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Action Plan Report: Aurora 2017 Vision Implementation

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Presented to City of Aurora Planning Commission



Action Plan Report Aurora 2017 Vision Implementation

June 5th, 2007



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I. □ INTRODUCTION

Since the adoption of the City of Aurora's (Aurora) 1995 Vision (1995 Vision), Aurora experienced faster population growth than was previously projected. As a result, Aurora now finds itself with a sewer system almost at capacity, ten years sooner than expected. At a town hall meeting to discuss the proposed annexation ballot measure in September 2006, many residents commented the 1995 Vision needed to be revisited to ensure it accurately reflected the values of the current residents. The City of Aurora Planning Commission (Planning Commission) recognized a need to update or create a new future vision for the community.

In early 2007, the City of Aurora Planning Commission sought the assistance of JDL Planning, a consultant team consisting of five members in the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University, to update the City's 1995 Vision. JDL Planning guided an intensive visioning process to capture the current values of both new and long-time residents and business owners.¹

The 2007 visioning process resulted in the creation of a new vision, the Aurora 2017 Vision (2017 Vision). The 2017 Vision, a copy of which is in Chapter II. Aurora 2017 Vision, of this report, serves as a guiding document for future growth and development in Aurora. The 2017 Vision reflects the values of current community members in a clear manner and is structured to ease future interpretation and implementation. The 2017 Vision consists of five main themes, each with several guiding principles to shape future development.

The Aurora 2017 Vision is expected to be recommended to the City Council for adoption at the Planning Commission's June 5th, 2007 meeting. Once the 2017 Vision is adopted, the process of incorporating the 2017 Vision into future planning can begin.

This report picks up where the *Aurora 2017 Vision Report* left off. It is intended to provide the Planning Commission and community members with recommended strategies to meet each of the guiding principles identified in the 2017 Vision. It contains seven chapters to assist the Aurora community in taking the next steps towards realizing the Aurora 2017 Vision:

- **Chapter II. Aurora 2017 Vision** includes the Aurora 2017 Vision published in the *Aurora 2017 Vision Report*.
- **Chapter III. Vision Into Action: The Action Plan** includes an explanation of the Draft Action Plan begun at the Community Visioning

¹ The 2007 visioning process is detailed in the *Aurora 2017 Vision Report*, available through Aurora City Hall.

Workshop in April of 2007. It is meant to be a framework from which to start the Action Plan. The Draft Action Plan is attached at the end of this report.

- **Chapter IV. Next Steps** outlines the suggested steps and time frames for developing the Draft Action Plan and moving into implementation.
- **Chapter V. Best Practices** includes research and case studies for each 2017 Vision theme, relaying how other organizations and cities have approached implementing some of the guiding principles in the 2017 Vision.
- **Chapter VI. Plan Review** recommends how Aurora's planning documents can be updated to reflect the 2017 Vision.
- **Chapter VII. Draft Action Plan** contains a matrix of suggested actions, responsible parties and timeline for implementing the 2017 Vision gathered through Vision Aurora community outreach activities and independent research.

The purpose of this document is to provide *recommendations* on how the 2017 Vision can be implemented. Ultimately, the Aurora community will need to decide the time frame and strategies to most appropriately realize their 2017 Vision.

II. □ AURORA 2017 VISION

Aurora 2017 Vision²

The year is 2017 and it has been ten years since the Aurora community created its vision. The City of Aurora is located in northern Marion County half-way between Portland and Salem at the confluence of Mill Creek and the Pudding River. The community enjoys a rich history with its origins as the Aurora Colony in 1856, which was one of the most successful 19th century experiments in communal living. Over the past ten years, the Aurora community has continued to work together to protect and enhance the town's historic identity, as well as the small town feel and surrounding natural and agricultural areas. The community has successfully promoted Aurora as a family-friendly place to live and visit, with a vibrant town center. Aurora residents share a strong sense of community and neighborliness, actively engaging in local events. Aurora has successfully worked together to respond creatively to outside influences.

Maintain sense of place. *Aurora will work to maintain its small town, village atmosphere, defined by its identity as a village in a rural setting, and to protect and enhance its rich heritage and historic district.*

Guiding Principles:

- Protect and enhance Aurora's rich heritage and historic district, being mindful of what has been inherited.
- Use clear and objective design standards to encourage appropriate new development.
- Create strong visual gateways into and through Aurora and its historic district that reflect arrival to the village.
- Encourage maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping throughout the town.

Community engagement. *The Aurora community will build upon its history of working together to control its future in the face of internal growth and external development pressures through increased volunteerism, community events, and activism. City leaders will continue to actively engage the community and develop partnerships with civic and professional organizations. Volunteers will help to inform the community of events and issues by reaching out to their neighbors.*

² This is the Aurora 2017 Vision, as presented to the Planning Commission on June 5th, 2007.

Guiding Principles:

- Encourage the development of more gathering places (both public and private).
- Promote additional social activities for the community.
- Actively welcome new residents and businesses.
- Develop partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions, such as schools, counties, neighboring cities and special districts, to collaborate on issues of common interest and concern.
- Encourage and support increased volunteerism and individual contribution.
- Encourage community involvement in the process of shaping Aurora's future.
- Promote involvement and investment in Aurora youth.

Managed growth. *Aurora experienced fast residential growth following the completion of the sewer system in 2001. In the next ten years, Aurora will work to establish clear standards and targets for balanced residential, commercial and industrial development to provide an expanded revenue base, allowing for the provision of public infrastructure and city services, while maintaining livability. Balanced development will help to ensure that infrastructure and city services keep pace with growth.*

Guiding Principles:

- Retain and encourage small businesses and restaurants in commercial areas that can serve both residents and tourists.
- Encourage a balance of residential, commercial and light industrial growth in appropriate areas.
- Promote economic development through the commercial and industrial growth that is needed to provide an expanded revenue base.
- Create appropriate transitions between industrial, commercial and residential uses in newly developing areas, and between 99E and residential development.
- Create a “main street” feel along 99E through appropriate commercial and mixed uses and appropriate gateway standards.
- Work to control growth inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and influence forces outside the UGB to ensure viable balanced economic growth.
- Work to ensure the expansion of services and industry at and around the airport protect the livability of Aurora.
- Work to limit impacts on surrounding agricultural uses, recognizing the importance of this industry to Aurora and the region.

Transportation. *Aurora will work to create safe and efficient modes of travel for automobiles, pedestrians and cyclists. Aurora will increase connections between neighborhoods. The Aurora community will work collaboratively with the County and State agencies to integrate major thoroughfares into the community.*

Guiding Principles:

- Utilize traffic calming techniques on 99E and other streets to promote safety.
- Improve local streets through innovative means.
- Create safe, convenient and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes providing for connections throughout the community.

Greenspace and recreation. *Aurora will retain and enhance existing parks and greenspace and work to create additional parks, recreational opportunities and interaction with natural areas. These amenities will not only increase livability for residents, but also help make Aurora a destination for outdoor enthusiasts.*

Guiding Principles:

- Develop additional parks.
- Maintain green buffer around Aurora by supporting local agricultural industry and maintenance of open space.
- Develop multi-use trails for pedestrians and cyclists for both transportation and recreation.
- Be mindful of our impact on the environment in the decision making process.
- Retain and encourage appropriate landscaping throughout the city for its importance to the livability of Aurora.

III. VISION INTO ACTION: THE ACTION PLAN

The Draft Action Plan included in Chapter VII of this report reflects how the themes and guiding principles within the Aurora 2017 Vision can be implemented. This framework includes a list of possible actions suggested by the community at the April 21st, 2007 Workshop, the May 22nd, 2007 Open House, and by various Vision Committee and community members throughout the visioning process, as well as some independent research.

Actions are categorized under each guiding principle. Potential responsible parties involved in implementing an action, as well as a suggested time frame, are identified. A short-term time frame indicates an action that could be achieved in the next 5 years. Long term indicates an action that reasonably will take 6-10 years to accomplish, though some work may need to begin in the next 5 years. An action considered on-going is given both short term and long term marks.

There is currently no relevance to the order in which the actions appear. Ultimately, this document, or any future action plan, should be considered a “living” document. As such, an action in the document can be changed at any time. The process for doing this should be identified by a newly created Action Committee.

IV. ACTION PLAN NEXT STEPS

Section 1. Refining the Draft Action Plan and Implementing the Actions

The Draft Action Plan in Chapter VII of this report should be refined in order to create a working document of what Aurora wants to accomplish. The resulting Action Plan should be well thought out, with consideration for who will lead each action effort, which actions are priorities, and how decisions will be made regarding actions. The Draft Action Plan was developed from community input and independent research. It, along with the guidance provided in this section and the supporting documents in Section 2 of this chapter, are provided to assist you in refining the Draft Action Plan into an Action Plan and implementing those actions. The refinement process should take up to 9 months, from June 2007 to March 2008.

Forming the Action Committee

A Committee should be formed to be responsible for and direct refinement of the Draft Action Plan and coordinate implementation of the actions.

It is suggested the name “Action Committee” be adopted for the Committee to distinguish between the visioning and action implementation process. However, there may be a disadvantage in using the Action Committee name. Members of the general public may be unclear about the previous role of the Vision Committee or the status of the 2017 Vision. The decision of the appropriate name can be left up to the Committee, once formed. For the purposes of this report the Committee working on the Action Plan will be referred to as the Action Committee.

Getting members for the Committee can begin with calling back together the Vision Committee and community members who were active throughout the Vision Aurora process. The roles and responsibilities of the Action Committee should be communicated, and are proposed as follows:

- Determine the internal decision making process for the Action Committee. The Planning Commission should assist with this process or determine it prior to Committee formation and inform the Committee.
- Decide whether the Committee should break down into five subcommittees, one for each 2017 Vision theme; and
- Assist in identifying which actions best realize the Aurora 2017 Vision and outline the components of completing these actions.

Determine the internal decision making process for the Action Committee.

The internal decision making process includes the types of decisions the Action Committee will make, how decisions are made, and the considerations or criteria necessary to make a decision. Alternatively, the Planning Commission may choose to determine the decision making process for the Action Committee. If this option is selected, the decision making process should be communicated to Action Committee at the initial meeting(s).

Decide whether the Committee should break down into subcommittees.

Once the Action Committee is formed, it may be useful to break into five subcommittees, one for each 2017 Vision theme. This may help lessen the workload and direct people to areas they are most knowledgeable about and/or interested in. As there is some overlap within the 2017 themes, the subcommittees will need to be periodically informed as to what the other subcommittees are working on and coordinate efforts as required.

The formation of the Committee and establishment of procedures may take one or several meetings to get the refinement process under way. The *Example Agenda: Initial Action Committee Meeting(s)*, included in Section 2, outlines how you might conduct the initial meeting(s).

Include Responsible Parties

The Draft Action Plan identifies potential responsible parties for each action. Some of these potential parties are already involved in the process, while others are not. Representatives from these organizations will need to be a part of developing the Action Plan. This can be accomplished by asking organizations responsible for two or more action items to have a representative present at Action Committee meetings. However, recognizing some representatives may have difficulty making such a large time commitment, an alternative option would be to:

1. Establish which actions a particular organization will be the lead on;
2. Have the lead organization develop a time frame and process for the implementation of the action(s) on their own time; and
3. Schedule a future meeting for them to return to an Action Committee meeting and present their thoughts and plans.

Invitations for participation of responsible parties should be made via personal outreach by an Action Committee member or someone in the government. A letter explaining the process and the importance of their active participation, along with a copy of the Aurora 2017 Vision and the Draft Action Plan, should

accompany the invitation. Ideally the responsible party will be invited in time for the initial Action Committee meeting(s).

Choosing the Actions, Making the Action Plan

The Draft Action Plan includes a list of potential implementation actions for each theme's guiding principles. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, nor should it imply all these actions should be completed. The Action Committee, all responsible parties, and the community should determine which actions are most appropriate for realizing Aurora's 2017 Vision.

Given the length and detail of the Aurora 2017 Vision, examining and choosing actions will probably take multiple meetings. The sample agendas, provided in Section 2 of this chapter, outline a basic process for these meetings. The Action Committee should become very familiar with the Draft Action Plan. They should be alert to areas where actions overlap or conflict, or where additional or different actions might be needed. Some discussion may need to be tabled and revisited at another meeting, pending more information gathering. It is acceptable to explore or attempt an action and give it up if ultimately it does not make sense. A worksheet of questions has been developed for use when evaluating actions and is included in Section 2 of this chapter. In general it is important to address the following questions:

What will this action really do?

The action under consideration should be examined to make sure it is appropriate for Aurora and the 2017 Vision. Understanding what will actually be accomplished, how it will impact the community (positively & negatively), and if the resources exist, are important questions to determine whether it contributes to meeting a guiding principle in the 2017 Vision.

Who should lead the action?

Identifying a lead party for each action is critical. The lead party could be an existing Committee or community group, or may require forming a new group or Committee. Regardless, when choosing the lead party, consider whether or not the lead party has the resources necessary to accomplish this action and consult them regarding timing. Again it may be necessary to table an action and allow the lead party time to respond. If a new group will be formed to lead an action, try to identify who will spearhead this effort, and verify their willingness to do so. Also, if a new group is the lead party, the time frame may have to be left open until the group is off the ground.

What about future decisions regarding an action?

When identifying the lead party, consider who will make future decisions regarding an action and the timing for those decisions. Will the lead party make all decisions or will they need to bring it before a government entity or the public first? How much additional time will be needed for the decision making process?

How should the action be prioritized?

The Action Committee will also need to prioritize the order of actions. When working through each action, ask whether or not it is a high priority. Referencing the Vision Aurora Survey(s) and Community Visioning Workshop Results may assist in identifying the priorities. An action might also be a priority if waiting too long would mean missing the opportunity to act. It may also not be possible to accomplish one action without first completing another. Certain actions may also overlap with other actions, meaning accomplishing them would contribute to realizing multiple principles in the 2017 Vision. Considering these factors should assist in identifying the priorities.

Bringing it All Together

As the Action Committee works through the Draft Action Plan, a prioritized order of actions should start to develop. The Committee should begin considering when these actions will actually be accomplished. The Draft Action Plan lays the actions out in terms of short term, the next 5 years, and long term, meaning the action probably cannot be accomplished for more than 6 years. It may be helpful to break this time frame down more. Identify what will be accomplished in year 1, year 2 and so on.

Since it is expected Aurora's 2017 Vision will be adopted in June 2007, year 1 will finish in June 2008. A great deal of time and effort will go into creating the refined Action Plan, so year 1 actions may need to be simple but noticeable efforts. Identify easy tasks from the ongoing actions, like organizing a community event or tree planting. Actions currently under way might also be good choices for year 1. Completing even simple actions will demonstrate dedication to accomplishing the 2017 Vision and build enthusiasm in the community.

The refinement of the Draft Action Plan needs to consider the role the wider public will have in creating the plan. Public participation should be encouraged throughout. Either the Planning Commission or the Action Committee needs to determine when, how, and on what level they want feedback from the general public regarding the Action Plan. A well-designed public participation process will demonstrate Aurora's leaders are committed to realizing a community driven

vision and help build momentum for the process. Questions to be addressed regarding public involvement include:

- Will there be periodic open houses or meetings, or maybe just one at the end of refining the Action Plan?
- How widely will the Action Plan be distributed to the public, and when? And what will be done with any feedback received?

Additionally, official adoption and procedures for making modifications and updates to the plan should occur before ending the refinement of the Action Plan. As the Action Plan is meant to be a “living” document – that is, a document that can be amended to reflect efforts and changes over time – this should be factored into any adoption language used. In Section 2, the *Example Agenda: Action Plan Wrap-up* outlines what should be accomplished in the final meeting(s) of the refinement process.

Action to Implementation: The First Year

As stated above, the resulting Action Plan should be a prioritized list of actions. If the action meets roadblocks and cannot be completed in the time frame assigned, extend the time frame or redesign it into a more suitable action.

While implementing the actions, the Action Committee should continue to exist in some official form. While the lead parties will assume most of the responsibility for accomplishing actions, the Action Committee is still needed to monitor the progress of actions, support the lead parties working on individual tasks, and inform the public about the state of vision actions. The Action Committee could also be charged with hosting an annual Vision Day in Aurora. Additionally, they could be in charge of reviewing the Action Plan annually for modifications, and designating which actions take place in the next year. The Planning Commission and the Action Committee will need to identify how many and who will continue to be on the Action Committee. As the Vision is meant to be implemented over 10 years, establish procedures for how this Committee will continue to operate. Considerations should include when and how often the Action Committee will meet, what decisions they will be charged with, length of service for Committee members, and how to replace Committee members.

Maintaining Enthusiasm for the Process

Several tactics could be utilized to bring more community members to the process and take on some of the tasks involved. It’s also important to realize when it is

time to modify or put on hold part of the process to address challenges or opportunities.

Consistent Communication

Determine methods and times for communicating with Committees and the public. Utilize existing forms of communication, such as the water bill newsletter, the Canby Herald, or the city website. As time and talents present themselves, consider periodic door-to-door efforts, or an internet blog. Regardless of the chosen communication method, develop a consistent pattern for when, how and why it is used. Such consistency will result in Committee members and the community expecting and looking forward to updates. This will build commitment amongst participants and interest from those not yet involved in the process.

Delegation

Identify tasks for every Committee member, both to help disperse workload and ensure everyone feels engaged in making things happen. Do not overlook the tactic of sitting in silence until you get a volunteer for a task. Duties could start out simple, like asking for a volunteer to bring refreshments to the next Committee meeting. Giving people roles also increases their feeling of importance and hence commitment to the process.

Coordination

Examine challenges, opportunities, and new ideas for areas of overlap and for possibilities to combine the work with existing groups or actions. This will also refine the process and allow it to operate more efficiently.

Increase Volunteerism

Look for new ways to involve volunteers. Identify what and how much time is needed from them and work with them to create an experience that is mutually beneficial. Continuously check-in with and appreciate your volunteers. This will help ensure their continued involvement.

Section 2. Supporting Documents for Future Action Committee Meetings

*EXAMPLE AGENDA: Initial Action Committee Meeting(s)
Summer 2007
Time & Location TBD*

OBJECTIVES

A. Outline the process, logistics, and time frame for developing a solid Action Plan to begin implementation.

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions of New and Returning Participants**
- II. Recap of the Vision Process to Date**
 - Explain how the Aurora 2017 Vision was adopted.
 - Depending on who is present, a recap of the Vision Aurora process may be necessary.
- III. The Action Plan: Overview**
 - The Action Plan serves as a guidebook on how to achieve the 2017 Vision.
 - A preliminary plan (The Draft Action Plan) was drafted from the April 21st workshop.
 - The actual Action Plan should be clear about what is to be accomplished, providing a path to directing efforts effectively: what, who, when, how?
 - The resulting document will be “living.” It will be open to adding, removing, or refining actions throughout the next 10 years.
 - The process for modifications will be determined at a future meeting.
- IV. The Action Plan Refinement: Process & Role of Action Committee**
 - This phase will take 6-9 months.
 - Involves asking a series of questions about each of the actions: is it the right action, who will lead, when it will be done...
 - *Establish the process and role of the Action Committee:
 - Who and how will decide what actions (including lead partner, timeframe, prioritization) go into the plan?
 - How will the Action Plan be finalized: Adoption by APC and City Council? On who’s recommendation?
 - How and when will the resulting document be presented to the public and in what format?
 - What is the role of the Action Committee in all of it?
 - Determine the internal decision making process for the Action Committee. The Planning Commission should assist with this process or determine it prior to Committee formation and inform the Committee.
 - Decide whether the Committee should break down into five subcommittees, one for each 2017 Vision theme; and
 - Assist in identifying which actions best realize the Aurora 2017 Vision and outline the components of completing these actions.
- V. Who is needed?**

- You: We need you to commit to the next 6-9 months, and consider committing to the Committee beyond this initial period..
- Any party suggested under at least 2 actions in the Draft Action Plan should have a representative at the table (Parks Committee, HRB, Business and property owners, etc...).
- In the alternative, Committee members should inform responsible parties and seek proposals from them to incorporate into the Action Plan.
- Any community members interested in taking part.
- If these people are not present, decide how you might get them to the next meeting or, in the alternative, how their input will be secured.

VI. Logistics of future meetings

- Where and when?
- Who will chair and organize: reminder e-mails, agendas, and necessary handouts.
- Recommend Co-chairs, 1 Planning Commissioner, 1 Citizen.
- Ground Rules for meetings (This can also be decided by facilitators).

*** The Aurora Planning Commission could choose to decide all process matters prior to this meeting and then tell the Action Committee at this meeting.**

MATERIALS: **Flip chart, easel, markers**
 Note taking device (tape recorder or person),
 Refreshments
 Handouts: Aurora 2017 Vision, Draft Action Plan
 Sign-In Sheet

EXAMPLE AGENDA: Meeting 1
Late Summer 2007
Time & Location TBD

OBJECTIVES

- A. Recap the process, logistics, and time frame for developing a solid action plan to begin implementation.**
- B. Begin to examine and evaluate actions within the Draft Action Plan.**

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions of New and Returning Participants**
- II. *Recap of the Vision Process to Date**
- III. *Recap Purpose of the Action Plan and Tasks for the Action Plan Committee**
- IV. Get to Work**
 - Committee members should:
 - Become familiar with the entire Draft Action Plan.
 - Be alert to areas of overlap or opportunities to combine actions.
 - Be alert to areas where more, better, or different actions may be needed.
 - Facilitators choose which theme to begin with
 - If necessary utilize: *Action Identification: Questions for Defining the Action Plan* Worksheet to critically examine what goes into the Action Plan.
 - Pointers:
 - It's okay to pursue an action and give it up later if it's not working as thought.
 - Some actions may need to be tabled for another meeting pending more information.
 - This document is supposed to be 'living' and is meant to be modified as time and situations may change
- V. Next Meeting**
 - Where and when?
 - Tasks between now and then?

*** New Action Committee members should be brought up to speed prior to this meeting, but it's important to make sure the whole group is clear on the purpose of the Action Plan and the Committee. So spend a few moments clarifying this.**

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart, easel, markers**
- Note taking device (tape recorder or person)**
- Refreshments**
- Handouts: Aurora 2017 Vision, Draft Action Plan (if needed), *Action Identification: Questions for Defining the Action Plan* Worksheet (see below)**
- Previous Meeting Minutes**
- Sign-In Sheet**

EXAMPLE AGENDA: Meeting 2 & Beyond
Times & Locations TBD

OBJECTIVES

A. Continue to examine actions within the Draft Action Plan for inclusion in the final Action Plan

AGENDA

I. Welcome and Introductions of New and Returning Participants

II. Continue where you left off previously in the Draft Action Plan

- Revisit tabled actions or ideas for updates and resolution if possible.
- Continue through the Draft Action Plan:
 - Be alert to areas of overlap or opportunities to combine actions.
 - Be alert to areas where more, better, different actions may be needed.
- If necessary utilize: *Action Identification: Questions for Defining the Action Plan*. Worksheet to critically examine what goes into the Action Plan.
- Pointers:
 - It's okay to pursue an action and give it up later if it's not working as thought.
 - Some actions may need to be tabled for another meeting pending more information.
 - This document is supposed to be "living" and is meant to be modified as time and situations may change

III. Next Meeting

- Where and when?
- Tasks between now and then?

MATERIALS:

Flip chart, easel, markers
Note taking device (tape recorder or person),
Refreshments
Handouts: Aurora 2017 Vision, Draft Action Plan (if needed),
Action Identification: Questions for Defining the Action Plan
Worksheet (see below)
Previous Meeting Minutes
Sign-In Sheet

***EXAMPLE AGENDA: Action Plan Wrap-up
Early 2008
Times & Locations TBD***

OBJECTIVES

A. Finalize the Action Plan

B. Discuss what will happen with the 2017 Vision, the Action Plan & the Committee as you move into implementation

AGENDA

I. Welcome

II. The End of the Action Plan Refinement Process

- Recap of the Public Review and Adoption of the Action Plan.

III. Modifying, Updating, & Monitoring Progress of the Action Plan

- Identify who and how the document will be updated or modified (Action Committee; See IV).
- Identify how you will monitor the progress and celebrate the success of actions!!!

IV. Entering the Implementation

- A Committee will continue to exist.
- Roles and Procedures for the Committee.
- Who will be on it?
- How frequently will they meet?

V. Next Steps

- Base on decisions made above.

VI. Thanks and Appreciation

- Celebrate the completion of the phase and find a way to thank those who were part of it.

WORKSHEET

Action Identification: Questions for Defining the Action Plan

This could be distributed with *Meeting 1 Agenda* or any meeting where discussion of what goes into the Action Plan takes place.

Not all questions need be addressed, but these might help determine which actions are appropriate for Aurora.

The Actions

- What actions will determine this Vision Principle is being realized?
- What will actually be accomplished?
- Have there been past efforts to achieve this or similar actions? What was the outcome? Or what were the roadblocks?
- Can this be combined with another action in the Plan?
- What resources or support are needed to accomplish this action?
- Are those resources readily available?
- Do we need more information? If so can it be accomplished in this phase or does information gathering need to become an action?

The People Involved

- Who will be impacted (positively or negatively) by this action?
- What impacts will it have on the community?
- Are other people already working on this? If so, is it covered, can we collaborate? How are they progressing?
- Who will be responsible for accomplishing this action?
- Who will assist?
- Are their future decisions involved in this action? If so, will the lead partner make them, or someone else (community, Committee, etc...)? What amount of extra time is needed to allow for decision making?

The Time Frame

- When would we like to accomplish this action by?
- When can we realistically accomplish this action?
- Is this a time sensitive action? Will we lose the opportunity to act if it is not done soon?
- Is there overlap between this action and another, or does one need to happen before another?
- How important is it to the community?

V. □ BEST PRACTICES FOR 2017 VISION THEMES

Introduction

To assist the Aurora community with implementation of the 2017 Vision, JDL Planning summarized best practices related to each 2017 Vision theme into the next five sections of this chapter. Best practices include methods and concepts applied successfully around the nation, with emphasis on those used in small communities, that can help Aurora achieve the guiding principles of the 2017 Vision. The practices outlined relate to specific guiding principles, although not all principles have been addressed. Rather than providing an exhaustive outline of practices that *should* be used in implementing the 2017 Vision, this chapter presents possible methods of implementation that have been successfully applied in other communities.

Section 1. Best Practices for Maintain Sense of Place Theme

Aurora will work to maintain its small town, village atmosphere, defined by its identity as a village in a rural setting, and to protect and enhance its rich heritage and historic district.

Guiding Principles:

- Protect and enhance Aurora’s rich heritage and historic district, being mindful of what has been inherited.
- Use clear and objective design standards to encourage appropriate new development.
- Create strong visual gateways into and through Aurora and its historic district that reflect arrival to the village.
- Encourage maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping throughout the town.

Introduction

The desire to maintain sense of place – the “village atmosphere” – is one desire that has remained consistently strong between the 1995 and 2017 Visions. Many Aurora residents moved to and business owners have opened shop in Aurora because of the small town feel. Thus, as Aurora grows over the next ten years, it is important that this growth be managed to respect both the small town feel, as well as respect the heritage of the town.

Best Practices

➤ *Design and Landscape Guidelines*

Guiding Principles addressed:

- Use clear and objective design standards to encourage appropriate new development.
- Create strong visual gateways into and through Aurora and its historic district that reflect arrival to the village.
- Encourage maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping throughout the town.

Design and landscape guidelines should be tailored to meet Aurora’s needs. The Mayor and several community members have already taken a first step towards finding out what may work for Aurora by visiting Jacksonville, Oregon, to learn how that town has preserved and improved its historic district. Other Oregon towns to consider looking into are McMinville and Ashland. Both these towns

have thriving centers and have dealt with embracing State Highway 99. Corvallis could also be considered, as it has drafted Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, which include landscape guidelines.

Webpages for these cities are:

- <http://www.ci.corvallis.or.us/downloads/cd/hpabguidelines.pdf>
- <http://www.ashland.or.us/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=433>
- <http://www.ci.mcminnville.or.us/>

➤ ***Community Events to Market Aurora as a Place to Visit***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Protect and enhance Aurora’s rich heritage and historic district, being mindful of what has been inherited.

The section on Community Engagement talks about activities for the Aurora community. With regard to Sense of Place, Aurora should be looking to distinguish itself as a unique place to visit, reaching out to those outside the community. Indeed, this message was clear during the visioning process, when the community expressed desire to have more small-scale retail and restaurants for residents and tourists, as well as events such as a Saturday or Farmers’ market.

Aurora already hosts a number of events that would be of great interest to visitors, including Colony Days, Outdoor Antiques Faire, Art Show & Sale, Antiques Appraisal Faire, Annual Quilt Show, Holidays Merchant Open House Weekend and Holiday Candlelight Tour. Aurora needs to capitalize on these events by bringing in a larger audience, which will have a spill-over effect of allowing Aurora to be discovered as the antique capital of Oregon, and bring back repeat visitors. To do this, Aurora should consider broader advertisement of these events, including newspapers circulated in Portland and Salem, as well as radio advertising.³ More in depth explanation should be provided for these events on an updated webpage.

Aurora may also consider holding a Historic Preservation Week. Ashland holds this once a year. It is described on their webpage as:

National Historic Preservation Week is an outreach program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and observed annually in

³ Radio advertising can be particularly effect. For example, one of JDL’s members was recently in Brookings, Oregon with her husband when they heard an advertisement for the “Aleutian Goose Festival” on the radio. They were so intrigued, that they drove the 30+ minutes to Crescent City, CA to attend part of the festival. Had they not heard the radio advertisement, they would have had no knowledge of this unusual event.

Ashland. One of the many reasons Ashland is so wonderful is the special care and recognition we give to our many architectural and historical resources. Historic preservation is a catalyst that brings our community together and assists us in respecting the past as we move forward as a city. This year's theme is "Preservation Works".

(<http://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=10135>.)

During this week, Ashland holds a Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony to

. . . honor the people and building projects that contribute to the preservation of our City's historic districts and to recognize the commitment of local citizens in the furtherance of historic preservation and the protection of cultural resources over the past year.

The Historic Preservation Week, along with civic awards, would assist in deepening the community's sense of pride and involvement in preserving and honoring its past.

Ashland has a list of Historic Preservation related sites that may be of help to Aurora at <http://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=623>.

➤ *National Trust for Historic Preservation Resources*

Guiding Principles addressed:⁴

- Protect and enhance Aurora's rich heritage and historic district, being mindful of what has been inherited.
- Use clear and objective design standards to encourage appropriate new development.
- Create strong visual gateways into and through Aurora and its historic district that reflect arrival to the village.
- Encourage maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping throughout the town.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has several resources that can assist Aurora in preserving its heritage. These include:

Share Your Heritage (see attachment) – this brochure can help Aurora define and market itself as a place for cultural heritage tourism. More information and resources are available at

⁴ Depending on how these resources are used, they could fulfill one or more of the guiding principles for Maintain Sense of Place.

www.culturalheritagetourism.org/fiveprinciples.htm
www.nationaltrust.org/heritage_tourism/index.html.

&

Community & Countryside (see attached) is a two-day educational workshop during which community leaders can learn from experts about the best tools for community revitalization and historic preservation and how to solve land-use management and community design challenges currently facing small towns and rural communities. Four workshops are planned for 2007 and 2008. For more information, contact: National Trust for Historic Preservation, Center for Preservation Leadership/PLT, 202-588-6223

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy for cities and towns nationwide. The program has four points: (1) organization; (2) promotion; (3) design; and (4) economic restructuring. Attached is a brief description of the program, as well as a questionnaire to assist Aurora in determining whether the Main Street Approach would be appropriate for the community. More information can be found at www.mainstreet.org/ (note, this is access through the Trust's Rural Heritage Page at http://www.nationaltrust.org/rural_heritage/).

➤ ***Community Volunteerism to Maintain Properties***

Guiding Principal addressed:⁵

- Encourage maintenance and upkeep of buildings and landscaping throughout the town.

Aurora could hold one or two community improvement days a year. While typically such events focus on public areas (parks, recreations centers), one or both of these days could focus on assisting the needy with home repairs or landscape upkeep. Need can be assessed based on financial need and/or need for physical assistance. A Committee should be formed to organize the event, with different people in charge of recruiting and assigning tasks to volunteers, signing up and prioritizing recipients of assistance and targeting local businesses for donations of cash and materials. This is an excellent opportunity to both improve maintenance of landscaping and buildings, as well as to involve the entire community. Recruiting can take place at community meetings, through advertising in the local newsletter, sending fliers to residents and posting fliers at the town hall, as well as through the schools. Volunteering at such events gives

⁵ Using community volunteerism to maintain and/or repair properties also addresses community involvement.

residents (both owners and renters) a sense of accomplishment and pride in community. These events have the added benefit of letting neighbors get to know one another.

To be effective, community improvement days will need to be combined with outreach programs. The cost of such outreach and the actual event should be minimal, as there will be a reliance on volunteers and donations. The first such event should be on a small scale, targeting 3 to 5 homes, depending on the number of volunteers and extent of work necessary. If professional contractors are available to donate time, more extensive home improvements may be undertaken with their supervision. To increase the effectiveness of such a program, an effort should be made to recruit volunteers and support from companies such as Comcast, which advertises its support for the community through volunteering (http://www.comcast.com/InTheCommunity/volunteer/volunteer_intro.html). Additionally, Aurora could explore partnering with a non-profit organization such as Rebuilding Together, whose purpose is

. . . preserve and revitalize houses and communities, assuring that low-income homeowners, particularly those who are elderly and disabled and families with children, live in warmth, safety and independence. Our goal is to make a sustainable impact in partnership with the community.

(www.rebuildingtogether.org/main-pages.php?page_id=main/about/natl_impact.php)

Finally, as suggested by a community member at the May 22, 2007 Open House, Aurora should enlist the assistance of high school students for community improvement days. This will have a mutual benefit of getting youth involved, while allowing the students to fulfill their community service requirements for graduation.

Maintain Sense of Place Attachments:

(The following excerpts are from the referenced webpages)

Heritage Tourism

(www.culturalheritagetourism.org/fiveprinciples.htm
www.nationaltrust.org/heritagetourism/index.html.)

&

The National Trust defines cultural heritage tourism as traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural resources.

The Heritage Tourism Program provides assistance ranging from [how-to cultural heritage tourism publications](#) to consulting services tailored to meet the needs of individual clients. [The National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program's experienced staff](#) provides fee-for-service assistance in heritage tourism development, management and marketing. The staff also works at the national level to track national trends, provide how-to training tools and programs and advocate for increased national support for heritage tourism.

Through years of experience the National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program has developed [five guiding principles](#) for successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism development as well as [four steps for getting started](#). These principles and steps have been adopted broadly across the United States and are also being used in Canada and several other international destinations. These principles and steps serve as the foundation of all of the work of the Heritage Tourism Program.

What are the [benefits of cultural heritage tourism](#)? Studies have consistently shown that cultural heritage travelers stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of travelers. A good cultural heritage tourism improves the quality of life for residents as well as serving visitors.

- [Heritage tourism success stories](#).
- [The latest Cultural Heritage Tourism Fact Sheet \(pdf\)](#).
- [Toolkit](#) for the National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations communities.
- [The Heritage Tourism program's Assessment and Recommendations for St. Augustine, Florida \(pdf\)](#).
- Learn more about successfully developing, promoting, and managing cultural heritage tourism at culturalheritagetourism.org—a website managed by the National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program on behalf of Partners in Tourism. (pdf)
- [Community assessment visits and recommendation reports](#)
- [Workshops on a variety of cultural heritage tourism topics](#).

How We Can Help

The Heritage Tourism Program provides consulting assistance in heritage tourism development, management and marketing. The program has developed a

nationwide network of partners and resources - an unparalleled benefit to anyone seeking to enhance or develop heritage tourism programs.

The program staff includes national leaders in the field of heritage tourism with extensive experience at the local, state and national level. In addition to our core staff, the Heritage Tourism Program taps into a network of specialized national experts to create project teams to match the needs of our clients. No other heritage tourism consulting firm offers our unique blend of extensive hands-on heritage tourism experience at the local level combined with a national perspective on cutting edge trends and insights into the latest funding opportunities for cultural heritage tourism.

Our goal is to work with clients, building local capacity and encouraging long term sustainability. Our staff works to complement local expertise and build from existing work rather than "reinventing the wheel." Among our services are—

- [Community assessment visits and recommendation reports](#)
- [Workshops on a variety of topics.](#)

Since the program began in 1989, we have assisted hundreds of heritage and cultural sites, communities, regions and states in assessing resources and creating plans for sustainable heritage tourism programs. Past clients have included state tourism offices, state preservation offices, state Main Street programs, scenic byway organizations and other clients at the regional and local level. The Heritage Tourism Program can provide cultural heritage tourism assessments, project coordination, planning, facilitation, presentations and training workshops.

Community & Countryside

What ?

Community & Countryside in Orange, Virginia, September 2006. Community & Countryside is a two-day educational workshop during which 30 community leaders learn from top experts about the best tools for community revitalization and historic preservation, and how to solve land-use management and community design challenges currently facing small towns and rural communities.

The goal of Community & Countryside is to provide community leaders with additional tools to respond to and anticipate local growth in ways that can conserve and enhance the historic, natural, and scenic assets of their communities. Using case studies, illustrated presentations, and small group activities, the program focuses intensively on the best practices of land-use planning, historic preservation, and community design. Major topics include:

- Design Changes in Rural America: The Forces at Work
- Dollars and Sense of Growing Smarter
- Design in Historic Areas: On Being Good Neighbors
- Retail Mix and Franchise Design in Historic Areas

- New Roadways and Bridges in Historic Places

Where and When?

The first program was held in Orange, Virginia, in September 2006. The four workshops have been planned in 2007 and 2008, in small towns and rural communities along the [Journey Through Hallowed Ground](#) corridor in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Who Should Come?

Led by national experts, the programs are designed for local elected and appointed decision-makers, including town council and county board members, planning and zoning commissioners, county attorneys, town managers and county administrators, as well as local civic and business leaders. *All participants must attend the full two-day program.*

Why Participate?

Community & Countryside focuses on an important aspect of community spirit and community integrity: the process of design. The program aims specifically to introduce community decision makers and leaders to the role of design in community planning. The faculty is drawn from national, state, and local experts, giving participants a balanced national perspective and a network of regional and local resources for the future.

Contact Information

For information on dates and locations of upcoming training opportunities, contact your National Trust Regional Office or:

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Center for Preservation Leadership/PLT
tel: 202.588.6067 fax: 202.588.6223, e-mail: plt@nthp.org

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ to commercial district revitalization

(www.mainstreet.org/)

The Four Points

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing Committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets — such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets — is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Section 2. Best Practices for Community Engagement Theme

The Aurora community will build upon its history of working together to control its future in the face of internal growth and external development pressures through increased volunteerism, community events, and activism. City leaders will continue to actively engage the community and develop partnerships with civic and professional organizations. Volunteers will help to inform the community of events and issues by reaching out to their neighbors.

Guiding Principles:

- Encourage the development of more gathering places (both public and private).
- Promote additional social activities for the community.
- Actively welcome new residents and businesses.
- Develop partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions, such as schools, counties, neighboring cities and special districts, to collaborate on issues of common interest and concern.
- Encourage and support increased volunteerism and individual contribution.
- Encourage community involvement in the process of shaping Aurora's future.
- Promote involvement and investment in Aurora youth.

Introduction

Recognizing the vital role of community engagement, the Planning Commission specifically requested recommendations on how the City of Aurora government can encourage dialogue with and keep the community engaged going forward at the outset of the Vision Aurora process. The community also recognizes the vital role of participation and emphasized community engagement in several focus area discussions during the Vision Aurora community-visioning workshop.

By working to maintain open communication, the Aurora government can guide future planning and development that better represents the choices and values of community members. Additionally, as Vision Aurora moves from the planning stage into implementation, active involvement by community members will be necessary to ensure the future Aurora is consistent with the 2017 Vision. Partnerships between government and community members and adoption of action items by individuals and organizations in Aurora will help make the 2017 Vision a reality. Addressing the dual nature of community engagement as a specific report element requested by the Planning Commission and a vital element of putting the 2017 Vision into action, lessons learned from the Vision Aurora process and best practices going forward are outlined below.

Lessons Learned from Vision Aurora

Hispanic Outreach

In an attempt to include the entire community in the Vision Aurora process, the consultants translated the survey and project information sheet into Spanish, personally distributing it to several households and a Spanish language church service. However, no Spanish surveys were returned and the planning team was unable to personally connect with Hispanic community members. Although there is not a large Hispanic community currently present in Aurora, the Hispanic population has been growing and comprises a sizable minority in Marion County. Therefore Aurora may want to reach out and engage this population in the future.

Ultimately the City will want to connect with Hispanic members of its own community. However, because it may initially be difficult to identify and engage with this population, Aurora can begin by reaching out to organizations serving the Hispanic community in neighboring towns, such as St. Patrick Catholic Church in Canby. Working with other organizations may help Aurora identify and connect with its own Hispanic community members.

Person to Person Outreach

Community members expressed throughout the project they prefer using personal outreach to increase volunteerism and participation in the future. While engaging the community throughout Vision Aurora, the consultants and Vision Committee members had the most success using personal forms of outreach, supporting the preferences of workshop participants. The community may want to establish a formal network of neighborhood and business representatives that could be used in future outreach efforts. The community could also establish a 2017 Vision Speaker's Bureau whose members talk to local groups about visioning and encourage participation in future activities.

Best Practices

➤ *Community Volunteerism*

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Encourage and support increased volunteerism and individual contribution

A method of increasing volunteerism and individual contribution that received considerable support at the community Visioning Workshop is to create an

inventory of resources skills and knowledge held within the Aurora community. *Asset Based Community Development*, developed by John Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, is a community development model that focuses on identifying and mobilizing assets in the community rather than focusing on needs and deficiencies. The model revolves around three principles:

- Identify assets: Focus on the assets present within the community.
- Develop from within: The process should be internally focused, drawing upon the assets and energy within the community.
- Build relationships: Communities mobilize resources by building and maintaining relationships among individuals, associations and institutions.

The first step in Kretzmann and McKnight's model is to inventory or "map" the assets of a community. Assets include individuals such as youth, elderly, artists, and business owners; associations such as neighborhood groups, churches, the historical society and the business association; and institutions such as schools, libraries and government agencies.

A community can identify its resources by conducting a detailed inventory of local groups and individuals. It is important to include skills and knowledge gained through informal experiences, such as family history, as well as those gained through formal educational or work related experiences. Creating and maintaining an updated inventory of assets located within Aurora can help promote information exchange among community members and identify resources to support future community efforts.

Aurora can use a variety of methods to create, distribute and utilize a resource inventory; this model is just one framework that may be useful. For more information visit the Asset Based Community Development Institute website at <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html>.

➤ ***Enhancing Aurora's Gathering Spaces***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Encourage the development of more gathering places

Developing new gathering places can do more than just provide a place for people to hang out. It can encourage volunteerism by involving the community in development of the space, increase tourism by enhancing a town's appeal, contribute to local economies by incorporating business development and improve public health by providing additional recreational opportunities.

Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating and sustaining places that build communities, suggests the following principles for creating great community gathering places:

- Listen to community preferences and utilize existing resources when developing a gathering place. This may include involving community partners, inviting youth to contribute art projects and utilizing the skills of community members to construct the place.
- Observe community behavior and create places that support existing or desired activities. If community youth hang out in a certain location, developing a park or activity in the space may contribute to their enjoyment.
- Combine elements to enhance places and promote community interaction. A bench and wastebasket may draw people to a space, but by adding an informational kiosk you can draw more people and stimulate conversation.
- Create gathering places that are flexible and accommodate a variety of different uses. Movable seating allows people to adjust a place to fit their needs. The addition of a tent can provide a setting for a variety of different community events.
- Increase activity in a place by incorporating elements such as a water fountain or food vendor that draw people to interact with the space.
- Be mindful of minor details that increase the comfort of users, such as signs, lighting and tents or trees that provide shelter from the elements.

For more information about these suggestions and detailed examples, visit the Project for Public Spaces website at www.pps.org.

➤ *Increasing Involvement in Aurora's Future*

Guiding Principles addressed:

- Promote additional social activities for the community
- Encourage community involvement in the process of shaping Aurora's future

The Aurora community can fulfill the guiding principles of promoting additional social activities and encouraging involvement in shaping Aurora's future by sponsoring events that relate to planning and development. Hillsboro holds an annual town hall meeting to celebrate ongoing activities related to its vision, Hillsboro 2020. In addition to discussing annual progress toward achieving Vision goals and soliciting feedback about implementation, the event includes performances by local dance and music groups and distributes door prizes to liven up the evening and encourage attendance. Competitions may also be a useful way to build excitement and encourage involvement in shaping the future. By incorporating fun activities into an annual vision town hall meeting, a community can increase attendance and generate positive energy to channel into future planning and development efforts. For more information on Hillsboro 2020 Town Hall, visit their website at <http://www.hillsboro2020.org>.

➤ ***Increase Community Communication***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Encourage community involvement in the process of shaping Aurora's future

Another method to encourage community involvement in shaping Aurora's future is to increase communication within the community and between City officials and community members. Expanding the City's website received strong support at the Vision Aurora community visioning workshop. Providing access to City documents, roles and responsibilities of City officials, a calendar of events and contact information for City staff and elected officials are vital elements of basic communication.

The City could expand web-based communication by hosting a forum or internet blog on its website, where all community members can post statements and ideas related to City issues, including the 2017 Vision. Although not widely used as a visioning tool in the past, internet blogs are increasingly being used to promote community dialogue by cities and community organizations. The University of Washington recently created a vision and incorporated an internet blog into the set of outreach and communication tools. Visit the UW Vision blog at <http://depts.washington.edu/uwvision/wordpress/>.

Section 3. Best Practices for Managed Growth Theme

Aurora experienced fast residential growth following the completion of the sewer system in 2001. In the next ten years, Aurora will work to establish clear standards and targets for balanced residential, commercial and industrial development to provide an expanded revenue base, allowing for the provision of public infrastructure and city services. Balanced development will help to ensure that infrastructure and city services keep pace with growth.

Guiding Principles:

- o Retain and encourage small businesses and restaurants in commercial areas to serve both residents and tourists.
- o Encourage a balance of residential, commercial and light industrial growth in appropriate areas.
- o Promote economic development through commercial and industrial growth to provide an expanded revenue base.
- o Create appropriate transitions between industrial, commercial and residential uses in newly developing areas.
- o Create a “main street” feel along 99E through appropriate commercial and mixed uses and appropriate gateway standards, to provide a transition between the undeveloped areas along 99E and adjacent residential uses.
- o Work to control growth inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and influence forces outside the UGB to ensure viable balanced economic growth.
- o Work to ensure that the expansion of services and industry at and around the airport protect the livability of Aurora.
- o Work to limit impacts on surrounding agricultural uses, recognizing the importance of this industry to Aurora and the region.

Introduction

The City of Aurora will continue to experience growth in the future. While state law prohibits the City from excluding all future growth, it does provide the tools to mold future growth in a way that minimizes its worst qualities and maximizes its contribution to the community. Additionally, state agencies such as ODOT and DLCDC have invested time and resources in the development of handbooks that can guide small towns like Aurora in achieving its vision, many of which are referenced below.

While most small towns in the US are on the decline, Aurora's economic position is quite strong, as evidenced by data showing increased growth in the number of businesses and employees within and around the City. Additionally, Aurora is ideally situated in a growing region with access to several airports, rail lines, and

Interstate 5 and State Highway 99E. Lastly, the historic identity of the town can be a strong promotion tool in attracting small businesses that can contribute to Aurora's sense of place.

Best Practices

➤ *Economic Development*

Guiding Principles addressed:

- o Retain and encourage small businesses and restaurants in commercial area that can serve both residents and tourists.
- o Encourage a balance of residential, commercial and light industrial growth in appropriate areas.
- o Promote economic development through the commercial and industrial growth that is needed to provide an expanded revenue base.

Economic development is a goal common to most small communities across the country. A common shortfall of economic development strategies for small towns is seeking a “quick fix” solution to replace lost jobs or declining local tax revenue through the aggressive attraction of a single employer, usually through generous tax concessions. This type of approach may result in little to no expansion of the tax base and an overdependence on a single source of jobs. The key to sustainable economic development is diversification and patience.

The Small Town Planning Handbook offers the following four principles of action toward the development of a sound economic development strategy:

1. Plugging the leaks
2. Invest in yourself
3. Encourage new local enterprise
4. Recruit appropriate new business

The first two actions primarily address the retail and services sectors of the economy. “Plugging the leaks” refers to the exporting of retail and service dollars to businesses in other towns. While retail sales of groceries and other household goods are the most obvious loss of economic stimulus, the service industry is also a significant “leak”, especially with regard to health care. “Invest in yourself” refers to revitalizing the commercial district and infrastructure investment. This may involve identifying the uniqueness of your place and building on it. The uniqueness of Aurora may be its historic identity and antique businesses. As mentioned under Best Practices: Maintain Sense of Place, this identity can be built upon with special events that celebrate it and attract regional attention.

The last two actions primarily address new business development. “Encourage new local enterprise,” reflects the fact that four out of five new jobs in the United States are created by small businesses. One of the most common and successful ways to encourage small business development is the creation of a business incubator program. They not only create jobs, but also promise a more diversified economy. These programs are common in rural areas, especially in the Midwest and address the three main barriers faced by new businesses: high overhead, undercapitalization, and poor management. A business incubator program will typically feature a flexible, affordable space, shared clerical services and office equipment, and advice on management and financial matters. Grand Junction, Colorado (pop. 50,000) established a “kitchen incubator” operated by a nonprofit to allow manufacturers of jellies, jams and other processed foods to utilize a large professional kitchen instead of spending \$50,000 or more to build a maintain a professional one.

The “recruit appropriate new business” action requires local officials to be aware of regional and national economic trends and identify ways in which Aurora offers an attractive business environment for commerce that complements and respects the livability of the community. New businesses should also be of an appropriate size to respect the small town feel of Aurora. This should not be difficult considering that most new jobs are created in service industries by companies with less than 20 employees. Companies of this size have a high potential for fitting in well with the community.

For more information on economic development in small towns, see *The Small Town Planning Handbook* published by the American Planning Association. Additionally, finding seed money for the establishment of an economic development organization should be directed, but not limited to, the following organizations:

Oregon Office of the Small Business Administration: <http://www.sba.gov/or/>

Economic Development Administration (for funding infrastructure in support of economic development): <http://www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Investments.xml>

US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Administration: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

➤ ***Main Street and Appropriate Commercial Development in and Adjacent to the Historic District***

Guiding Principles Addressed:

- o Retain and encourage small businesses and restaurants in commercial areas that can serve both residents and tourists.

- o Create a “main street” feel along 99E through appropriate commercial and mixed uses and appropriate gateway standards.

As mentioned earlier, building upon Aurora’s historic identity can be a key component of a successful economic development strategy and perhaps the most obvious way to do so is to improve the streetscape and commercial environment along highway 99E. Fortunately, Oregon Department of Transportation has created the *Main Street Handbook* to assist in the transformation of 99E into an asset for the community. Case studies for highways in Heppner, Newberg, and Sisters provide examples of design features utilized on state highways that are more conducive to pedestrians, bikes, and businesses such as on-street parking, bike lanes, crosswalks and center medians, under-grounded utilities, pedestrian-scale lighting, and street trees.

Cascade Avenue in Sisters, Oregon also provides an example of appropriate development scale on a main street for a small town. Storefront upgrades and sidewalk development extended the main business district further than before, while street parking was added on each block. The city also aggressively pursued a design approach that mimicked an “Old Western” building style, which is not advocated by most historic preservation professionals because new development designed to mimic historic architecture “competes” with original structures. Design guidelines provided in the *Aurora Master Plan Report*, if applied to new development on 99E, may achieve many of the same objectives of creating a desired place for business. The City of Aurora has other resources available to it to assist in encouraging appropriate development on 99E, such as the *Commercial and Mixed-Use Development Code Handbook* and *Model Development Code for Small Cities*, both of which are designed for Oregon cities. The former may be used to supplement or update design guidelines for new development while the latter may be used to ensure the proper zoning mechanisms are in place for appropriate development to occur. Also, while Sisters focused on attracting tourism as an economic development tool, the approach of creating an attractive, cohesive commercial district can be used to attract and retain small retail and service industry businesses from the local and surrounding community as an alternative to more distant or less attractive commercial districts in surrounding cities.

The *Main Street Handbook* can be found online at <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/docs/mainstreet.pdf>.

Additional resources for guiding appropriate commercial and mixed-use development are:

Commercial and Mixed-Use Development Code Handbook at: <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/docs/publications/commmixedusecode.pdf>

Model Development Code for Small Cities at:
<http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/modelCode05.shtml>

Section 4. Best Practices for Transportation Theme

Aurora will work to create safe and efficient modes of travel for automobiles, pedestrians and cyclists. Aurora will increase connections between neighborhoods. The Aurora community will work collaboratively with the County and State agencies to integrate major thoroughfares into the community.

Guiding Principles:

- Utilize traffic calming techniques on 99E and other streets to promote safety.
- Improve local streets through innovative means.
- Create safe, convenient and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes providing for connections throughout the community.

Introduction

According to rural area classifications presented by the Federal Highway Administration, the City of Aurora is classified as “urban boundary rural.” The city borders the Portland metropolitan area, is highly developed, and most of the economic activity, population, and transportation systems are tied to an urban center. Similar to other urban boundary rural areas, the City of Aurora has experienced increased population growth and is interested in maintaining its rural atmosphere while stimulating economic activity.

In order to meet its transportation needs, the City of Aurora depends on developing strong connections with state and regional transportation authorities. The purpose is to ensure their own needs are protected, while at the same time tapping into necessary funding sources that meet regional and statewide interests. It is important that the City of Aurora maintain connections regionally. Allowing intermodal regional traffic on roads, by rail, or air, can do this.

Best Practices

➤ *Traffic Calming Techniques*

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Utilize traffic calming techniques on 99E and other streets to promote safety.

Many traffic calming techniques can be utilized to slow the flow of traffic and provide safe pedestrian access across busy streets. The goal is to reduce traffic speeds and restrict traffic volumes. Many traffic calming measures include lowering speed limits, creating gateways or other landscape aimed at stimulating a response at a certain point by drivers that they are entering a certain area and need to slow down or even stop to enjoy what the area has to offer, signs, road markings such as a different pavement color or through other uses of contrasts in color and texture such as through the use of rumble strips, narrowing of the road using chicanes, an “S” bend reducing speed by forcing drivers through in a single file, or other treatments such as curb extensions, and speed enforcement.

In addition to standard traffic calming techniques, many areas can manage their access points, or how well vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, enter and exit major roads like 99E. Good access points, such as shared streets between destinations, help ensure the flow of the roadway, but at the same time consider the safety of the driver, bicyclist, or pedestrian. Access management helps to minimize the number of conflict points from turning, thereby reducing the risk of a crash as well as minimizing congestion.

Finally, a bypass route may be an effective means to keep regional traffic, especially freight traffic, outside the downtown area, thereby allowing the Aurora to concentrate local efforts on maintaining the village core of historic sites and antique stores in the downtown area. More emphasis could be placed on providing parking and sidewalks in the downtown area. It is recommended that the feasibility of a bypass route be explored with the State, including consideration of funding sources that may or may not change as a result of the bypass.

More information on traffic calming can be found at the following website: <http://www.ite.org/traffic/tcstate.htm#tcsop>.

➤ ***Innovative Street Improvement***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Improve local streets through innovative means.

Innovative street improvements include ensuring, functionally, the best transportation and traffic management practices are used, projects are low cost, maintain the sense of place Aurora wants to preserve, and it is ecologically friendly. Many innovative street improvements aim to calm traffic and have been presented in the preceding section. In the City of Aurora, not only do the streets have to be safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, but their design has to reflect the village atmosphere.

Innovative street improvements do not have to involve the utilization of the most advanced roadway design features available on the market. Removing roadway markings on streets may be a suitable solution that achieves the objectives of providing a means of access for motorists, safe pedestrian and bicycle conditions, and maintains the village atmosphere in Aurora. In the United Kingdom, the marking on one street was removed and stones placed on the outside to preserve the rural atmosphere (<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/webfiles/Info%20sheets/Rural%20road%20traffic%20calming.pdf>).

Many cities have used bioswales, “gentle drainage trenches planted with water-purifying vegetation” (<http://www.earthministry.org/3e/pmap/infrastructure.htm>), as a solution to landscape streets while providing a permeable surface for rainwater to gradually seep into the ground. Bioswales can be built into the side of the street to slow traffic, manage storm water runoff, preserve the historical and cultural features of the community, improve the aesthetic quality of the community, and support the economic vitality of the community. The use of bioswales in Aurora would also address guiding principles mentioned in the *Greenspace and recreation* theme.

In order to improve streets, adequate data must be collected on the volumes and usage of the road. Intelligent transportation systems have long been an essential component of the transportation system. Rural areas and small communities can benefit as well from the use of such devices as variable message signs to notify drivers, for example, that they are speeding. These signs can be activated by a movement by an approaching vehicle for personal message delivery. Another type of device that can be used is satellite communication to ensure the speedy response of emergency responders in the event of a collision on 99E or another roadway.

➤ ***Enhancing Connectivity***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Create safe, convenient, attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes providing for connections throughout the community.

The City of Aurora is known for its antique stores. This thriving business center attracts tourists from all over the state. Safe pedestrian access is needed to ensure the steady flow of tourists and shoppers to Aurora. Additionally, the City of Aurora residents spend a lot of time walking the streets of their community. For both the tourists and local residents, it is important that safe, convenient, attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes that are connected throughout the community be provided.

Traffic calming techniques may make it safe for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate, but other treatments such as a marked crosswalk and refuge in the

middle of the road, as well as adequate signage and lighting, particularly on major streets such as 99E, can help provide safe access as well. For bicyclists, bicycle lanes should be painted on the ground in areas where traffic volumes are high. In some areas, underground bike tunnels have been built to provide safe access. All these treatments work to separate the pedestrian and bicyclist from the roadway.

Connectivity of all pedestrian and bicycle pathways are important in promoting residents to ride a bicycle and walk. They also help to establish a set pathway motorists know about and respond accordingly by slowing down. Finally, they add to the community recreationally and aesthetically, providing a livable and healthy environment for residents. Creating connectivity may involve acquiring right of way, however, to avoid these issues or as a temporary measure, an informal bicycle and pedestrian map can be produced. Connectivity can also be incorporated by allowing that new development is built not in an isolated manner, such as a suburban subdivision, but through the use of a more integrated street network throughout the community. Where subdivisions are already in place, paved pedestrian pathways can be built connecting one subdivision to the next. For more information visit the following website: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/engineering/connectivity.cfm>.

On a larger scale, it may be possible to form alliances with surrounding jurisdictions to explore the feasibility of a larger network of trails regionally. Katy Trail, a 233 mile long trail was built in Missouri (<http://ntl.bts.gov/ruraltransport/toolbox/index.html#USDA%20AND%20USDOT%20PROGRAM%20EXAMPLES>), and runs across the state. The trail was built using hard-packed, crushed limestone, a resource prevalent in Missouri, which can be used for wheelchair, bicycle, and pedestrian access. Many of the surrounding communities benefited from the DOT Transportation Enhancement, State of Missouri, and a private benefactor funded project.

➤ *Funding Sources*

The United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) recognizes the importance rural areas and small communities have in the role of providing multimodal and intermodal transportation in their area and regionally. To help rural areas and small communities achieve their transportation goals and “ensure the quality of life and economy is maintained and enhanced”, the USDOT started a Rural Transportation Initiative in May 1999. Their goal is to ensure rural areas and small communities “share in the mobility, economic, and social benefits that many USDOT programs provide” through providing assistance in planning, decision making, technical assistance in writing plans and studies, conducting evaluations, and funding through grants.

The USDOT identifies their objectives as:

- Improve safety to reduce the human and material costs that are unintended consequences of the operation of the transportation systems in rural areas;
- Allow residents of rural areas and small communities access to the destinations and goods to attain their desired quality of life;
- Provide the transportation service that will afford rural areas and small communities the opportunity to reach their economic growth and trade potential;
- Enhance the social strength and cohesiveness of small communities and protect the natural environment of rural areas; and
- Maintain the national security and border integrity necessary for the well being of all Americans.

More information on funding sources can be found at the following website:

http://www.communityinvestmentnetwork.org/single-news-item-states/article/us-department-of-transportation-rural-transportation-initiative/?tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=1095&cHash=f5809e99b1

Other funding sources are available through USDOT and the US Department of Agriculture and can be found at the following website:

<http://ntl.bts.gov/ruraltransport/toolbox/index.html>.

It is recommended that the City of Aurora develop a long-range funding program for their transportation system to ensure the maintenance of adequate transportation facilities as the City grows.

Section 5. Best Practices for Greenspace and Recreation Theme

Aurora will retain and enhance existing parks and greenspace and work to create additional parks, recreational opportunities and interaction with natural areas. These amenities will not only increase livability for residents, but also help make Aurora a destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Guiding Principles:

- Develop additional parks.
- Maintain green buffer around Aurora by supporting local agricultural industry and maintenance of open space.
- Develop multi-use trails for pedestrians and cyclists for both transportation and recreation.
- Be mindful of our impact on the environment in the decision making process.
- Retain and encourage appropriate landscaping throughout the city for its importance to the livability of Aurora.

Introduction

Planning with the surrounding environment in mind provides many benefits to communities. A healthier community environment, which includes access to recreation and greenspace, results in physically and mentally healthier citizens. Additionally, planning to mitigate impacts on the environment will minimize costs associated with the negative effects of growth. The increased livability experienced by visitors and residents will draw more people to visit and invest energy and money in Aurora.

Best Practices

➤ ***Landscaping***

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Retain and encourage appropriate landscaping throughout the city for its importance to the livability of Aurora.

The function and importance of the planted environment within a city cannot be overemphasized. Trees and vegetative landscaping are not only aesthetically pleasing, they provide shade and cooling to an area, collect and filter runoff, reduce erosion, improve air quality, and increase privacy. Research also supports that tree lined streets serve as a traffic-calming device. The canopy gives the road

a narrower appearance, thereby influencing the driver to slow down. The livability of a city is increased on many fronts with the greater presence of landscaping.

While Aurora will want to consider adopting citywide landscape guidelines or standards, educating, promoting and incorporating the planted environment into the town's fabric would be initial easy actions. This approach would also assist people in choosing to plant and retain, rather than feeling they are being forced to comply.

Metro, in the Portland Region, has put together a series of books and resources for helping communities of any size create more livable and green streets. Specifically Metro's *Trees for Green Streets Guide* identifies what to consider when planting trees and landscaping in the urban environment. The guidebook also provides direction on how to retain trees when modifying or updating streets. Probably the most useful part of the guide is the page-by-page descriptions of suggested trees for urban areas. By providing the user with details of how the tree grows, what it will look like, and maintenance needs, people can choose a tree they will love and have the ability to maintain.

As the cost and time of maintaining landscaping can be a deterrent to planting or create problems with upkeep, Metro suggests several strategies from the onset. They are summarized here:

- Before choosing vegetation, become familiar with the life cycle, growth rate, space requirement and pruning needs of the plant or tree.
- Choose the appropriate space and soil for the tree. Be aware of conflicts that may occur with sidewalks, utility lines, and compact or not-well drained soils.
- Planting natives, or planting species that can survive wet winters and dry summers is best.
- Consistent maintenance in the first three years including: pruning, watering, weed removal, mulching, and not applying herbicides, will assist the vegetation in easily reaching adulthood.

Aurora could modify this guidebook to better meet its needs and circulate the revised version to residents and businesses. The City, Parks Committee, or business leaders could assist neighborhoods in organizing tree planting and maintenance events. Aurora could approach the local nurseries to arrange for either donations or discounts to coincide with the tree event days or possibly even a workshop on landscaping. Since certain trees and vegetation will do better and be easier to maintain, arrange with the nurseries so that any donation or discount applies only to such species. In the alternative, make sure the consumer receives the deal after receiving an educational brochure or going to the workshop.

The trees and landscaping in Aurora could also be incorporated more into the fabric of the town by creating a tree walk brochure, or possibly having a tree or garden tour day. Considering the historical heritage in Aurora, the walk or event might consider incorporating trees with a long history or unique story in the community.

More information about tools for planning greener streets can be found on the Metro website: www.metro-region.org

Copies of their manuals are available for free by going directly to Metro, 600 NE Grand, Portland, or they can be ordered online at <http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleID=235>

➤ *Environmental Awareness*

Guiding Principle addressed:

- Be mindful of our impact on the environment in the decision making process.

There is no set definition of what constitutes good environmental planning. Federal, state, and local laws have outlined certain environmental standards areas must comply with. Still, what constitutes good environmental planning and policy is subject to great variation individual-to-individual, and law-to-law.

Small communities face extra challenges when trying to plan and manage for the environment. Financial and administrative resources are usually tight and have to be divided up amongst several competing uses. Regardless, communities recognize environmental planning is much more than just complying with standards. It's also about creating healthier and more livable communities.

Small and rural towns across the nation agree the best way to be mindful of the environment is to start by creating a community environmental plan. Similar to the visioning process Aurora just went through, creating a community environmental plan involves identifying the environmental responsibilities, needs, and priorities of your town and then determining how you will get meet them. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has done extensive research and has provided assistance to small communities trying to create such plans. They say a community environmental plan also allows you to:

- Provide a sensible way for your community to set priorities and decide how to make the best use of your resources to protect people's health and the environment.
- Help your community save money—by dealing with issues before they become big problems, by making sure that environmental services are provided in the most efficient way possible, by planning to use the right

combination of environmental programs and services, by working with other communities where possible, and by making use of local talent and resources. A plan also will help you take advantage of opportunities to prevent pollution, the cheapest and most effective solution of all.

- Provide a blueprint for compliance with the environmental regulations that affect your community, to help you avoid the need to react to enforcement actions by state, county, or federal agencies.
- Empower your community to take charge of its own destiny by charting its best course.
- Build community awareness and support for actions (such as possible rate increases) that you, the decision-maker, must take to protect public health and the quality of the environment.
- Help promote the economic health and well-being of your community by providing the environment, infrastructure, and quality of life that make your community a good place to live and to do business.

The EPA has put together a detailed guide on how small communities can develop an environmental plan. Included in the guide is discussion of how to act on and maintain the priorities and needs identified, and lists of feasible solutions for common environmental problems. The guide can be found at <http://www.gdrc.org/decision/smallcom.pdf>

Additionally the EPA has a website to assist small communities with compliance and enforcement of environmental standards through incentive based programs. More information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/incentives/smallcommunities/index.html>

VI. PLAN REVIEW

Introduction

After the adoption of the 1995 vision, Aurora updated its Comprehensive Plan. The 1995 vision formed the basis for the updated Comprehensive Plan, which was acknowledged in 2002. Other plans adopted since the 1995 visioning include the Master Plan Report (2000), Transportation System Plan (TSP)(January 8th, 2002) and Parks (drafted in October 2005). Because these plans were based on the 1995 vision, the new vision provides an opportunity to update the plans and strengthen their connection to the new vision. Additionally, as discussed in the following sections, update of the plans is recommended, given the recent unprecedented growth experienced by Aurora beginning in 2000.

The following is an outline contains recommendations of areas (1) of the plans that should be updated and (2) where ties and references to the vision can be strengthened. The following is meant as a starting point for developing a framework for implementation of the new vision. Completion of the action plan, framework of which is provided in Chapter VII , will provide further guidance for updating the city plans.

Section 1. Comprehensive Plan

The current Comprehensive Plan was drafted prior to the completion of the sewer system in 2001. The County based its projected growth rate of 1.4% on the lack of sewer system (and resulting need for larger lots to accommodate septic systems). The City had a projected a growth rate of 2.8%, taking into consideration the then soon to be completed sewer system. Based on these forecasts, the plan was written as a twenty-year plan. Aurora's actual growth rate since 2000 has far exceeded all expectation, and the city has met its target population set forth in the current plan in ten years. Because of this unexpected growth, along with the new vision, it is recommended that comprehensive plan be updated within the next five years.

Update

(Note: Italicized references are to sections of the Comprehensive Plan)

I. Introduction. Section I.A (Citizen Participation) of the introduction should be updated to reflect recent citizen participation efforts, including the annexation ballot measure in 2006, which gave rise to the current visioning process, as well as the current visioning process. The paragraph on periodic review will, likewise, need to be updated. *Section I.B* (Planning History) should be updated to include actual rates of growth and the process for updating the plan subsequent to the 2007 visioning process. Specifically, the fourth paragraph in this section should be updated to reflect actual growth since the installation of the sewer system. If the Planning Commission and City Council adopt the vision statement produced as a result of the 2007 visioning process, *Section I.C* (Vision Statement) will need to be replaced. *Section I.D* (Gateway Properties) will need to be updated to reflect actual growth after construction of the sewer system, as well as the new vision for Aurora. This should include expanding the reference to “village atmosphere” should be expanded to the definition now provided under the “maintain sense of place” section of the vision.

II. Background Analysis and Findings. The introduction should be updated to reflect the plans referenced in this section, as well as any additional plans adopted or studies conducted since the 2002 update. *Section II.A* (Declared Future) will need to be updated to reflect the new vision. *Section II.B* (Growth and Urbanization) needs updating to reflect recent population growth. New population forecasts should be preformed for *Section II.B.2* (Population Projections). Given the recent growth and the updated forecasts to be preformed, projected housing needs (*Section II.B.3*) and the land use and buildable lands inventory (*Section II.B.4*) must be updated.

III. Local Economy. References to median family income and percentage of wage earners that commute in the introduction to this section need to be updated. If the comprehensive plan is updated prior to the 2010 Census, the source of this information, including the date, should be included.

Acreages set forth in *Sections III.A* (Commercial Areas), *III.B* (Industrial Areas) and *III.C* (Potential Development) will need to be updated based on recent development trends, as well as the updated inventories and forecasts in Section II. Also, the nature of businesses in and around Aurora should be updated in these sections. Reference to the lack of sewer needs to be removed. However, the need for increased capacity of the existing sewer may need to be added.

VI. Public Facilities. This section will need updating to reflect the construction of the sewer system in 2001, and the projected date of reaching capacity. Both the introduction and individual sections will need to be updated.

VII. Transportation. Updates to this section should include reference to plans that have been adopted since 2001, and any other progress made in achieving transportation systems. Specific references are made to the 1995 Vision in sections *VII.F* (Local Streets and Ways) and *VII.H* (Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities). These sections will need updating to reflect the new vision.

VIII. Growth Management. This section needs an introduction explaining recent growth trends, which should be reiterated in *Section VIII.B* (Growth Management Framework). *Section VIII.B* will also need to be updated to reflect the change in law on annexation. The inventories of land use, developed lands and vacant land in *Section VIII.A* (Urban Growth Boundary) will need to be updated to reflect growth since 2000.

IX. Policies. Based on recommendations of the PSU team, *Section IX.B* (Citizen Participation) should be updated. *Sections IX.C* (Planning Process) and *IX.D* (Growth and Urbanization) can be updated to reflect the new vision on managed growth, and *Sections IX.E* (Open Spaces and Natural Resources) and *IX.F* (Air, Water and Land Resources) updated to meet the new vision regarding greenspace and enhanced livability. *Section IX.K* (Economic Policies) should be updated to reflect the need for a more diversified revenue base by encouraging commercial and industrial development. *Section IX.N* (Transportation Policies) should be updated to reflect the vision for 99E, as well as providing bicycle and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods.

Strengthen Connection to Vision Statement

Section I.D. (Gateway Properties). Given the reference to “village atmosphere” in this section, and the definition of this term in the new vision, there is opportunity to strengthen the connection to the new vision.

Updated population and growth projections and land use and buildable needs analysis under *Section II* should be performed with the vision in mind. Particular attention should be given to the desire for attaining a better balance between residential, commercial and industrial growth, as well as the need for infrastructure and city services keep pace with growth.

The introduction to *Section III* (Local Economy) should include a statement of the vision for the future economy of Aurora, as set forth in the managed growth statement of the vision.

Section IV deals with the Historic District of Aurora, with *Section IV.A* discussing the history of the Aurora Colony. It would be interesting to tie the Vision to the founding principles of the city and illustrate any parallels.

For *Section V* (Resource Inventories), an introduction should be added tying the desires of the community, as reflected in the vision, to natural resources in and around the city. For example, note could be made of desires for additional open spaces and multi-purpose trails.

Section VII.F (Local Streets and Ways) refers to the vision calling for a “walkable village” atmosphere, without saying more. This statement should be elaborated upon and include references to the new vision for bicycle and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods.

The new vision for growth should be added to *Section VIII* (Growth Management).

Connection to the vision should be strengthened and elaborated upon in *Section IX.A* (Policies – Overall objectives).

Section 2. Transportation System Plan

The Transportation System Plan (TSP) is a long range plan addressing federal and state regulations. The TSP serves as a guide for the City of Aurora to manage its existing transportation facilities and plan for the development of future transportation facilities through the year 2018. It includes the transportation goals for the City, a transportation system inventory, transportation improvement alternatives, each evaluated to a set criteria, and standards.

Connection to the 1995 Vision Statement

One of the concepts contained in the 1995 Vision Statement was innovative infrastructure. Within this concept, the 1995 Vision Statement focuses primarily on the following areas with respect to transportation:

- Traffic Impacts: Efficient transportation system / managed traffic growth / congestion
- Innovative Transportation Alternatives (selecting the best alternative)
- Balanced / Multi-modal Transportation System
- Agency and Government Coordination (but mostly with respect to managing traffic growth)
- Environmental Impacts
- Public Involvement
- Safety
- Work – Job Connectivity (from Diverse Employment Opportunities)

How the TSP Connects to 1995 Vision Statement:

The TSP consists of seven transportation goals, each with relevant objectives and policies.

- Goal 1 Preserve the function, capacity, level of service, and safety of the state highway.
- Goal 2 Improve and enhance safety and traffic circulation and preserve the level of service on local street systems.
- Goal 3 Identify the 20-year roadway system needs to accommodate developing or undeveloped areas without undermining the current nature of the City of Aurora.
- Goal 4 Increase the use of alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycling, rideshare/carpooling, and transit) through improved access, safety, and service. This shall be done in a manner consistent with the historic nature of Aurora.

- Goal 5 Provide and encourage a safe, convenient and economic transportation system.
- Goal 6 Ensure that the road system within the city is adequate to meet public needs.
- Goal 7 Improve coordination among the City of Aurora, Marion County, and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The TSP goals are adequately aligned to the innovative infrastructures concept from the 1995 Vision Statement, especially with regards to promoting an efficient and balanced transportation system. The TSP goes beyond directly meeting transportation needs by addressing other concepts from the 1995 Vision Statement. In several of the objectives under the transportation goals, the need for consistency with the historical preservation goals and historic look of the town is mentioned (e.g. Goal 1, Policy B, 2-1 / Goal 2, Objective F, 2-2). Finally, the selected alternative addressing improvements to Highway 99E, which improves the “main street” of Aurora by providing additional parking, access for trucks to load and unload goods and services, meets the Vision by meeting the criteria of improving pedestrian safety, maintaining circulation of traffic, and minimizing cost.

When drawing connections between the 1995 Vision Statement and the TSP, there was one primary concern. The concepts and sub-concepts in the 1995 Vision Statement were not broken down into specifics. For instance, the concept, “promoting an efficient, balanced transportation system” can be further broken down into an efficient system and a balanced system. Breaking the concepts down into specifics allows the Planning Commission to easily determine whether or not the elements of the TSP meet the concepts identified in the Vision Statement. It is recommended that in the Vision update, this be addressed.

Updates to the TSP

The TSP could be updated to include a section on public involvement. Although the public’s desires were addressed, for example, in providing suitable transit solutions, the TSP document did not include how the public involvement process would work.

Connection to the 2017 Vision

The new Vision for the City of Aurora with regards to the transportation theme is:

Aurora will work to create safe and efficient modes of travel for automobiles, pedestrians and cyclists. Aurora will increase connections between neighborhoods. The Aurora community will work collaboratively with the County and State agencies to integrate major thoroughfares into the community.

Guiding Principles:

- Utilize traffic calming techniques on 99E and other streets to promote safety.
- Improve local streets through innovative means.
- Create safe, convenient and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes providing for connections throughout the community.

Updates to the TSP:

No major updates to the TSP are necessary. The TSP already meets the time range for the new vision, which is to go into effect up and through the year 2017. The TSP is also aligned with the new Vision's theme on transportation and its guiding principles, which now includes a guiding principle on connectivity.

A public involvement section in the TSP could be included. Although the new Vision theme of transportation does not address public involvement, public involvement is included within the Community Engagement theme of the new Vision.

Section 3. Master Plan Report

The current Master Plan Report, adopted in 2000, only five years after the adopted of 1995 vision statement, appropriately includes reference to the visioning process and statement as guiding the development of the report. The report appears to be consistent with the proposed Aurora Vision. As such, the only change that may be needed is a reference to the consistency of this document with the new Aurora Vision.

Updates

Introduction. The 1995 vision is referenced as a guiding document in developing this report. This section should be updated to mention that the report is consistent with the new Aurora Vision.

Background. Reference to “heavy traffic” identified by the community from the 1995 visioning process could be qualified as coming from the prior visioning process and expanded to include related findings from the current visioning process.

Traffic Intersections. The “proposed” traffic diversion project at the Ehlen Road-99E-Liberty Street intersection is complete. The report could be updated to reflect this situation. Other physical changes made to intersections identified in the report could be updated, as appropriate.

Intersections. The specific recommendations for improvements to intersections may be irrelevant if improvements have already been made to those intersections.

Additionally, the Gateway design standards were adopted by the City of Aurora following the completion of this report. While this report focuses on the historic commercial district, an updated version of this report may describe the adoption of the Gateway standards (and any revisions made thereto) and reevaluate the proper relationship between those standards to the ones suggested by the report for commercial infill to provide appropriate transitions and/or continuity of design for the community. The Aurora Vision, if used as the foundation for any further changes to the Gateway standards, may be referenced as the guiding document.

Strengthen Connection to Vision Statement

While not directly mentioned throughout the report, the 1995 vision has influenced the development of the report on a deeper level in its attention to the character of the community by promoting a historically-sensitive and well-

landscaped streetscape. These themes are shared by the proposed Aurora Vision under its discussion of “Maintain sense of place” and its *Guiding Principles* should be described specifically in the *Introduction* section of the report.

The *Background* section of the report may still reference the 1995 Vision as its inspiration, but should recognize that updates to the report have been guided the proposed Aurora Vision.

Following the development of an action plan with more detailed implementation ideas supported by the community, updates to each of the *Design Elements* subsections (including Vehicular Traffic Lanes, Traffic Intersections, Curbs, Parking, etc.) should be made as appropriate, recognizing the appropriate Vision Aurora *Guiding Principles*. Doing this would provide the report greater standing as a document intended to influence development within the community.

Section 4. Parks Master Plan

The current park master plan, adopted in 2005, includes a single passing reference to the 1995 visioning process. The plan acknowledges rapid residential growth following the sewer completion in 2001, and the growth limitations imposed by sewer and water system capacity. Population projections up to year 2025 are included in the plan, using 2.8%, 6%, and 10% growth rates, based on building permit data available at the time. Thus, the plan appears current relative to growth assumptions if projections remain accurate, but may need revisions to include reference to the appropriate *Guiding Principles* of the “Greenspace and Recreation” theme from the proposed Aurora Vision. There are certainly opportunities to strengthen the relationship of the community vision to the park master plan.

Update

Chapter 2. Socio-Economic and Land Use Analysis. This chapter does not make reference to the visioning process, but could be updated with building permit data and revised growth trends, if those change significantly as a result of the studies to be conducted to update the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 9. Capital Facilities Planning. This chapter references desired facilities identified in the comprehensive plan, including a community park in the Mill Creek flood plain and a downtown park and/or plaza. In conclusion, the chapter makes reference to the vision statement: “Further, the City’s Vision anticipates linear greenway parks and pathways along the river and creek.” This reference should be updated to include the *Guiding Principle* supporting multi-use trails for pedestrians and cyclists for both transportation and recreation. Also, reference to the other *Guiding Principles* under “Greenspace and Recreation” should be included as they play an important role in guiding future development of capital facilities.

Chapter 10. SDC Methodology and Calculations. This chapter utilizes population growth projections that may need to be updated in the near future.

Strengthen Connection to Vision Statement

The introduction in *Chapter 1* (Introduction) could be strengthened with references to the visioning process and proposed Aurora Vision as guiding the update of the plan. This chapter should include a summary of the action planning process and community-supported implementation ideas.

Chapter 4 (Mill Creek Greenway Trail) should reference the appropriate *Guiding Principles* from the proposed Aurora Vision as a basis for supporting the Mill Creek Greenway Trail, such as the community's desire for safe, convenient and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes, development of more park space and multi-use trails for both recreation and transportation purposes, and desire to maintain a green buffer around Aurora.

There may be an opportunity throughout *Chapters 5-8* (Written Survey Results, Phone Survey Results, Student Meeting Results, and Interview Results) to reference the findings from the current visioning process relative to recreational needs and desires of the Aurora community.

Rather than mentioning the city's vision in passing in the last sentence of *Chapter 9* (Capital Facilities Planning), this chapter should reference the community's vision in a more prominent, beginning portion of the chapter as a guiding document in planning for park and recreation facilities. If, during the action-planning phase of the visioning process, specific recommendations are made for implementing the "Greenspace and Recreation" theme of the proposed Aurora Vision, those recommendations should be incorporated here. The reference should mention what types of parks the community desires for the future and how they contribute to the overall future vision.

The suggested goals described in *Chapter 11* (Suggested Goals) could be prefaced with the findings of the current visioning process, if new goals are needed to further the community's future vision.

VII. DRAFT ACTION PLAN

See attached draft action plan.