site adaptation” in the vision plan, is intended by the staff, to refer to reuse or conversion, is wholly without definition, and in my opinion meaning. It should be replaced by the phrase “encourage reuse and conversion of buildings and other substantial structures and foundations”.**

