


**City of West Linn  
PLANNING & BUILDING DEPT.  
MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** City of West Linn Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Chris Kerr, Senior Planner   
**DATE:** July 9, 2008  
**SUBJECT:** Imagine West Linn Update 2008

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Please find attached for your review a revised "Imagine West Linn Update: Draft - July 2008" document as well as a Memorandum dated May 27<sup>th</sup> from Scot Siegel addressed to me that details the project. As you may recall, at the June 2nd City Council/Planning Commission joint worksession, the consultant presented a working draft of the document and received comments from those in attendance. The Council requested that the revised draft be brought back to the Planning Commission for their review and comment.

The attached July 2008 Draft is a refinement of the previous working draft and includes the recommendations made at the Worksession by both the Councilors and Commissioners.

Please provide Staff with any comments or additional recommendations to be forwarded to the Council. This item is tentatively scheduled for the August 11, 2008 City Council meeting.

attachments



CITY OF  
**West  
Linn**

*Imagine West Linn Update  
Draft – July 2008*

**WEST LINN CITY COUNCIL**

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**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 the inevitably lie 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 will continue to grow at about two percent (2%) 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 increase from 1.5 million to 2.7 million persons for an annual growth rate of about one percent (1%).
- The growing population will be comprised of peoples with a diversity of backgrounds. This diversity will enrich our region but also place increased demands and needs for a wide 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.

### ***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 affects 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.
- 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.

## **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. 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. 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 is a vision of what West Linn could look like in forty years if we choose to accept a different course and guide the changes.

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 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. The City has taken a proactive stance in managing growth and ensuring land use decisions are made in a cautious and well planned manner. West Linn has played 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.

Reuse of the former paper mill site has followed a well-defined master plan that was created through a participatory process with the property owner, City government, and the neighborhood. The site contains a collection of 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, Tanner Basin, and Savanna Oaks 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.

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 was improved only to three lanes its entire length through the City, complimented by an inter city jitney service which links West Linn with the regional bus and rail lines. 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 sustainable development practices, including but not limited to, the riverfront redevelopment. The area of

the paper mill reflection ponds has been redeveloped 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 composed 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. Our elected officials receive a stipend for their service; this helps promote a diverse City Council, where income level is not a barrier to public service.

The City government operates under a Code of Public Involvement, whereby government officials, staff, community groups and citizens participate under adopted principles of behavior. The 'win/lose' product of the public hearing process has been replaced by a roundtable negotiation process where 'win/win' solutions are commonplace. Here a give and take can occur between 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 and developing 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 new 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 has been 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 has been 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, work programs, etc. based on identified needs and resources. Senior citizens serve as mentors and role models for adolescents. Through volunteerism, human service needs are being met, in part, without increased cost and programs 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. A secondary role is to serve double-duty as neighborhood centers that complement the local community centers established to provide ample areas for recreation, culture, and the arts for all ages.

Strong demand for arts and cultural activities and facilities has resulted in the development of alternative sources of financial support. This has resulted in 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 the 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. These opportunities have been increased to the point where 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 have become a permanent element of the community's public facilities such as at the schools, parks, library, and neighborhood and community centers. Recognizing 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 esplanade, 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 the “young-old” (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, managing youth community projects, and more.
- 10 Pursue establishing a local jitney transit system that will maintain 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 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 respond to a reduced need for square footage in homes due to an aging population and lifestyle preferences.
- 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 green building practices (e.g., energy efficiency, resource conservation, housing choices, pollution prevention, indoor environmental quality, innovation in design, etc.) and implement the *Sustainable West Linn Strategic Plan*.
- 7 Consider adopting land use policy and code amendments supporting an incentive-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 The City should continually review and update its regulations, as needed, to assure they help facilitate and protect home occupations while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.
- 4 The City should 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.
- 6 Implement the recommendations of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Task Force.
- 7 Maintain a conservative sign code to protect community character and aesthetics.
- 8 Enforce landscape standards for arterials and commercial centers.

## **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.
- 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 Museum.

## **Recreation Action Items**

- 1 The City should 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 new landscaping projects 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, 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 Establish neighborhood centers featuring public plazas, meeting rooms, and more.
- 3 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.
- 4 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 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.

### **Transportation Action Items**

- 1 Review and update the City's street standards, consistent with sustainable development practices.
- 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 Lake Oswego and Portland as those communities pursue enhanced bus 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 to help interconnect City 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, such growth is highly likely. How we manage growth is key. Whatever growth takes place, there should be assurances that growth is in fact sustainable – i.e., 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**

- Save energy (see the “12 Easy First Steps for Businesses/Offices” in Appendix E for ideas to reduce energy associated with buildings and transportation).
- Assess the sustainability of your practices, inventory your 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 your 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**

- Save energy (see the ‘Top 10 Things Citizens Can Do’ in the Appendix for ideas to reduce energy consumption in buildings and driving your car).
- 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 into leaders that foster trust, respect, courage and honor.

### **Community Institutions Action Items**

- 1 Maintain inter-agency agreements between city government, school district, neighborhood associations, and other community institutions.
- 2 Implement the ‘code of conduct’ for all public meetings.
- 3 Establish a negotiation/mediation process for dispute resolution.
- 4 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 Update the West Linn Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to reflect and support the West Linn vision.
- 7 Establish a year-around community education program utilizing existing school facilities for all ages.

## **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.).

**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.



## Memorandum

**To:** Chris Kerr, Senior Planner  
**From:** Scot Siegel, AICP LEED AP  
**Date:** May 27, 2008  
**Re:** *City of West Linn – Imagine West Linn Update*

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Siegel Planning has been retained by the City of West Linn to assist in updating the city's vision statement, *Imagine West Linn*. The City Council established the project as a top priority in 2007-2008. The vision update will lay the groundwork for subsequent amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> work session is to provide an update on the project and solicit input from the Planning Commission and City Council on the approach. The revised *Imagine West Linn* document will be presented for Council approval in the next 4-6 weeks. We are also preparing a list of existing Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that may be inconsistent with the revised vision and that should be considered for future text amendments.

### Background

In 1994, the City engaged in a major undertaking to create a vision for the future of West Linn. Although much of the document is still relevant today, the Council would like to review it and modify it to reflect changes in the community and its goals 14 years later.

In February of 2007, the city asked its citizen boards and commissions to respond to a questionnaire regarding *Imagine West Linn*. The questionnaire asked for points of agreement, disagreement, and desired changes to the document. Written responses were provided by the Historic Resources Advisory Board and the Planning Commission. As evidenced by the attached list of comments (pages 3-4), the document is still generally representative of the City's vision for the future. The comments received are summarized as follows:

1. Minor changes are needed throughout the document to update statistical data and to reflect accomplished goals. The updated vision will incorporate these changes.
2. "Historic understanding and appreciation has spread across the City to include areas *beyond* the core of old Willamette and the Falls." (HRAB)
3. Several historic preservation action items have been completed – archives, inventories, museum space (HRAB)

4. There is still a need to link the vision to implementation and monitoring of supporting plans and codes.
5. Emerging issues (Planning Commission):
  - The transition from a developing city to a *redeveloping city*
  - Increasing housing costs – the vision should address affordability and housing choices (smaller homes, aging in place, etc.)
  - The vision should support effective citizen involvement vis-à-vis neighborhood associations and project task forces (e.g., Dock’s Code)
  - Foster local and regional partnerships (e.g., drinking water)
  - Technological changes (e.g., web sites, blogs and other tools)

In addition, the Planning Commission expressed an interest in addressing infill development, mixed-use, 10<sup>th</sup> Street traffic<sup>1</sup>, and planning for the Stafford area, among other issues, in future Comprehensive Plan updates (Periodic Review).

### **Working Draft**

As a working draft for the Council and Planning Commission, we have reformatted the existing vision statement to make it easier to read, without revising the content. The new format provides page numbers, subject headings, and a single column layout to facilitate subsequent editing and draft reviews. The attached document does not include any substantive revisions. The following outlines our approach for updating the vision document:

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

*During the June 2<sup>nd</sup> work session, we will provide examples of how other communities apply vision statements through Comprehensive Plan amendments.*

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

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

As requested by staff, we have prepared a working list of suggested technical and housekeeping revisions to *Imagine West Linn*. The following revisions are limited to factual changes, such as statistical data and projects completed since 1994, and editing. The revisions follow the general order in which they would appear in the vision document. The document will include the new City seal, as well as images that reflect the character of West Linn:

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

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



# IMAGINE WEST LINN

*Adopted by the West Linn City Council, February, 1994*

## **VISION TEAM MEMBERS**

Lori Faha, Chairperson; Lynn McFadden, Charles & Diane Awalt, Sally McLarty, Pam Black, Beth McNamara, Sue Brady, David W. Mehl, Jody Carson, Charlotte Morris, Mimi Chitty, John L. Moss, Tom D'Amour, Jerry & Ruth Offer, Betty Dargis, Paddy Pynch, Kate Dickson, Rockey Sagers, Pat & Suzanne Feeney, Primus St. John, Duane Funk, Jack & Julia Simpson, Jill Sherman, David Goodman-Farley, Don Stuart, Robert Grace, Rod Swanson, Jean Green, Bob Thomas, Nancy Hopkins, Marilyn Torsen, Jeff Kraus, Jim Waddell, Bob Krahn, Deb Zackman, Gary Madson, Leslie Marsh

## **COUNCIL LIAISON**

John L. Moss

## **STAFF SUPPORT**

Michael Butts, Project Manager; Pam Williams, B. J. Doty, John Darling, Peter Spir, Nancy Schmidt, and John Nomie

Department of Planning and Development 2042 8th Avenue, West Linn, OR 97068 (503)  
656-4211

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

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

To embark on a journey in search of West Linn's future. A search of community spirit and a sense of place, involving adventure and tests of courage. A quest that will engage the community in a collective and creative approach to determining the form and character of West Linn. This visioning process will create a future for West Linn.

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

1. To establish a vision for the City.
2. To achieve a commitment to our vision.
3. To develop the leadership and organizational capacity necessary to reach our vision.
4. To develop a strategic plan that will enable us to arrive at our vision.

**GOALS**

- Sense of Community and Sustainability
- Sense of Place and Identity
- Growth and Quality of Life
- Community Institutions
- Culture and the Arts



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Imagine **West Linn in the year 2040**. What would it be like? What could it be like?

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 the product of a committed group of your fellow citizens who have worked with each other, their neighbors, and City staff since September 1992. Our goal is to plan a future for West Linn that we can be proud to leave as a legacy for our children. The Visioning Committee collected information through community workshops, interviews with citizens young and old, and from reviewing data from the city and state.

Without a vision, the City will continue to change, but with no direction. It is intended that this vision statement will serve as an instrument to maintain our sense of community and set direction for our future. This vision statement is significant because it will be placed before the City Council for adoption, and ultimately be used as a citizen developed guide for drafting City policy, planning, and budgeting. Before it goes to the City Council for adoption, we (the West Linn Visioning Committee) are presenting it to you, the citizens of West Linn, for your approval. We believe that our actions can make a difference. Join with your neighbors in designing and building West Linn’s future.

## **TRENDS**

These 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 (i.e., lands that are not constrained by steep slopes, floodplains, etc.) land by the year 2020, possible regionally required density increases and/or expansion of the UGB could cause West Linn to reach a population of about 40,000 by the year 2040.
- West Linn will continue to grow at about two percent annually. Under the City’s state acknowledged Comprehensive Plan, a maximum of about 30,000 population could be accommodated within the City’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).
- By 2040, the four-county Metro area will increase from 1.5 million to 2.5 million people for an annual growth rate of about one percent.
- The growing population will be comprised of people from diverse backgrounds. This diversity will be expressed through increased demands and needs for a wide 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 a phenomenal growth in traffic throughout the metropolitan area.
- Twenty-four hour traffic volumes on Highway 43 will increase to 22,500 at the north end, and 25,200 at the south end of the city by 2010. Due to severe capacity limitations, these volumes will represent only about 65 to 75 percent of the level of traffic desiring to use Highway 43. This will force people to find alternate modes 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 by 50 to 60 percent 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.

### **Environmental Trends**

- There will be an increased effort to further define the value of natural areas and assure their protection.
- Open space for both active and passive recreational use will become a critical component of the 'sense' of environment and quality of life.
- All parks within the City will experience greatly increased use resulting in their over-use and requiring limits and user fees.

### **Trends in Government**

- More 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.
- The move towards regional coordination, consolidation, and provision of some services will accelerate.
- Facilities along both the Willamette and Tualatin rivers will experience increasing local and regional use.
- Due to the limitations on local revenues and increasing demand for a more diverse range of services, there will be a shift from government provided services to the private sector and volunteers.

### **Education Trends**

- With an increasingly diverse population, there will be a demand for greater flexibility in educational services which will reach more people at all ages and income levels.
- Schools will provide "life-learning" opportunities, both on-site and through telecommunication, to meet changing occupational and career needs.

## **Community Development Trends**

- West Linn will continue to be a community dominated by automobile-oriented subdivisions with large single-family homes. Developing ways to interconnect these subdivisions will become a community-wide effort.
- With a regional trend towards mega-stores and small specialty shops, retail activity within the City will continue to be dominated by convenience sales and services. Convenient access to these sales and services will become a major concern of West Linn residents.

## **Arts and Cultural Trends**

- Portland will continue to serve as the regional focus for major arts and cultural activities. Sub-regional programs may require intra-community confederations to sponsor events and programs.
- The library will experience greatly increased use as a diversified arts and cultural information source with on-line user services.
- Overall, participation in arts and cultural activities will increase, but with greater diversity due to a variety of interests.
- Both governmental and corporate financial support of arts and cultural activities will decrease, making it difficult to find stable funding sources for maintaining cultural and arts programs.

## **PROBABLE FUTURE**

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 communities without a city center. 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 in this terrain makes the extension of utilities difficult and costly.

West Linn continues to draw new residents searching for a safe haven from the crime of the inner city. These newcomers 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.

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 neighbor-

hoods. The West Linn Paper Mill (the City's only industrial business) was found to be too old and expensive to operate, and was closed.

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. In total, people have a sense of losing the community feeling they once felt.

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.

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, etc.

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 limit the City's ability to provide anything beyond the most basic services such as police, fire and public works. This is a time when West Linn is burgeoning with empty-nesters and families alike, but limited funds eliminate all hopes for a community center for citizens of all ages.

The 13 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. 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.

## **PREFERRED FUTURE**

The following is a vision of what West Linn could look like in 50 years if we choose to accept a different course and guide the changes.

In 2040, West Linn has evolved into a full-service city of nearly 40,000 population. West Linn 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 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 as is evident in the City park system, wild spaces, and river esplanade; a healthy environment; the City's commitment to encourage and celebrate the arts; 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. City government sets policy and takes action based on one question: Will this policy or action foster or hinder a sense of community in West Linn?

The heart and spirit of the community are readily apparent. The network of sidewalks, pathways, public meeting places, 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 of West Linn.

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. The UGB expansion and required increased densities within the region has been cautious and well planned.

The city center is a well-defined collection of offices, civic facilities, commercial buildings and multifamily housing anchored at the abandoned paper mill site, 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 smaller commercial centers of Willamette, Robinwood, and Bolton have been joined by an additional center in the Tanner Basin area, as well as some small commercial nodes within selected neighborhoods.

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 was improved only to three lanes its entire length through the City,

complimented by an inter city jitney service which links West Linn with the regional bus and rail lines. The West Linn telecommunication system provides educational as well as many in-home services necessary to maintain the large number of in-home businesses in the City.

West Linn continues to earn the most livable city award, in part due to the purchase and redevelopment of its riverfront. The area of the paper mill reflection ponds has been redeveloped into a riverfront park, plaza, and high-end office center, with easy access to I-205. Waterfront public places abound and a network of bike\trailways 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 government, 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, churches and other community 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 composed of members elected at large. Councilor's duties have been expanded to include acting as representatives to other community and regional service boards. These positions provide enhanced cooperation and networking within the current system of elected boards and commissions. They have also become actively involved in the state legislature, serving as advocates for the citizens of West Linn. In recognition of their expanded roles, our elected officials receive a stipend.

The City government operates under a Code of Public Involvement, whereby government officials, staff, community groups and citizens participate under adopted principals of behavior. The 'win/lose' product of the public hearing process has been replaced by a roundtable negotiation process where 'win/win' solutions are commonplace. Here a give and take can occur between the applicant and opponents, with the government serving as the prime facilitator and protector of the public good.

The City has promoted the formation of seven neighborhood associations, which comprise the City of West Linn. Public meeting rooms have been provided in each of the seven neighborhood community centers and one at the city center complex for citywide forums. Neighborhood-level planning has been promoted to create plans and regulations unique to the respective neighborhoods. In addition, a League of Neighborhood Associations has been formed to address citywide issues. Neighborhood associations meet similar tests for public notice and involvement as has been in place for city government decision-making. Neighborhood associations are no longer just watchdogs of public institutions. They have formed partnerships to identify needs of the community, and to develop and implement plans to meet those needs. Neighborhood associations take an active role in 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 city center complex to facilitate this new partnership for the common good. Each

local center provides services such as education, recreation, childcare, work programs, etc. based on identified needs and resources. Senior citizens serve as mentors and role models for adolescents. Through volunteerism, human service needs are being met, in part, without increased cost and programs 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. A secondary role is to serve double-duty as neighborhood centers that complement the local community centers established to provide ample areas for recreation, culture, and the arts for all ages.

Strong demand for arts and cultural activities and facilities has resulted in the development of alternative sources of financial support. This has resulted in the formation of a complex 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 the quality of life, have taken a greater role in providing financial support for continued growth in arts and cultural activities. The City of West Linn as well as other suburban communities in the Portland regional cultural activities is based on the concept that 'to get a say, we must 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 in-home cable opportunities. These opportunities have been increased to the point where worldwide access is possible. Coverage of local city events has expanded with a greater quality of presentation.

Public art projects and exhibits have become a permanent element of the community's public facilities such as at the schools, parks, and community center. Recognizing 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.

## **GOALS**

Goals have been developed in five significant areas to show some possible steps to move West Linn from the Probable Future toward the Preferred Future.

## **SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND SUSTAINABILITY**

To create and sustain a spirit of community where there is a sense of caring, openness, inclusiveness, goodwill and connecting to each other and the natural environment where both



present and future needs are met; where there is an atmosphere of consensus where disagreements can be aired and resolved respectfully; 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 respect for our natural environment and its need for sustainability.

- 1 Assure that all decisions are weighed, among other considerations, as to whether or not this action of plan will foster or hinder a sense of community and sustainability in West Linn.
- 2 Consider developing and implementing a plan to provide easily accessible public gathering places that are designed to build and celebrate a sense of community. These centers should be found in all seven neighborhoods and at the city center. The plan should include walkways and bike paths, a river esplanade, a town square, a community center, a farmer's market space, community gardens, an amphitheater and a multitude of parks connected by greenways.
- 3 Consider updating the City's trail system master plan (within the Park System Master Plan) to assure all seven neighborhoods, schools, city parks, neighborhood centers and the Willamette Falls Center are all interconnected by safe pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
- 4 Establish programs for the celebration of community spirit. 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. West Linn should adopt a theme of basalt rock walls, 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. The City should help 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.
- 5 Consider providing opportunities to participate in service projects that serve fellow citizens and the City of West Linn. Project examples include neighborhood beautification, constructing trails and public plazas, building neighborhood parks and centers, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, greenway maintenance and enhancement, helping elderly citizens in home maintenance or transportation needs, managing youth community projects, and more.
- 6 Pursue establishing a local jitney transit system that will maintain 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.
- 7 Encourage and nurture the formation of seven neighborhood associations within the City. The City should pursue grant opportunities for the their formation and support of special neighborhood events.

- 8 Encourage and nurture the formation of a League of Neighborhood Associations to serve as a body to address issues of citywide concern.

## **SENSE OF PLACE AND IDENTITY**

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, boundaries, patterns, styles and visual reference points define the uniqueness and magic of a special place; where the City's roots are revealed and where the quality and abundance of its public spaces are the focus of the community.

### **Housing**

- 1 Encourage the design of housing to be more sympathetic to surrounding homes and respond to a reduced need for square footage in homes due to an aging population.
- 2 Consider establishing regulation calling for minimum allowable densities for the various residential districts.
- 3 Encourage porches in the front and garages in the rear. An incremental goal would be a requirement that the house be placed closer to the street while maintaining the garage at least ten (10) feet behind the primary building line of the house, or that they should be side loading or detached. This would push the garages into a secondary position and their dominance of the front elevation of the house would be reduced. This design concept also encourages the development of alleyways.
- 4 Encourage smaller front yards and the social benefits of porches by allowing a 10-15 foot front yard setback for porches, versus the required 20-foot setback.
- 5 Encourage a mix of commercial and residential uses such as apartments above commercial uses in areas zoned for commercial use.
- 6 To accommodate affordable housing, the City should consider code requirements to allow 'granny suites' or 'mother-in-law apartments. "
- 7 The City should establish design standards to make townhouses and row houses more attractive, compatible and pedestrian friendly.
- 8 Housing diversity and affordability should be encouraged by supporting varying lot **sizes** and house types, from custom to manufactured homes.
- 9 The City should maintain or improve the current code on removal of trees.

### **Commercial Development**

- 1 Continued commitment to the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule by allowing higher increased densities along transit corridors.
- 2 Assure that development of the 10th Street and Highway 43 Interchanges with 1-205 are comprehensive, well-planned and pedestrian friendly.
- 3 In order to facilitate home occupations and reduce vehicle miles traveled, the City should review its regulations to assure they help facilitate and protect home

occupations.

- 4 Consider establishing a special zone for the City Center, encompassing the mill area and extending to the library, that would establish a particular theme for the area as well as proposing special standards (e.g., increasing the maximum allowable height of structures, and requiring pedestrian oriented buildings adjacent to street, including courtyards or open space, defensible space, attractive design, and use of quality materials).
- 5 The City should continue to enforce the special historic standards that apply to the Willamette commercial area, and continually improve code language to meet the needs of the district.
- 6 Study other jurisdictions to determine what particular standards exist for neighborhood commercial uses (e.g., Lair Hill, Corbett, Ladd's Addition, etc.) The City should develop guidelines with particular attention paid to design for the pedestrians, esthetics, compatibility, and parking, as well as mitigation of impacts.
- 7 The City should review commercial design and development standards along Highway 43, and consider establishing other neighborhood centers to encourage walking and bicycling.
- 8 Maintain a conservative sign code.
- 9 Establish landscape standards for arterials and commercial centers.
- 10 Consider requiring a percent of cost of commercial projects go to exterior art work such as the arts program in Portland.

## **Historic Areas**

- 1 The City should continue to support programs relating to the Willamette Historic District and Historic Landmarks, and provide appropriate training for staff and the Historic Review Board.
- 2 The City should investigate funding opportunities for the historical districts and historic landmarks.
- 3 Pursue the acquisition of a historic centerpiece for the Willamette Historic District to provide a focal point.

## **Recreation Facilities**

- 1 The City should 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 aquatic center.
- 3 Continue to pursue the development of a senior/community center at a central location that is near transit.
- 4 Requiring dedication of trail corridors should be continued 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 plus Wails in the Master Plan should be a priority.

- 5 Continue City\School District cooperation in planning playfields, parks and scheduling uses of those facilities.

## **Public Facilities**

- 1 Assure major public facilities are constructed of permanent materials (e.g., brick or rock).
- 2 Establish neighborhood centers featuring public plazas meeting rooms and more.
- 3 Study the space needs for city office facilities considering the value of a single city office complex.
- 4 The School District should build schools in the center of the population they are intended to serve, and on collectors or arterial streets and, where possible, along transit lines.

## **Open Space**

- 1 The City should consider expanding the current 25-foot building setback line area around wetlands, drainage ways, heritage trees, and forested areas.
- 2 The Park System Master Plan should be updated relative to open space acquisition and trail corridors.
- 3 The City should identify additional means by which open space may be more readily dedicated as part of the development permit process.
- 4 The City should encourage the development of vacant, past over lots prior to expansion of the UGB as one way to protect open space outside the UGB.

## **Transportation and Streets**

- 1 The City should review its street width standards and consider adopting a “skinny streets” program.
- 2 The City should amend its codes so as to conform to the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (i.e., design its streets, trails and buildings to reduce the miles traveled by automobile).
- 3 The City should establish plans to provide for convenience services and public meeting places within easy walking distance of each residence
- 4 The City should encourage the expansion of transit in the West Linn area and the development of links along the periphery of the City and metropolitan area. The City should support a transit link with the proposed Willamette Valley high-speed rail line station in Oregon City.
- 5 The City should develop a Transit Master Plan, and require bus turnout areas where

new development takes place.

- 6 Promote grid pattern street development to help interconnect City neighborhoods.

## **GROWTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

To manage both the quantity and quality of growth to assure an evolving improvement in the quality of life in West Linn.

- 1 Recognize that there are multiple dimensions to community growth, which are both positive and negative. While citizens overwhelmingly view physical growth in negative terms, such growth is highly likely. Whatever growth takes place, there should be assurances that growth preserves and enhances West Linn's identity.
- 2 Consider acquiring (through purchase or dedication) and land banking natural areas, future park sites, trail corridors, future public plaza sites, and viewpoints for future public use and preservation from private development.
- 3 Consider establishing a maximum roadway standard of three lanes (two travel lanes and one center left turn lane) for all roadways within West Linn (excepting 1-205), while promoting the use of mass transit to reduce traffic congestion.
- 4 Assure that the City's crime rate does not increase with added growth by promoting 'Neighborhood Watch' and other safety programs.
- 5 Support funding solutions for city and county services without depending solely on increased property taxes.
- 6 Establish neighborhoods around compact commercial/residential centers with pedestrian-friendly design.
- 7 Assure that the costs for new infrastructure, and the maintenance of existing infrastructure, are borne by the respective user.
- 8 Consider acquiring local control of Highway 43 and Willamette Falls Drive.
- 9 Establish high standards of urban design to ensure that the new fits well with the best of the old. New development should complement the scale and quality of the community.

## **COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS**

To shape our city government, school district, and other West Linn institutions into leaders that foster trust, respect, courage and honor.

- 1 Adopt inter-agency agreements between city government, school district, neighborhood associations, and other community institutions.
- 2 Develop a 'code of conduct' for all public meetings.
- 3 Establish a negotiation/mediation process for dispute resolution.

- 4 Establish the boundaries for seven neighborhood associations. Prepare neighborhood association guidelines that will assist in their formation. Assist in establishing meeting and organizational procedures for neighborhood groups. Initiate staggered neighborhood planning programs. Assist in the funding of neighborhood publications.
- 5 Form a "West Linn Vision Alliance" composed of representatives from the City Council, School Board, League of Neighborhood Associations, Chamber of Commerce, and churches to oversee and carry out the West Linn vision.
- 6 Update the West Linn Comprehensive Plan to reflect and support the West Linn vision.
- 7 Establish a year-around community education program utilizing existing school facilities for all ages.

## **CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

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

- 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 Establish a West Linn cable studio and staff the facility to cover and promote local productions and events.
- 7 Build and establish facilities at which cultural and art events and exhibits can be staged (e.g., Willamette Falls Market and a series of small private galleries).