

Memorandum

Date: June 11, 2026

To: West Linn Planning Commission

From: Darren Wyss, Principal Planner

Subject: VISION43 Project Briefing

At its June 17, 2026 meeting, the Planning Commission will receive a briefing on the status of the VISION43 project. The briefing will include the process and timeline to adopt the Corridor Vision Plan and associated West Linn Community Development Code (CDC) amendments to implement the vision. The adoption process is legislative, so the Planning Commission role will be to make a recommendation to City Council.

Background and Discussion

The [VISION43 Project](#) will develop a preferred community vision plan for the commercial areas along Highway 43 and the framework to implement that vision. The focus of the project was to reimagine Highway 43 to prioritize a safe and accessible environment for people to comfortably walk, bike, and roll, enhance connections and access to neighborhoods and surrounding areas, and develop the corridor to serve as a hub for living, working, and recreational activities, featuring a mix of housing, shopping, restaurants, and recreational spaces.

The VISION43 Project kicked off in 2023 and involved robust community engagement to help inform the project Vision and Goals, which provide guidance for the recommendations in the Corridor Vision Plan and proposed CDC amendments. Engagement activities included an online survey, pop-up and community workshop events, Project Working Group and Technical Advisory Group meetings, and Planning Commission/City Council feedback.

Project Vision

Our vision is to enrich the Highway 43 corridor, infusing it with a distinct sense of place and local identity, turning it into a cherished destination. The Corridor will seamlessly integrate activity centers, or “focus areas” with surrounding neighborhoods and the whole community, thereby serving as a cohesive asset that binds the region together and draws in opportunities for people to live, work, and play. All community members and visitors are safe and comfortable in the Highway 43 Corridor. The area will harness a variety of efficient transportation and land use patterns to help us create a vibrant, sustainable corridor that is climate friendly and reflects the community’s values. Through collaborative efforts, we aspire to shape a corridor that embodies the spirit and essence of our community, becoming a beloved destination for all.

Project Goals

SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Prioritize a safe and accessible environment for people to comfortably walk, bike, and roll. Encourage development patterns that give people a variety of safe options to move within the corridor and enhance connections and access to neighborhoods and surrounding areas.

INTEGRATED SPACES AND DESIGN

Integrate the Corridor with surrounding neighborhoods, parks, trails, and the rest of the community. Thoughtfully incorporate landscaping, green spaces, sidewalks and pathways, and other amenities (e.g., lighting, benches, and similar features) to improve local environmental sustainability and to enhance the appearance and vitality of the Corridor. Develop an exciting and compelling environment that promotes beautification and fosters a cohesive, attractive corridor. Leverage proximity to existing community assets such as parks, trails, neighborhoods, and enhance connectivity to the waterfront. Enhance connections within and between the focus areas and activity centers along the Corridor that promotes sustainable and climate friendly development patterns. Prioritize active and engaging design and avoid development patterns that are incompatible with walking and biking.

COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES

Develop a corridor that serves as a hub for living, working, and recreational activities, featuring a mix of housing, shopping, restaurants, and recreational spaces. Transform the corridor into a dynamic, multi-functional community asset, aiming to become an inviting destination rather than just a thoroughfare. Design spaces and focus areas to be walkable and desirable, offering diverse dining and shopping options, recreational facilities, and community amenities, fostering a sense of place that is unique to West Linn.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Leverage mixed-use development opportunities to foster economic growth and vitality, particularly for the Corridor's focus areas. Prioritize the integration of commercial, residential, and recreational spaces to create a vibrant and diverse environment. Encourage the development of mixed-use properties that cater to the needs of residents, workers, and visitors alike. Foster a dynamic ecosystem that supports local businesses, creates job opportunities, and enhances the overall quality of life.

FUNCTIONAL CORRIDOR AND SPACES

Transform the corridor so that it is functional and efficiently serves the needs of the community. Prioritize land use strategies that optimize functionality, accessibility, and efficiency along the corridor. Ensure a balanced mix of land uses that support the community's needs. Identify transportation improvements to enhance connectivity, accessibility, and safety.

Engagement Activities

A wide range of West Linn community members and stakeholders shared their perspectives and input about the process through a variety of community engagement activities. This collaborative process among the community, City staff and decisionmakers, stakeholders, and consultants helped ensure that the project team considered and understood multiple points of

view. These engagement efforts provided guidance throughout the course of the project, and they were instrumental in developing the project Vision and Goals and informing proposed CDC amendments and bicycle/pedestrian improvements. The following are examples of engagement activities:

PROJECT WORK GROUP (PWG) AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

The PWG members listened to the community's backgrounds, viewpoints, and interests and served as a sounding board for project recommendations and outcomes. The PWG included representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, Robinwood and Bolton Neighborhood Associations, local business owners and other community members. The PWG was instrumental in identifying local needs and shaping the project Vision and Goals. The PWG also provided critical feedback on the mixed-use zone and transportation improvement recommendations. This was especially beneficial in informing the draft Code language.

The TAG provided key guidance and local expertise in policy, land use, and transportation for the project. TAG members included representatives from the City Engineering Department, West Linn School District, Metro, Clackamas County, TriMet, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), and officials from the City of Lake Oswego and Oregon City who have successfully completed similar projects.

CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION BRIEFINGS

The project team held joint work sessions with the City Council and Planning Commission to provide important direction at key points in the project. The project team also took the City Council and Planning Commission on two "field trips" along the corridor and to locations in Lake Oswego that may serve as a model for how Highway 43 can evolve.

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEYS

The City hosted three online surveys to gather community feedback on corridor needs, opportunities, and preliminary recommendations. These surveys generally corresponded with key project tasks, including the project "kickoff" to assess current needs and opportunities, the development of the project Vision and Goals, and the Corridor development/design concepts.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES AND WORKSHOPS

The City hosted and facilitated multiple open houses and workshops to share information and background on the project and gather feedback on corridor needs and recommendations. These included public meetings, open houses coordinated with the Robinwood and Bolton Neighborhood Associations, and an open house targeted to renters in the corridor.

POP-UP PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

To attract a larger audience beyond the usual participants, City staff conducted "pop-up" outreach activities to share project information and solicit feedback. These occurred at key locations throughout the community, including businesses, gathering places (e.g., Robinwood Park, Robinwood Station Community Center, churches, major grocery stores, etc.), and major community events. The pop-up engagement was integral for introducing the project to a wide

range of West Linn residents. Input received at pop-up engagement events also helped City staff understand the community's desires and/or concerns for the Highway43 corridor, which ultimately helped to inform various project recommendations.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

City staff provided project briefings to Bolton and Robinwood Neighborhood Associations multiple times throughout the project. Staff also gathered feedback from these meetings related to key concerns or suggestions or opportunities for the future of the corridor. The input at these meetings helped inform the project team's strategies, messaging, and overall recommendations at various stages throughout the project.

Proposed CDC Amendments

The purpose of CDC amendments is to provide more flexibility than the current General Commercial (GC) zoning designation. Some of changes that will be the primary focus of future work sessions with Planning Commission include:

Permitted and Conditional Uses

- New development with drive-through services are proposed to be Conditional Uses
- Multi-Unit Residential development will be permitted on properties that are two-acres or less
- Multi-Unit Residential development will be permitted in conjunction with commercial on properties that are greater than two-acres

Maximum Building Height

- Existing 45-foot height maximum and 35-foot height maximum within 50-feet of residential zoning will be maintained
- Maximum height will be increased to 65-feet (to accommodate 4 over 1 buildings) on selected properties along the corridor where there is limited impact to residential properties

Maximum Lot Cover and Minimum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

- Remove 50 percent maximum lot cover requirement
- Include minimum FAR of 0.50

First Floor Occupancy

- Allow residential use to occupy 75 percent of floor space along Highway 43

Existing Development and Non-Conforming Uses

- Allow expansion of existing development and non-conforming uses under the provisions of the GC zoning. Once GC provisions can no longer be met (lot cover, setbacks, design standards), any new development must meet the new code provisions.

Non-Conforming Uses

- Create new code provision to allow reinstatement of a non-conforming use via approval by the Planning Commission

Legislative Adoption Timeline

The tentative schedule to bring the Corridor Vision Plan and CDC amendments through the adoption phase include:

- Final Draft Documents – June/July 2026
- Final Community Review/Feedback – August 2026
- Planning Commission Work Sessions/Public Hearing – Autumn 2026
- City Council Work Sessions/Public Hearing – Winter 2026-27

If you have any questions about the project or the materials, please reach out me at dwyss@westlinnoregon.gov or 503-742-6064.