

An aerial map of Milwaukie, Oregon, is overlaid with several cutouts of dogwood flowers. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing yellow centers and others being more closed. The map shows streets, buildings, and a body of water on the left side. The text "FRESH LOOK" is written in large, bold, blue letters across the middle of the map.

FRESH LOOK

June 2013

MILWAUKIE:
Downtown Road Map
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS report



“A city is not an accident but the result of coherent visions and aims”

Leon Krier, *The Architecture of Community*

About the Project

The *Fresh Look Milwaukie: Downtown Road Map* project (‘Fresh Look’) was a collaboration between ALIGN planning, City of Milwaukie staff, and over 300 fantastic Milwaukie community members, to plan for an improved Downtown. The ALIGN planning team is a group of five graduate planning students from Portland State University’s Nohad Toulon School of Urban Studies and Planning: Ryan Lemay, Carine Arendes, Jeffrey Butts, Erica Smith, and Iren Taran.

Through the *Fresh Look* project, City staff and ALIGN planning identified shared Milwaukie community values, and analyzed how those values interact with current Downtown plans and current physical and economic conditions. The recommendations developed for this project are accompanied by concrete strategies to support a vibrant Downtown Milwaukie in the short and long-term future.

How to use this Document

The *Fresh Look* project comprises Phase I of a larger City project called the Commercial Core Enhancement Program (CCEP). This document, the *Road Map*, should be used during Phase II of CCEP as a policy guide. Recommendations in the *Road Map* are the project team’s interpretation of community desires, transformed into policy direction and planning strategies. Decision-makers should consider this document a key source to understand the creative energy of the Milwaukie community.

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Acknowledgements

ALIGN planning enjoyed the welcoming nature of the Milwaukie community and would like to thank the following:

Contributing Businesses

Cha Cha Cha! Restaurant
Milwaukie Kitchen & Wine
Sully's Café
Wind Horse Coffee

Venue Hosts

Ledding Library
Marla Baggetta Gallery
Milwaukie Masonic Lodge
Thomas Kemper

Also

Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC
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Planning at Portland State University
First Friday organizers
Fregonese Associates, Inc.
Milwaukie churches
Yost Grube Hall Architecture

The People
of Milwaukie!



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Why Downtown Milwaukie? Why Now?

Over a decade has passed since the adoption of the Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan (“Framework Plan”) and implementing regulations which guide development in Downtown Milwaukie. Lack of funding, an atmosphere of distrust among various stakeholder groups as well as unfavorable market conditions have resulted in piece-meal implementation of that plan. Additionally, circumstances have changed. Milwaukie has an aging and diversifying population, enjoys increasingly favorable economic conditions and has a major transit project (Light Rail, or MAX) under construction.

Project Purpose

The City of Milwaukie has a need for a high level of understanding of how past plans and policies align with community values and desires with current conditions, in order to develop recommendations which inform Downtown planning policy making efforts. The culmination of the *Fresh Look* project is such a guide – a “Road Map” for Downtown Milwaukie, which addresses the following questions:

- Do current plans and policies align with community values and desires for the Downtown?
- What impacts are current plans and policies having on Downtown development?
- How have social, economic and physical circumstances changed since these plans’ adoption?
- How can current plans and policies be revised to better reflect community values and circumstances?

Process

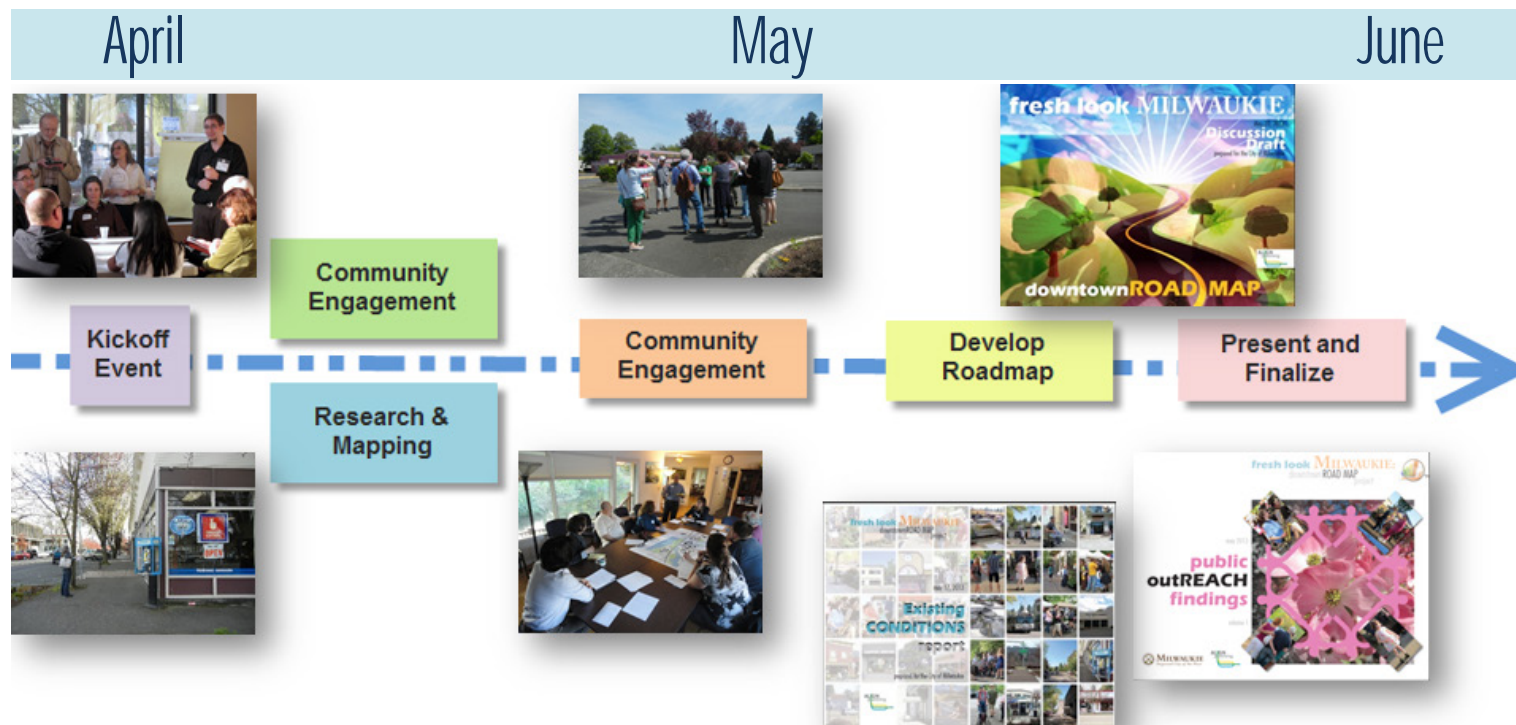
The *Fresh Look* project convened community members to identify values and concerns related to downtown while capitalizing on the positive momentum generated by recent improvements to the Downtown. The Existing Conditions Report (Attachment 2) describes current social, economic and physical conditions of Downtown. Research is based on a compendium of current and

past plans and policies of Downtown, demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau, and first-hand observations from an on-the-street Downtown business inventory.

A wide variety of community engagement techniques (Figure 1) were enlisted over a two-month period to identify broad themes of interest and concern, which became the

focus of subsequent engagement activities. Discussions with the community focused on identification of concrete strategies for addressing the themes identified as priority areas.

Figure 1 Project Overview

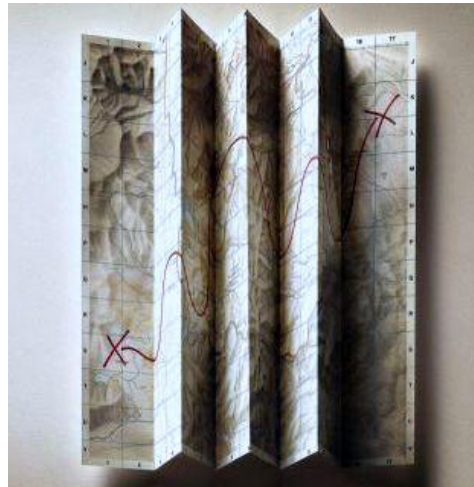


Findings



- *A New Community with Values that Echo those of the Past*

There are many areas of agreement among Milwaukie community members. The top qualities people value about Downtown Milwaukie (and want to see more of) are: the preservation of the small town feel; growth of locally-owned businesses; celebrations focused on local food, arts and culture; and improved connections to the river.



- *Implementation Strategies Need Updating*

The community's values today closely mirror the overarching themes of the 2000 Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan. However, the implementation strategies have had mixed results. The current plans and regulations were adopted more than a decade ago and do not reflect current physical or economic conditions.



- *Milwaukie Needs More People Downtown*

There is a chicken-egg conundrum for getting more people Downtown: more people will come Downtown if there are more enticing shops and activities. On the other hand, these uses depend on having a sizeable number of nearby residences. Once there are more shops and activities available, housing opportunities in Downtown will become more attractive and potentially attract more residential development, thereby leading to a larger customer base.

Recommendations

The outcome of the *Fresh Look* project is a set of five recommendations for Downtown Milwaukie. Policy-level recommendations are based on a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis, findings from the Existing Conditions Report, and are intended to enhance Downtown's assets and strengths. The recommendations include short and long-term strategies to achieve five main objectives:

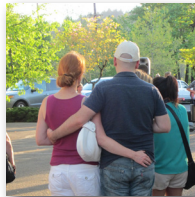
1. Promote and enhance shared community values

Ensure community values play a significant role in public investment decisions.



2. Facilitate economic development

Forge public-private partnerships to promote Downtown as a place of opportunity for local businesses to grow.



3. Increase community cohesion

Prioritize projects based on points of common ground. Points of contention should be noted and set aside to address at a future date.



4. Bring “sexy” back to McLoughlin

Facilitate access to Downtown as well as to encourage orientation of buildings and street activity toward the river.



5. Identify and prioritize short-term projects

Realize achievable projects that set the tone for the Downtown's future

Next Steps



The City of Milwaukie will begin Phase II of the Commercial Core Enhancement Program in June 2013. The next phase of the project will focus on making changes to policies and regulations that implement the community desires identified by the *Fresh Look* project.



The **Fresh Look** project aims to review the policies and regulations that shape development and uses in Downtown to ensure that they align with the community's desires for Downtown. The need for this project is generated by changing demographic, economic, and physical conditions in Downtown. This project identifies community priorities and values, and provides a basis for ensuring that policies plans governing Downtown reflect those priorities and values.

Past, Present & Future



Where have we been?

Over a decade has passed since the adoption of the Milwaukie Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan (“Framework Plan”) and other policies currently guiding development in Downtown, which are summarized in Appendix A. Lack of funding, an atmosphere of distrust among various stakeholder groups, as well as unfavorable market conditions have resulted in piecemeal implementation of those plans. Additionally, circumstances have changed. Milwaukie has an aging and diversifying population, enjoys increasingly favorable economic conditions, and has a new Light Rail alignment under construction.

Where are we now?

The Milwaukie community wants to leverage positive momentum from recent improvements to spur growth and development in Downtown. However, it is important to do so in a manner that protects shared local values, catalyzes economic development, and fosters community cohesion. Revisiting concepts of past plans, assessing current conditions, and a series of dynamic community discussions produced data (synthesized in the Public Outreach Findings Report), which informed the recommendations of the *Fresh Look* project.

Where are we going?

Though conditions have changed considerably over the past decade, there is still support for the overall objectives of the 2000 Framework Plan – building strong connections to the river, catalyzing local economic development and activating the main Downtown corridors. There are areas of strong agreement about particular strengths and weaknesses of Downtown, which have given rise to the list of top priorities. Further engagement will be necessary to parse out underlying issues in the areas of greater uncertainty in order to realize the community vision for Downtown.

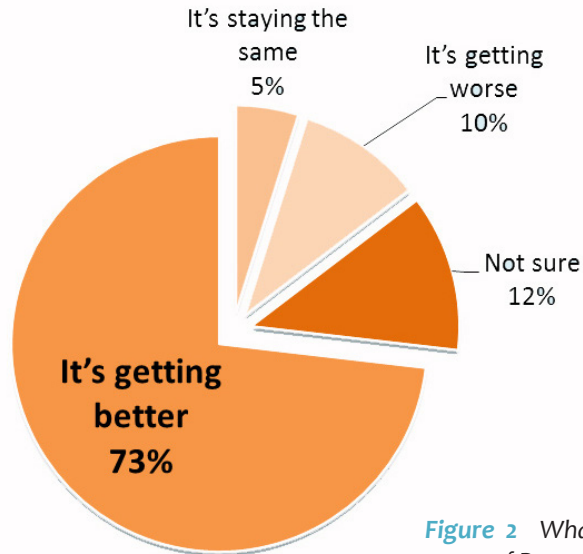


Figure 2 What is your general sense of Downtown Milwaukie?

How Policy is Affecting Downtown

What Is Working?

Ground floor retail with residential housing has been well received. People like the North Main Village project and new ground floor retail and dining options. New business owners report a lower cost to doing business in Milwaukie than in other areas. People believe Downtown is generally a walkable environment and newer streetscape improvements are well received, although there remains desire for improvements where the infrastructure is older or in poor condition. Residents are very excited about the Riverfront Park project and look forward to a fully developed park and community gathering space along the Willamette River. Many report feeling optimistic about Milwaukie's future (see Figure 2).

What Is Not Working So Well?

There is frustration associated with Downtown planning, with some participants feeling although Milwaukie is a city that plans, little has changed. People also express concern that use restrictions requiring ground floor retail on several blocks along Main Street have inhibited potential development. Some business owners expressed the opinion that it has become more expensive for business in Milwaukie; this was most often associated with the system development charges and permitting fees.



Areas of Uncertainty

Cost of Doing Business

Larger developers track commercial property markets and associated development fees closely to select development sites with the highest potential return on investment. However, smaller property owners may be less aware of locational variances in costs related to permitting, required public right-of-way improvements, and inspection fees. This creates a market in which there are widely ranging perceptions of the profit margins associated with development potential of Downtown. In addition, these perceptions vary depending on awareness of recent amendments that lightened conditions that trigger Public Area Requirements (PARs).

Ground Floor Uses

Restricting ground floor uses can promote retail associated foot traffic and helps maintain affordable retail space. However it may also prolong vacancies, especially in tough economic times. Highly specific definitions of uses may not be flexible enough to take into consideration new types of uses or changing perceptions of desirable uses.

However loosening regulations also has tradeoffs - more flexible use requirements may attract a use that does not contribute to the pedestrian environment.



Moving Forward



Planning is a long-term process, which considers changes to political and economic circumstances that are often unpredictable. Thus, managing expectations of what is feasible for implementation proves to be a difficult task, as the future is uncertain. In addition, changes in land use can occur very slowly when property owners have little incentive to make changes due to personal or economic conditions.

In response to some of these challenges, the *Road Map* provides recommendations that address some of the challenges for policy making purposes. As we heard throughout engagement efforts, Downtown Milwaukie is full of potential, and has many assets on which to capitalize. ***The question that remains is: how to move forward while preserving community values?*** This question is addressed in the following section.



The Future of Downtown

Adopted plans and policies still reflect the present values of the community. Cultivating Downtown as a local and regional destination – building on existing strengths and qualities of place – will make it an enticing place to do business and draw a greater customer base.

The built environment of Downtown offers pleasure and security—the human-friendly form makes it easy and pleasant to stroll through. Ledding Library is a hub of civic and cultural activity, a place where people go not just to check out books but to find out what is going on in the community. Parks and the areas around Kellogg Lake and Spring Creek offer another dimension of Downtown — the opportunity to play and connect with nature within an urban area. As Downtown continues to develop, integrating historical interpretative elements into the built environment that honor the timber and agricultural history of the area will enhance the visitor experience while honoring the community's desires.

Making Downtown a Destination

There is a strong desire for more local businesses to locate in the Downtown area. Hosting local events in Downtown is one strategy the community identified as a way to encourage more shopping in Downtown. In addition, people expressed interest in reducing unattractive, empty storefronts and increasing uses that draw foot traffic.

Bringing more people Downtown will increase the customer base for existing businesses and attract new businesses, ultimately increasing the variety of business located Downtown. Attracting more people may also attract residential development. There is awareness among some of the community that an increase in the number of people living Downtown would bolster the success of local business, attract desired services such as a grocery store, and generally generate a greater degree and range of activity.

iii RECOMMENDATIONS

What kind of Destination?

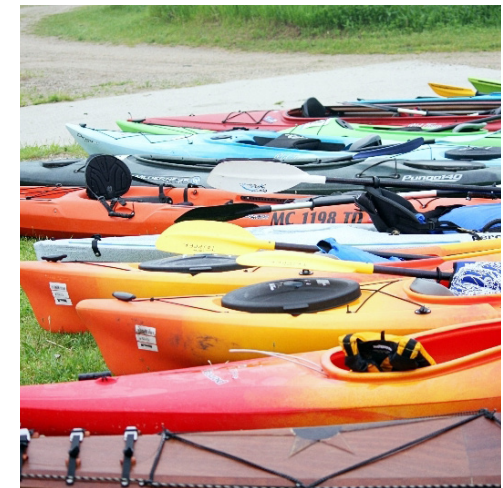
Downtown is well-positioned to be both a local and regional destination. The north-south travel corridors to and through Downtown offer easy access, though Hwy 224 makes east-west connections more difficult. Milwaukie is centrally and conveniently located to attract visitors from the Sellwood and Eastmoreland neighborhoods to the north and Oak Grove and Oregon City to the south.

Based on existing strengths and opportunities, Downtown should be a regional and local destination to shop, dine and play.



Shop! The community expressed strong desires for a solid anchor tenant to meet daily needs, preferably providing fresh, affordable food items. Residents would also like to see an increase in the availability of service-oriented businesses serving walk-in customers, such as alterations and shoe repair, a yoga studio, or pharmacy.

Dine! One of the main reasons visitors come to Downtown is to enjoy the local restaurants. The Milwaukie community would like to see the continued success of these businesses and expansion of the range of options available in Downtown. A brewpub is at the top of many people's list of desirable businesses, as well as a range of specialty kitchen restaurants that might range from vegetarian to multi-ethnic cuisine.



Play! Milwaukie has great natural assets. A popular bicycle route—the Trolley Trail—travels through the area and the Springwater Corridor is nearby. There are development plans for Kronberg Park, just to the south of Downtown, and the Riverfront Park project broke ground in 2012. Community members shared many ideas about how to capitalize on these resources, among them a bike shop, kayak rentals, dragon boat racing, a riverside restaurant, and rooftop and patio bars.



The *Road Map* recommendations are intended to capture and communicate community values and priorities while identifying overarching themes.

The *Road Map* recommendations are based on shared community values. The strategy-specific recommendations are heavily based in community-generated solutions to improve Downtown.

The main objective and underlying principle is outlined for each of the five recommendations. The associated strategies provide general descriptions, examples and community-based ideas for taking action on the recommendations.



PUBLIC OUTREACH FINDINGS DISPLAYED AT COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Road Map Recommendations



Protect and Enhance Shared Community Values

Action: Ensure community values play a significant role in public investment decisions.

#1

START



Facilitate Economic Development

Action: Forge public-private partnerships to focus on increased occupancy levels, shopping variety and local business recruitment.

#2



Build Community Cohesion

Action: Prioritize projects based on points of common ground. Points of contention should be noted and set aside to address at a future date.

#3

Bring “Sexy” Back to McLoughlin

Action: Facilitate access to Downtown as well as to encourage orientation of buildings and street activity toward the river.

#4



Identify & Prioritize Short-Term Projects

Action: Consider projects that are realistic within the near future and realize them to improve the quality of life in Downtown.

#5

FINISH



Reason: Shared values are central to Milwaukie’s identity. These values are a unique small-town feel, signature community events, focusing on food, arts & culture, and a strong connection to the river.

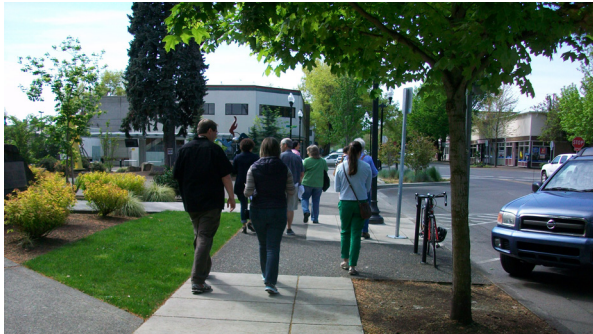
Reason: Downtown can benefit from an increased variety of retail and services offered in order to attract more visitors. However, to do so requires more support of local businesses.

Reason: Joint efforts among the community and local government will help ensure consensus around Downtown’s future.

Reason: Downtown Milwaukie’s “McLoughlin Face” should not continue to disconnect the Downtown from Riverfront park, but can instead be used as a way to complement them.

Reason: The projects in this strategy are achievable and relate to the objectives of the previous four recommendations. The results of these efforts will set the tone for the Downtown’s future and demonstrate responsiveness by the City to generate confidence in plans for long-term change

**VIBRANT
Downtown
Milwaukie**



PLEASANT WALKING ENVIRONMENT



ACTIVE STREETSCAPE



POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS TO THE RIVER

Recommendation #1 **PROTECT & ENHANCE SHARED COMMUNITY VALUES**

The community identified the following values as those that should be protected and enhanced (in alphabetical order):

- Accessibility
- Active streetscape
- Affordability
- Attractiveness
- Community events & celebrations
- Connections to the river
- Focus on food, arts & culture
- Local business
- Pleasant walking environment
- Quality green & open spaces
- Safe & family-friendly
- Shopping options
- Small-town feel

During the *Fresh Look* community workshop (May 9th, 2013), participants ranked these characteristics highest:

- Focus on food, arts and culture
- Safe and family-friendly
- Small town feel
- Connections to the river

There are three key reasons to focus on protection and enhancement of these values:

One reason is Downtown Milwaukie's strengths today are due to the investments of current and past community members. Milwaukie's unique character and assets are a source of fierce hometown pride. The composition of the community is changing, and now is the time to take measures to preserve and build on the qualities that brought people to Milwaukie in the first place.

Another reason is there is a large degree of uncertainty about what impacts Light Rail will have on the social fabric of the community. A significant concern is that the current values and quality of life enjoyed by Downtown Milwaukie community members may be vulnerable because of increasing development pressures (connected to Light Rail and improving market conditions) over which stakeholders have an uncertain amount of control.

Last, but not least, defining community values and spelling out concrete strategies to protect them provides a clear framework for decision-making. An action may effectively facilitate economic development, but its worth is undermined if it does not do so in a way that resonates with community values.

Strategies to Protect & Enhance Community Values

1.1 Enhance & Expand Existing Events

*Promotes: Active streetscape;
Community Events and Celebrations;
Connections to the River; Family-
Friendly; Local Business; Focus on Food,
Arts and Culture; Small-town Feel*

Events bring the community together and attract visitors from outside of Milwaukie. Signature events and celebrations ranked highly among community participants as both a way to increase quality of life and community cohesion, as well as promote Downtown Milwaukie as a place where good, fun things happen. Effective approaches to engage new community leaders in event planning and coordination are critical at this point.

The community can leverage the success of existing food, arts and culture-focused events such as First Friday, the Milwaukie Farmers Market, and “Milwaukie Daze”

festival to foster Downtown Milwaukie as a hub of local food, art and creative activity.

Milwaukie’s plant sales and Earth Day cleanup are other popular annual events that could be opportunities to create new associated events and celebrations. Once completed, Riverfront Park will also provide an enhanced waterfront venue for summertime celebrations such as Milwaukie Daze.

Specific community suggestions include:

- Expanding the season and/or size of the Farmers Market
- Art shows jointly hosted by Dark Horse Comics and the Ledding Library
- Revival of dragon boat races along Downtown’s riverfront
- Extended shop hours during First Friday events, when there is more foot traffic Downtown.



FOCUS ON FOOD - FARMER'S MARKET



FOCUS ON ARTS & CULTURE - FIRST FRIDAY



LOCAL BUSINESSES PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY EVENTS



1.2 Prioritize Recruitment of Local Businesses

Promotes: Active Streetscape; Local Business; Shopping Options; Small-town Feel

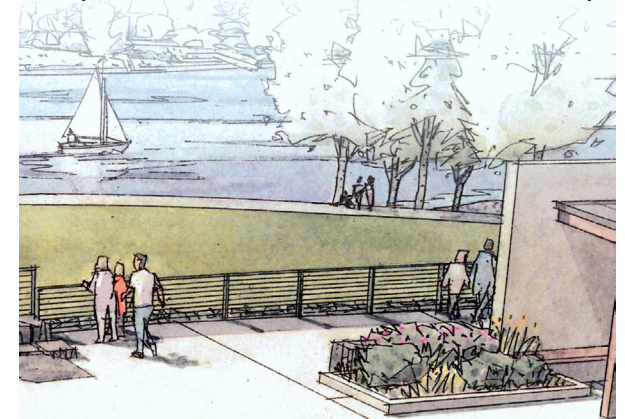
Local businesses play a critical role in defining Milwaukie's unique identity, and community members have a strong desire to retain and recruit them. Local businesses are more likely to invest in the neighborhoods where they are located, and respond to community values. They also amplify the impact of local spending by retaining more of that money in the community (the local multiplier effect). Efforts to foster growth for local businesses, could include ways to reduce start-up costs for first time business owners, by means of monetary or non-monetary incentives.

1.3 Support Timely Completion of the Riverfront Park Projects

Promotes: Attractiveness; Connection to the River; Family-Friendly, Local Business; Pleasant Walking Environment; Quality Green and Open Spaces

Long before the *Fresh Look* project, Riverfront Park was identified as a shared community priority. The *Fresh Look* engagement efforts reinforced this priority—through workshops, the walking tour, survey responses and interviews—and findings suggest that Riverfront Park is the essence of what Downtown Milwaukie is and hopes to be. Continued efforts to fund Riverfront Park construction will help maximize the investments already transforming the riverfront into an accessible, quality green space connecting Downtown Milwaukie to wonderful views and recreational opportunities.

There are multiple benefits to completing Riverfront Park: completion of a project with massive public support fosters a sense of accomplishment among local citizens, and produces enhanced social relationships



DETAIL FROM RIVERFRONT PARK MASTER PLAN

through community pride and ownership over a place they helped make special. The park will provide a venue for civic events, celebrations and increased foot traffic between Downtown and the Riverfront will increase the customer base for new, river-oriented business along the east side of McLoughlin.

1.4 Prepare for Social & Physical Impacts of Light Rail

Promotes: Access; Affordability; Attractiveness; Family-Friendly; Local Business; Small-Town Feel

As Light Rail construction nears completion and corollary public right-of-way improvements are constructed, development opportunities in Downtown Milwaukie will become more enticing. Despite concerns about potential for decreased parking and loss of small-town character, participants of the *Fresh Look* community workshop identified their top three hopes for Light Rail:

- Expanded commute options
- Bring more people Downtown
- Physical Improvements to 21st Ave

Economic development is also a priority for Downtown, but should not come at the expense of existing community assets and values. Consideration should be given to ensure that use and design standards preserve the small-town character through future development.

1.5 Improve Greenspace Connectivity

Promotes: Attractiveness; Pleasant Walking Environment; Quality Green and Open Spaces

Downtown Milwaukie has several charming parks and green spaces, including Scott Park, Dogwood Park and the Riverfront Park. These places provide respite for residents and visitors, offer areas to run and play, and offer views of local flora and fauna. The parks of Downtown are strengths to build upon, and increasing connectivity to and between the parks can help take advantage of these strengths.

Though it may not be feasible to physically link all of Downtown's green spaces, a conceptual green belt through Downtown would allow locals and visitors to more easily navigate through multiple green and open spaces. Implementation strategies will vary widely, but should meet the objective of facilitating increased awareness and use of local green spaces.





GROCERY STORE CONCEPT



RECREATION ORIENTED BUSINESS



BUSINESS WITH HIGH FOOT TRAFFIC

Recommendation #2 FACILITATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Although the City has responded to business and property owner needs by amending the Public Area Requirements (PARs), there is still a need for more support of downtown businesses.

Downtown business owners indicated a need for economic development, citing a lack of foot traffic in Downtown Milwaukie as a challenge. However, economic development strategies have been impeded by the fragmented nature of the downtown business community. Currently, several separate groups of business owners are organizing and there is no unified business association. Although the desire for a unified business vision exists, realizing such a vision has been difficult for Downtown business owners to manage. A cohesive downtown business group that represents a broad cross section of downtown business would be a powerful voice for the needs of downtown businesses.

Strategies to Facilitate Economic Development

2.1 Feasibility Study for Attracting a Grocery Store & Anchor Retail Tenants

Promotes: Active Streetscape; Family-Friendly; Focus on Food, Arts and Culture; Local Business; Shopping Options; Small-town Feel

Since the inception of the Framework Plan, there has been a strong desire for a grocer within Downtown. However, this desire has yet to be realized, which suggests there may be market conditions in Downtown that are unfavorable to a grocer. Conducting market research to assess the market feasibility for a local, financially viable grocery store located in Downtown Milwaukie is the first step.

A feasibility assessment might engage experts to undertake prospectuses for a variety of anchor tenant types. Local demand and site suitability analyses can be performed using geographic information systems (GIS). A collection of market studies and site

suitability analyses should also include other desirable anchor tenants—especially water and recreation-oriented businesses, local businesses, businesses with a food, arts or culture focus and businesses with high foot traffic. Findings from the market analysis will help to better understand whether it is feasible for the City to effectively incentivize a grocer and other desired uses Downtown.

2.2 Public-Private Partnerships

Promotes: Active Streetscape; Local Business; Shopping Options

The community supports developing a shared vision between Downtown business owners and local government. Public-private collaboration will increase resources available to fund and coordinate economic development efforts. Repeating the success of the pilot storefront Façade Improvement Program (FIP) that assisted eight Downtown businesses with façade upgrades may require creative solutions. One example is a business liaison position jointly funded by business owners and the City.

The creation of a unified business association would facilitate partnerships with the City and expand the range and capacity of such

partnerships. A cohesive vision among Downtown business owners could also attract more outside investment and foster cooperation between business owners to explore joint solutions to issues, such as renting out parking spots to one another.

2.3 Prioritize Improved Local Access to Downtown for Milwaukie Residents

Promotes: Accessibility; Local Business; Pleasant Walking Environment

Some community members reported that they did not visit Downtown frequently because:

- There are physical barriers including McLoughlin Blvd and Hwy 224, to getting there easily without driving, and/or
- The reasons to go to Downtown are not compelling enough to warrant the extra travel effort.

Continuing to prioritize and encourage alternative modes of transportation through infrastructure investments will improve the accessibility to Downtown for visitors and encourage active streetscapes.



ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION



ACTIVE STREETScape



OUTDOOR-INDOOR CONNECTIVITY, Alberta St.



EXISTING BUSINESS SIGNAGE



SIGN FOUND ON SIDEWALK IN MILWAUKIE



CITY SIDEWALK MEDALION

2.4 Promote a Milwaukie Identity Based on Shared Values & Strengths

Promotes: Active Streetscape; Attractiveness; Local Business

Champion the phrase “Milwaukie: Good Things Happen Here”. A positive phrase will bring more attention to the positive changes have already been made are underway, and leverage existing positive momentum to attract more investment – both social and economic. Branding efforts focused on food, arts, and culture would also leverage this positive momentum.

The formation of a City-recognized group responsible for promotion would facilitate future policies to allow branded fixtures and signage to promote the whole Downtown in designated areas.

2.5 Utilize the Arts as Economic Driver & Place-making Tool

The formation of the Milwaukie Arts Committee (also known as the ArtMOB, an acronym for “Art–Milwaukie on Board”) has already institutionalized the arts as a priority. Leveraging the arts to meet other community priorities – especially economic development that retains unique character of place—is the next step. Arts, culture, and creativity can improve a community’s competitive edge, create a foundation for defining a sense of place and attract new and visiting populations, integrate the visions of community and business leaders, and contribute to the development of a skilled workforce.¹

¹Source: Arts and Culture Briefing Paper #5: How the Arts and Culture Sector Catalyzes Economic Vitality. American Planning Association, 2011. <http://www.planning.org/research/arts/briefingpapers/pdf/vitality.pdf>.

Formalizing the relationship between arts infrastructure and programming and invigorating the local economy may come in different forms – a mural program, public art and design contests, and arts-based events are examples of strategies already underway or in the development process both in Downtown Milwaukie and other cities in the region. Consideration should be given to strategically designate publicly owned areas as sites of collaborative art projects, which in return would enhance the overall appearance of Downtown. Another approach could be the consideration of a “percent for the arts” program, where a certain percentage of any new development in the Downtown would be dedicated to on-site public art or a general public art fund pool.





Recommendation #3 **BUILD COMMUNITY COHESION**

Tensions within the downtown business community and between the business community and the City of Milwaukie act as barriers to positive changes in Downtown Milwaukie. Some of the tensions are rooted in frustration about City regulations that are perceived as overly restrictive and unfair, such as the Public Area Requirements (though now amended) and use restrictions. Frequent, easy-to-understand communications from the City may help citizens better understand the need for and benefits of regulations.

Two major themes inform this recommendation:

- Building consensus around a common identity
- Trust-building among and between local government entities, members of the business community, and community residents

The strategies in this recommendation have potential to address all the values listed in Recommendation #1, and set the stage for the next phase of this project.

Strategies to Build Community Cohesion

3.1 Form a Project Specific Downtown Advisory Committee

*Promotes: Active Streetscape;
Attractiveness; Focus on Food;
Arts & Culture; Pleasant Walking
Environment; Safe & Family Friendly;
Small-Town Feel*

A Downtown Advisory Committee for the next phase of the Commercial Core Enhancement Program will serve as a ground-truthing resource for proposed projects, and advise City staff and the Planning Commission on how a project or policy resonates with the community's values and vision.

Membership of this committee should be comprised of local residents, business owners, community advocates—including those representing youth, elderly, and minority populations—and design and planning experts from within the community. Inclusion of a broad cross-section of community members will improve accessibility to the aforementioned hard-to-reach community members. The inclusion

of design professionals will provide a sounding board for project ideas early on in the planning process and provide insight into potential design issues and financial feasibility.

3.2 Leverage Existing Communications Networks

Promotes: Accessibility; Local Business; Safe & Family-Friendly

A Downtown Advisory Committee will provide access to existing communications networks. Enhancing communications are key because the Downtown serves the entire city of Milwaukie and the decision-making process to determine policy and investments in Downtown produces broad impacts that extend beyond the borders of Downtown.

In addition to communication networks accessible through an advisory committee, public and private parties should tap into resources and organizations beyond Milwaukie's borders – the North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce, Bicycle Transportation Alliance, and local governments of nearby cities, for example. Further, engagement efforts for this project have proven that social media and intercept surveys are also effective strategies for enhancing engagement.

3.3 Coordinate Actions & Efforts with Other Government Entities

Promotes: Accessibility; Local Business; Shopping Options

Public expectations of government range from ensuring public safety, creating aesthetically pleasing places and improving efficiency of day-to-day functions. To minimize duplication of efforts and maximize pooling of resources, local governments should be in close coordination with each other to communicate consistent citywide goals for Downtown.

Quality relationships with staff from state, regional and local agencies and departments will elevate the impact of each organization's efforts. City staff and community stakeholders can benefit from exploring tactics and strategies employed by other local governments, and assessing which are most likely to be effective in generating positive market attention around Downtown. The goal is to create a streamlined resource for relevant information for Downtown businesses, such as the level of vacancies and ways to navigate the sometimes-complex policies.





- 81% of survey respondents indicate that Downtown should encourage pedestrian activity and safety on McLoughlin
- At the May 9th workshop, 55% of participants agreed that the corridor in Downtown corridor most in need of attention is McLoughlin



Recommendation #4 BRING "SEXY" BACK TO MCLOUGHLIN

McLoughlin Boulevard (Highway 99) is the gateway to Downtown Milwaukie, but also acts as a physical and psychological barrier between Downtown and the riverfront. Creating an experience that connects Downtown Milwaukie with its river can promote and activate these spaces, and generating more interest in visiting Downtown Milwaukie.

"When was McLoughlin ever sexy?" a community resident asked at the May 9th Community Workshop. Maybe never, but the point, aside from an homage to Justin Timberlake (and Milwaukie's own Pascal Sauton), is that travelers on McLoughlin Boulevard may speed through without realizing what they are missing.

To remedy this situation, standards for use, design, and development should facilitate establishment of an attractive entryway into Downtown at the north and south ends. Policies should encourage the attractive physical elements of Downtown to spill out onto McLoughlin Blvd. This will enhance the overall feel of Downtown, draw in travelers from McLoughlin, slow vehicle traffic, and reinforce a visual connection to the river from Downtown.

Strategies to bring "Sexy" back to McLoughlin

4.1 Beautify the East Side of McLoughlin

Attractiveness; Connections to the River; Local Business; Pleasant Walking Environment; Shopping Variety

A first step to bringing "sexy" back to McLoughlin is improving the visual appeal of west-facing facades. Currently there is a significant aesthetic contrast between the scenic views to the river west of McLoughlin and the parking lots, gas stations and backs of buildings that dominate the view looking east from McLoughlin.

Beautification could include signage, murals, street trees, lights, or façade improvements with signature architectural themes or elements. Not only would this help beautify and activate McLoughlin, but it would also raise Downtown's status as a hub for artistic and creative activity. The design and painting process could also be a catalyst for increased community cohesion, and opportunities to market Milwaukie's "brand."

4.2 Designate Entry Nodes or a Gateway Zone

*Promotes: Accessibility;
Attractiveness; Local Business*

Entry nodes or gateway zones can be identified through distinct architectural design or façade materials on buildings to give a visual clue as to the special nature of that location. The built environment should orient people toward the civic elements of Downtown such as parks, open spaces and community events. Consideration should be given to modify standards to support of the characteristics necessary to establish entry nodes.



DOWNTOWN RENTON GATEWAY EXAMPLE

4.3 Encourage Building Orientation toward the River

*Promotes: Accessibility;
Attractiveness; Connections to the
River; Local Business; Pleasant Walking
Environment; Shopping Options*

People traveling through Milwaukie via McLoughlin Blvd may not realize they are in Downtown Milwaukie. Bringing new development and businesses closer to the east side of McLoughlin would make McLoughlin more attractive and fit with the character of Downtown.

Building and design standards should be modified to identify and preserve view corridors to the river. These standards should ensure that new development along McLoughlin is oriented toward the river both physically and culturally.



ENTRY WAY SIGNAGE ON MCLOUGHLIN BLVD



AREA SIMILAR TO MCLOUGHLIN, BEFORE



AREA SIMILAR TO MCLOUGHLIN, AFTER
WITH STREET ORIENTED BUILDINGS

Recommendation #5 IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE SHORT-TERM PROJECTS

Small, concrete projects with high visibility generate community support and momentum for positive change. Completion of these projects sets the tone for the quality of future, long-term development. The short-term projects recommended below span objectives the other recommendations and respond to community identified issues.

Strategies to Complete Short-Term Projects

5.1 Restart a Program for Small-scale Renovation & Façade Improvements

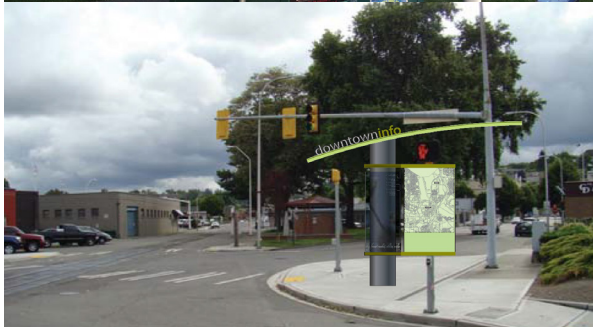
Promotes: Attractiveness; Local Business; Pleasant Walking Environment

Community members identified the physical appearance of downtown as an area needing improvement. A policy to incentivize affordable, short-term improvements to Downtown's built environment can significantly enhance the visual appeal of downtown.

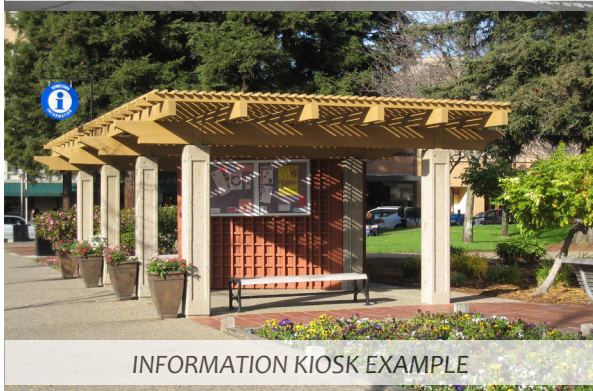
Projects can be identified by citizens, property and business owners, or City staff. Projects can be prioritized by considering cost, time-frame, available financing opportunities, and level of visibility. For example, the informational kiosk in front of City Hall represents a highly visible opportunity for a relatively low-cost improvement project.



EXISTING INFORMATION KIOSK



DOWNTOWN RENTON INFORMATION KIOSK EXAMPLE



INFORMATION KIOSK EXAMPLE

5.2 Install Signage

Promotes: Accessibility; Active Streetscapes; Attractiveness; Connections to the River; Local Businesses; Pleasant Walking Environment; Quality Green and Open Spaces

Scott Park is mentioned frequently by community members as one of Milwaukie's "hidden gems," but is practically invisible from McLoughlin Blvd or Main Street. The park is a prime example of how well-designed and strategically placed signage could generate more foot traffic and appreciation for Downtown's assets. Signage can also be used strategically to help people find their way into Downtown, understand how to access the riverfront, move easily between the Downtown's most pleasant spaces, and activate those spaces that lack distinctive character or street life.

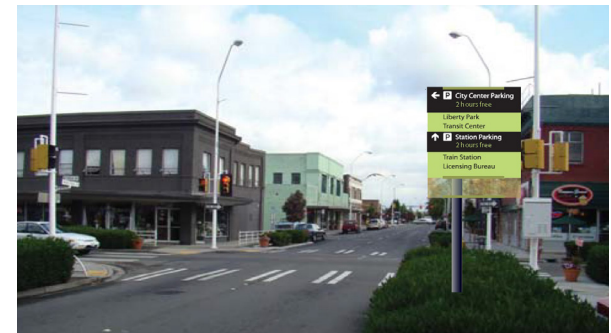
Strategically placed signage on McLoughlin would welcome visitors and invite drivers to stop and visit Downtown.

5.3 Parking Permit Program Adjustments

Promotes: Access; Local business

Parking has been identified as a key issue by the downtown business community. Employees "shuffle" throughout downtown in an effort to avoid the 2-hour maximum times, and vendors or clients visiting downtown must either move every two hours or purchase a monthly parking pass.

Approaches such as a daily parking permit program or shared parking arrangements among private businesses, in addition to signage and clear communications and about the range of public parking options, may decrease frustration and address the perception that parking is limited in Downtown.



DOWNTOWN RENTON DIRECTIONAL EXAMPLE



LEDDING LIBRARY SIGN



PUBLIC PARKING EXAMPLE

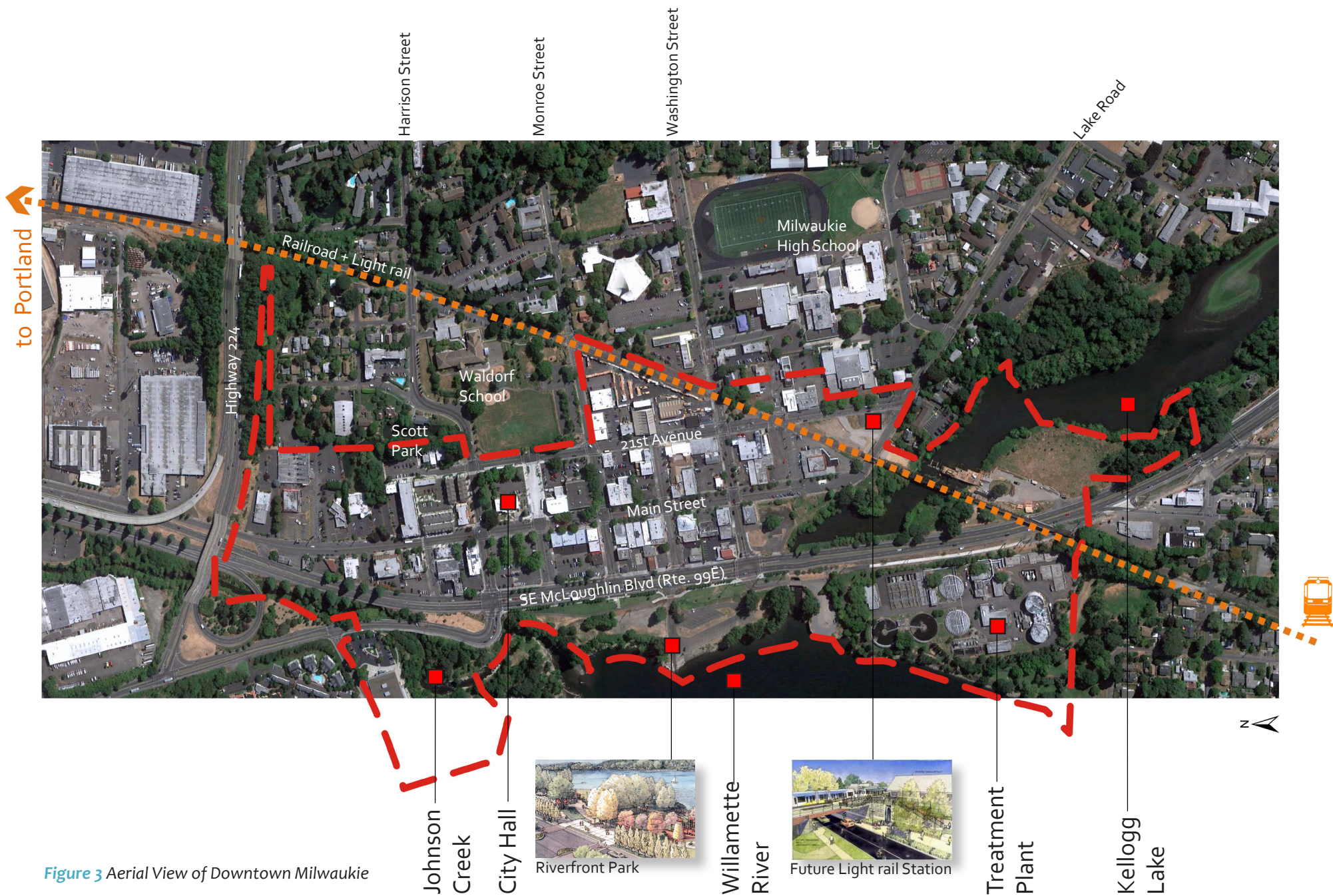


Figure 3 Aerial View of Downtown Milwaukie

— Planning Area Boundary

The *Fresh Look Milwaukie: Downtown Road Map* is the first phase of a larger, multi-phased City effort called the Commercial Core Enhancement Program (CCEP). ALIGN planning implemented the *Fresh Look* project in five phases. The study area of the project is shown in *Figure 3*. Together, these phased components formed the *Road Map*. A general diagram of the Workflow is shown in *Figure 4*. A detailed version of the workflow and details of each task can be found in the Work Plan and MOU Report (Appendix C).

Phase I centered on data gathering, outlining data sources for existing conditions research, and developing the Community Engagement Plan (located in the Public Outreach Findings Report, Appendix E). Additional tasks included the preparation of survey questions and preliminary contact with the Milwaukie community.

Phase II began with a kickoff event, along with the distribution of the survey. Additional tasks included revising interview questions and conducting interviews with stakeholders. Towards the end of this phase, of the Existing Conditions Report (Appendix D) was drafted.

Phase III marked the beginning of interactive community events, including, community conversations and continuation of the interviews and surveys from Phase II. Towards the end of this phase, results from the community events, interviews and surveys were synthesized. This synthesis, along with the existing conditions report informed the development of the *Road Map*.

Phase IV closed out remaining stakeholder interviews, Community Conversation events and development of a draft *Road Map*. The alternatives produced in the draft *Road Map* served as the basis of discussion at the Workshop. This event provided the Milwaukie community an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft recommendations and

alternatives. Comments and feedback from the Workshop were summarized and used to inform the final production of the Draft *Road Map*.

Phase IV included the development of draft recommendations based on public feedback recieved at the community workshop. Draft recommendations were presented to Milwaukie Design and Landmarks Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council. The final *Road Map* were presented to the City of Milwaukie Planning Department on June 10th, 2013.

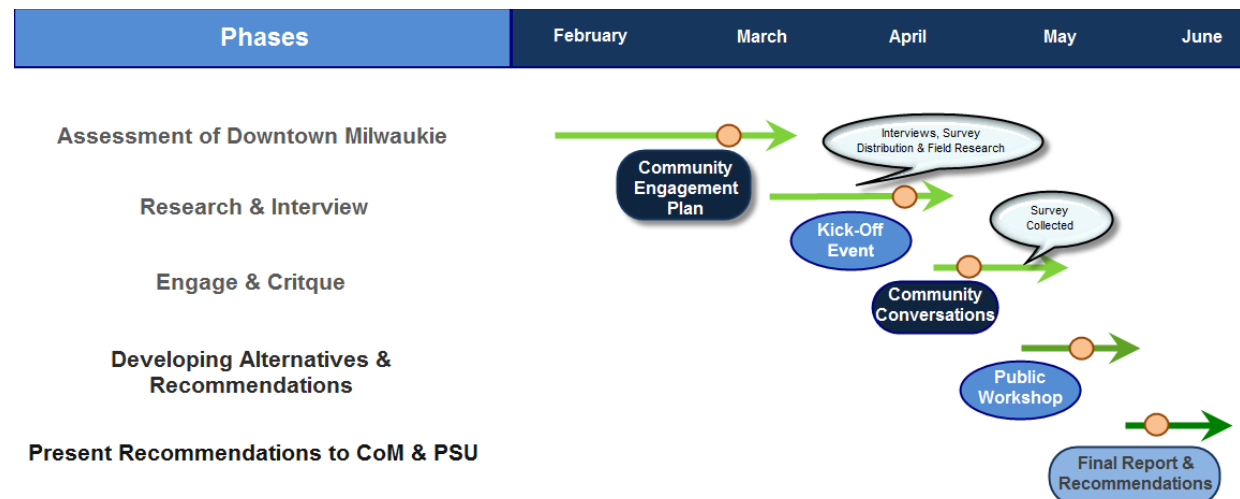


Figure 4 General Diagram of Workflow



Where we've been . . .



The City of Milwaukie was founded as a rival to Portland in 1848. From the early 1890s to the 1940s, it was prosperous small town with a thriving lumber economy and riverfront industry. From the 1950s to present, Milwaukie has become a suburban community. Since 1950, its population has grown from 5,000 to 21,000 (U.S. Census 2010). While downtown is the historic center, today's Milwaukie has a different set of needs and Downtown has a different function.

Where we are today . . .

Needs and preferences for housing, goods, services and social opportunities are changing. Furthermore, cultural awareness of the personal and public benefits of vibrant, walkable streetscapes has increased

over the past decade. As a nation, long term demographic trends are becoming more evident. Baby boomers are aging and their large share of the population means a larger share of older adults in the population. The nation is currently emerging from a deep economic recession.

Locally, the City of Milwaukie saw a larger decline in median income from 2000 to 2010 than the county or the state as a whole. Milwaukie also reflects national trends regarding an aging and diversifying population. Within the city, median age has increased from 31 in 1980, to 38 in 2000 and more recently to 40 in 2010. A greater proportion of adults are 55 or older now (28%) than in 2000 (22%), while children under the age of 18 make up a smaller share of population today (21%) than they did in 2000(23%).



Milwaukie has momentum ...

Over the past decade there have been many positive changes in Downtown. There have been substantial pedestrian-focused infrastructure upgrades with revamped transit stops, sidewalk improvements, installation of planting strips and street trees, and the Adams Street Connector, a pedestrian only street section currently under construction.

A sculpture and native plant garden adjacent to City Hall represents concerted efforts to capitalize on Downtown Milwaukie's propensity to attract and retain art and culturally oriented events and businesses. Additionally, Milwaukie has a thriving Farmers Market that was recognized by the Oregonian in 2012 for its excellence, and a host of other events including First Fridays.

A \$50,000 storefront façade improvement grant program, jointly funded by Metro and the City of Milwaukie, assisted eight Downtown businesses with façade upgrades in 2011 – 2012. Several of these storefronts were called out by walking tour participants or business owners as examples of what they would like to see more of. North Main Village, a mixed-use development constructed in 2007, today hosts a variety of dining options as well as quality urban design elements. Klein Point, a new hardscaped riverfront lookout featuring unobstructed river views, was the first project of the Riverfront Park plan to be completed. Ground was broken for light rail track and station construction in July 2011.

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it”

Alan Kay



STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT



FACADE IMPROVEMENT



KLEIN POINT

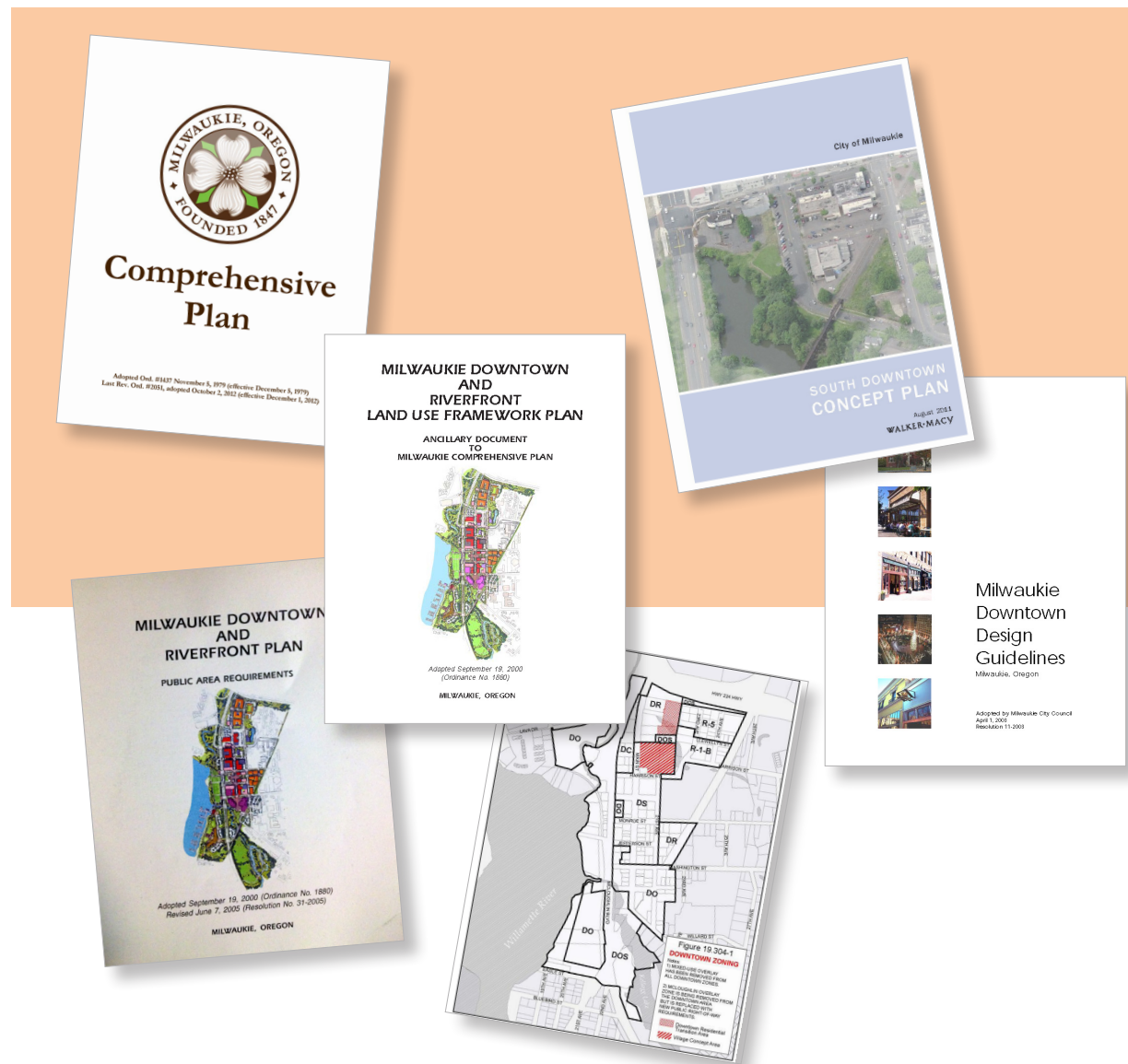
Plans Guiding Development

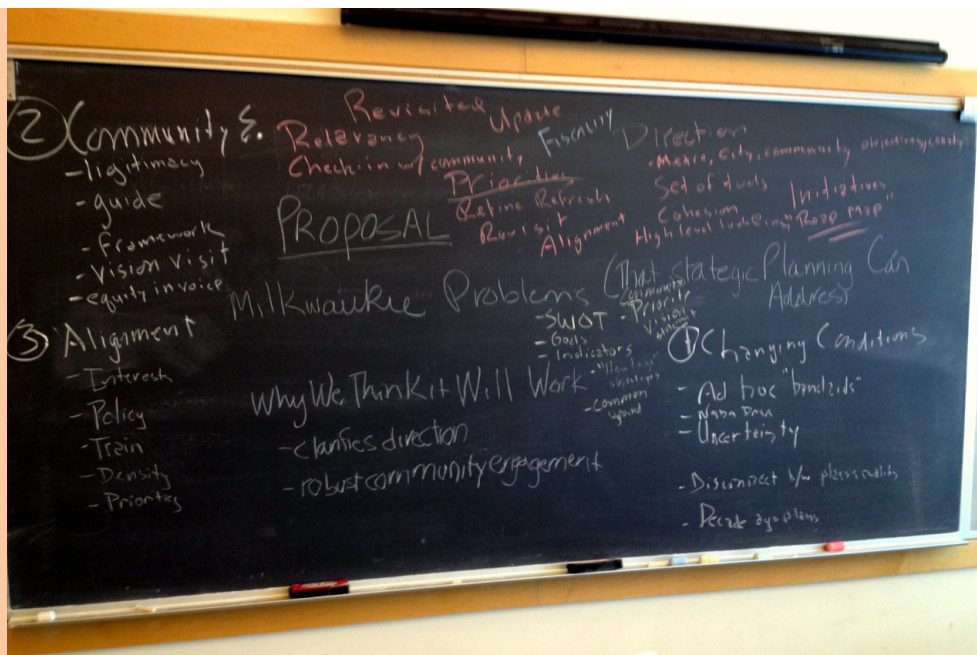
Many plans for Downtown Milwaukie have been adopted. Current challenges for Downtown Milwaukie include conflicting views of light rail, high commercial vacancy rates (10% of the Downtown parcels were vacant as of April 2013), and uncertainty about how community interests align with each other and current planning documents.

Plans & Policies currently guiding development in Downtown include:

- **Milwaukie Comprehensive Plan (1989)**
- **Downtown and Riverfront Framework Plan (2000)**
 - Downtown zoning ordinances (2000)
 - Public Area Requirements (2000)
 - Downtown Design Guidelines (2003)
- **South Downtown Concept Plan (2011)**

These plans are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter and in Appendix A.





Project Approach

Robust community engagement drove this plan. *During a two-month period, ALIGN planning engaged over 300 Milwaukie community members.*

Members of the consultant team attended the April 3rd Neighborhood District Association (NDA) leadership meeting, the First Friday art event on May 3rd, and the May 12th Farmers Market. The team invited Downtown business owners to two business owner coffee klatches. A walking tour resulted in a portfolio of community-generated photos and comments about Downtown. The team held two well-attended public events, one a public open house and workshop hybrid on April 1st, 2013 and a community workshop on May 9th, 2013.

Meanwhile, team members were collecting data and conducting analysis as part of a Downtown business inventory, demographic analysis, and review of existing plans. This data has been synthesized to provide a snapshot of Downtown Milwaukie in 2013, including community expectations and perceptions of opportunities and constraints in Downtown.



vi EXISTING CONDITIONS

Adopted Plans & Policies

The project team reviewed adopted plans and policies to identify common themes, investigated ground floor uses and elements of the downtown environment, and collected demographic data on the Milwaukie community (see Appendix D).

While not every plan or policy addresses the same elements, they do share similar characteristics at a conceptual level (see Table 1). Both public infrastructure improvements and private investments are recognized as drivers of development in all of the planning and policy documents.

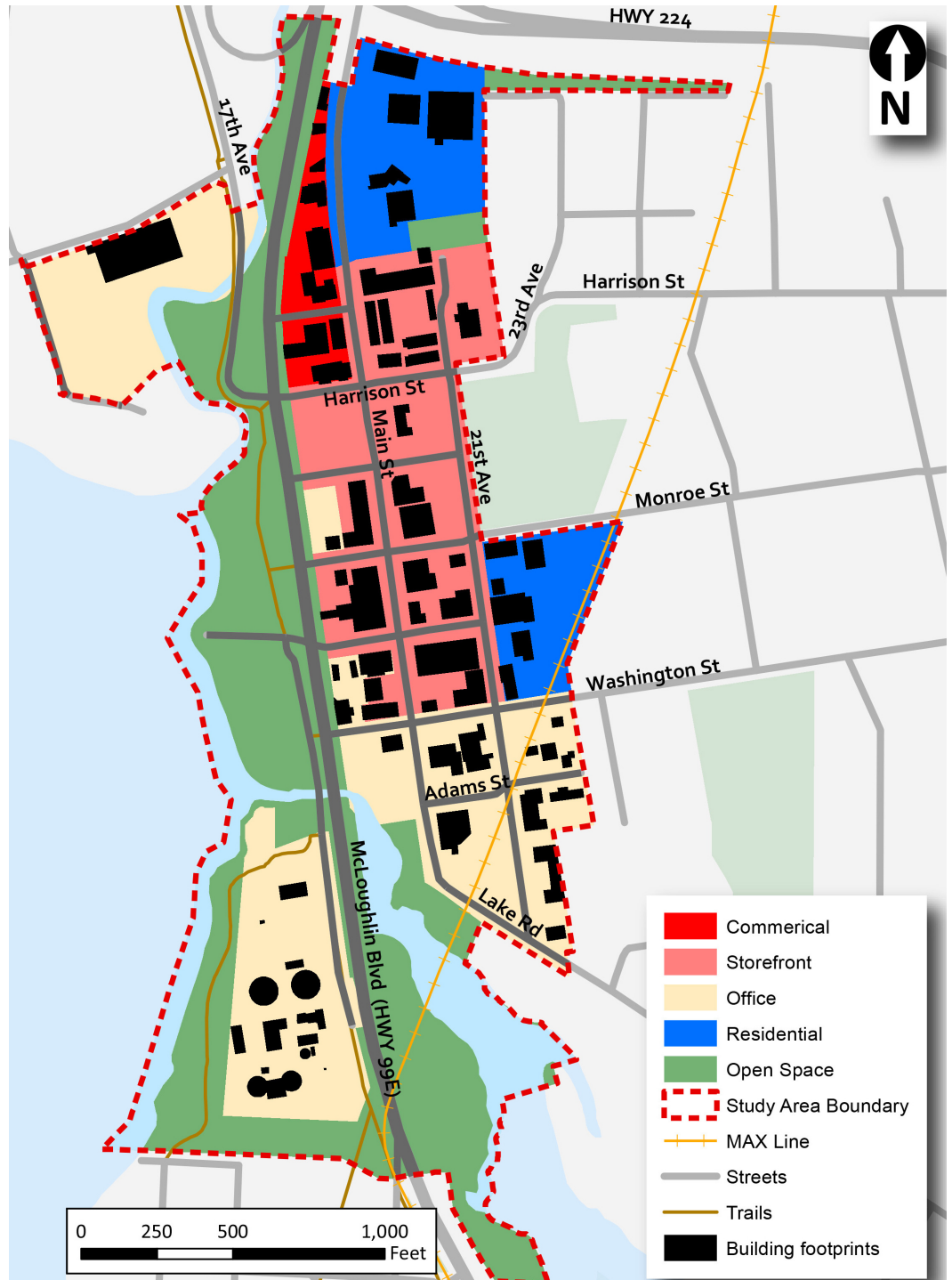
PLANNING CONCEPTS	PLANS & POLICIES			
	Framework Plan	S. Downtown Concept Plan	Comprehensive Plan	Design Guidelines
Historical Character	X	X	X	X
River Connections	X	X	X	X
Pedestrian Orientation	X	X	X	X
Quality MF Housing	X	X	X	X
Employment Opportunities	X	X	X	
Nat Resources & Open Space	X	X	X	X

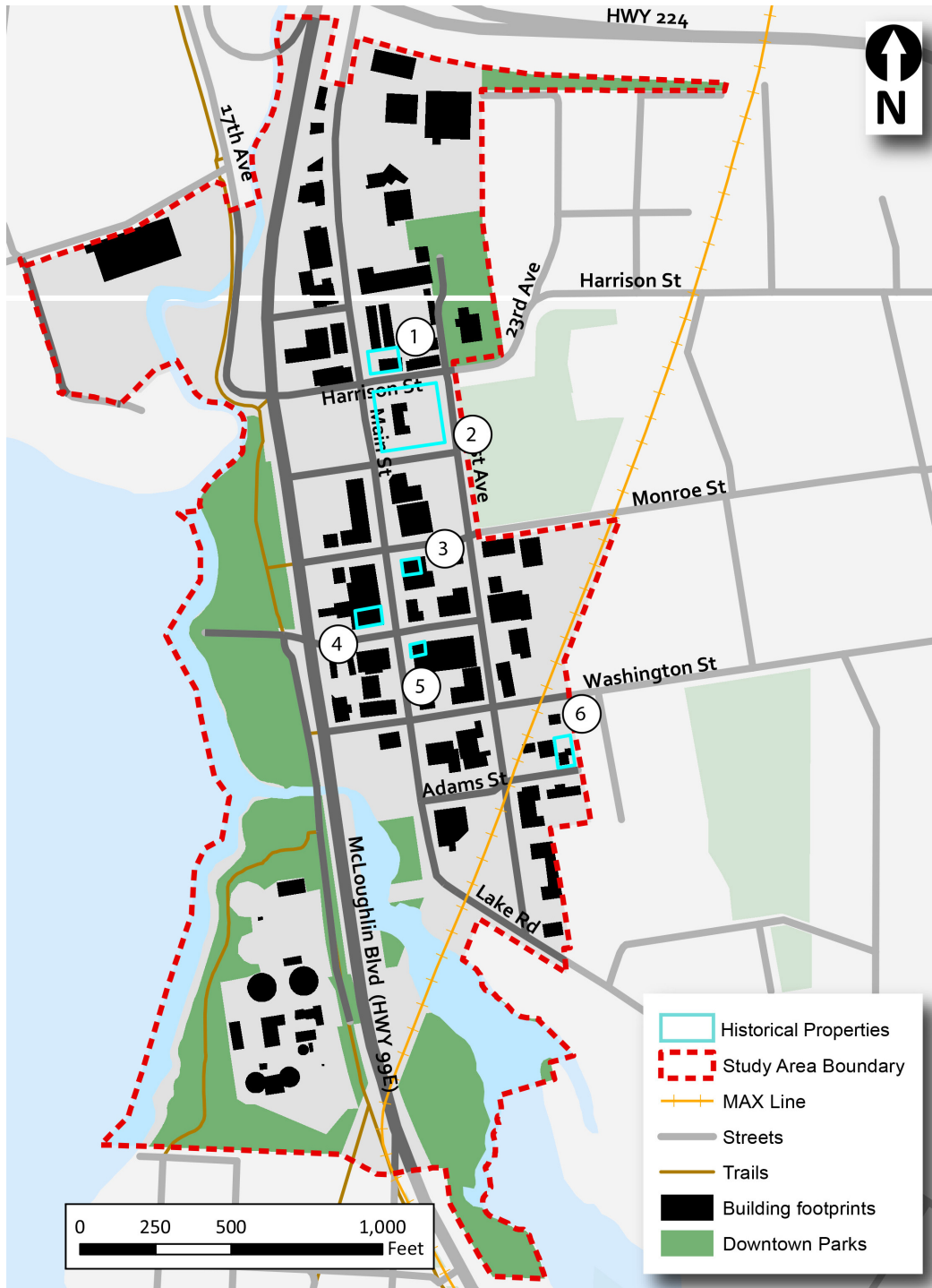
Table 1 Shared Elements & Concepts in Adopted Plans

Downtown Zones

While land uses are governed by the land use zones described in the Framework Plan and implemented by Milwaukie's zoning ordinances, the anticipated (and in some cases, required) future uses rarely match the current uses. There are community concerns that current zoning may inhibit desirable development. In addition, with the arrival of light rail the types of desirable uses immediately adjacent to the station could be reconsidered.

right map Downtown Zones





Current Conditions

Downtown Milwaukie consists of small walkable blocks and a number of historic buildings. The Willamette River, Highway 224, Lake Road and SE 21st Ave define the area's edges. Pedestrian access to the Willamette River has been enhanced through new signalized crossings across McLoughlin Boulevard, and Riverfront Park is starting to take shape. Recent commercial enterprises downtown are activating dormant spaces, while recently developed multi-family housing provides new customers for businesses.

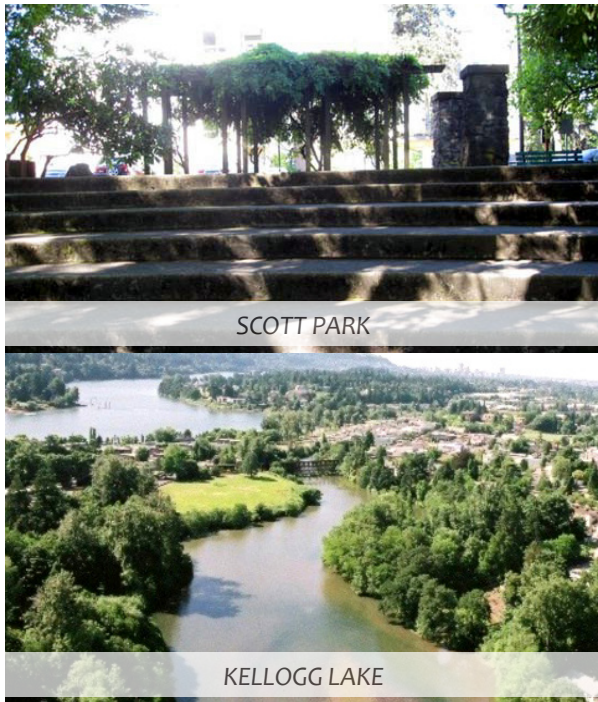
Historical Component

Honoring the historical elements of the built environment is a common theme in adopted plans and policies. Commercial uses have long dominated the area but civic and residential uses are also on the City Historic Resources inventory.

List of Historical Properties (Map left):

1. Masonic Lodge, 10636 SE Main (1925)
2. City Hall 10722 SE Main (1938)
3. Commercial Building, 10914 SE Main St
4. Commercial Building, 10999 SE Main St
5. Commercial Building, 11008 SE Main (1905)
6. Single Family Residence, 2115 SE Adams

left map Downtown Sites on the City of Milwaukie
Historic Properties Inventory

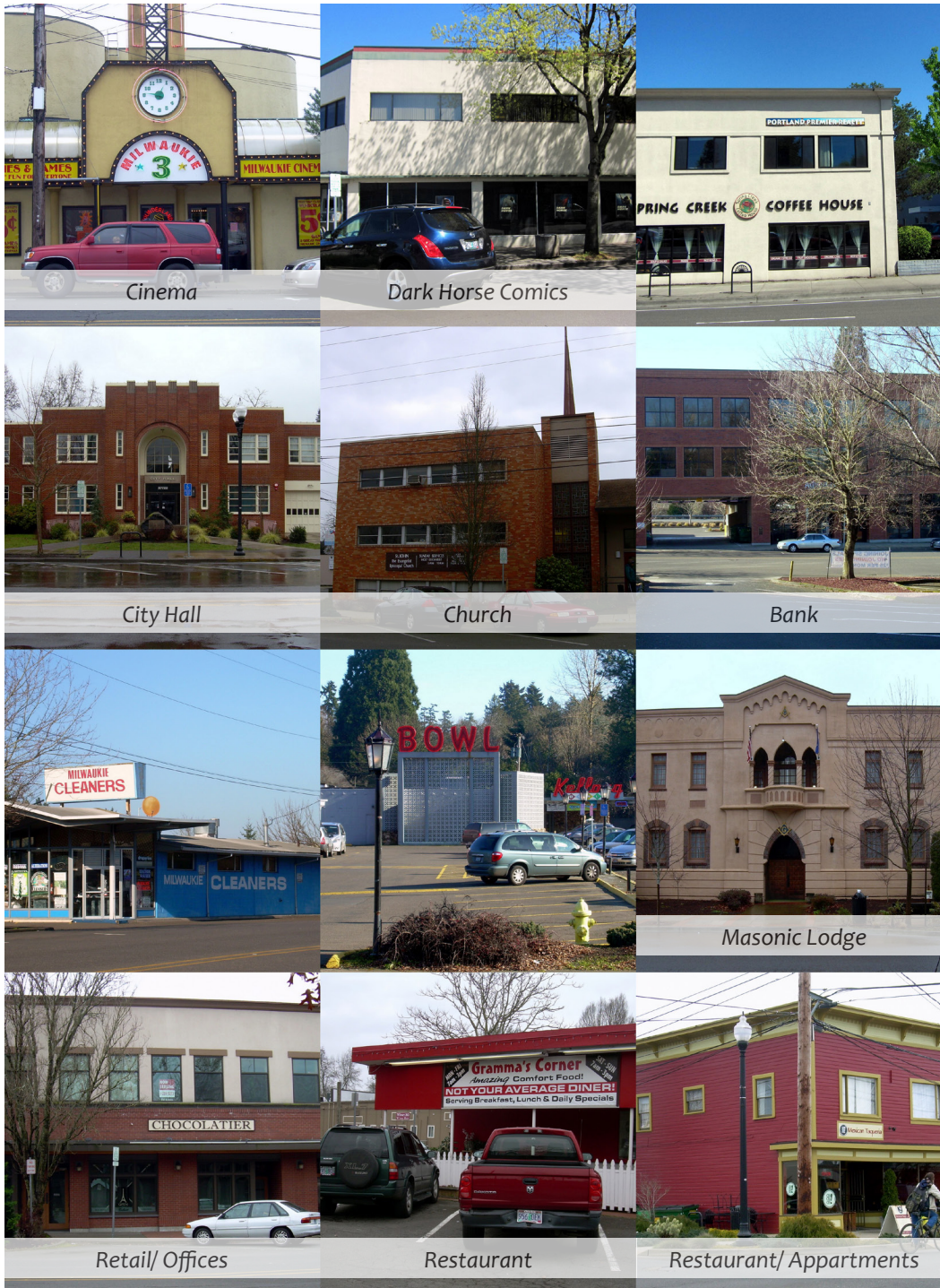


Parks & Open Spaces

Parks and open spaces form natural bookends to the Downtown area: Spring Creek and Scott Park, to the north, and Dogwood Park and Kellogg Lake to the south. Together with the Riverfront Park area, parks and open space make up 31 percent of the total study area.

right map Parks & Open Spaces





Mix of Uses

The majority of the 77 buildings² in the study area are associated with commercial activity of some type. This includes services such as medical providers and insurance, classified as office use by Milwaukie Municipal Code (MMC) and mixed use buildings where the ground floor is a retail or office use, while the second story (and higher) is residential. Six buildings include civic uses, like the library, City Hall and the post office. Thirteen vacancies were observed during a business inventory ground survey conducted March 27th, based on empty storefronts and signage advertising space for rent or lease.

²When structures with shared walls, such as town homes are counted as separate buildings the total buildings in 77, when such structures are not counted individual, there are 66 buildings in the Downtown area. The Clackamas County water treatment plant and associated structures is excluded from this count.



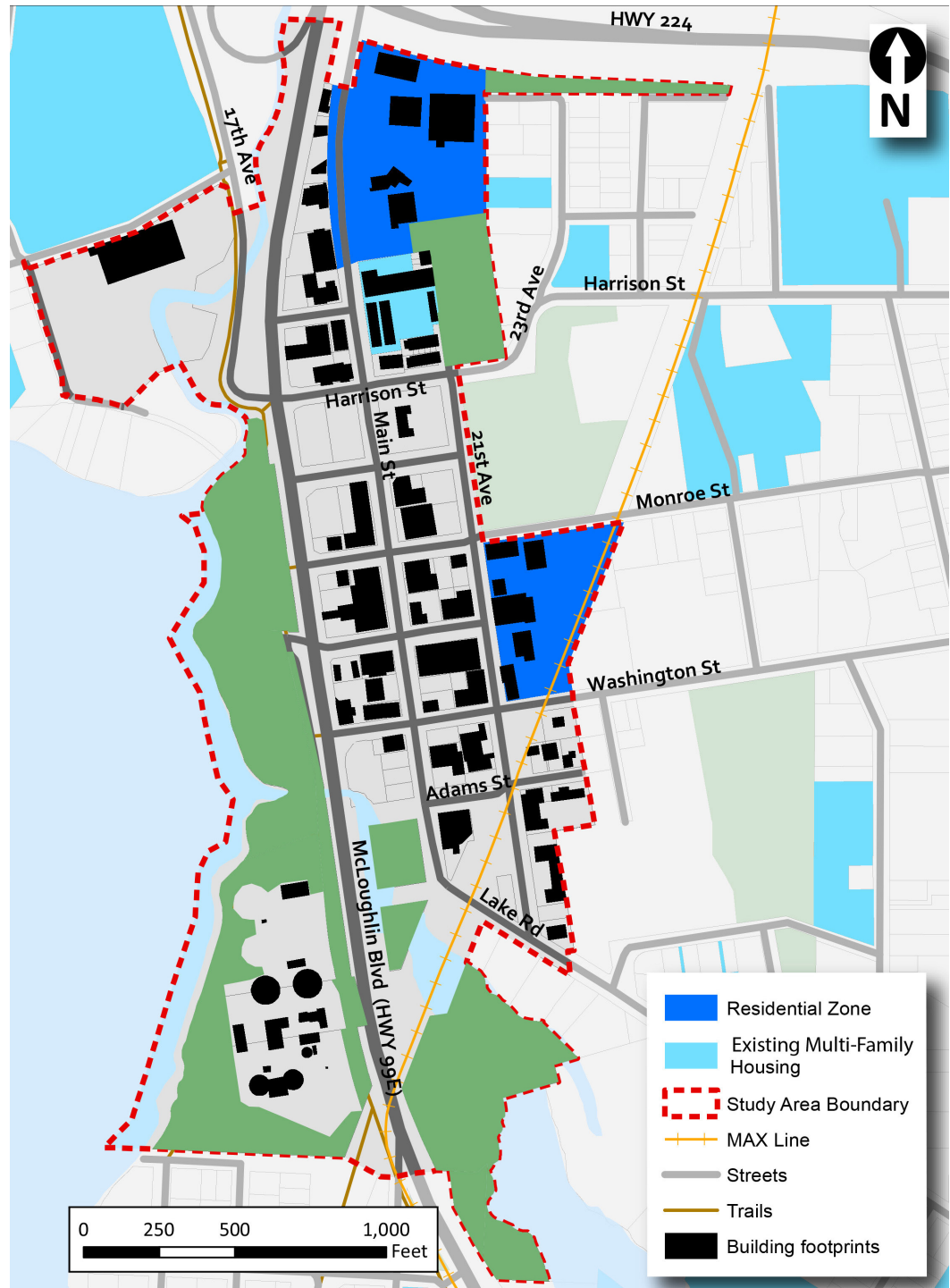
NORTH MAIN VILLAGE

Downtown Residential Development

Downtown living units are considered desirable in many of the plans for the area. They provide an opportunity to increase the supply of housing units in Milwaukie, which has limited developable lands, and also increases the customer base for downtown businesses. The market demand for urban housing is expected to continue to increase, and with the arrival of light rail, downtown living in Milwaukie is also expected to become more desirable.³ Available downtown housing was greatly expanded by the North Main Village development in 2007.

³Future Housing Trends, Milwaukie Residential Standards Project (spring 2011) Urbworks.

right map Existing Multi-Family Housing & Downtown Residential Zones





Summary of Community Engagement Activities (April 1 st to May 12 th , 2013)	
Survey (Online + Hardcopy)	Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 134 Survey Responses 47 Questions Available in English and Spanish Target audience: Milwaukie business owners, residents and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 Interviews conducted Over 50+ Contacted One on one in person or phone interviews; some in groups of two Wide spectrum of interviewees, including: business owners, city officials, residents of downtown, and minority groups.
Walking Tour	Business Coffee Klatches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Participants Seven stops with discussions Target audience: Milwaukie community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 Business owners (1 outside of downtown boundaries) Two sessions: 8AM and 6PM Group discussions: Issue identification and solution seeking
Kickoff Event (April 1st, 2013)	Community Workshop (May 9th, 2013)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35 Participants Activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I Love Milwaukie + Places with Potential mapping exercise Group discussions Milwaukie Bux 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46 Participants Activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instant Polling Exercise Group Discussions Downtown Roadmap Design
Targeted Outreach to Groups in Milwaukie	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disabled Parents Renters Senior Citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hispanic and Latino Community Low Income Schools and Youth Downtown events, including First Friday, ArtMOB and the Farmers Market.

Table 2 Community Engagement Activities Summary

vii COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Throughout April and early May, ALIGN planning conducted several community engagement efforts. These efforts are summarized in Table 2.

The intent of each of these events was to learn more about what the community wants. The events were designed to reach different portions of community through a variety of engagement techniques.

Kickoff Event



This event marked the beginning of community engagement efforts and included mapping exercises, group discussions and prioritization of desired outcomes to Downtown in the form of an event-unique currency called “Milwaukie Bux”. During the exercise, participants were given five “Milwaukie Bux” with the value of \$20 and one with the value of \$100.

Community members placed their mock currency into the themed jars to identify their priorities. The top three priorities were:

1. Connecting Downtown to the Riverfront
2. Milwaukie Signature Events
3. Business Development & Recruitment – Unified Vision & Direction

Surveys



Both hard copy and Internet surveys were distributed through multiple channels in the community. The consultant team received 132 responses. They provided an opportunity for outreach to people who are not normally heard and provide quantitative data to complement the qualitative data collected through interviews and other engagement activities.

Interviews



Interviews were conducted in informal settings, often over coffee. Interview questions were based on findings from the initial public engagement efforts. These one-on-one interactions offered a more in-depth understanding of what community members see as the strengths and opportunities of Downtown, as well as detailed ideas that are reflected in many of the final strategies.

Walking Tour



This event was an engaging way to gather opinions on what participants like or don't like about specific elements in Downtown Milwaukie. The tour included cameras and the framing of opportunities in terms of “Hidden Gems” and “It’s Got Potential.” The responses served as a backdrop for the Community Workshop and verified and expanded initial findings from other community engagement activities.

Business Owner Coffee Klatches



Business owners of Downtown Milwaukie have concerns that differ from the community as a whole. This event gathered local business owners in an informal setting to identify concerns about aspirations for doing business in Downtown Milwaukie. Business owners were asked about strategies they could undertake in order to work together towards solutions for identified issues.

Targeted Outreach



Groups such as seniors, parents and artists have a presence within Downtown Milwaukie and are often not explicitly engaged. These efforts were designed to engage under-represented organizations and groups. Activities included attending events such as First Friday, ArtMOB lectures, and the Farmers Market, and distributing surveys to targeted locations. Success of these outreach efforts was varied and is discussed further in the Public Outreach Findings Report (Appendix E).

Community Workshop



The primary purpose of the event was for the community to provide feedback on draft recommendations. The instant polling activity proved to be very engaging and successful.

Community Engagement Outcomes

ALIGN planning approached the issues in downtown using a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis approach. This approach identified community values and provided a broad look at what is and what isn't working in Downtown. The key findings from the community engagement events shaped the recommendations and strategies, and are summarized in the following pages.

Overall, results indicate that participants support the preservation of Downtown Milwaukie's small-town character, enhanced connections to the river, and desire to make Downtown Milwaukie a destination. Further, results suggest that Light Rail will bring changes to Downtown Milwaukie, which potentially can increase development opportunities.

Additionally, results indicated that participants support improvement of the streetscape throughout Downtown Milwaukie (i.g. street trees, wider sidewalks, planters, etc.).



Participants also indicated a need for more 'active uses' along the ground level business spaces in Downtown Milwaukie. However, there are divergent views on whether or not those uses should also include office spaces that provide services at the ground level.

Business owners of Downtown Milwaukie share a desire to form a unified business association. However, it was unclear who would be responsible for coordinating among Business owners.

Lastly, there is uncertainty in terms of whether parking is a perceived or real issue. Findings indicated that Downtown business owners face challenges regarding employee parking. However, many survey respondents indicated that Parking was not an issue in Downtown.



STRENGTHS of Downtown Milwaukie



Events

Multiple events take place in Downtown Milwaukie during the summer, including the Farmers Market and First Friday. These events attract people to the downtown core, bring the community together, and attract new visitors from outside of Milwaukie. Building upon and expanding these existing events can provide greater opportunity for realizing an active and vibrant downtown.



Small Town Character

Although the Framework Plan and other planning documents envision an active and vibrant downtown, the accompanying visual examples of similar types of development often feature larger urban areas. Findings suggest that the small town charm of the Downtown should not be compromised by large or monolithic development. The preservation of the small town character should be maintained in future developments in Downtown Milwaukie.



Local Businesses

When asked what people like about downtown, they often referenced their favorite local restaurants or coffee shops. The local businesses supply Downtown Milwaukie with a local identity, which continues to draw visitors into Downtown. The community supports and wants more local businesses.



Ledding Library

The library is an active center for Milwaukie residents. It is a strong asset that Milwaukie residents are proud to utilize. Partnering with the library in future engagement activities and finding new ways to build upon this strength can help foster a more cohesive downtown.



Parks & Open Space

The City of Milwaukie has numerous parks throughout the downtown. It is situated on the Willamette River with a large, open park along the shoreline. Other parks – including Scott Park and Dogwood Park – provide places of respite for residents, visitors and supply habitat for wildlife. Kellogg Lake offers many opportunities, but currently has limited access. Increasing connectivity to the parks would help take advantage of these assets.

WEAKNESSES of Downtown Milwaukie



Lack of Shopping Variety

A major weakness of Downtown Milwaukie is the lack of variety for places to shop and fulfill daily needs. Although a grocery store can provide desired services, findings suggest that other kinds of uses are also desired in Downtown, such as a brewpub, clothing retailer and recreation orientated business.

Attracting businesses would address the issue of vacancies within the Downtown area. Business owners of Downtown Milwaukie expressed concern with the lack of foot-traffic, outside of events such as the Farmers Market, which temporarily attracts many visitors. Addressing the lack of variety and vacancies can help build a critical mass to attract customers and/or residents.

Need for Economic Development

Community members spoke of the need for coordinated economic development. The business community of Downtown Milwaukie is currently fragmented into separate groups without a unified business association. Although the desire for a unified business vision exists, realizing such a vision has been difficult for Downtown business owners. A unified vision and voice of Downtown business owners could potentially bring joint solutions to create a more prosperous and vibrant center.



McLoughlin Boulevard

Until light rail is fully operational, McLoughlin Boulevard remains the primary gateway to Downtown Milwaukie. However, travelers on McLoughlin often do not realize the presence of Downtown Milwaukie. Findings suggest that this is due to a lack of attractive signage and entry points to signal the presence of downtown. Further, findings suggest that McLoughlin is also a source of opportunity – development can capitalize on Riverfront Park by promoting shops that cater to recreational activities or restaurants with a view of the river.



Difficult Local Access to Downtown

There are physical barriers to Downtown, including McLoughlin Blvd and Hwy 224, which discourage visitors from visiting Downtown. There is also the addition of Light Rail in the future of Downtown, which together suggest that the needs of pedestrians and bikers must continue to be considered.

Findings suggest that there is continued support for improved bicycle infrastructure and pedestrian improvements to facilitate healthy transportation alternatives. Continuing to prioritize and encourage alternative modes of transportation through infrastructure investments can help improve the accessibility to Downtown and encourage more visitors as well.

OPPORTUNITIES of Downtown Milwaukie



Local Restaurants

Downtown Milwaukie currently hosts a variety of local restaurants. The quality of these establishments are appreciated and desired by the Milwaukie community. An increased supply of local restaurants is an opportunity in Downtown Milwaukie that should continue to be considered, including additional dining options such as a brewpub, casual dining or specialty kitchen. Not only is eating one of the reasons visitors come to Downtown Milwaukie, but is also an element of realizing a vibrant Downtown.

Public & Green Space

Riverfront, Dogwood and Scott Parks currently provide the green spaces in Downtown Milwaukie. However, connectivity between these places is limited: Riverfront Park is separated by McLoughlin from Downtown, Dogwood Park is currently not that accessible due to construction, and Scott Park is an environmentally protected area. Connecting these green spaces, by means of trails, pathways, bicycle boulevards and way-finding signage in Downtown Milwaukie can help better promote and activate these spaces, potentially generating more interest in visiting Downtown Milwaukie.

Grocery Store

There is a strong desire in the community for a grocery store in Downtown Milwaukie, which remains consistent with one of the fundamental concepts from the Framework plan: Anchors and Attractors.³ Realizing a vibrant downtown may require policy changes to increase the likelihood of a grocery store locating downtown.

³See City of Milwaukie Memorandum – “Downtown Plan Refresh Background Memo #2: History of Downtown Milwaukie Programs, Studies and Plans (pg 6).”



Light Rail

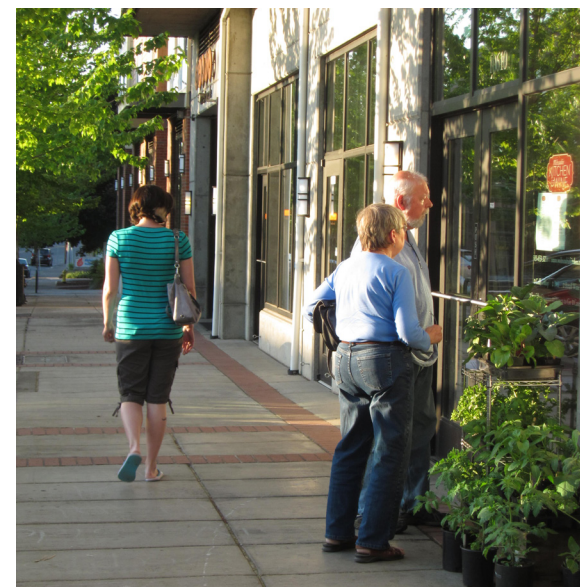
The introduction of a new Light Rail line to Downtown Milwaukie brings excitement and concerns. Generally, the findings indicate that the community believes Light Rail will bring about positive changes to Downtown Milwaukie, particularly the potential to attract people to Downtown.



Downtown Milwaukie's Local Identity

Findings suggested that participants agree that food, arts and culture should be the focus of Downtown Milwaukie's identity. This desire is consistent with one of the fundamental concepts from the original Framework Plan: the need for an Arts/Entertainment District and to build off existing creative groups and organizations. These groups then can be utilized for future efforts to 'beautify' areas of Downtown that could benefit from simple decorations even consider places where a mural is most appropriate.

Further, findings suggest that McLoughlin is also a source of opportunity – development can capitalize on Riverfront Park by promoting shops that cater to recreational activities or restaurants with a view of the river.



Ground Level Uses

The Framework Plan conceptualized a strong retail corridor along Main Street, featuring restaurants and retail uses on the ground floor. Findings suggest that this concept is still supported and relevant.

There is general agreement that ground level uses should promote a pleasant pedestrian experience. However, findings suggest there is diversion on whether or not office uses, as currently defined in the code, belong at the ground level.

CHALLENGES of Downtown Milwaukie



Parking

Whether parking is an issue seems to be a matter of perception. Discussions with business owners revealed a belief that there is a lack of spaces for employee permit parking; some feel there is a lack of enforcement of the “15-minute zones”. Additionally, Light Rail construction has removed some parking from the South Downtown area.

The broader Milwaukie community is also divided: most state they can find parking, while others feel there needs to be more.



Downtown Tensions

Tensions both within the business community and between the business community and the City of Milwaukie can be a barrier to realizing positive changes in Downtown Milwaukie. Some of the tensions are rooted in frustration about City regulations that are perceived as overly restrictive and unfair, such as the recently amended Public Area Requirements and use restrictions. Frequent, easy-to-understand communications from the City may help citizens better understand the need for and benefits of regulations.

Negative perceptions were often attributed to one of two factors:

1. Distrust of change and a feeling that things are fine as they are
2. Fear of the unknown, specifically related to Light Rail

73% of workshop respondents feel that Downtown Milwaukie “is getting better”

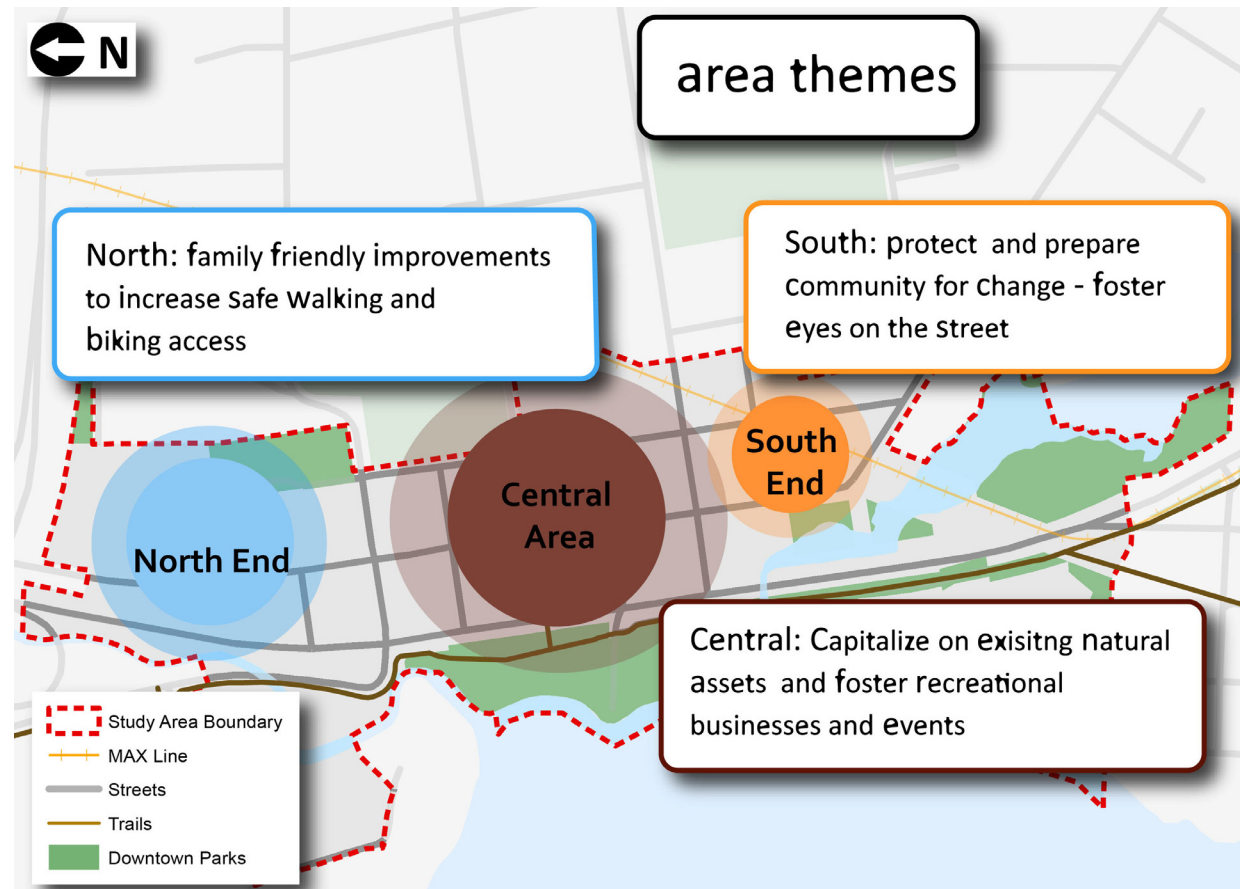
Community Value Themes

Priority Area: South Downtown

Participants prioritized the protection of community values in the built environment of South Downtown as the pace of development increases due to Light Rail and the improving economy. This could be achieved through a variety of strategies such as development and design guidelines, public art programming, and business recruitment. Increased activities of all types, to provide more eyes on the street, was identified as an effective approach to increasing business activity, pedestrian comfort and a general sense of Downtown Milwaukie as a “place to be.”

Area: Central Downtown

The central area of Downtown is seen as the hub of downtown—a popular retail destination and community event locale. The community aspires to encourage new uses in Central Downtown, especially those that promote and expand recreational activities. Active ground level uses of space is also desired in this area. Community members also place value on enhancing the aesthetic value of existing buildings in this area.



Area: North Downtown

Development in north downtown should build on the existing family-friendly businesses, including Pietro's Pizza and Kellogg Bowl. Infrastructure improvements to enhance the pedestrian and bicycling experience in the area—including facilitating access to the Springwater multi-use corridor

and improving the area's connection to Scott Park and the Downtown core—is a way to foster establishment of additional family-friendly businesses and activities. North Downtown is also seen as a potential site for additional 3-4 story multi-family housing with ground floor retail uses.

Priority Corridor: McLoughlin

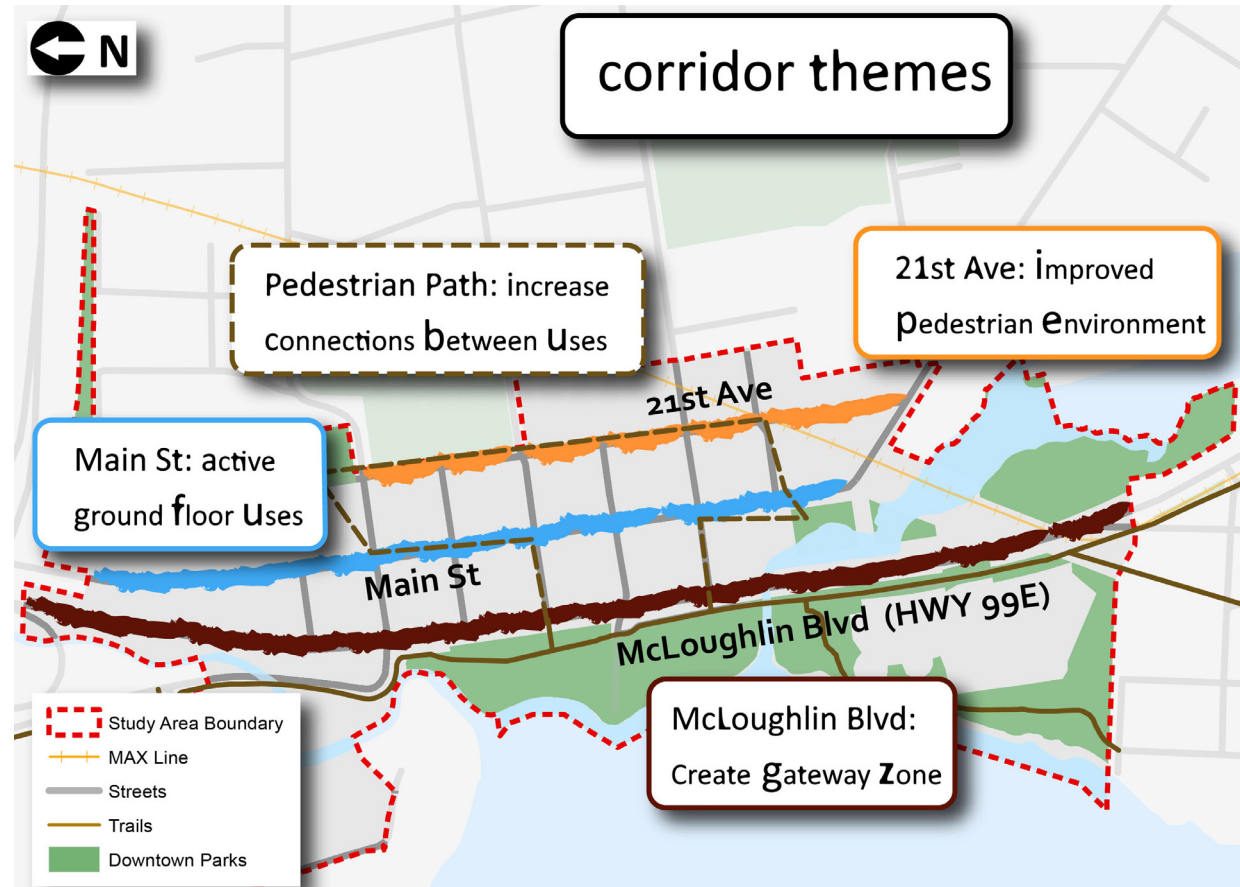
Community members support improving the “McLoughlin face” of Milwaukie. Improving views between McLoughlin and the river, and expanding upon the attractive elements of Downtown so they are more visible from McLoughlin are potential strategies. Ideas to activate the east edge of McLoughlin include orienting buildings toward McLoughlin and the river, and incentivizing façade upgrades. Finally, designating and improving key “nodes of entry” along McLoughlin will raise awareness of and increase accessibility to the Downtown for visitors and locals.

Corridor: Main Street

Increasing active ground floor uses on Main Street supports the unified appearance in the materials and design of storefronts and commercial buildings along Main Street. A grocery store, brew pub, permanent public market, and museum are among the most popular community-generated proposals for new uses on the Main Street corridor.

Corridor: 21st Ave

21st Avenue will light rail riders to the Downtown area. Improving the pedestrian environment along this corridor is a good way to enhance the general attractiveness of Downtown to visitors. Community generated ideas to achieve this effect include burying utility lines, improved landscape design, sidewalk upgrades and installation of attractive lighting elements and hanging flower baskets.



Pedestrian Corridor: Enhanced Connections

Popular Downtown features and destinations should be linked physically and conceptually by common design elements, such as consistent landscape design, plant types, street furniture and way-finding signage. Utilizing existing multi-use pathways (the Trolley Trail and Springwater Corridor) can

enhance access between Riverfront Park and the Downtown, which can entice visitors to explore the full extent of what Downtown has to offer.



Positive Forward Momentum

The *Fresh Look* project's engagement efforts revealed that there are many areas of agreement among Milwaukie community members. The top qualities people want to protect and encourage Downtown are: the preservation of the small town feel; growth of locally-owned businesses; celebrations focused on local food, arts and culture; and improved connections to the river.

These areas of agreement provide numerous opportunities to continue positive momentum and are the core of this report's recommendations. These recommendations and findings should be considered as the City moves forward into Phase II of the Commercial Core Enhancement Program, which will focus on making the changes to policies and regulations that implement the community desires identified by the *Fresh Look* project. Downtown is full of potential, with many assets to capitalize upon; ultimately, the optimism, creativity and collaborative energy put toward crafting the policies and plans of today will help shape the future of Downtown for decades to come.



Appendix A

Primary Documents Governing Downtown Development

Appendix B

ALIGN planning Team

Appendix C

Work Plan and MOU Report

Appendix D

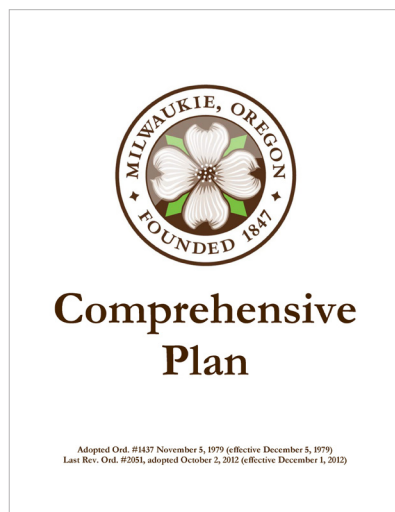
Existing Conditions Report

Appendix E1

Public Outreach Findings Report (Vol 1)

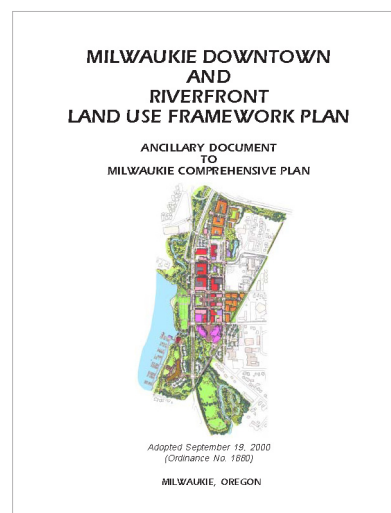
Appendix E2

Public Outreach Findings Report (Vol 2)



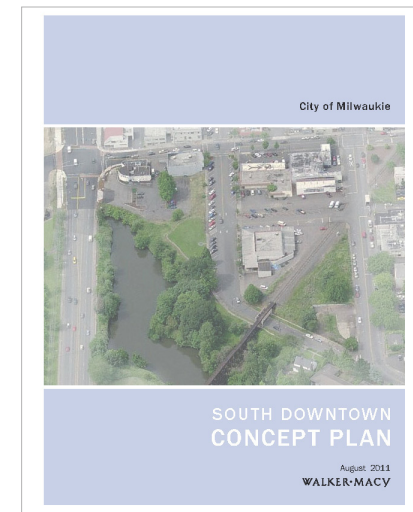
A the MILWAUKIE COMPREHENSIVE plan

The 1989 Comprehensive Plan establishes the land use and development policy for the City of Milwaukie. It classifies Downtown as an area of special interest for the whole community and details planning concepts related to Downtown development.



B the DOWNTOWN and RIVERFRONT LAND USE FRAMEWORK plan

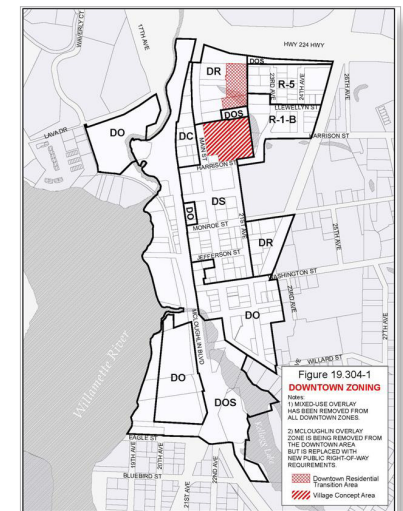
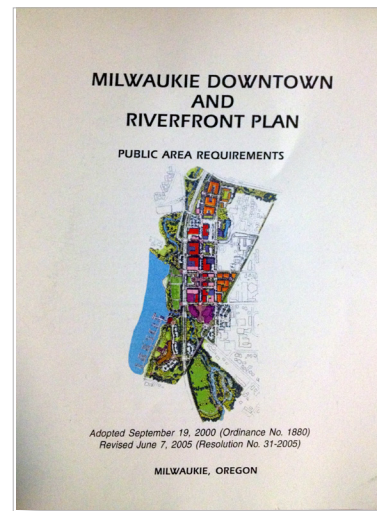
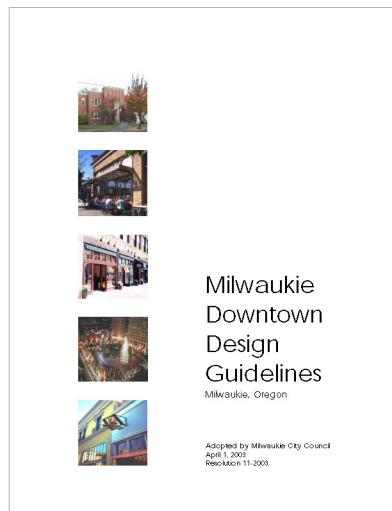
The Downtown and Riverfront Land Use Framework Plan (“Framework Plan”) was adopted in 2000. This is the guiding document for development in Downtown Milwaukie and is an ancillary document to the Milwaukie Comprehensive Plan. Its boundaries form the study area for the *Fresh Look Milwaukie* project.



C the SOUTH DOWNTOWN CONCEPT plan

Adopted in 2011, the South Downtown Concept Plan is a vision for the area south of Washington between 99E (McLoughlin Boulevard) and 21st Ave. Once codified, it will guide redevelopment and land use in preparation for the Milwaukie Light Rail Station opening in 2015. The first project to implement the plan is the Adams Street Connector project, to be completed in fall 2014.

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS GOVERNING DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT



D DOWNTOWN DESIGN guidelines

The Downtown Design Guidelines were adopted in 2003 to support and complement the Framework Plan through the promotion of a consistent urban design vision and contextually sensitive development. The guidelines address “Milwaukie character,” architecture, signage, lighting and pedestrian elements. They are used by City staff and Milwaukie’s Design and Landmarks Committee to evaluate the design of new construction and some exterior renovations.

E PUBLIC AREA requirements

The Public Area Requirements (PARs) were adopted in 2000 to define and implement the circulation framework of the Framework Plan. This document defines circulation elements for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, guides the development of capital improvements in the public rights-of-way, and establishes standards and requirements for improvements at the time of development or redevelopment of parcels adjacent to the public right-of-way in downtown Milwaukie. The PARs were revised in 2009 and 2013, and have been integrated into the City’s Public Works Standards.

F DOWNTOWN ZONING ordinances

Zoning and Land Use regulations for downtown are addressed in Title 19 Section 304 of the Milwaukie Municipal Code (MMC). The current downtown zones and regulations were adopted in 2000 to implement the Framework Plan. Aspects of the ordinances were revised in 2009 and early 2013. The zoning ordinances address allowed uses, dimensional standards such as building height and setbacks; design standards; residential density, and applicability of design review and public area requirements.

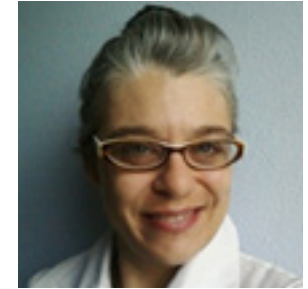
appendix B

ALIGN planning TEAM



Ryan Lemay | Project Manager

Ryan is a Washington native from Kitsap County, who joined the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program in 2011, specializing in Land Use. His background includes a Bachelor's degree in Urban Studies from the University of Washington, Tacoma with, along with certificates for AutoCAD and GIS. His previous experience with planning includes work at the City and Federal government. At the City of Puyallup, Washington, Ryan served as a GIS/Planning Intern and experienced in working with issues in long-range and short-term planning. At the Federal level, Ryan currently works as a student hire for Navy Region NW. He has assisted the Public Works in drafting utility diagrams and currently works with the Planning department with various projects. Post Graduation, Ryan hopes to work as a planner for a government organization, seeking options that unify sprawling communities and instead promote more intensive uses of land. Outside of Planning, Ryan's interests include experiencing outdoor activities in the northwest, ranging from hiking, mountain biking, snowboarding, kayaking and rock climbing to other activities such as sports, autocrossing, and travelling.



Carine Arendes | Content Development Lead

A long time Oregon resident, and graduate of PSU's Community Development program, Carine entered the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program in the fall of 2011 specializing in Land Use. Previous research conducted on the social determinants of stormwater management stewardship shaped her professional interest in the green infrastructure and the preservation of ecological functioning in urban areas. Carine is active in the APA's newly formed Sustainable Communities Division and a local organization pursuing development of a Nature Play park. In 2013, she was appointed a Tigard Central City Advisory Committee Commissioner on urban renewal district policy. A recent Washington County position focused on "Greening the Code" to address code barriers to sustainable development is leading to the development of new wind and solar energy generation ordinances. Her current position as an assistant campus planner allows Carine to support innovative and sustainable urban development occurring on Portland State University campus, while also providing staff support to a newly initiated Capital Advisory Committee. A regular library patron, Carine daydreams about trips to Tuscany and adventures aboard Serenity.



Jeffrey Butts | Public Engagement, Co-Lead

Jeffrey is originally from Montana and moved to Oregon to attend Portland State University (PSU), in September 2011 from El Salvador where he served two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Prior to volunteering overseas, Jeffrey earned a BA in Environmental Studies from Montana State University Billings and worked in community organizing around environmental issues where he once toured the country on a biodiesel bus with three others to engage with the public and the media about sustainability. Jeffrey has been involved in student leadership during both his undergraduate and graduate education. At Montana State University, Jeffrey spearheaded a successful effort to plan and implement comprehensive campus recycling. As Co-Chair of the Urban Planning Club at PSU, he successfully led an effort to bring influential urban thinker and former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia, Enrique Peñalosa to Portland for two events. Jeffrey currently works at a Portland consulting firm focusing on urban planning and community engagement. He has an interest in multi-modal transportation and the creation of quality urban habitats for humans, with a prominent orientation toward the pedestrian atmosphere.



Erica Smith | Public Engagement, Co-Lead

A native Portlander, Erica will graduate from PSU's Masters in Urban and Regional Planning program in June 2013. Upon graduating Erica aims to work as a long-range and strategic planner facilitating public-private sector collaboration, and driving policy to reduce the urban area's carbon footprint while increasing equitable access to social, political and economic capital. Erica has extensive experience working for the public sector in the Portland, Oregon area, including Portland's Parks and Transportation Bureaus, Portland Public Schools, the City of Hillsboro's Planning Department and the Portland Development Commission. She also has experience working in construction and green/natural building, including design and management for small ecoroof projects in the Portland area. Currently, Erica works as a Planning and GIS Intern at Fregonese Associates, Inc., a locally-based planning firm. There, she primarily focuses on regional and strategic long-range planning projects around the nation. She specializes in map-making and GIS analysis, public participation and community engagement (especially with the Spanish-speaking community) as well as environmental planning issues. Erica completed her BA in Community Development at PSU in 2008.



Iren Taran | Production Lead

Iren joined the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program in 2011. She holds a BA in Architecture from WSU School of Architecture and Construction Management. At PSU, her research interests include sustainable economic, social, and environmental development as well as planning practices that can bridge all three. Last year, she started her research work on the transformation of the urban planning system in the Post-Soviet Bloc. She spent summer of 2011 in Nicaragua on a PSU International Community Development program gaining field experience. This summer, Iren worked with the Shenzhen Institute of Urban Planning and Design alongside local planners in China. Iren's introduction to international practice began while she was a student at WSU. She assisted a team of professors in postwar studies and development strategies for the City of Kabul, Afghanistan. After graduation, Iren joined Yost Grube Hall, a U.S.-based architecture and planning firm where she worked on a wide variety of projects, ranging from educational facilities to campus and community planning, both domestically and overseas. When she is not juggling education, research and professional practice, Iren is hiking and exploring the Pacific Northwest.



Find out more about the **PROJECT** at:

[www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/planning /fresh-look-milwaukie-downtown-road-map](http://www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/planning/fresh-look-milwaukie-downtown-road-map)

Find out more about the **TEAM** at:

www.ALIGNplanning.com