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Alley Allies

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Background Report

June 2013

ALLEY ALLIES

CONNECTING NEIGHBORS, REIMAGINING ALLEYS

Alley Allies Overview

This Background Report is part of a set of three documents produced by Mill Street Community Planning to provide the foundation for the Alley Allies project.

Plan

This is the guiding document for the project and sets the stage for the potential of alley re-use in the Foster Corridor. It includes: A 2020 vision statement; a project overview; context regarding the importance of alley revitalization; and our recommendations. The intended audience for this document is the leadership of the project, the non-profits and other organizations who will be involved in the project's implementation, and the City agencies who will play a critical role in facilitating the successful repurposing of these alleys.

Background Report

This document describes the development of the project during the planning phase, including the public engagement process used to develop this plan and the toolkit, and can be used as a resource for residents seeking grants, by City agencies wanting to understand the public engagement behind the project, or by the organizations leading the project.

Toolkit

This document was designed through the six-month public engagement process (described in the Background Report) with the goal of shaping the content around resident needs. The major goals of the Toolkit are to answer questions regarding what can be done with alleys, who owns them, and who is responsible for their maintenance, and to help residents overcome barriers for making alley improvements by providing them with the resources and tools to move forward.

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Credits

Partners

Alley Allies began as a project of the Foster Green EcoDistrict and Mill Street Community Planning. As the project developed, it has grown to include a large network of supporting organizations and allies that will continue to be integral to the project during implementation.

Foster Green EcoDistrict is a long-term partnership among community organizations, local residents, and businesses based in an area around Foster Road in Portland, Oregon between SE 52nd Avenue and SE 122nd Avenue. The goal of the Foster Green EcoDistrict is to create triple bottom line solutions that promote economic resiliency, social equity, and environmental sustainability by building on existing community assets. Guided by a steering committee that includes a diverse set of local residents and organizations, Foster Green EcoDistrict is committed to supporting the local community in realizing their vision of the Foster corridor.

Mill Street Community Planning is a team of six Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) students at Portland State University with expertise in public outreach, public health, site planning, urban design, data analysis, green infrastructure, economic development, environmental justice, and transportation. We have a passion for neighborhood empowerment through community ownership of urban space, capacity building, and the development of more sustainable urban forms.

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Lents Neighborhood Association
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Organizations, businesses, and individuals who provided input and support throughout the process

Arleta Library Café
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Cora Potter, Lents Town Center Urban Advisory Committee
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Steph Routh, Oregon Walks
The Intertwine

Summary

The Alley Allies project began when the Foster Green EcoDistrict proposed a PSU Toulan School of Urban Studies & Planning workshop project – the capstone project for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program. It was selected by a group of six graduate students who formed a consulting firm called Mill Street Community Planning. Mill Street Community Planning conducted research through an existing conditions inventory, analysis of existing data sets, expert interviews, and a review of contemporary planning literature to arrive at a set of alley types and a Workplan for a six-month community-led alley improvement planning process. Initial public outreach at over 20 community events was followed by Alley Allies sponsored events including 6 coffee talks, a community workshop, community vetting, and agency roundtable. The goal of these events was to ensure that the Toolkit for residents and the Plan for the organizations leading the project provided the information needed to achieve the project's vision. This background report details the planning process and provides data that can be used to better understand the project and to move alley projects forward by seeking funding.

Figure 1: A Residential-To-Commercial Alley

This aerial shows the alley between SE 63rd and 64th Avenues that changes from residential houses to businesses on Foster Road across from the future site of Laurelwood Park, the "Heart of Foster".

Introduction

Alley Allies Mission

The Alley Allies project will promote and guide the implementation of alley improvements that result in alleys that are safe, well maintained, and an asset for the community. The project will transform alleys into spaces where neighbors can come together. Alley improvements will reflect the collective values and meet the collective needs of the community. Improved alley spaces will also help to define the unique character of the Foster corridor neighborhoods.

Who are the Alley Allies?

Alley Allies is more than a project name. It is a term for those who are committed to the revitalization of Portland's forgotten alleys. An Alley Ally is a resident who gardens or picks up trash in his or her local alley, a local organization who is financing an alley project, or a city agency committed to assisting local communities realize their alley visions. This document is constructed to help those current and potential Alley Allies by providing the tools required to make change (big or small) and rejuvenate the alleys of Portland. This project is call to action to the reclaim these lost neighborhood spaces. Are you an Alley Ally?

Project Overview

Alley Allies is a community driven project focused on the revitalization of the alleys in the Foster-Powell, Mt. Scott-Arleta and Lents neighborhoods. The project was proposed by Foster Green EcoDistrict following several community surveys and discussions that showed local alleys were playing host to drug use, illegal dumping, vandalism and a variety of other negative activities.

As a result, alleys in these neighborhoods are considered a liability rather than a potential resource. The EcoDistrict Steering Committee has an interest in understanding the potential of local alleys to become active, vibrant spaces, identify community needs and concerns regarding alley renovations, and determine how the effective transformation of these spaces can be achieved.

Mill Street Community Planning was brought in as a consulting team to facilitate community involvement and conduct research to create the Alley Allies Plan for the community and local organizations to guide alley improvements.

Our Process

The initial stage of the project included several steps:

- Researching the City's alley-related regulations and global best practices
- Performing an inventory of each alley in the focus area and identifying alley typologies
- Facilitating a five-month public participation process
- Selecting three study alleys and creating example visions for partners to use in moving the project toward implementation
- Identifying agencies, organizations, and individuals who have an interest in alleys
- Establishing an advisory committee to provide technical guidance

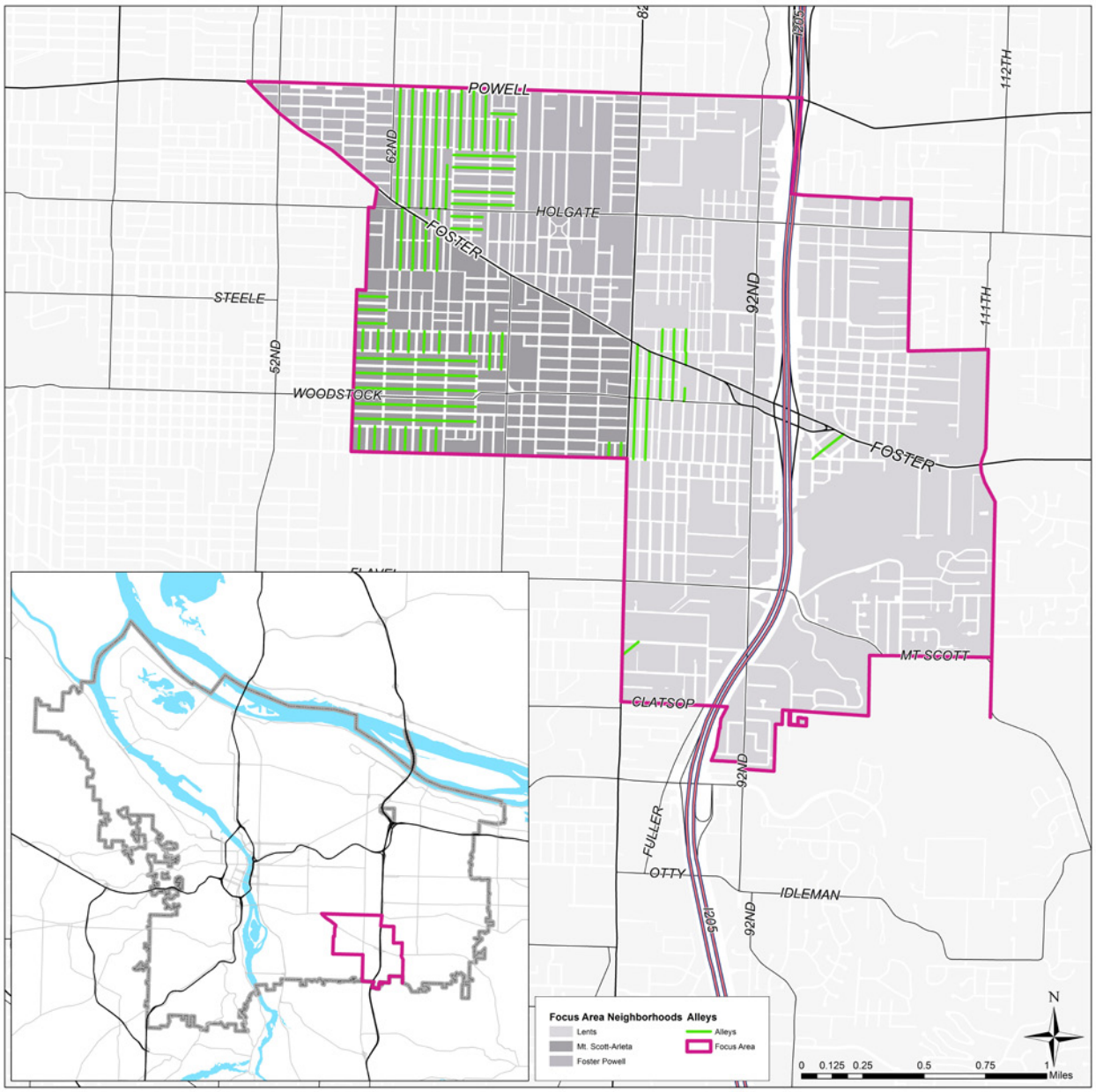
The diagram below shows a simplified timeline of the process used to create the foundation for the Alley Allies project.

Figure 2: Overview Of The Alley Allies Project Process

Focus Area

This project is focused on the alleys within the Lents, Foster-Powell, and Mt. Scott-Arleta neighborhoods. Together, these neighborhoods are host to over 12 miles of alleys. As one of the city's more historic communities, neighborhoods along the Foster corridor benefit from period features including beautiful homes, public parks, and a dense network of alleys.

Map 1: Alley Allies Focus Area



Caption: Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Alley Examples & Strategies

History Of Alleys

Alleys have been a part of cities nearly as long as there have been cities. As cities age and evolve, the role their alleys have also changed. As far back as ancient Rome, the narrowest and oldest streets—much like today's alleys—were called 'vicoli.' They were vibrant and densely packed centers of activity and commerce. Alleys have served various functions over time. Initially they were built as an alternate delivery and service network throughout the city. In the US, many cities built alleys for transportation purposes with carriage houses and eventually garages. As cities changed, many alleys were filled in with shops for small manufacturing, clothing and equipment repair, and low-income housing.

Commercial alley in Singapore. Source: Flickr - Kudumomo

More recently, alleys have seen a revival in metropolitan centers across the nation. Several cities around the nation and world have activated their alleyways to create unique public spaces. San Francisco redeveloped commercial Linden Alley in 2006, and Chicago began its Green Alleys program focusing on stormwater management in 2010. In other cities, alleys are typically downtown or in commercial districts between highrise buildings where land is in short supply. Although Portland's alleys are primarily in residential neighborhoods, these examples can provide inspiration and lessons in terms of successes and challenges overcome. The inventory of North American alley projects and alley strategies that follow demonstrate the full range of activity across the nation.

Traditional Venice alley. Source: Flickr - ahisgett

Jack Karouac Alley in San Francisco. Source: Flickr - Gary Soup

Contemporary North American Alley Projects

The examples below show the innovative projects ongoing in cities across the continent. Alleys are increasingly being seen as a resource for city residents, particularly in low-income areas where park and public spaces are rare or underfunded. Current projects fall into two categories: Downtown alley focused plans (Seattle, Detroit, and Los Angeles), and residential projects focused on providing housing off alleys (Austin and Vancouver). The Alley Allies project is unique in that it represents a community-based project focused on the potential of alleys in residential neighborhoods. However, organizations and residents can learn from the successes of ongoing projects.

Seattle, WA: Active Spaces

http://greenfutures.washington.edu/pdf/ActivatingAlleys_2011.pdf

The Alley Network Project in Seattle focuses on placemaking in the alleys along the city's historic Pioneer Square to boost healthy activity on its streets, feed its vibrant arts culture, and draw people to local business. The International Sustainability Institute has offices off one of these alleys, and recently launched a funded planning project to redevelop Nord Alley as a pedestrian corridor.

Detroit, MI: Inspiration

http://greengaragedetroit.com/index.php?title=Main_Page

Green Garage purchased an old model T warehouse in 2008 with a vision to create an incubator for small businesses focused on green practices and technologies. The green alley project, adjacent to the warehouse, was a public/private partnership that demonstrates innovative ways to manage stormwater, reduce the heat island effect, promote recycling, conserve energy, and promote a walkable community. This project is the first in what the city hopes to replicate across thousands of alleys in Detroit.

Los Angeles, CA: Social Capital

http://www.chc-inc.org/downloads/CASLA%20Alleyway%20Report.pdf

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national nonprofit working to create green spaces for public enjoyment, launched a program based on the recommendations of a 2008 study by the University of Southern California's Center for Sustainable Cities. TPL is currently planning demonstration alleys connecting destinations in a high-poverty, high crime neighborhood, including the relocation of a homeless encampment. As part of the long-term effort, they plan to improve sidewalks, crosswalks, plant trees, add lighting and public art, install permeable paving, and enclose one alley segment to create a safe space for community gatherings.

Austin, TX: Affordable Housing

http://www.thealleyflatinitiative.org/

The Alley Flat Initiative is a collaboration between the University of Texas Center for Sustainable Development (UTCSD), the Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation (GNDC), and the Austin Community Design and Development Center (ACDDC). "Alley Flats" are small, prefabricated, detached residential units, accessed from Austin's extensive network of underutilized alleyways. The program will lease backyard land in low-income areas to install the alley flats, with a portion of the rent returned to the homeowner.

Vancouver, BC: High Density

http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/laneway-housing-howto-guide.pdf

Vancouver's alley project encourages increased density through enabling the construction of "laneway houses" very similar to Portland's accessory dwelling units. Laneway (or alley) houses are viewed as an efficient way to encourage sustainable development and introduce density to more traditional single-family neighborhoods where land is extremely limited and real estate values are among the highest in North America. As a result, the paved alleys serving laneway houses are becoming cleaner, safer access points for residents. More than 500 laneway houses have been built since the program started in 2008 and a robust market for the construction of laneway homes has developed.

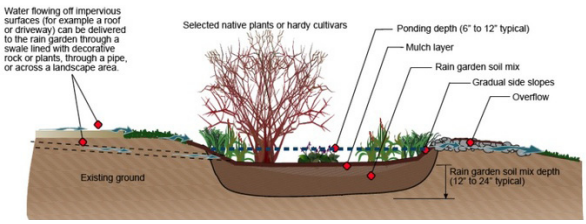
A Vancouver BC laneway home by Lanefab Design/Build

Alley Improvement Strategies

In addition to studies of alley projects in other cities, we conducted research through expert interviews and contemporary planning literature to determine a list of potential uses for alleys.

Stormwater Management

In a natural environment, soil, trees and plants absorb rain and stormwater runoff. However, in cities, when streets, buildings, and parking lots cover the ground, rain washes over these surfaces and is not absorbed. Individuals and neighborhood organizations can install rain gardens and plant trees or other native plants in their alleys to help facilitate natural stormwater management and protect water quality.



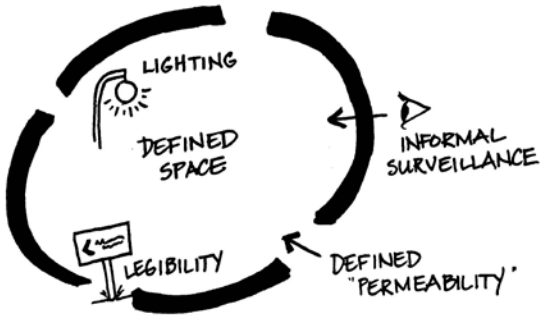
Caption: Diagram of a rain garden which will help facilitate stormwater management

Stormwater Management Resources

- Green Infrastructure- Re:Streets
  http://www.restreets.org/green-infrastructure
- Green Street Case Studies- City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/45386
- Sustainable Stormwater Management- City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/34598

Crime Prevention

Several studies show that well-maintained vegetated landscapes promote community by having people come outside into public spaces and interact with each other. Assigning neighborhood or alley captains or conducting alley walk-throughs can help provide the community with the sense that there is investment and attention paid to the neighborhood and its alleys. Some key best practices related to crime prevention are natural surveillance through windows, lighting, and obstruction removal; natural access control through psychological barriers such as signs, paving, or nature strips; and maintenance and management that is facilitated through easy-to-maintain designs.



Caption: Key CPTED Elements for Crime Prevention

Crime Prevention Resources

- Defensible Space- National Housing Institute
  http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/93/defense.html
- Defensible Space- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
  http://www.huduser.org/publications/pdf/def.pdf
- Vegetation and Crime Prevention- Study by Jeremy Mennis, Temple University
  http://www.scienceomega.com/article/991/combating-crime-with-urban-greenery
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design- National Crime Prevention Council
  http://www.ncpc.gov.sg/pdf/CPTED%20Guidebook.pdf

Placemaking

Placemaking is the reclaiming of public space to reflect the character and values of a neighborhood. Placemaking projects should be community driven and created based on the unique identity of the place. Placemaking may involve art, sculptures, benches, plantings, displays, and other amenities. These elements should reflect local culture and involve local artisans or designers.

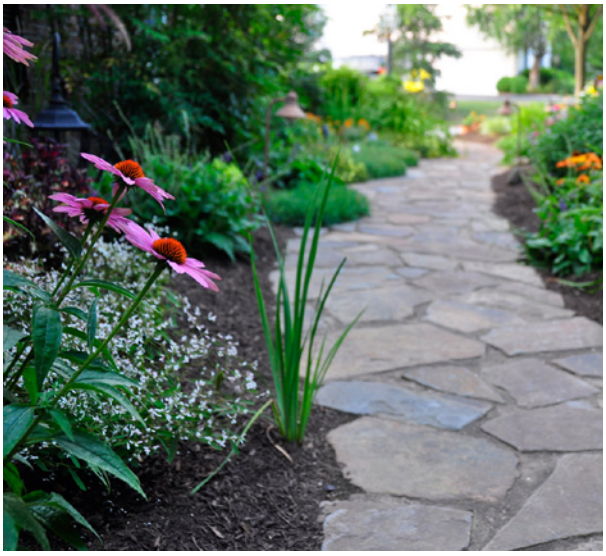
Caption: Reclaiming parking spots to create a Parklet in San Francisco. Source: Flickr - Paul Krueger

Placemaking Resources

- Placemaking Guidebook- City Repair
  http://cityrepair.org/about/how-to/pmresources/
- Image & Identity- Re:Streets
  http://www.restreets.org/image-and-identity

Naturescaping

According to the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, "naturescaping is the practice of designing a landscape so that it reduces water use, stormwater runoff, and pollution without sacrificing splendor". Alleys are ideal spaces for habitat corridors, and can act as beautiful linear parks throughout the neighborhood.



Caption: Example of naturescaped garden path. Source: Naturescaping PA.

Naturescaping Resources

- Naturescaping- East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
  http://www.emswcd.org/naturescaping
- Naturescaping with Native Plants- Columbia Land Trust
  http://www.columbialandtrust.org/get-involved/act/backyard-habitats/naturescaping-with-native-plants
- Native Plants for Yards and Gardens- Metro
  http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=27023

Increasing Pedestrian Activity

Active pathways and attractive building facades encourage pedestrian activity, as pedestrians will choose paths based upon visual interest. Alley design could incorporate wayfinding signs, visual interest points such as plants and art, and pedestrian amenities such as seating, a pleasant walking surface, or cover help to foster a pedestrian friendly environment. Implementing an urban greenway or trail in alleys lacking connectivity can significantly increase pedestrian activity.

Caption: Wayfinding Example. Source: Flickr - Oran Viriyincy

Increasing Pedestrian Activity

- 7 Best Practices- Pedestrian Access to Transit- Seattle Department of Transportation
  http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/docs/tmp/briefingbook/SEATTLE%20TMP%207%20BP%20-%20l%20-%20Pedestrian.pdf
- The image of the city. K. Lynch. (1960) MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- Urban space for pedestrians. B. Pushkarev, J. Zupan. (1975). MIT Press, Cambridge MA.

Food Production

Community gardens, planting beds, food carts or stands are a few ways to increase food access or provide food production in alleys. Alleys are ideal spaces for vertical gardens, planting beds, or communal garden spaces. Alleys near commercial areas could be unique spaces for small vending carts or seating areas.

Caption: Local Community Garden. Source: fotopedia.com

Food Production Resources

- Community Gardens Toolkit- Portland Parks & Recreation
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/282909
- Urban Food Zoning- City of Portland, Bureau of Development Services
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/282909
- Sidewalk Vending Toolkit- City of Portland, Bureau of Development Services
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/275061
- Food Carts in Portland Resources- City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
  http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/52798

Community Engagement

Alley projects can encourage community engagement. Some of the best ways to encourage community engagement are to make an effort to get to know and talk to your neighbors. Making an effort to plan community events or inviting neighbors over goes a long way in fostering good relations. Having regular check-ins or an email listserv to discuss issues or changes along the alley can keep communication lines open. Also, being an active participant in a neighborhood association or community project can facilitate community connections. By building this foundation, neighbors can start to make and advocate for improvements in the neighborhood and on alleys.

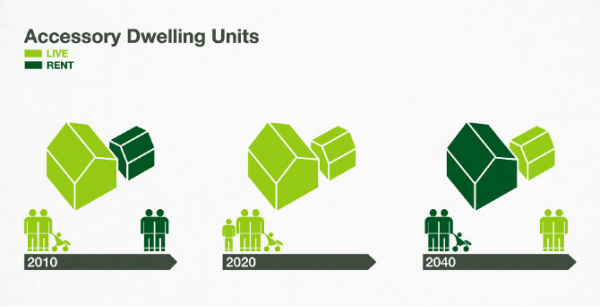
Caption: A community clean up event is a great way to get to know your neighbors. Source: Flickr - Sienna College

Community Engagement Resources

- Neighborhood Watch Manual- USA on Watch
  http://www.usaonwatch.org/assets/publications/0_NW_Manual_1210.pdf
- Connecting with Neighbors- AARP
  http://www.aarp.org/relationships/friends/info-09-2010/connecting_to_neighbors.html
- Good Neighbor Relations- Penn State University
  http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/ua309.pdf
- 10 Tips for Problem Solving – Resolutions Northwest
  http://www.resolutionsnorthwest.org/conflict_resolution_tips

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a second dwelling unit created on a lot with a house, attached house or manufactured home. Besides the social and environmental benefits they may provide, ADUs can also provide considerable income through the charging of rent and when income is the basis for valuation, perceptions of the value of properties with ADUs can change substantially. Alleyways can be an ideal access point for ADU's and foster a pleasant living environment for ADU residents.



Caption: Options provided by developing an ADU. Source: www.greatcity.org

ADU Resources

- ADU Guidance- City of Portland, Bureau of Development Services
  http://www.portlandonline.com/bds/36676
- Understanding and Appraising Properties with Accessory Dwelling Units- The Appraisal Journal
  http://accessorydwellings.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/appraisingpropertieswithadusbrownwatkinsnov2012.pdf
- Accessory Dwellings- Accessory Dwellings
  http://accessorydwellings.org/
- ADU Return on Investment Calculator
  http://accessorydwellings.org/adu-breakeven-calculator/
- Financing for ADUs
  http://accessorydwellings.org/2013/01/28/finally-a-loan-product-that-works-for-constructing-adus/

Caption: An ADU under construction off an alley in the Foster-Powell Neighborhood. For this new home, the alley provides a pedestrian-centric and quiet front street. The brick patio for the unit opens onto the alley space.

Growth & Change In The Foster Corridor

Demographic data on the Foster neighborhoods and surrounding areas described in the sections below paint a picture of a neighborhood in transition. Middle-aged, higher income residents with fewer kids are replacing older long-term residents and younger lower-income families.

- Declining youth and elderly populations, and a decreasing household size;
- A slightly whiter neighborhood than surrounding areas, and a changing composition of racial and ethnic diversity evidenced by a 50% increase each in the proportion of African Americans and Hispanics and a nearly complete loss of people of Russian ancestry;
- A larger deterioration in housing affordability for home-owners in the Foster neighborhoods compared to surrounding areas, yet a greater housing cost burden on renters in surrounding areas than in Foster;
- A notable shift toward higher earning residents in Foster and surrounding areas, revealed by a decrease in households earning less than $50,000 per year and an increase in those earning $75,000 or more; and
- An increase in the market value of most commercial properties fronting Foster Road, with some nearly doubling in value between 2002 and 2012.

Any improvement projects in the corridor, including the Alley Allies project, should be sensitive to and take into account, these changes in demographics. While the increasing number of high-income households and rising commercial rents may reflect the area's growing prosperity, care needs to be taken to avoid displacement of lower income families and the businesses that serve them. Alleys and alley improvement projects provide an opportunity for neighbors to connect with each other, and these connections can support resilience in the face of neighborhood change.

Care must be taken to ensure that alley projects mitigate disparities. Alley projects which only include those who are "easy to reach" could worsen the marginalization of families that face income, language, or cultural barriers to engagement. Similarly, if alley projects are only pursued in alleys where residents already have connections and resources, this could worsen inequities. Organizational and city engagement with lower income families can help to provide stability during changing times. For this reason, efforts must be made to include these households and families in discussions and projects involving alleys.

Table 1: Age of Residents in Foster Neighborhoods and Surrounding Neighborhoods, 2000 and 2010

	Under 15		15-24		25-44		45-64		65 and Over	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Foster Neighborhoods	20.1%	16.4%	13.0%	10.6%	35.0%	39.6%	20.2%	23.7%	11.8%	9.7%
Surrounding Neighborhoods	20.6%	18.9%	13.6%	12.4%	34.5%	35.5%	20.6%	24.0%	10.7%	9.3%

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Decennial Census

Table 2: Race and Ethnicity of Residents in Foster Neighborhoods and Surrounding Neighborhoods, 2000 and 2010

	White		Black/African American		Asian		Hispanic or Latino		Russian Ancestry	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Foster Neighborhoods	77.5%	74.7%	1.8%	2.7%	11.3%	11.6%	5.9%	8.9%	2.7%	0.4%
Surrounding Neighborhoods	77.9%	70.5%	1.9%	4.4%	9.4%	12.4%	8.2%	12.3%	2.4%	2.9%

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Decennial Census

Table 3: Select Housing Characteristics of Residents in Foster Neighborhoods and Surrounding Neighborhoods, 2000 and 2010

	% Vacant Housing Units		% Owner Occupied Housing Units		Average Household Size	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Foster Neighborhoods	4.9%	4.7%	56.8%	55.9%	2.46	2.32
Surrounding Neighborhoods	6.0%	5.7%	55.1%	52.7%	2.44	2.45

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Decennial Census

Table 4: Income Categories of Residents in Foster Neighborhoods and Surrounding Neighborhoods, 2000 and 2010

	Less than $25,000		$25,000 to $49,999		$50,000 to $74,999		$75,000 to $99,999		$100,000 or More	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Foster Neighborhoods	30.9%	25.8%	36.0%	30.9%	22.6%	21.2%	6.0%	13.6%	0.0%	8.4%
Surrounding Neighborhoods	31.2%	27.8%	37.0%	29.5%	20.7%	21.8%	7.0%	13.0%	0.0%	7.9%

Source: American Community Survey 2010 5-Year Estimates; 2000 U.S. Census

Table 5: Property Values of Select Lots Fronting Foster Ave, 2002-2012

Property Address	Use	Tax Paid 2012	Real Market Value 2002	Real Market Value 2012	% Change (2002-2012)
6904 SE FOSTER RD	General Warehousing	$24,560.53	$1,446,730.00	$2,804,070.00	93.8%
6701 SE FOSTER RD	Small Office	$7,095.91	$509,670.00	$583,320.00	14.5%
7435 SE FOSTER RD	Church	$0.00	$1,398,230.00	$1,745,770.00	25.0%
8130-8136 SE FOSTER RD	Convenience Store	$26,767.14	$1,077,350.00	$2,230,000.00	107.0%

Source: www.Portlandmaps.com

Table 6: Property Values of Select Residential Lots in Foster Neighborhood

Property Address	Residential Type	Tax Paid 2012	Real Market Value 2002	Real Market Value 2012	% Change (2002-2012)
7317-7319 SE STEELE ST	2-4 Unit Multi-Family	$2,650.18	$133,410.00	$168,360.00	26.2%
4526-4532 SE 70TH AVE	2-4 Unit Multi-Family	$5,849.46	$294,850.00	$369,560.00	25.3%
7106 SE MITCHELL ST	Single Family	$2,908.21	$139,770.00	$194,720.00	39.3%
4702 SE 62ND AVE	Single Family	$4,651.47	$215,910.00	$296,780.00	37.5%

Source: www.Portlandmaps.com

Existing Conditions & Alley Types

Purpose

Understanding the current state of the alleys in the focus area was an important first step in developing a plan to improve the Foster corridor alleys. In February and March of 2013, we conducted an in-depth inventory of alleys within the focus area.

We analyzed this large data set along with existing data on crime, locations of amenities, and current land uses to establish a small number of alley types. These were used in communicating with the public about the potential of various alleys as well as in the visioning process.

While this data has been used to identify key challenges and opportunities for alley improvements, moving forward, we envision the data being used by residents to understand what type of improvements best fit their alley and can then be incorporated as supporting data for funding applications to implement alley improvements.

Process

Based on the final deliverables, project purpose, and implementation goals, the field inventory was organized to collect data in four areas:

1. Current use
2. Current condition
3. General character and nature
4. Primary land use of lots adjacent to each alley

To gather information on current uses we recorded the number of pedestrian and vehicular access points, presence of business and utilities structures. In addition, we recorded various 'signs of life' evident in the alleys by recording the presence of elements such as parked cars, chairs or benches, makeshift shelters and/or sleeping bags, bike tracks and signs of wildlife. To gather information on the condition of alleys, we recorded factors such as graffiti, dumping, litter, road conditions, vegetation overgrowth, presence of standing water and general walkability. In addition, alley elements such as public art, cafe seating, decorative lighting and improved alley frontages were recorded to identify alleys where alley improvements were already underway. Finally, we recorded the general character of the alley and its adjacent uses to help categorize alleys into appropriate alley types.

Field Inventory Limitations

Although a pre-inventory training was held and there was a data dictionary to provide guidance, recordings still included some level of subjectivity. Data users should be aware that the findings from this data are a snapshot in time and may not represent an accurate picture of alley uses and conditions over long periods of time.

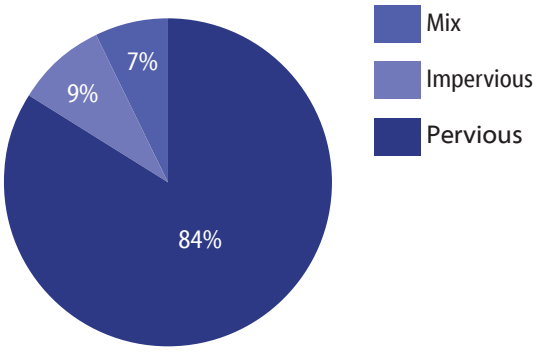
Successes In SE Portland's Alleys

The alleys in SE Portland possess elements that can be celebrated and strengthened in order to achieve quality spaces. Some of the positive qualities of the alleys include:

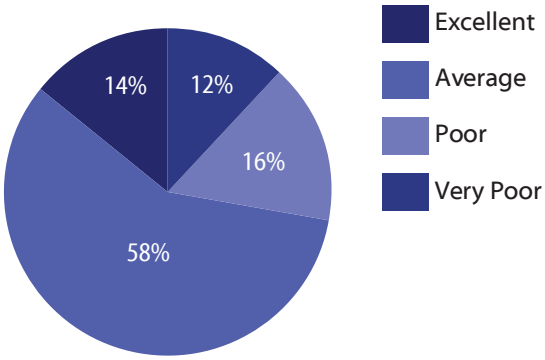
- Mostly pervious surfaces (grass, dirt, gravel, and rock): Although some pervious surfaces such as mud, can present challenges to travel through alleys, these surfaces are much more conducive to rainwater recharge than concrete or other impervious surfaces. Concrete and asphalt are also very difficult to remove, and therefore hinder the conversion of alleys to parks, community gardens, and other non-paved public spaces. Community outreach showed that neighbors value the natural environment that alleys provide in part because they lack paving.
- Decent road and surface material conditions: Alleys vary considerably in this respect, but in general, alleys were flat and the surface was consistent if not level. By consistent we mean that although there were large potholes, there were relatively few small holes that could lead to injury from pedestrians or bicyclists.
- Decent walking conditions: Nearly all alleys could be walked easily. Slippery mud and pools of water in potholes slightly limited walkability, however, they also reduced drivability through the alleys making the alley much more comfortable for those on foot.
- Lack of business loading and unloading: Although there are a number of alleys abutted by commercial users, the majority of the alleys surveyed were residential. Without loading and unloading, the alleys are more peaceful and natural spaces, and without such active uses, are easier to convert to non-transportation uses.

- Multiple signs of invested ownership and interest in alley improvements: We were impressed by the level of investment homeowners showed in their yards abutting the alleys and also in their segment of the alley. Birdhouses were common, as were planters in the alley. We recorded several accessory dwelling units accessed by the alley and a number of green walls or vertical planters. The table that on the following page shows the breakdown of these improvements.

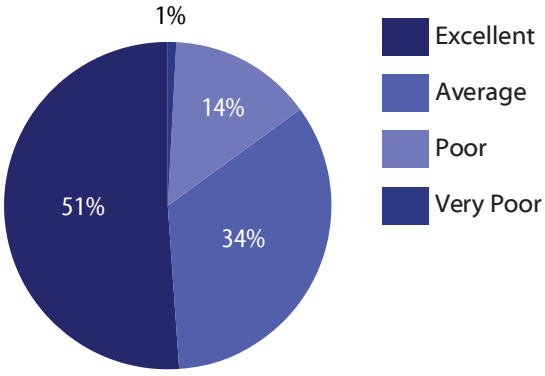
Graph 1: Surface Material



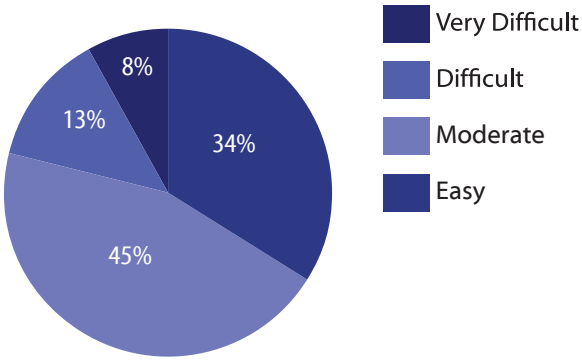
Graph 2: Surface Material Condition



Graph 3: Drainage and Stormwater Maintanence



Graph 4: Walkability



Source for all graphs above: Alley Allies Inventory

Table 7: Observed Alley Improvements

Alley Improvement	Total Percentage of Alleys
Landscaping/gardening	29%
Improved or well-maintained alley frontage/facade	26%
Deliberate signage	13%
Maintained pedestrian access or walkway	10%
Public art	4%
Benches, chairs or tables	2%
Decorative lighting	2%
Other	2%
Attractive store/business entrance	0%
Sidewalk cafes	0%

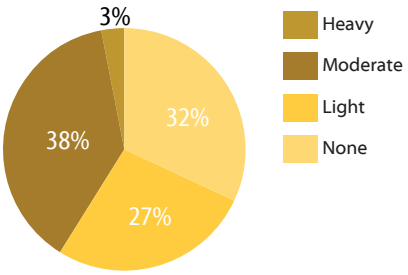
Source: Alley Allies Inventory

Challenges In SE Portland's Alleys

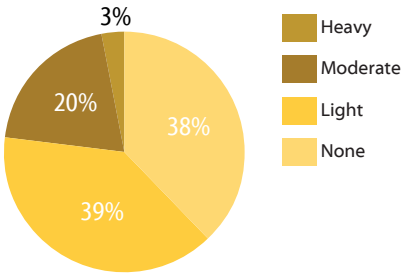
Alleys in the focus area also possessed many negative elements that reflected years of neglect and disuse and that need to be addressed in order to achieve alleys that serve as an asset for the community. Some of the problems include:

- Presence of graffiti in 68% of the alleys
- Presence of standard litter in 61% of the alleys but relatively little risky litter (14% of the alleys)
- Signs of dumping (Including by neighbors) in 37% of the alleys
- Lack of lighting in 96% of the alleys
- Lack of accessibility due to vegetation overgrowth in 48% of the alleys, with few other major obstructions placed in the alley (11% of the alleys)

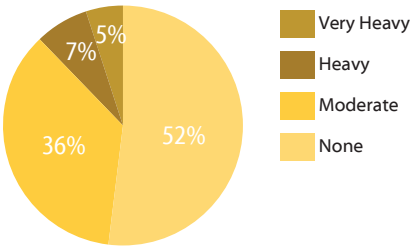
Graph 5: Presence of Graffiti



Graph 6: Presence of Litter



Graph 7: Vegetation Overgrowth



Source: Alley Allies Inventory

Use of SE Portland's Alleys

An audit of "signs of life" provides insight into how alleys may be used currently. Car tracks and parked cars were the most commonly spotted sign followed by private signage and wildlife.

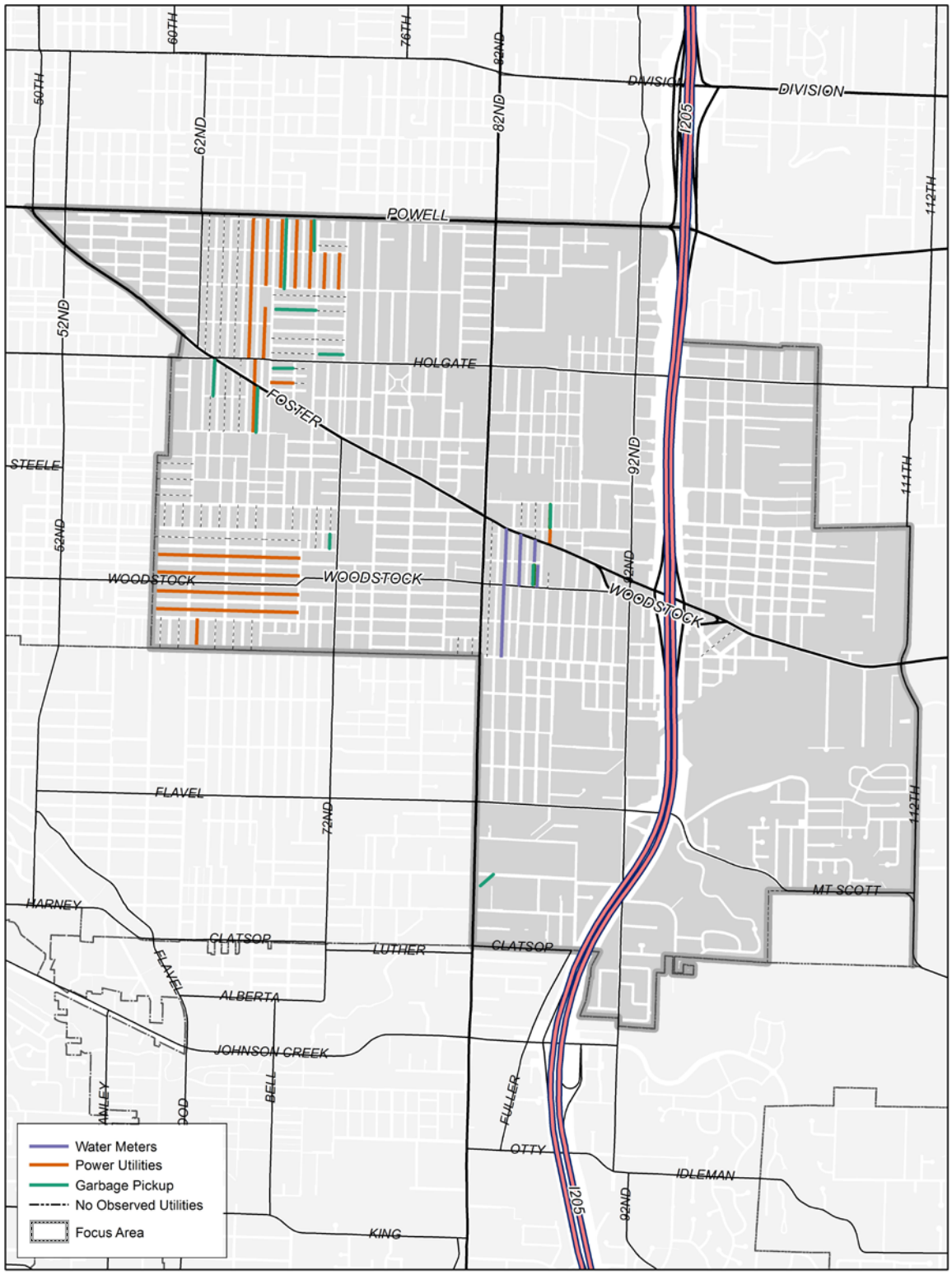
We also recorded which alleys had garbage pickup and power utilities. In conjunction with data obtained from PGE, Portland Water Bureau and Waste Management, we were able to identify which alleys serve as access and easements for utilities.

Table 8: Signs of Life

Activity	Total Percentage of Alleys
Car tracks	68%
Parked car	49%
Private signage	34%
Wildlife	26%
Dog Droppings	10%
Security Light/Camera	9%
Ad signage	8%
Makeshift shelters/sleeping bags	4%
Chairs or benches	3%
Bike tracks	3%
Sports equipment	0%

Source: Alley Allies Inventory

Map 2: Observed Utilities In Alleys



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS, Mill Street Community Planning
Note: For those alleys categorized as having garbage pickup; only homes on the end of alleys were placing garbage bins in the alley.
*To see a complete table of attributes inventoried and all inventoried attributes mapped, turn to Appendix 1

Addressing Crime

Previous community surveys and discussions with community members showed residents had concerns about a variety of crimes in or associated with the alleys along Foster Road. Many residents reported their house had been robbed with thieves coming to the back of their houses through the dark alley at night. In one case, the thief road a bike up to the back of the house and left it in the resident's property when they escaped on foot with the stolen property. Many signs of illegal activity were clear from our existing conditions analysis including presence of graffiti on private property and drug use-related trash. Many residents have installed motion-activated flood lights to light up their alley when people walk through in an attempt to make the dark alleys less attractive to those seeking to hide their activities. This includes homeless camping which was reported at many of our public outreach events.

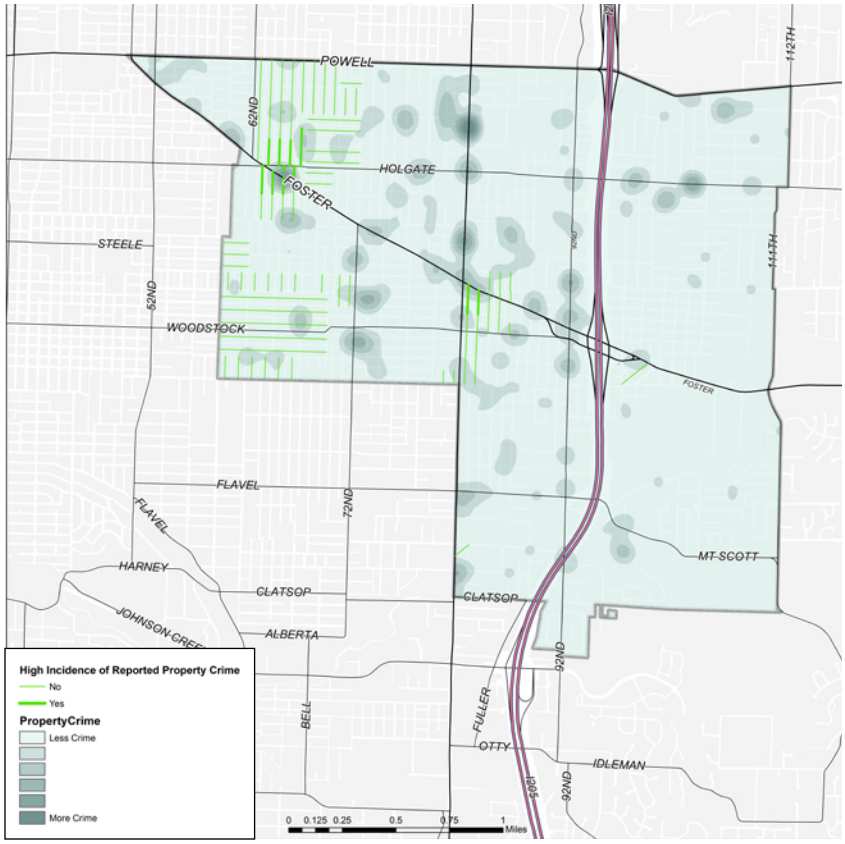
An important way to address crime prevention is in the design of the alley improvements. The Toolkit provides guidance on "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design".

Learn more about the community survey conducted by the Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood Association by visiting their site:

http://www.mtscottarleta.com/2013/03/neighborhood-survey-results.html

To gain a better understanding of the rate and the concentration of reported crime in the Alley Allies focus area, we mapped out reported incidences of the five categories of crime that were identified by the community: drug use, property crime, theft, vandalism, and violent crime.

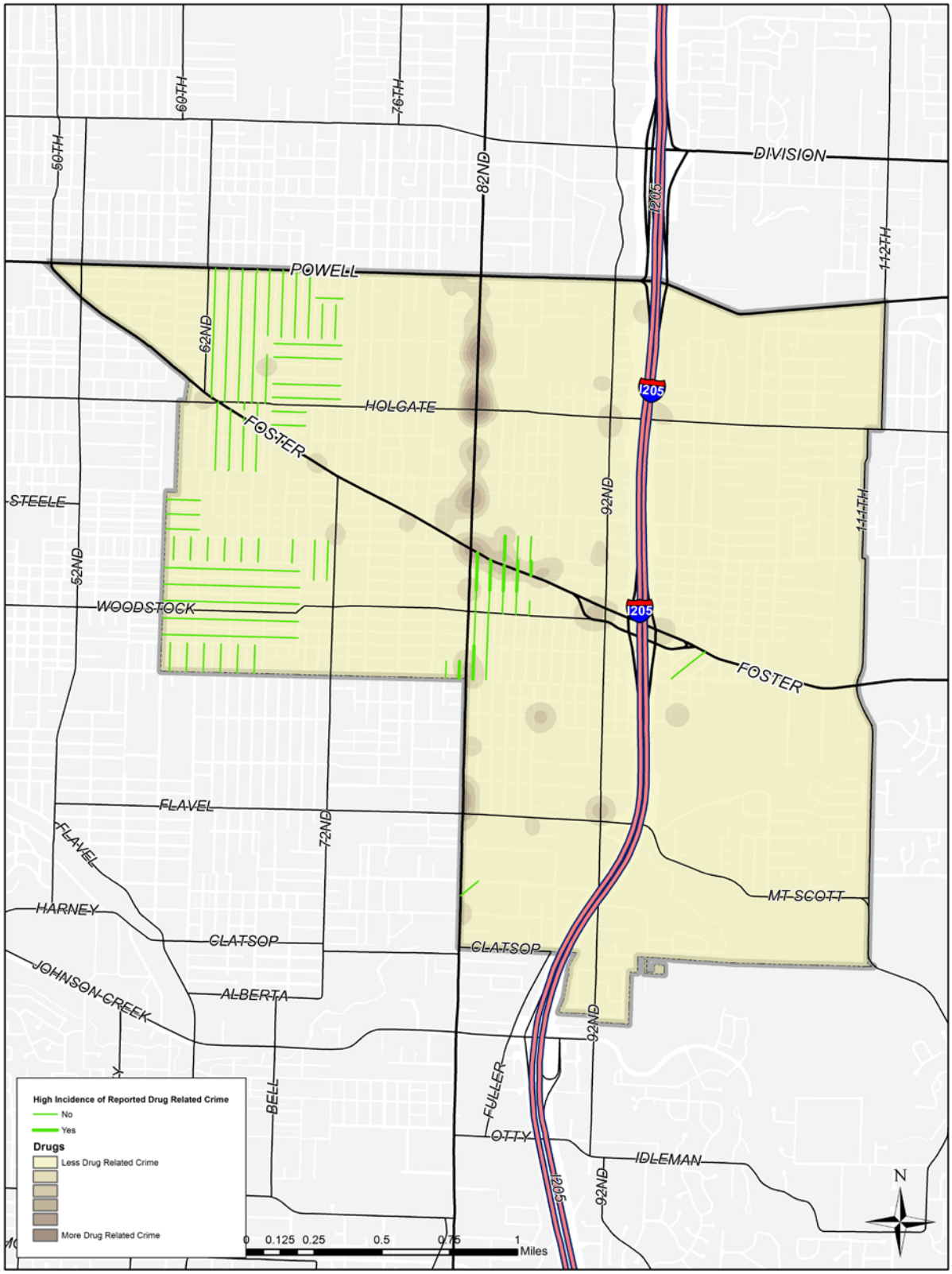
Equipped with City of Portland crime data, we mapped each category of reported crime that occurred between March 20th, 2012 and March 20th, 2013. Mapping the location of and concentration of these crimes will help those implementers identify which alleys could most benefit from designs and strategies aimed specifically at crime prevention and reduction.



Map 3: Reported Property Crime

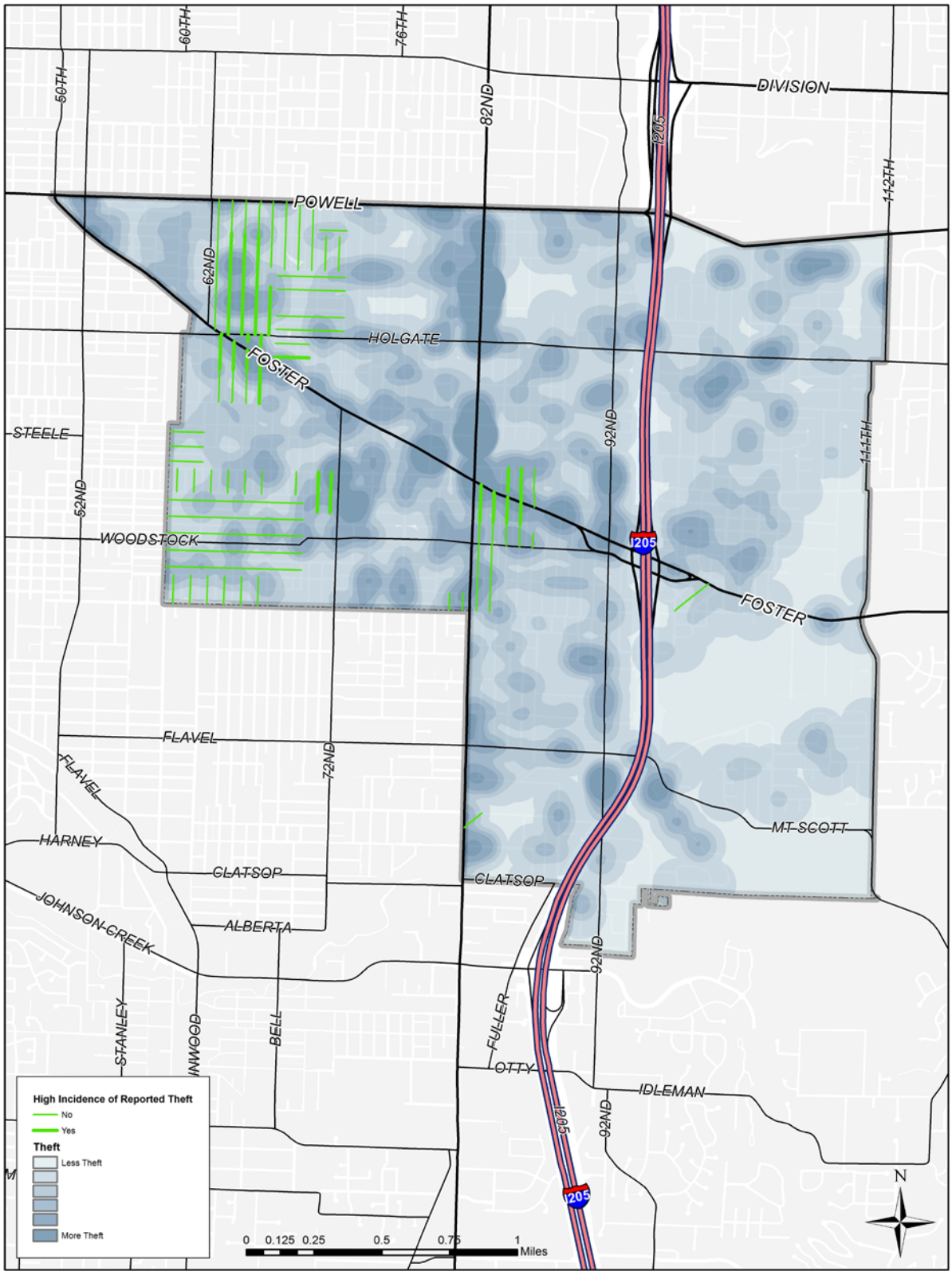
Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Map 4: Reported Drug Related Crime



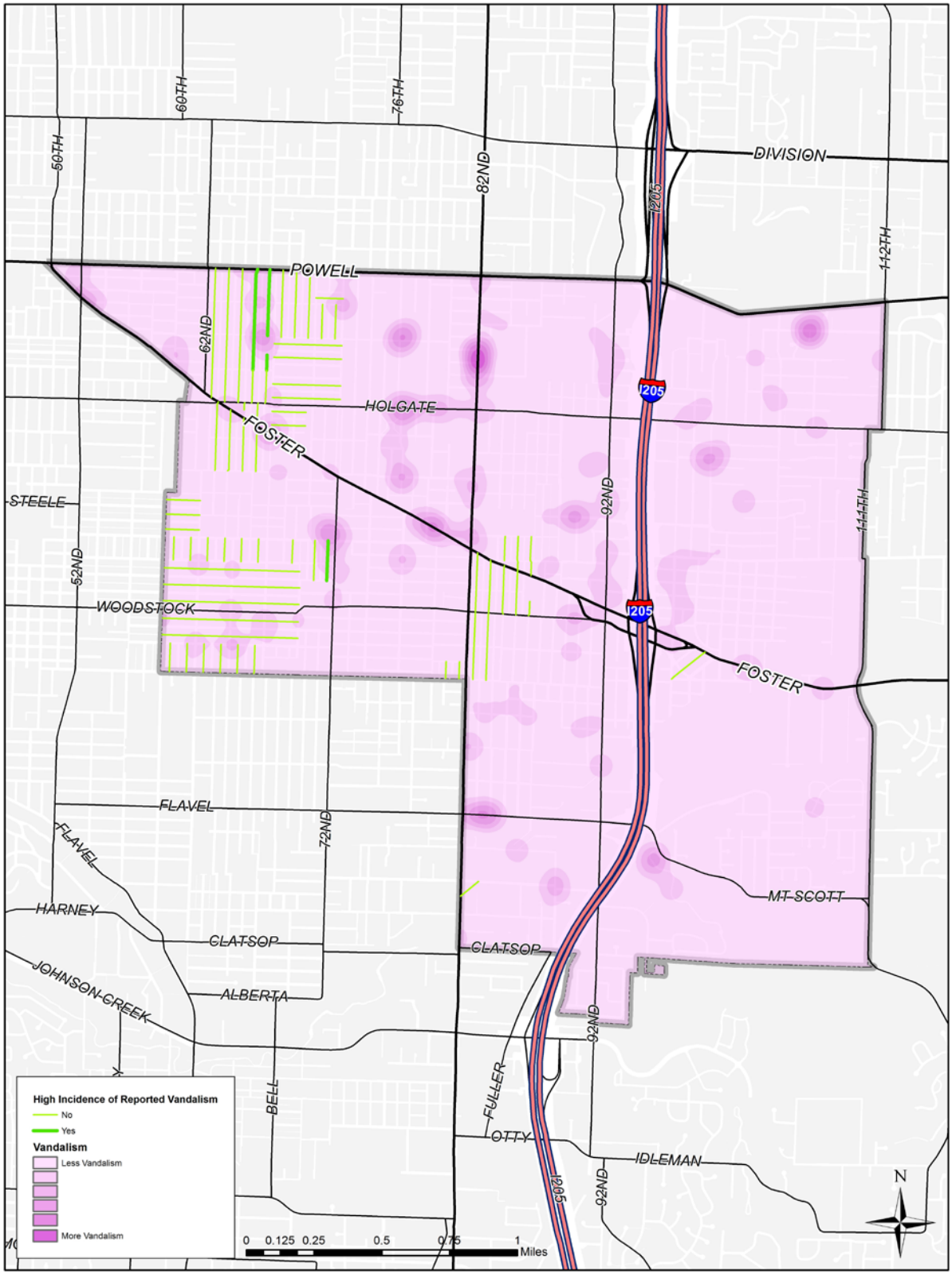
Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Map 5: Reported Theft



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Map 6: Reported Vandalism

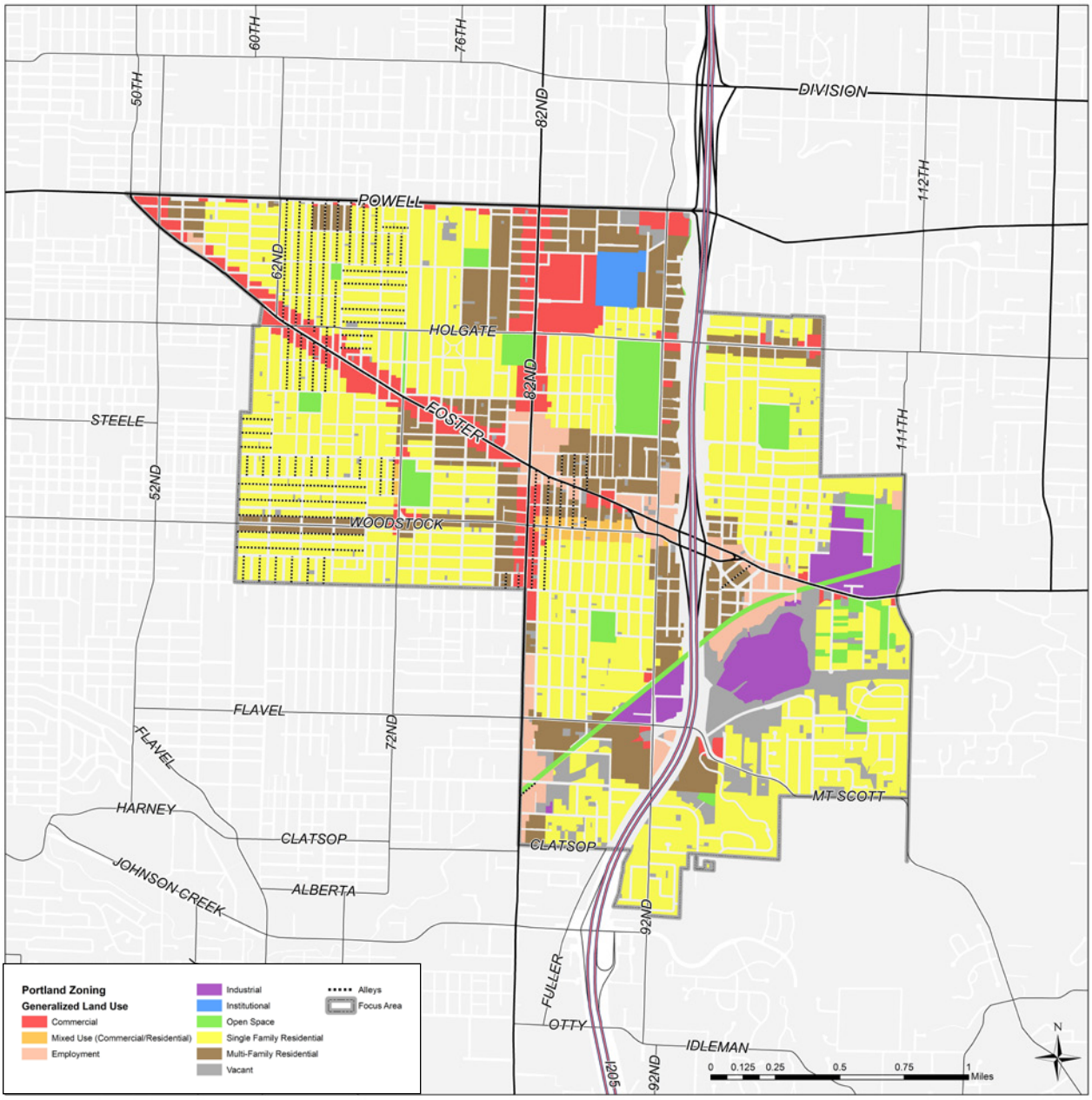


Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Adjacent Land Use

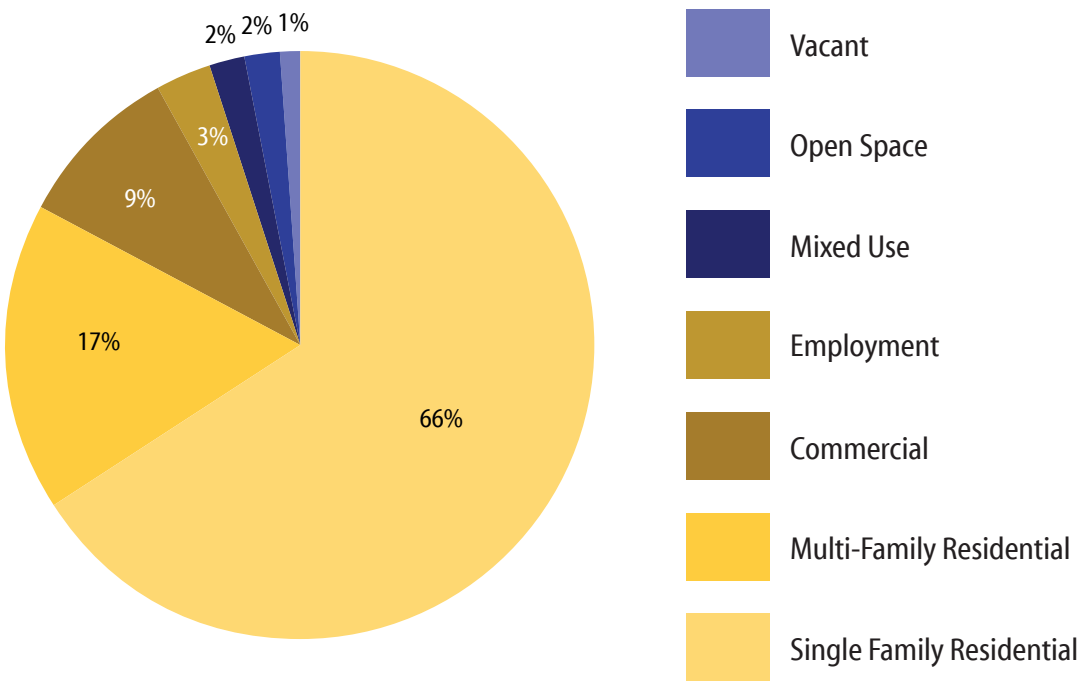
The land use surrounding alleys will greatly influence the types of improvements that are applicable. The vast majority of land use around the alleys is single family residential, followed by multi-family residential. That indicates that alley improvements must be sensitive to and meet the needs of residential users. There are a small percentage of alleys near commercial areas. These alleys could provide unique spaces for additional commercial uses or café seating.

Map 7: Land Use In The Foster Corridor



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Graph 8: Land Use Around Foster Green EcoDistrict Alleys



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Table 9: Land Use Within 400 Feet Of Foster Green EcoDistrict Alleys

Land Use	Total Area (Square Feet)	Percentage of Total Land Base
Single Family Residential	15,611,620	66%
Multi-Family Residential	4,063,462	17%
Commercial	2,148,244	9%
Employment	724,479	3%
Mixed Use	541,607	2%
Open Space	336,866	1%
Vacant	240,149	1%
Industrial	165	.0006%
Total	23,666,593	100%

Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Pedestrian Score

A pedestrian score shows the potential of alleys to be used by pedestrians based on their starting locations. Alleys with a high pedestrian score have the potential to be good connectors between residences and neighborhood destinations such as churches, schools, and bus stops.

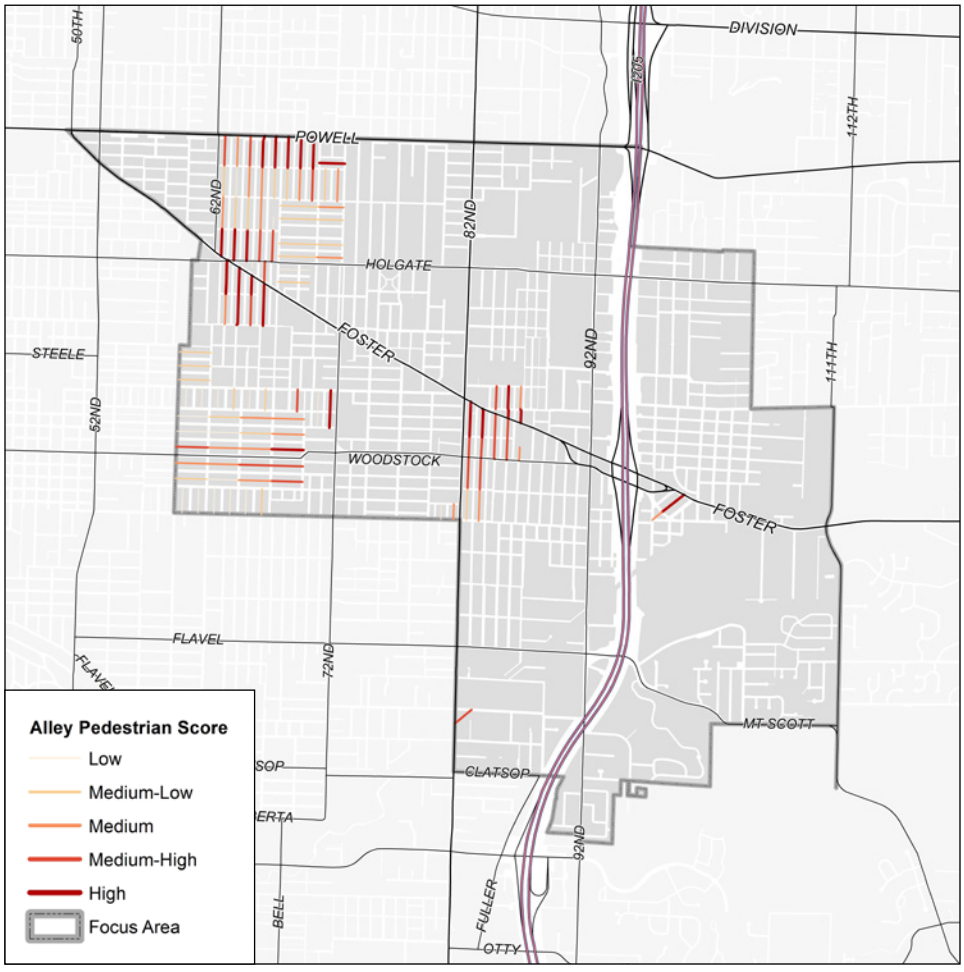
To calculate pedestrian scores, we used geographic information systems software (ArcGIS) to find the shortest routes from all residences, including all units within multifamily buildings, to specific destinations (within a 0.7 mile walk). We then counted the number of routes that used each alley and translated that number into a score from 0 to 100 with the alley having the most routes being ranked 100.

The destinations used:

- Transit stops (Bus and MAX)
- Grocery stores and farmers' markets
- Food carts, restaurants, and bars
- Churches
- Schools
- Libraries and the Mt. Scott Community Center

Each alley's pedestrian score for each individual set of destinations (listed above) can be found in the inventory lookup table (Appendix 1). We calculated the overall pedestrian score (mapped below) by adding together all the routes using each alley and translating it into a score from 0 to 100. Higher scores mean that more people are likely to use the alley to get from their homes to common neighborhood destinations, based on the alley's location.

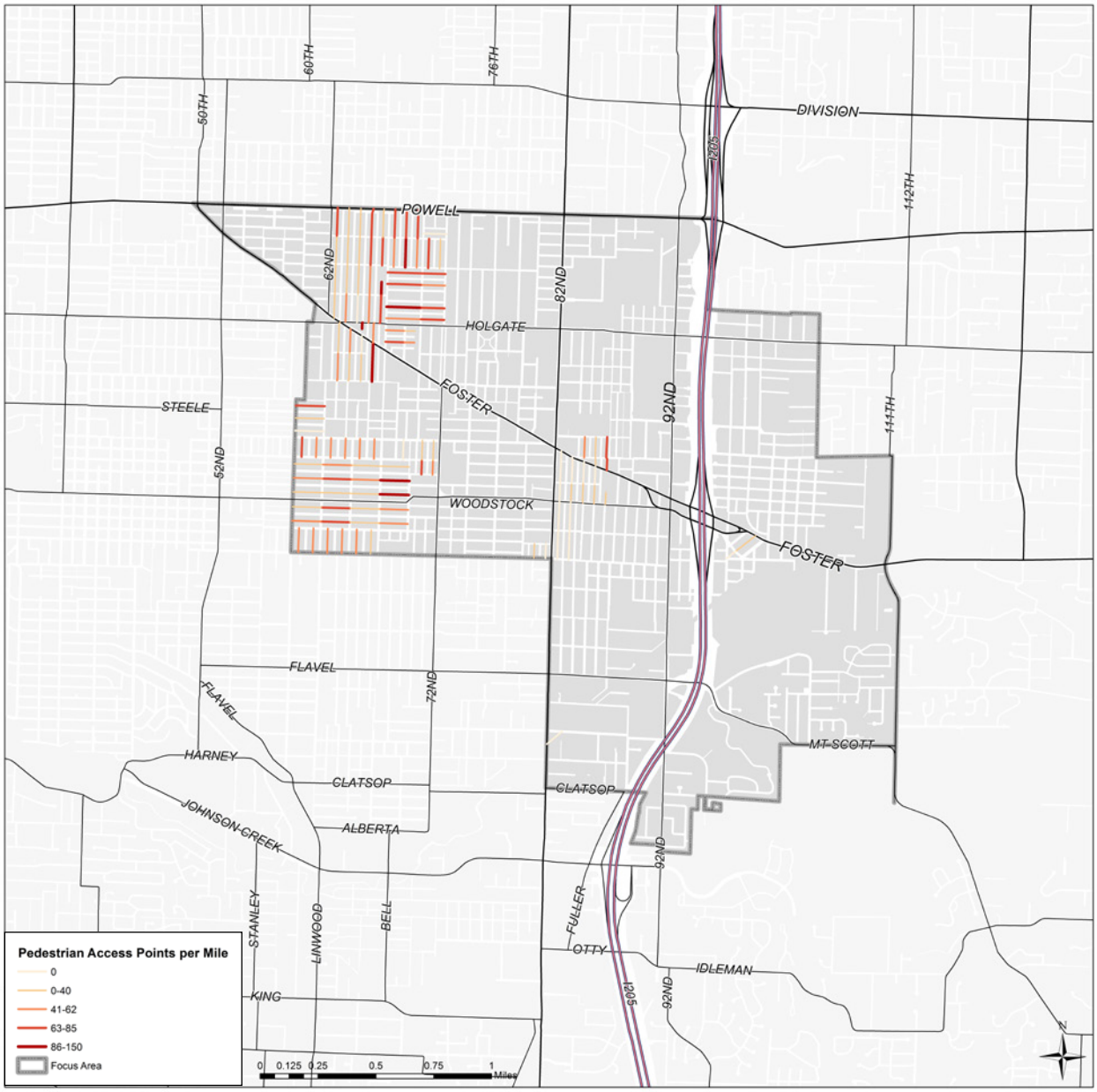
Map 8: Pedestrian Corridor Potential



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

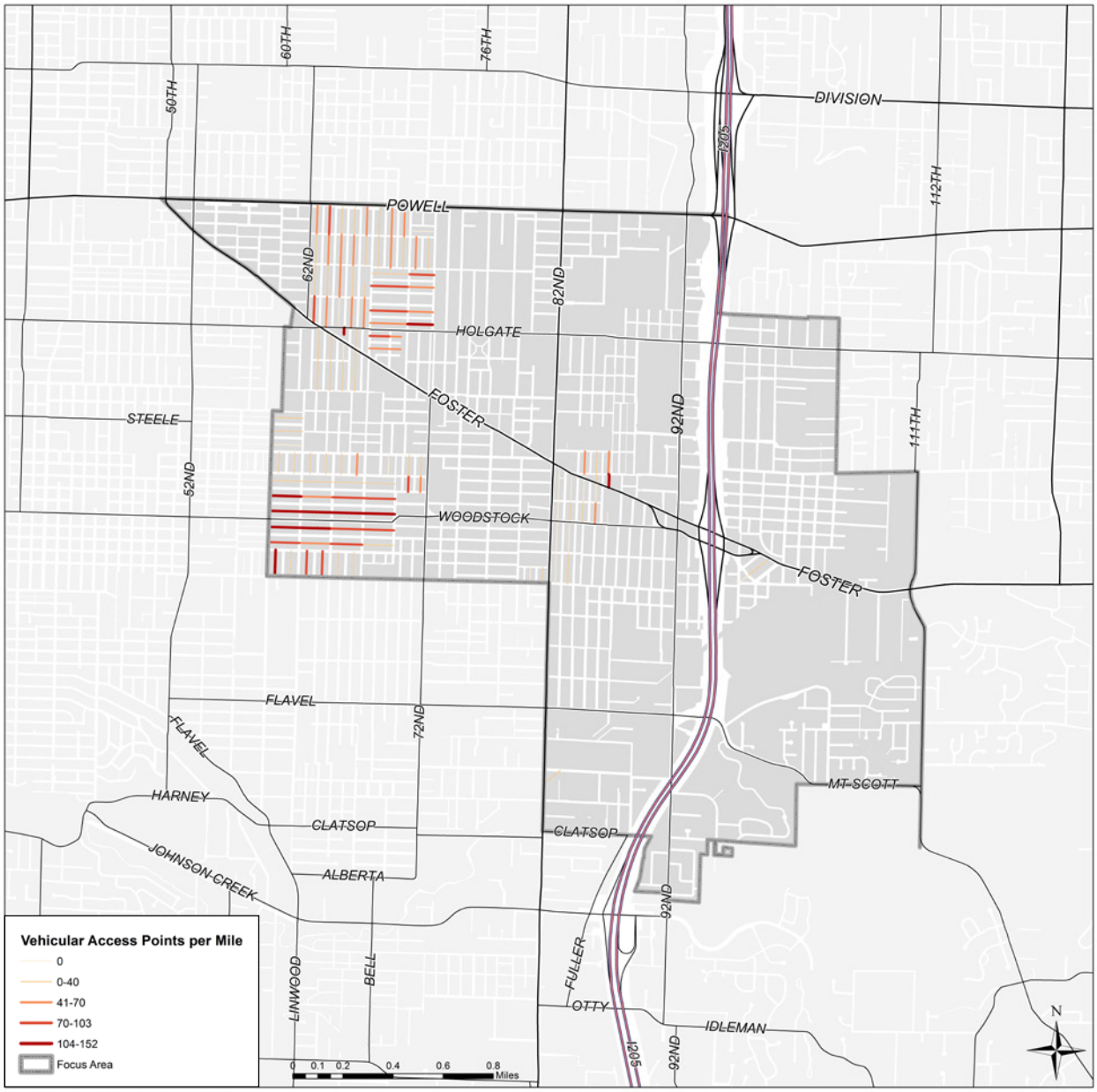
We also counted pedestrian and vehicular access points on each alley to determine primary alley uses. The maps below indicate alleys with current use patterns that better fit development as pedestrian corridors and those where vehicular access should be maintained (assuming current uses continue).

Map 9: Alley Pedestrian Access



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Map 10: Alley Vehicular Access



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS

Alley Typology

From the field inventory data and mapping we realized that there are alleys that people travel through either on foot, bike or car. There are also alleys that people may travel to, to spend time there. This resulted in three general alley types:

- Auto-oriented alleys – These alleys have many auto access points such as garages and driveways and are used for auto access to homes. Additionally, they may be located along a major auto corridor such as Powell Blvd. or Foster Rd., making the frequency of auto traffic higher.
- Pedestrian corridors – These alleys have high potential as a connector for pedestrians walking from their homes to neighborhood destinations according to our analysis of pedestrian scores. Additionally, the alleys are less traveled by autos than the auto-oriented alleys.
- Destination or amenity alley – These alleys generally show neither great importance for pedestrian nor auto connectivity. However, they hold potential for use beyond travel, such as community and neighbor activities. Some destination/amenity alleys are bordered by businesses that could use the alley space for commercial activities.

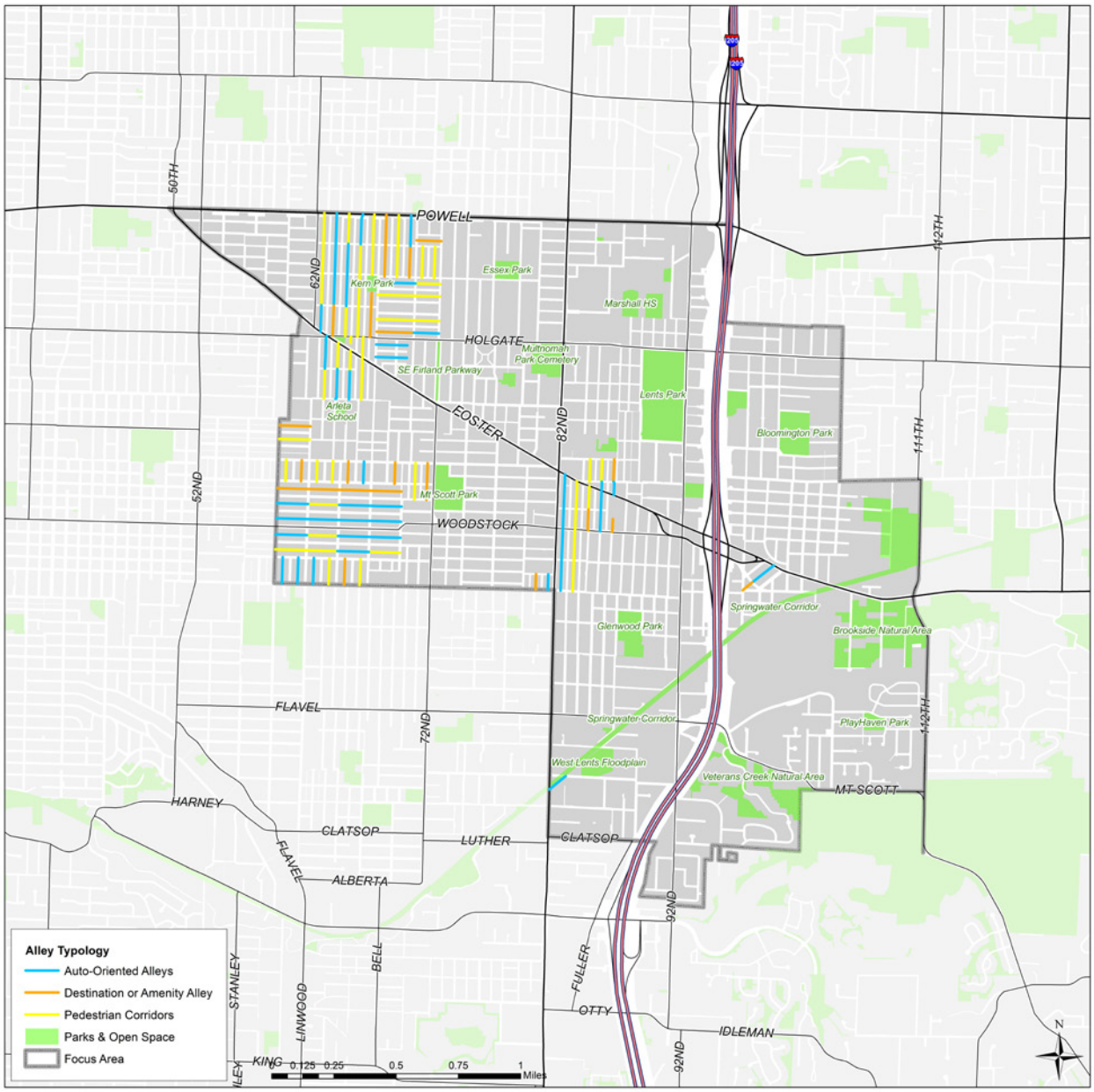
Two important points should be remembered when considering this typology:

1. The three types refer to potential future use as well as current use. For example, an alley classified as a pedestrian corridor may need some intense improvements to make it a place where pedestrians feel comfortable. Nevertheless, we may have identified it as an alley that has high potential to be used by pedestrians if improved due to its proximity to neighborhood amenities such as a school or park.

2. Residents living along and near an alley will generally have a better idea of the alley's potential than we were able to assess with our inventory because of their greater familiarity with the area. In the end, they will play a much larger part in determining what happens to the alley in the future than the alley's type as we have classified it. It is also possible that goals for networks at the neighborhood or city level may come into conflict with the interests of residents on a given alley segment if one is using a data-based approach and the other based on what amenities are needed in the area.

Caption: One of the many auto-oriented alleys in Mt. Scott-Arleta

Map 11: Alley Typology



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS, Mill Street Community Planning

Alley Design Through Community Input

Public Participation Overview

Public participation was at the core of our strategy for reimaging alleys. We ran a four-month, multi-faceted approach that began in February 2013 by tabling at public events and highly trafficked areas to introduce the project and ourselves to neighbors and to invite them to tell us about the alley they live on or care about. Residents could complete a survey in person or take the survey online. The results provided context and reinforced our belief that the community needed to be empowered to take active role in process. As a result, we developed a community-based approach to neighborhood improvement that combines the improvement of the physical space and sense of community for the existing residents.

Overall, our strategy was to start small, on a few alleys, so that we can encourage new people to get involved and benefit from the specific geography of individual blocks with a small number of residents and where benefits can be seen. The concerns, ideas, and issues raised during these intimate meetings were used to construct example visions that illustrated the potential for change within a single block based on neighbor input. These tangible examples were used to engage the broader community to add their ideas to their neighbors' visions. A community design charrette allowed us to understand the hurdles residents would face and target our products to be maximally effective.

The quality of our outreach was important to us. To ensure continual improvement of the public participation process and adjustment to community needs, we conducted an evaluation during each public participation stage. This section describes the process that led to the project's products.

Initial Outreach and Survey

The first step of the process was to engage the broader community. The goals of this initial step were to raise awareness of the Alley Allies project, gain a better understanding of community opinion regarding the local alleys, and identify alleys with especially high levels of interest to serve as potential pilot alleys.

To accomplish this step, we established a two-pronged community engagement approach that involved tabling and surveys. Between February 1st and March 8th, all public events occurring in the focus area were identified and attended by an Alley Allies project team representative. At these events, the project representative set up a table and spoke with event attendees about the project and about the local alleys. To help record public opinion and retrieve crucial information, surveys in English and Spanish were provided at the events.

Moreover, project representatives set up informational booths at popular public venues in the focus area where surveys were distributed and comments were retrieved. Lastly, to increase public reach, an English/Spanish online survey was developed. The survey URL was distributed to all local organizations and promoted through the Oregonian and the Tribune.

Over a five-week period, the online and in-person Spanish/English surveys received 88 responses. The graph that follows shows the demographic and marketing breakdown of the respondents.

Public Participation Process Diagram

Initial Outreach & Survey

Coffee Talks

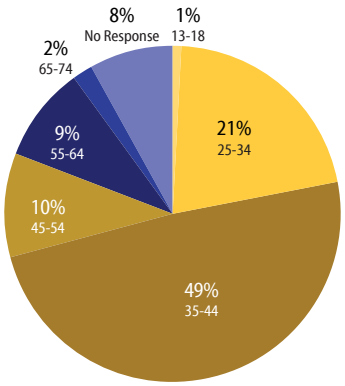
Community Workshop

Vetting
Community
City Agencies
Non-Profits

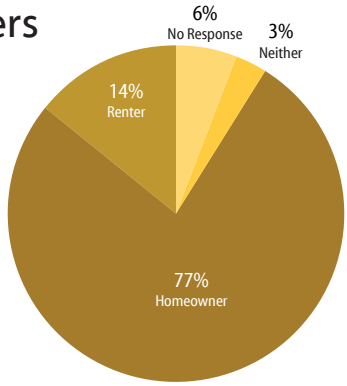
Guidebook Release & Celebratory Event

Graph 9: Demographics of Survey Respondents

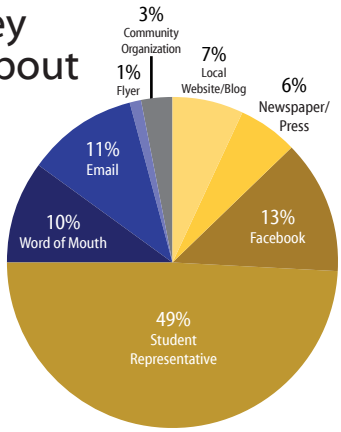
Age



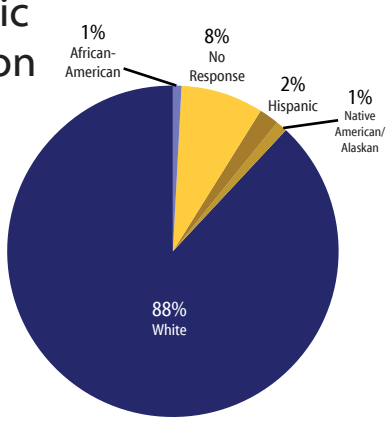
Renting or Homeowners



How They Heard About Project



Racial/Ethnic Identification



Source: Alley Allies Survey

Questions from the surveys were strategically constructed to receive answers regarding two primary topics:

1. Community concerns about the alleys in focus
2. Community visions regarding ideal alley spaces

After assessing the survey responses, there were four concerns and three goals that received the greatest amount of attention. The entire breakdown of the survey responses can be seen in the graphs that follow.

Concerns mentioned by more than 25% of the respondents included:

- Dumping
- Drug use
- Unmanaged vegetation
- Graffiti/vandalism

Goals mentioned by more than 25% of the respondents included:

- Clean alleys (from trash)
- Garden/food growth
- Green beautification

These findings assisted us in better understanding community concerns and future potential for the alleys. They also provided us with an initial direction for research, topics for the coffee talk discussions, and ideas to help guide the preliminary alley designs that were presented at the community workshop event.

Top 10 Specific Concerns

1. Dumping
2. Drug Use
3. Unmanaged/Overgrown Vegetation
4. Graffiti and Vandalism
5. Poor Road Conditions
6. Underutilized/Wasted Space
7. Trash and Litter
8. Homeless
9. Crime
10. Lack of Maintenance

Top 10 Specific Suggestions

1. Clean (Trash and Graffiti)
2. Gardening and Food Production
3. Green Beautification
4. Safe
5. Improved Pedestrian Access and Safety
6. Shared Community Space
7. More Art
8. Maintained
9. Usable and Well Used Space
10. Improved Access for All

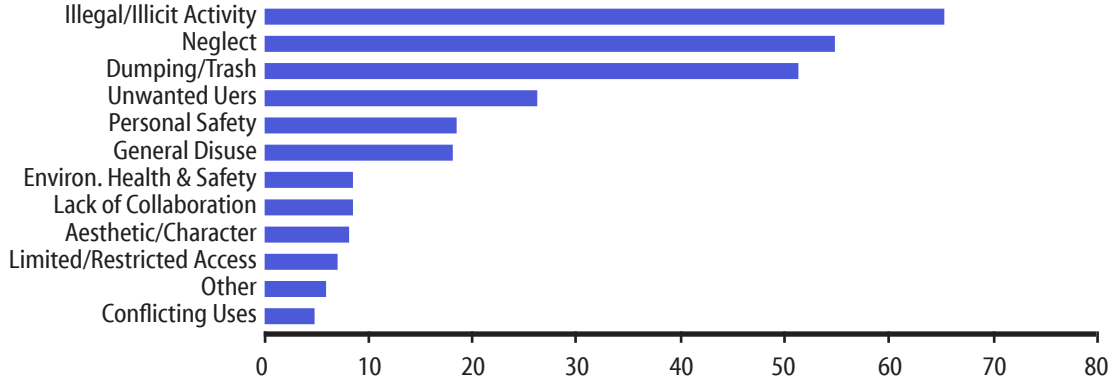
Identification of Pilot Alleys

We mapped the survey results and selected three pilot alleys based on a combination of factors including neighbor interest, the presence of neighbors willing to host an event, and our inventory of alley conditions which showed that there are three different types of alleys: Auto-oriented, Pedestrian/bike corridor, and Destination alleys. We selected an alley from each type based on neighbor interest in each of the three neighborhoods along the Foster Corridor: Lents, Mt. Scott-Arleta, and Foster-Powell.

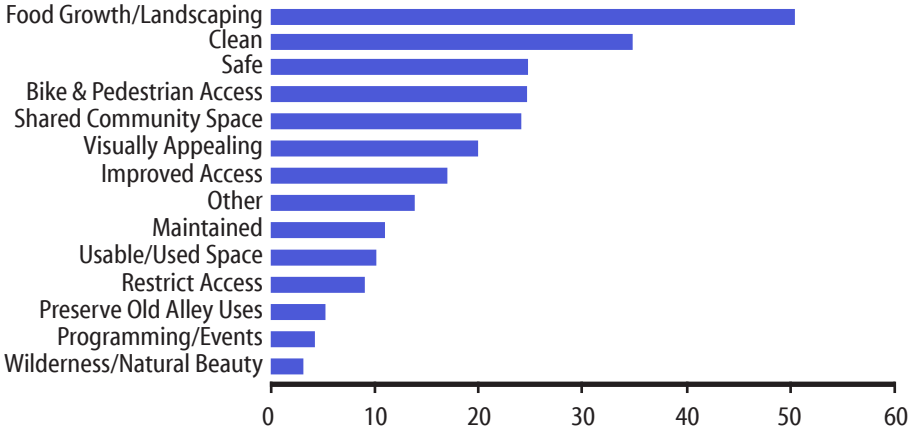
These pilot alleys aided the project in a number of ways:

- They allowed us to test the outreach and site design process
- They served as real world examples of what could be done with neighborhood alleys for engagement of the rest of the Foster corridor community
- They may result in fast tracking the revitalization of the three alleys with the highest level of interest from neighbors
- They provided insights that were used to create a first draft of the toolkit

Graph 10: General Concerns Of Respondents

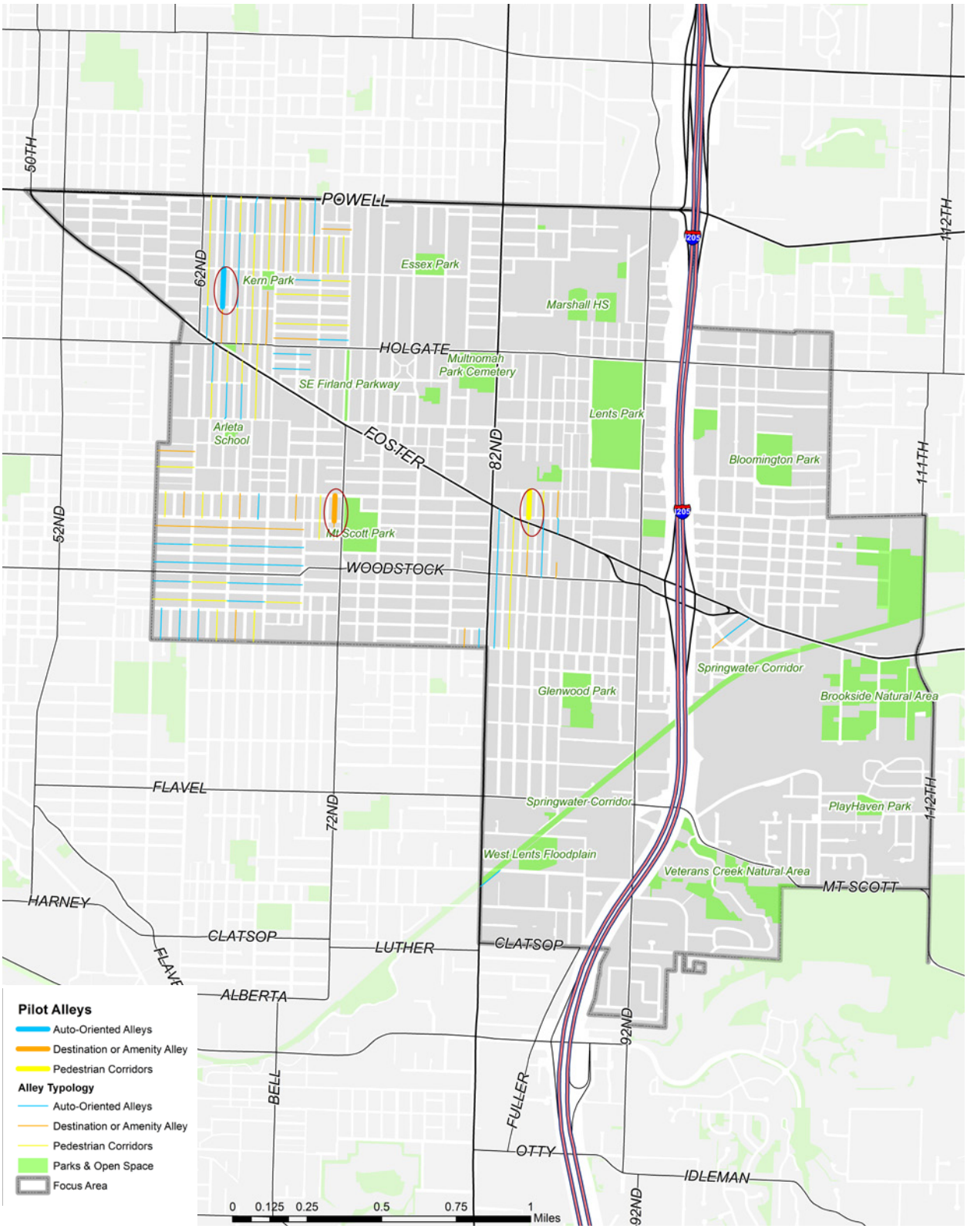


Graph 11: Respondent's Ideal Use Of Alley Space



Source: Alley Allies Survey

Map 12: Pilot Alleys



Source: Mill Street Community Planning

Coffee Talk Events Establish Neighbor Visions

Following the survey, six coffee talks were held with local residents, two for each pilot alley. These coffee talks were small group discussions that were hosted and attended by neighbors who lived along one of the three pilot alleys. These events were held over a two-week period and served four strategic purposes. First, by allowing the residents to host and be intimately involved, the community was able to gain ownership over the project. Second, they brought neighbors together to discuss something that they all share, strengthening community bonds. Third, it allowed us to identify community values and neighborhood needs. Lastly, residents spent considerable time discussing alley issues with their neighbors, which helped to develop creative ideas for alley improvement. These community driven ideas were crucial in designing the draft alley visions that were presented at the subsequent workshop event.

From the coffee talks, the participants identified the 14 priority values listed in the chart below. Although priorities differed somewhat between neighborhoods, the top 5 most vote-getting values in the chart below scored high in all three locations. These values helped us to recommend specific alley improvements for each pilot alley.

The Coffee Talks uncovered several current uses of the alleys that were perceived as positive and that neighbors wish to preserve. The following were frequently mentioned in the Coffee Talks:

Current positive uses, aspects to preserve

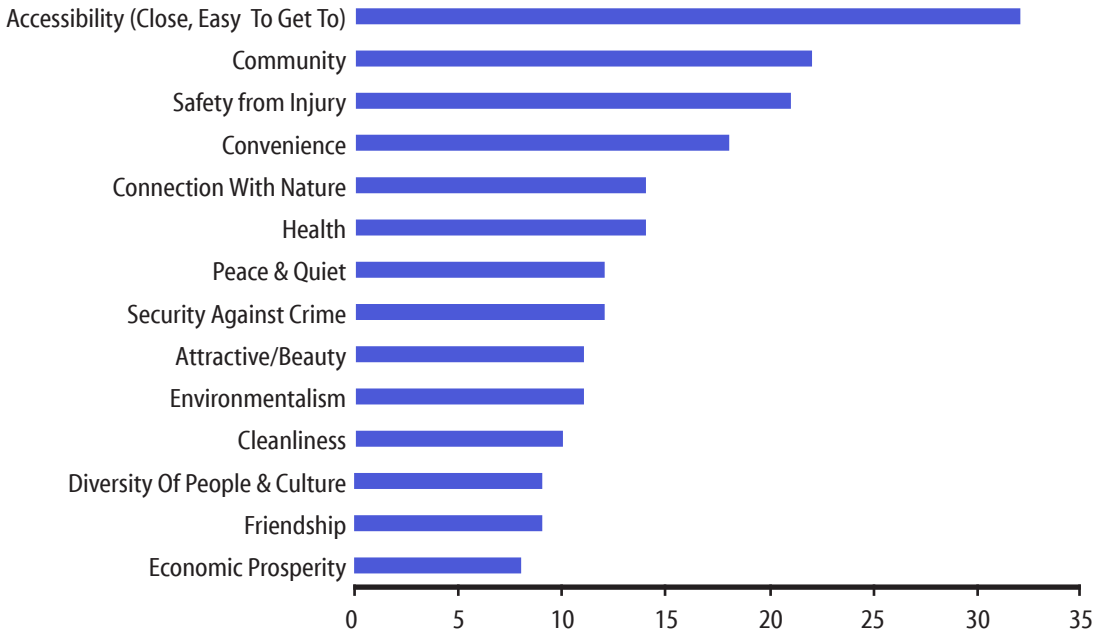
- Auto access to garages
- Access to back yards
- Blackberry picking
- Natural feel
- Dog walking
- Use by pedestrians and cyclists
- Gardens

Neighbors also identified several things about alleys that they would like to see changed. The following were commonly listed in the Coffee Talks:

Negative uses, and aspects that should change

- Dumping
- Litter
- Transient use

Graph 12: Top 14 Scoring Neighborhood Values (Out of 39 Values)



Source: Alley Allies Coffee Talks

- Theft
- Drinking and drug use
- Lack of lighting
- Potholes and puddles
- Graffiti
- Lack of security
- Lack of maintenance
- Poor visibility
- Fast auto traffic
- Lack of ownership/sense of pride
- Lack of eyes on the alley

Lastly, neighbors had some creative ideas about how to improve alleys. These included the following (in alphabetical order):

Creative ideas for improvements

- A designated graffiti wall
- A mutually agreed upon dog time
- A shared play area for children
- Access for accessory dwelling units
- Addition of birdfeeders
- An exchange for books, tools, toys, etc.
- Block parties or other events to get neighbors together
- Community compost station
- Extending back yards into the alley (transfer of property from City ownership)
- Flowers
- Mural or other art
- Planter boxes on the sides, potentially as a "veggie share" program
- Pocket parks/linear parks
- Shared recreation space with horseshoes or bocce ball
- Test gardens or landscaping projects
- Urban orchards with fruit trees

After the completion of the coffee talks, 25 evaluations were received out of the 34 total participants. The compilation and analysis of the data found six general areas for improvement: increase attendance, increase advertising, location with easier accessibility, provision of information about Foster Green EcoDistrict, inclusion of more images, and provision of healthier foods. To adjust for these findings, we incorporated new approaches into the design of the next stage of the public participation process (See appendix 3 for more detailed information on the evaluation).

The Coffee Talks provided crucial insight for us about the values and concerns of the pilot alley residents. In general, we learned that most residents across the three alleys wanted to preserve some level of automobile access but were also enthusiastic about putting the alleys to other uses as well. We also found that the three alleys, selected to represent the three alley types (auto, pedestrian, and destination), generally fit into the typology that the team had defined; one alley required a focus on the issue of auto access, one had issues centered around pedestrian traffic, and one had the potential to become a neighborhood amenity for people to come and enjoy.

The Coffee Talks also created an opportunity for residents to gather, meet their neighbors, and begin a discussion about their alley. We had numerous neighbors comment that they saw this project as a good way to get involved in the community. While there were serious concerns brought up about the current state of the alleys, these concerns often brought neighbors together to begin building a shared vision of what their alley could be if it was improved. Once residents had a chance to air their concerns, they expressed a great deal of energy and excitement about the potential of their alleys to become a resource.

Creation of Alley Visions and the Community Workshop

For the next step in our process we created visions of alleys that addressed the concerns, interests, and ideas residents expressed at the coffee talk events. Here we drew upon case study and toolkit research conducted in the first stage of the project to create a set of design elements such as street lights, rain gardens, bike racks, etc. that could be incorporated into alleys (see below). Each element was associated with a set of values. For example, lighting was associated with safety, accessibility, attractiveness, and vibrancy. If the residents on the alley identified any of these values as missing, or if they specifically requested lighting, this was added to their alley vision. We favored individual elements that addressed multiple concerns, providing a win-win while helping to reduce project costs during implementation.

Table 10: Alley Elements And Values

Elements	Accessible	Activeness	Affordability	Attractiveness	Art	Attractiveness	Camaraderie	Cleanliness	Connection w/ Nature	Cooperation	Creativity	Diversity of Recreational Options	Economic Prosperity	Education	Enjoyment	Environmentalism	Fitness	Health	Individuality	Inspiration	Peace & Quiet	Preparedness	Privacy	Relaxation	Safety	Vibrancy
ADU Access			•										•												•	
Art					•	•					•				•				•	•						•
Benches				•			•								•						•			•		•
Biking Path	•	•		•								•			•	•	•	•								•
Bioswales				•					•	•						•					•					
Bulletin boards										•				•												
Cafe Seating and Tables				•			•								•									•		
Car Parking	•																									
Car Path	•																									
Commercial Uses							•						•												•	
Composting								•								•										
Drinking Fountains															•									•		•
Edible Gardening				•			•		•	•						•		•		•	•	•	•			
Edible Orchards				•					•	•						•		•			•	•				
Electricity													•													
Emergency Access	•																					•			•	
Lighting	•			•																					•	•
Murals					•	•					•				•				•	•						•
Naturescaping				•					•							•					•		•			
Permeable Fencing																									•	
Pervious Pavement	•			•												•										
Planting Beds				•			•		•	•						•					•	•	•			
Play Features		•					•					•			•		•	•								•
Rain Barrels																•						•				
Rain Gardens				•					•	•						•					•					
Shading																								•		
Solar Panels																•						•				
Trash Collection								•																		
Trees				•					•							•					•		•	•		
Verticle Plantings				•					•							•					•		•			
Walking Path	•	•		•								•			•	•	•	•								•
Water Access																										
Wayfinding Elements	•										•			•	•										•	•

Mt. Scott-Arleta: SE Harold to SE Reedway between 71st and 72nd Streets

Current Alley Conditions

Example Improved Alley

Mt. Scott-Arleta coffee talk participants valued the nearby Mt. Scott Park, the flowers, planters and gardens neighbors kept, and the attractive Craftsman style homes in the area. There was a strong sense of connection with nature due to close proximity to Mt. Scott Park and its trails, with neighbors enjoying the peace and quiet under the shade of their trees and birdwatching.

There were also areas where neighbors want to see improvements. Safety was identified as a major concern. Neighbors reported that cars drive too fast down their alley, that they find needles and other signs of drug use and that there have been multiple homeless people camping in the alley. Based on this information we developed the vision above.

Alley surface improvements: The example vision shows the alley paved with bricks. These bricks improve the aesthetics of the alley, and identify the space as a pedestrian environment which has been shown to slow car travel even in intersections. Brick is also a sign of investment and active use, which reduces the chance that those wanting to hide their activities will think to do so in the alley. Finally, the bricks are an easy to walk and bicycle surface that allows water to penetrate into the ground, reducing the pooling of water, creation of mud, and improves the environment more broadly.

Native wildflower planters: Planters along neighbor fences are narrow enough to allow cars to pass, but add an aesthetically pleasing element that enhances the natural feeling of the alley which the residents value. Use of native flowers will also support the bird population and make birdwatching and alley activity.

Vertical planters: Vertical plantings (also called green walls) can be used to produce food and create a more natural edge to the alley than fencing. Such planters also act as a buffer that reduces the amount of noise reaching neighbors from the commercial uses on the corner of 72nd and Harold.

Post street lights: Lighting in the alleys makes them safer places to walk and cycle at night, eliminates hidden areas sought by drug users and homeless people and improves the aesthetics of the alley even during the day.

Wayfinding signs: These signs help pedestrians access nearby businesses, parks, and transit.

Cafe seating: Existing cafes can use small business grants to expand seating into the alley, benefiting businesses while giving underutilized space a purpose that will reduce unwanted activity and add "eyes on the alley". It may be possible to restrict access to this space at night which would cut down on noise and trash in the alley.

Murals (public art): Bare walls could be covered with a mural by local artists that depicts community goals. This helps build community, supports local artists, and enhances the aesthetics and enjoyment of spending time in the alley.

Bicycle parking: Bike racks provide a safe place to store bikes for neighbors and business patrons. Multiple neighbors at the coffee talks asked for more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): There are opportunities along this alley to build accessory dwelling units which can be rented out to provide income to residents. Those living on ADUs benefit from living off an attractive alley instead of a busy and loud city street. The City of Portland is charging reduced system development fees through 2016 making the construction of ADUs much more affordable.

Food planter: There is a large amount of unused space along the apartment building on the alley to install a planter for growing fruit and vegetables. Such amenities allow neighbors to connect with nature, improves the aesthetics of the alley, and provides a local source of fresh and healthy food. It also helps build community as residents work together to grow the food.

Farmers market: The alley has a gravel parking area which is heavily used much of the time, however, many neighbors were excited about the chance to have better access to groceries, and to host activities in their alley. A farmers market could be hosted during a Saturday morning without disrupting the parking lot's primary use for the rest of the week. Other events could be planned for the space based on what the neighbors want to organize.

Pedestrian walkway: Mt. Scott Community Center, Mt. Scott Park, and the businesses along SE 72nd Avenue were highlighted by many residents as important reasons they like their area. Converting a small portion of a resident's yard into a pedestrian passageway could improve connectivity and makes events along the alley easier to access for neighbors not living along it.

Foster-Powell: Center to Boise between 63rd and 64th Streets

Current Alley Conditions

Example Alley Vision

Feedback from the **Foster-Powell** coffee talks demonstrated that the alley community on 63rd and 64th loved the friendly neighborhood atmosphere. They placed a high value on community interaction and camaraderie.

When we asked: What do you love about your neighborhood? The top values from participants were: diversity of people and culture, accessibility (primarily to food), community, cleanliness and friendship. Taking these values into account, we suggested the following components in response to these concerns.

Trellis: The trellis structure—which does not run throughout the entire alley—provides a sense of ownership. Many residents felt an inability to control the activity that went on in the alley. This ranged from the speed of cars to safety and crime concerns. By placing a structure that shows investment in the alley, this will not only slow cars, but also discourage unwanted activity.

The trellis can also be mounted with lights, as we have envisioned it above. This would further increase a feeling of 'eyes on the alley,' and diminish the likelihood of alley crime. These could be motion activated or solar controlled to limit additional costs.

Kiosk: At the beginning of the alley we included a kiosk. Residents at both coffee talks suggested the idea for a community exchange spot. We created the kiosk to serve a number of needs. It has a community bulletin board for flyers and notices (babysitters wanted, upcoming events, etc.) as well as shelving to promote a neighbor-to-neighbor book exchange or a take-and-leave space for free items.

Surface treatment: Participants in the coffee talks all mentioned that the alley was still used as an important access point for cars. To meet this need, we added brick-laid tire tracks to allow for car access. Simultaneously, residents also emphasized how much they liked the 'natural' feel of the alley as it was. Without covering the entire surface, we felt that tire-tracks struck a balance between aesthetics and function.

Signage: Participants voiced concerns over the conflict between the speed of the traffic and children playing in the alley. We suggested signage to let drivers know that there are pedestrians and children in the alley in order to slow driving speeds before they enter.

Planter boxes: With the residents' interest in food and foraging, we placed planter boxes along the side of the alley that could be used for fruits or vegetables. This would allow the community to have shared gardens without blocking necessary access for cars.

Lents: Insley to Ellis between 85th and 86th Streets

Feedback from the **Lents** coffee talks demonstrated that above all, the alley community near 85th and 86th desired a safe, clean and maintained alley space. They also placed a high value on having healthy environments as well as access to local amenities.

When we asked: What do you love about your neighborhood? The top values from participants were: accessibility, community, convenience, safety from injury, security from crime and health. Taking these values into account, we suggested the following components in response to these concerns:

Walking path: Participants in the coffee talk emphasized improved pedestrian access and safety with the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks in the area and speeding cars being common concerns. To improve pedestrian comfort and ownership we suggested a cobblestone walking path through the alley. The path is also marked by ground-lighting to keep the alley safe and navigable at night.

Rain Garden: Stormwater management is a large concern for residents of this alley. The side closest to Ellis has expansive potholes and large puddles that make it difficult for pedestrians to pass through. To mitigate this problem, we have suggested rain gardens to help improve the alley storm water management.

Trash: Health and maintenance is a major concern in this alley. Participants of the coffee talks mentioned the presence of needles, homeless encampments, and human excrement in the alley. To discourage negative uses, and provide an incentive to improve the care of the alley, we have added a place for trash disposal in the alley.

Vegetation Maintenance: Residents felt that the vegetation along the alley is not being properly maintained creating obstructed views and safety concerns. In the alley vision, we illustrated

Lents: Insley to Ellis between 85th and 86th Streets

Current Alley Conditions

Example Alley Vision

maintained vegetation to call this out as a critical component of improving the overall atmosphere and the uses taking place within the alley.

Seating: To further encourage positive uses and pedestrian activity, we added low seating. The benches mimic tree stumps and keep the feel of the alley natural, since residents highly valued the green and natural feel of the alley.

Planter boxes: Access to food and food production was also important to Lents. To cater to this need we added planter boxes to the side of the alley to encourage community plots and produce exchange.

Destination Alley Type Example

These alleys are places people travel to and spend time in. Destinations alleys are excellent ways to provide amenities missing in the area or neighborhood. For example, alleys can include community gardens that provide fresh food in areas that lack grocery stores, play areas can be installed to provide playgrounds for local children, park spaces can be developed for people to walk dogs and relax, and restaurants or bars can expand into alleys to create sidewalk cafes and beer gardens.

While any alley can host events or planned activities like block parties, wine tastings, or children play dates, destination alleys are particularly well suited to hosting these activities because they have been identified as having low amounts of car activity. The example site vision below provides an example of one possibility for such an alley.

Large community garden: A large portion of the alley has been devoted to the growing of various fruits and vegetables. A gravel path between the growing areas allows pedestrians to travel through the alley, but the primary purpose is food production. A large blooming pear tree can be seen in the background.

Children's play area: The play area includes a play structure set on an area with wood chip ground covering. A chalkboard is fixed to the fence to provide a place for children to draw, and there is a horseshoe game area to the left of the play structure for adults. Although these features may be common to many public playgrounds, neighborhoods often lack sufficient playground space. There is also a benefit to having such amenities just beyond your back fence: Neighbors can share the costs of the equipment and the enjoyment, building community while incurring less costs compared to installing such amenities in their own backyard.

Bench seating: Seating such as these benches provides a place to rest while keeping an eye on the children or simply enjoying the park space created by the combination of plants in the community garden and play area.

Vertical planting: These vertical plantings make the space feel more garden like and less closed in by the many high fences. They also reduce the noise that makes it to nearby neighbors from the children's play area, and can provide food depending on what plants are used.

Lighting: Downward facing path lights illuminate the path through the community garden, cutting down on tripping, and helping people stay off the growing plants. In the play area, upward facing spotlights bounce light off the vertical planters and fences creating a softer light and enjoyable setting for those who want to sit in the alley during the evenings.

Pedestrian Alley Type Example

These alleys are primarily oriented around people traveling by foot or on bike through the alley. An alley may be a better fit for walking or cycling if it is far from one of the major roads such as Foster Road or Powell Boulevard, or if there is overgrowth or surface conditions that make driving unpractical. In many cases, neighbors have long since given up driving on these alleys.

For both pedestrians and cyclists, the unimproved conditions may be sufficient to provide basic access, however, mud and pooling water is a common problem. These alleys are particularly attractive for accessory dwelling unit (ADU) development as they are quiet and peaceful compared to living on a city street. Pedestrian alleys can serve dual purposes as both a passageway, and as a linear park with the addition of benches and facilities that allow dogwalkers to keep the area clean. The example site vision below provides an example of one possibility for such an alley.

Separated foot and bicycle paths: This alley shows the potential for separating cyclists from pedestrians. This allows each to move at their own pace. The cobblestone pedestrian path meanders between different natural elements while the concrete bicycle path cuts directly through the alley space.

Example of the Destination Alley Type

Current Alley Conditions

Example Alley Vision

Birdhouses: Birdhouses have been installed along the alley to enhance the natural atmosphere and birdwatching.

Seating: Natural wood benches have been installed to provide a place to rest or for those wanting to sit and enjoy the natural feel of the alley.

Pond: A pond is shown to highlight the possibility for more advanced landscaping features if neighbors feel that such amenities are worth the effort.

Naturescaping: A bamboo "living wall" has been planted along the fences on the left side of the alley. Living walls provide softer edges to public spaces than tall fences as well as habitats for local animals. When the bamboo grows tall, it will shade the alley on hot days and provide neighbors with privacy.

Uplighting: Upward facing lights are used to light the alley at night. Casting light against the living wall creates an interesting and enjoyable visual texture in addition to sufficient lighting. By throwing the light against elements, it reduces the light pollution to nearby neighbor residences.

Rain garden: A long strip of rain garden plantings is shown between the pedestrian and bicycle path. Such features filter rainwater while enhancing the natural elements of the space.

Tree cover: This alley already benefits from large trees that provide shade for portions of the alley. This sense of enclosure makes the space comfortable and enjoyable and should be protected over the years. If trees must be removed, elements like the bamboo living fence can provide some shade until new trees can grow tall.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): An ADU with a gate leading onto the alley is shown on the right. As discussed in the introduction, there are many people who would enjoy living on a quiet park-like environment such as this alley, over a busy and often noisy city street. Developing these units allows neighbors to benefit from the investment in the alley by adding a source of rental income.

Example of Auto Alley Type

After compiling feedback from the three neighborhood coffee talks, we took popular elements from each and tailored them to create three typology visions: vehicular, pedestrian and destination. Elements can and should be taken from any type that best fits an alley. The typology visions can help guide residents towards a current or desired use. Below are typical elements that can be added to vehicular alley.

Separation of modes: For an alley which needs to maintain some level of frequent access for cars we suggest clear delineation of modes to maintain safety. In this model, we created a marked, gravel walking and biking path that is separate from the brick-paved area for cars.

Bricked paving: The majority of this alley space has been preserved for car access. Given that this is still an alley and not a road, we have paved with gray brick instead of pavement to slow traffic and address concerns regarding style of driving in the alley. The brick paving is distinctly different from the street while still maintaining a drivable surface.

Stormwater: Poor stormwater management can prevent an alley from allowing cars to navigate smoothly, slowly and easily down the alley. It can lead to large puddles, uneven surfaces and potholes. To make sure excess water is adequately managed, we suggested rain gardens along the edge that provide aesthetic appeal, yet maintain stormwater management functions.

Signage: Adding speed or caution signs can enforce driving at slower paces.

Upkeep: Limiting the deterioration of an alley, even when it is primarily used for auto access is important for many of the listed reasons above. Owner investment is important and as a result the alley-facing frontage (the side of the house or property facing the alley directly) should be well kept and maintained. In this example, we have installed grass strips along the front of properties between any structures and the road.

Gathering spots: Even when the primary alley use is auto-oriented, the design of the alley should promote a combination of uses by autos and pedestrians as well as destination. In this example, we took extra space between the edge of the house and alley to provide for an outdoor grill area that could be utilized by the alley community.

The Broader Community Adds Their Voice At The Community Workshop

After compiling all the information from the surveys

Example of the Pedestrian Alley Type

Current Alley Conditions

Example Alley Vision

Example of the Auto Alley Type

Current Alley Conditions

Example Alley Vision

and coffee talks and creating the site visions, a workshop event was held to verify that the gathered information conformed with the ideas and needs of the broader community. The workshop event also allowed for new concerns and ideas to surface and allowed for us to gather information regarding barriers that community members face when it comes to alley improvement efforts.

The workshop event was held on April 27th and had 34 members of the public attend. The event was broken into two phases: a cooperative learning activity and a voting activity. Each phase, along with the findings, is described in the following sections.

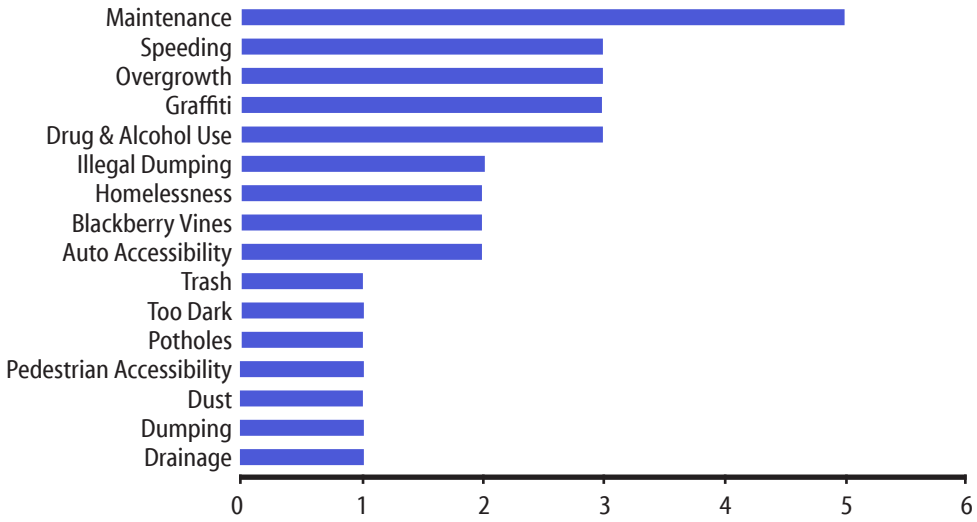
PHASE 1 - Cooperative Learning Activity

Of those in attendance, 28 actively participated in the cooperative learning activity. To encourage participation, the attendees were separated into groups of five or six people based on the alley type that they each self-identified. Ultimately, there were six groups: Two pedestrian alley, two auto alley, and two destination alley groups. The thoughtful public discussion that arose from the cooperative learning activity allowed usplanning to collect three sets of data:

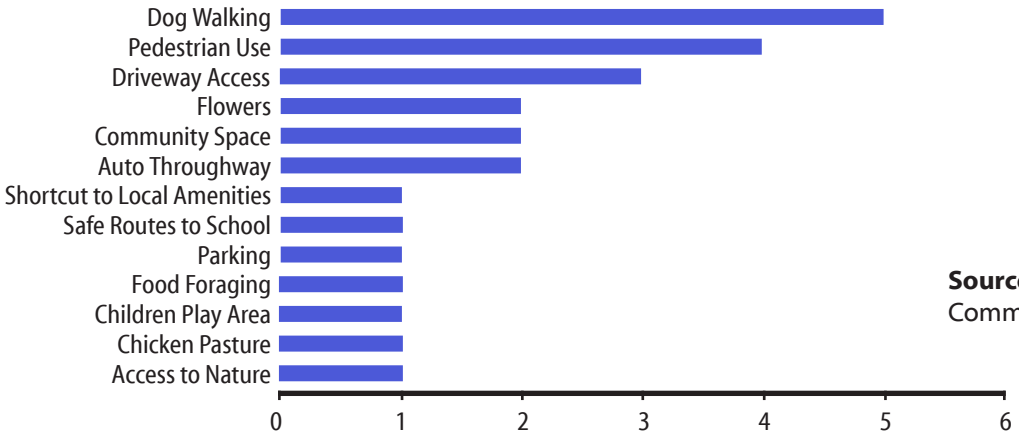
1. How Alleys are Currently being Used: Negatives and Positives

Groups were asked to identify the three to five most serious issues and the three to five most positive ways that their local alley is currently being used. The following two graphs are a breakdown of the responses.

Graph 13: Negative Uses in Alleys



Graph 14: Positive Uses in Alleys



Source: Alley Allies Community Workshop

2. Identified Alley Designs to Mitigate Negative Uses or Increase Positive Uses

Each group was provided with a large image of an empty alley and asked to redesign the alley with elements that could address the negative and positive items that each group identified. The six group illustrations uncovered the following themes and potential solutions:

Discourage Speeding

- Place benches at the alley entrances to help cars recognize community use
- Install a speed bump like slowing mechanism
- Safety signage along the alley

Encourage Community Space

- Create a garage free portion of the alley
- Create a more conducive community space because cars will less likely access this area
- Take down fences between garages to encourage shared space
- Build a kiosk for neighborhood use and to explain how the alley is utilized by the local community
- Place benches at the alley entrances to support local businesses located at the ends
- Murals along walls from community artists

Improve Safety

- Lower fences to bring more "eyes on the alley"
- Install alley lighting
- Preferably down lighting or ground lighting

Improve Conditions/Increase Maintenance

- Install a dog waste bag pole
- Install a trash can
- Install a car path paver with a rain garden for the center strip
- Host an alley "work party" to keep up maintenance and to talk about alley issues
- Install a walking path

Discourage graffiti, drug use, and camping

- Vertical gardens along wall to prevent graffiti
- Place benches at the alley entrances to discourage unwanted users from entering the alley center
- Benches with bar in the middle to prevent sleeping
- Install recessed lighting in dark areas to prevent camping

Energy Conservation

- Install solar power lights
- Install ground source heat pump to generate energy

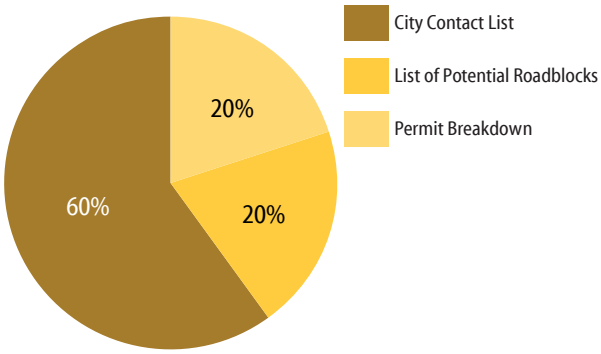
3. Tools to Assist in Overcoming the Barriers to Alley Improvements

To better understand the barriers that residents face when attempting to improve their alleys, each group was asked to list key items that would help them accomplish the following five steps that are involved in improving an alley: organizing neighbors, developing a neighborhood agreement on alley design and maintenance, determining the required city permits, identifying funding options, and carrying out the alley design.

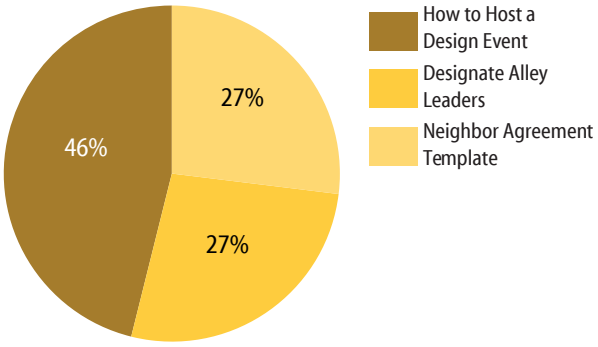
The following graphs list the three most common responses that the combined six groups had for each alley improvement stage. The identification of these commonly expressed items assisted in determining the additional tools and resources included in the final Alley Allies Toolkit.

Graph 15: Tools Needed For Each Stage Of A Project As Identified By Workshop Participants

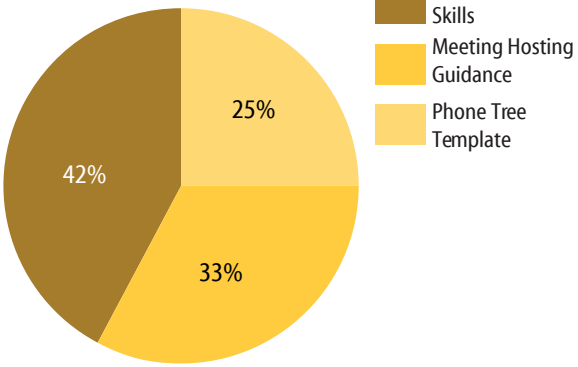
City Permissions Needed



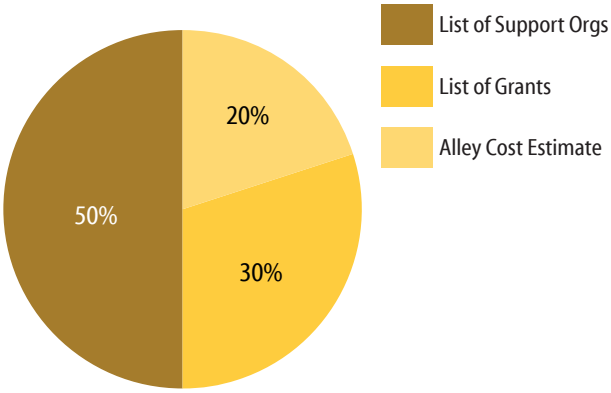
Agree On Alley Design & Maintenance



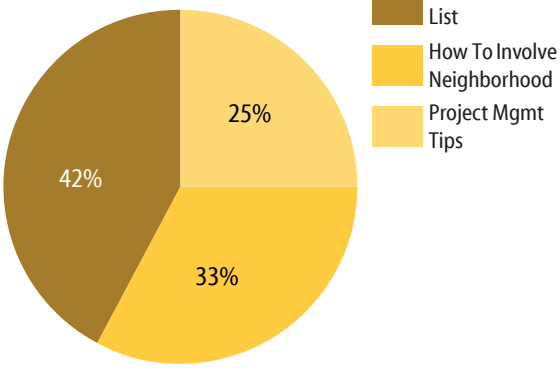
Organize Neighbors



Funding Options



Carry Out Alley Designs



Source: Alley Allies Community Workshop

PHASE 2 – Voting

At the conclusion of the cooperative learning activity, each attendee was provided with four colored stickers: one star and three dots. With these stickers in hand, the participants were asked to review the six site design posters. The attendees were asked to place their star sticker on the alley design that best encapsulated the image of their ideal alley. The graph below shows the vote breakdown.

With their remaining dot stickers, the participants were asked to review one final poser, which listed various types of elements that could be placed within an alley (i.e. lighting, pavement, vertical gardens, etc.), and vote for the three elements that they believed to be the most important. The following tables breakdown this final vote. The poster can be seen to the right.

Table 11: Favorite Alley Elements

Category	Alley Element	Vote Count
Seating	Individual Chairs	0
	Benches	6
	Cafe/Patio Seating	4
Lighting	String Lights/Lanterns	6
	Deck lights	1
	Uplighting	1
	Pathway Lights	4
	Street Light	7
Vegetation	Trees	1
	Native Wildflowers	1
	Raingardens	1
	Community Gardens	1
	Vertical Gardens	7
Surface Improvment	Permeable Asphalt	0
	Stone	11
	Brick	1
	Unimproved grass/dirt	0

Table 12: Favorite Alley Visions

Vision	Vote Count
Destination Example	0
Auto Example	0
Pedestrian Example	9
Mt. Scott-Arleta Pilot	4
Foster-Powell Pilot	5
Lents Pilot	5

Caption: The poster of alley elements presented at the Community Workshop was used for voting and inspiration during the charrette activity.

Source for all data above: Alley Allies Community Workshop

After the completion of the workshop event, 15 evaluations were received out of the 34 people in attendance. After a deeper review, only two areas of improvement were mentioned: Too much paper and the desire to have more specific "how to" information. To adjust for these findings, we incorporated new approaches into the design of the next stage of the public participation process (See Appendix 3 for more detailed information on the evaluation).

The workshop event uncovered several elements that were critical to the project. First, the workshop confirmed the accuracy of the data found in the surveys and coffee talks. More specifically, maintenance, overgrown vegetation, and graffiti were verified as major concerns to the residents. Moreover, pedestrian use, dog walking, and driveway access were confirmed as top positive uses. The event also revealed that some of the information gathered from the coffee talks and surveys was not generalizable to the whole community. In particular, community space and speeding were uses that were found to be marginally important in the surveys and coffee talks. However, those residents participating in the workshop event identified them as very important current uses that must be addressed in the toolkit.

When it came to residents' designs to mitigate or increase identified alley uses, eight major themes were uncovered: Discourage speeding, encourage community space, improve safety, improve conditions/maintenance, discourage graffiti, discourage drug use, discourage camping, and encourage energy conservation. Additionally, 15 themes were uncovered regarding residential barriers to improve the alley. These combined themes assisted us in identifying priority pieces to include in the Alley Allies workbook.

Lastly, the voting phase of the workshop event exposed several trends. **First, a majority of the votes for the ideal alley site plan were for the pedestrian example. Interestingly, this site plan example was one that executed major changes to the existing condition to the alley. Therefore, this helped us understand that there is a strong community desire for large-scale alley changes.** Secondly, the alley elements that received the highest votes were those that were along the theme of safety: Lighting to create a safer environment, vertical gardens to discourage graffiti, and a stone surface to create a more pedestrian friendly alley.

Vetting Event Takes the Toolkit to the Community to Ensure its Usefulness

After the completion of the public participation events, we felt we had a very clear idea of the community's needs, concerns, and hopes for the alleys. With this information, a draft of the Alley Allies Toolkit was created. Once the draft was created, a vetting event was held to ensure three items: 1) The toolkit is providing the appropriate information to assist residents in improving their alley, 2) The organization of the toolkit into different concerns (e.g., safety, walkability, etc.) is clear and easy to understand, and 3) The toolkit is made available at community suggested locations.

The vetting event was held on May 18th and it was attended by 22 members of the community. Each attendee was asked to fill out a questionnaire that sought information about the three items listed above. The findings from this event were compiled and listed below:

What important information should we make sure is included in the toolkit?

- Strategies – how and when do we need to involve the city (permits)
- Examples/templates of how to communicate with neighbors
- Information on non-alley residents to get involved
- Information on how improving alleys would detract crime and noise
- Directions on how to post traffic signs in the alleys
- Description of who owns and maintains the alleys

Is the toolkit organized in a manner that is easy to read and understand?

- All responses – YES!

Where would residents go to find this toolkit?

- City Website
- Dedicated website
- Local coffee shops
- Neighborhood Association Websites and Facebook pages
- Local restaurants
- Community Center
- Neighborhood organizations
- Farmers' Market

The vetting event provided the residents with an opportunity to voice their opinion and shape the toolkit into a document that would be most useful for the community. The event also helped us ensure that its toolkit addressed all key issues and that the toolkit was made available at all appropriate locations.

Technical Advisors Meet to Discuss Accuracy and Future Viability of the Products

On May 28th, technical advisors representing six city bureaus were brought together to discuss the Alley Allies project. We convened this meeting to provide an opportunity for discussion regarding the technical accuracy of the information presented in the draft of the final three products. More importantly, it was also a chance for city officials to confer about feasible next steps that Portland agencies and bureaus could undertake to assist Alley Allies' ultimate goal of helping Portland alleys become community assets.

These technical advisors provided insightful feedback and ideas that were incorporated into the final edits and recommendations. By working hand-in-hand with city officials regarding technical accuracy and feasible next steps, a sense of partnership has been developed that will be the foundation for which the Alley Allies project can grow.

The following lists the agencies and businesses that attended the meeting:

- Bureau of Environmental Services
- Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- Office of Neighborhood Involvement
- Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Portland Water Bureau
- Intertwine

Agency Roundtable Meeting

Caption: Staff from relevant City of Portland Bureaus came to a facilitated discussion on May 29, 2013 to discuss barriers to alley redevelopment residents and organizations face and how best to facilitate improvement projects.

Appendices

Public Participation Evaluation Process

To ensure continual improvement of the public participation process and adjustment to community needs, we conducted an evaluation during each public participation stage. After every participation event, public attendees were provided with an evaluation survey that addressed three main questions regarding the process of the event: What about the event was successful? What about the event was unsuccessful? What are some suggestions for improvement?

Once each participation stage was complete, the evaluation comments were compiled and findings were synthesized. We then used the evaluation findings as benchmarks for improvement and as a guide when developing the subsequent stage of the participatory process. By prioritizing the evaluation of the public participation process, we ensured that the determined engagement effort was the most appropriate, responsive, and effective for receiving community input.

Coffee Talks

After the completion of the coffee talks, 25 evaluations were received out of the 34 total participants. The compilation and analysis of the data found six general areas for improvement in the table that follows.

Table 13: Coffee Talk Feedback

Improvement Category	Comments Received
Increase attendance levels	4
Increase advertisement levels	2
Choose a location with easier accessibility	1
Provide more information about Foster Green EcoDistrict	1
Provide more pictures of alleys	1
Provide healthier drinks and snacks	1

To adjust for these findings, we incorporated new approaches into the design of the next stage of the public participation process (the workshop event). To increase the levels of advertisement and attendance for the event, announcements were made in both the Oregonian and the Portland Tribune, presentations given at several community events, and flyers were distributed to each resident through door-to-door promotion.

To increase event access, the following accessibility criterion was used to determine the appropriate venue: Serviced by more than one bus line, ADA accessible, and centrally located to the focus neighborhoods. Meeting all three criteria, Bobwhite Theatre was identified as the appropriate event location for the Community Workshop event. In addition to venue accessibility, we engaged in added measures to assist in increasing accessibility that go beyond the location. We provided multiple services (translation and childcare) as well as elected to hold the event on a Saturday for those residents who work late weekday hours.

Lastly, to compensate for the lack of alley pictures and information regarding the Foster Green EcoDistrict, a photo gallery was provided by Daniel Toole, a renowned alley enthusiast and architect, which displayed the various alleys in the world. Moreover, a detailed informational sheet regarding Foster Green EcoDistrict was provided to each of the participants.

Appendix

Workshop Event Evaluation

After the completion of the workshop event, 15 evaluations were received out of the 34 people in attendance. After a deeper review, only three of the evaluations provided information regarding future improvement in the table that follows.

Table 14: Workshop Feedback

Improvement Category	Responses Received
Too much paper	1
Need more specific "how to" information	2

We adjusted for the excessive paper evaluation by significantly reducing the amount of paper materials that were used during the vetting event. As for the final comment, one of the products that has stemmed from this project is a toolkit that will provide the "how to" information that the community was hoping to receive.

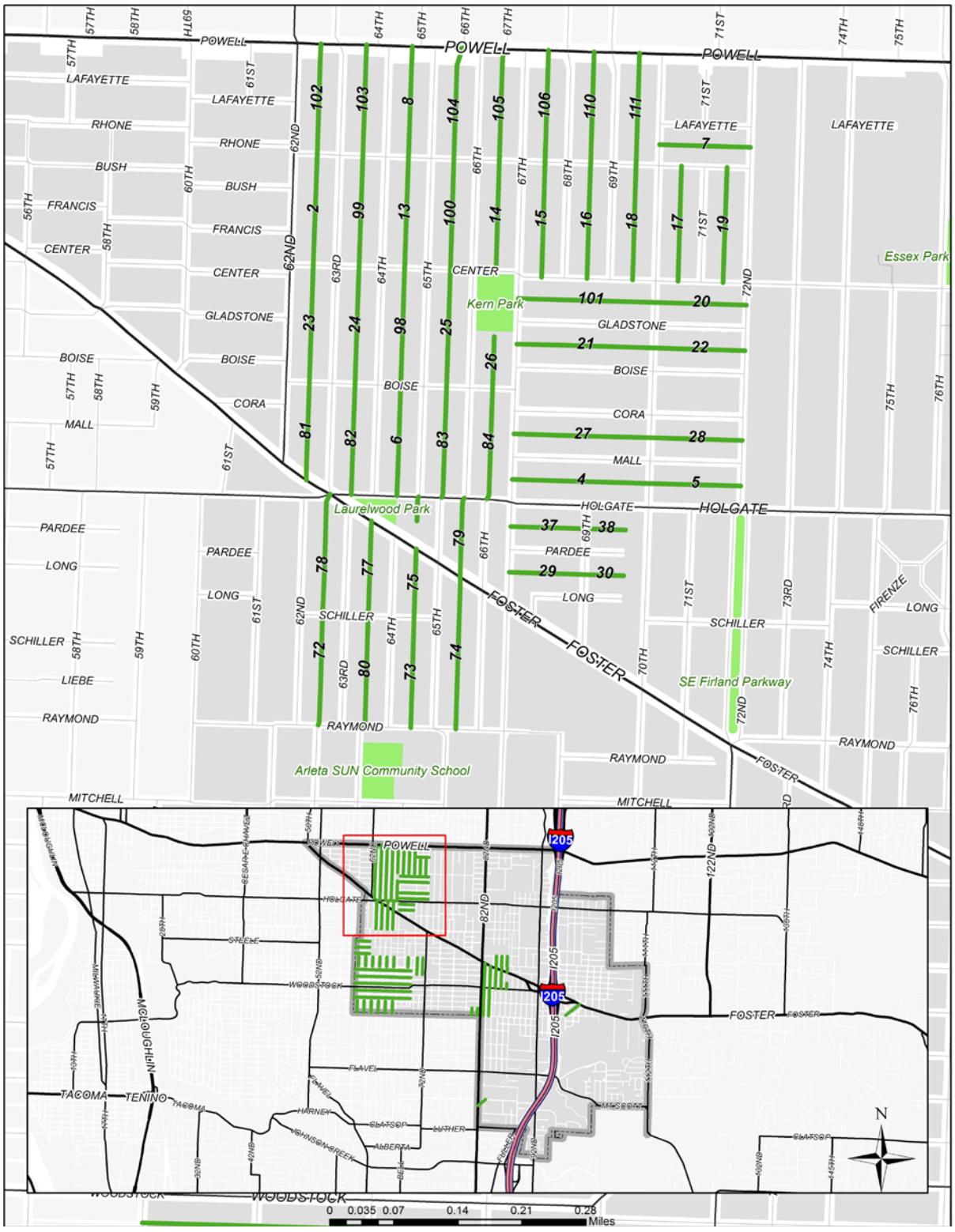
Full Dataset (Online)

A large dataset of alley inventory data collected during the project has been published online on the website of the Foster Green EcoDistrict as an Excel table. Visit http://www.fostergreenecodistrict.org/ to download and view the file. The dataset lists the alleys by a unique identifier provided in the Reference Maps described below.

Alley Inventory Reference Maps

The maps on the pages that follow show all alleys in the focus area broken down by neighborhood. For each neighborhood, alleys have been assigned a unique number that can be used to find more informationa about that alley gathered over the course of the project, including our existing conditions inventory conducted in the Spring of 2013. This data represents a snapshot of the alleys at the time the data was collected.

Map 13: Foster-Powell Alley Reference Map To Be Used With Online Lookup Table



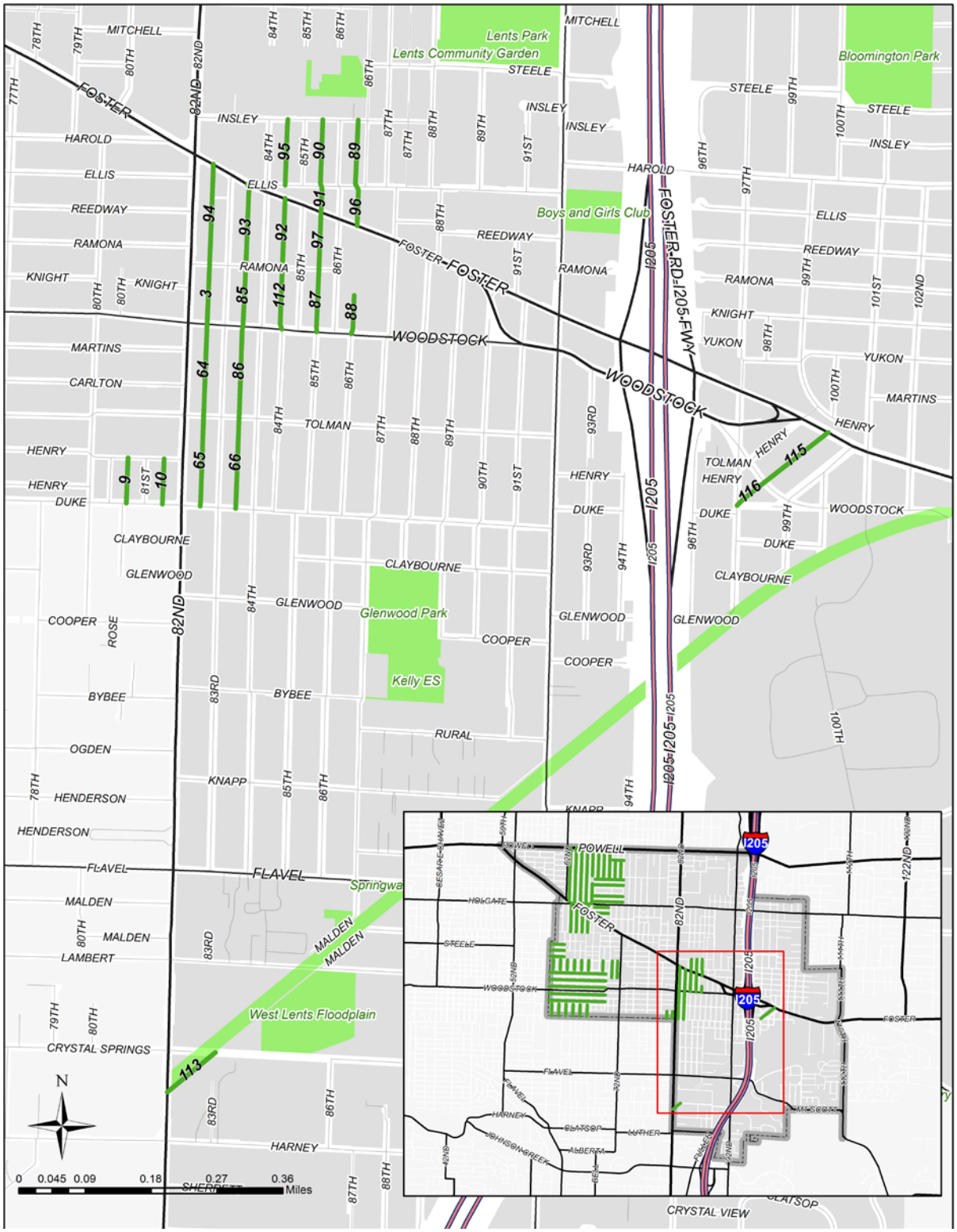
Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS, Mill Street Community Planning

Appendix

Map 14: Mt. Scott-Arleta Alley Reference Map To Be Used With Online Lookup Table

Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS, Mill Street Community Planning

Map 15: Lents Alley Reference Map To Be Used With Online Lookup Table



Source: Metro RLIS, City of Portland Maps & GIS, Mill Street Community Planning