

# **Oregon City's North End: Area in Transition**

**Oregon City Redevelopment Group**

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# Scope of Planning Services

## Project Proposal:

We propose to produce a document for the Oregon City Community Development Department (OCCDD). The purpose of this document is twofold: to show how the area known as the "North End" relates to its surroundings and too offer redevelopment alternatives for this 11 block area.

## General Planning Intentions:

Currently there is no concrete vision for the North End of Oregon City. There is a need to show how it relates to its surroundings and its future redevelopment potential. The North End is defined as the 11 block area between Mcloughlin Boulevard and Main Street from the southern point of the Interpretive Center to 10th Street downtown. This area could act as the link between the historic ending-point of the Oregon Trail and the downtown core (see map).

The following factors will increase pressure for redevelopment in the North End:

- Phase One of The End of The Oregon Trail Interpretive Center will be operating in the spring of 1995.
- The area is at the confluence of two state highways and one interstate highway.
- It is the future light rail terminus for MAX and a proposed stopping point for the high speed rail line from Eugene to Vancouver B.C.
- Oregon City is petitioning Metro for redesignation in the 2040 Plan from town center status to a regional center. A regional center has been defined by Metro as: "areas of mixed residential and commercial use that serve hundreds of thousands of people and are easily accessible by different types of transit. Examples include Gresham and Clackamas Town Center."

The OCCDD seeks to take a proactive stance on the future redevelopment of the North End. Our intention is to undertake a comprehensive study of this area. This study will compile information related to the North End and its immediate surroundings and help reveal possible redevelopment alternatives.

## Work to be Done/Methods:

### Task 1: Conduct interviews with experts and stakeholders.

We will conduct telephone and personal interviews with the following people and groups.

- Charlie Kupper and John Spencer at the urban renewal agency of Oregon City. They will give us background information on the study area and provide us with a copy of the recently completed *streetscapes* done for downtown Oregon City.
- The Traffic Engineering Department of Oregon City. This interview will allow us to develop a sense of the topographical constraints, street right-of-way issues and other nuts and bolts questions pertinent to the study area.
- Tri-Met South-North light rail coordinator, Sharon Meyers. She will elaborate on the proposed South-North alignment and transit stop locations in Oregon City.
- Dan Fowler, Mayor of Oregon City, and the Oregon City Planning Commission and neighborhood associations to determine their visions for the North End.
- Developers and business people who have a stake in the redevelopment process.
- Residents of Oregon City (Possible workshop or other means to elicit citizen ideas and values.)
- Individual owners of the land in the study area.

### Task 2: Contextual examination of the areas surrounding the North End.

This is necessary to determine how the North End relates to its surroundings. The North End will be examined on its own and within the following context(s):

- Main street axis
- Urban Renewal District
- Willamette River Corridor
- Metro Enhancement Area
- Downtown Oregon City
- Clackemette Cove
- Interpretive Center
- Transportation Corridors

### Task 3: A site by site analysis of parcels in the North End.

This information will be gleaned from tax assessors data, the comprehensive plan for Oregon City, zoning maps, visual inspections and related planning documents. The analysis will include the following: current zoning, comprehensive plan designation, assessed values, historical designations, square footage, general condition of existing structures, ability to be improved (do the costs of improving outweigh the benefits), physical and environmental constraints, ownership and ease of parcel assembly.

### Task 4: Formulate redevelopment alternatives.

We will formulate alternatives for redevelopment based on the above analysis. Specific criteria will be developed to assign redevelopment potential to individual sites. This could take the form of a redevelopment potential matrix.

### Expected Products:

The analysis we do will culminate in a document that accomplishes the following objectives for our client:

- 1) Help the city further its case for designation as a Regional Center.
- 2) Develop the importance of the North End as the key link between the Interpretive Center and the downtown.
- 3) Aggregation of various secondary and primary data into one cohesive source for easy reference.
- 4) Facilitate Oregon City planning efforts for this transition area.
- 5) Provide possible redevelopment options for parcels in the North End.

A second product will consist of a multi-media presentation of our findings to the Oregon City Planning Commission and possibly the Oregon City Council.

### Time Budget: (see appendix chart 2)

The first phase will consist of interviews with experts and stakeholders (Task 1), an examination of the areas surrounding the North End (Task 2) and a comprehensive analysis of the North End (Task 3).

In the second phase, we will analyze the data we have collected, render architectural drawings such as cross-sections and thumbnail sketches and begin thinking about possible alternatives based on our data analysis and interviews.

In the third phase, we will formalize our alternatives, review findings with our client and compose the draft report. This phase will allow us to receive feedback from our client and help solidify our proposed redevelopment alternatives for the North End.

### Relationship to Client:

Our client, the Oregon City Community Development Department, is responsible for planning, economic development and capital improvements within its jurisdiction. We will be advocating for redevelopment of the North End on its behalf. Our client will facilitate our efforts by providing us with background information, technical expertise and support materials. Furthermore, the client will provide feedback at relevant times on the progress of our project. We expect on-going interaction in the development of the final product.

The relationship with the client is defined in two parts: 1) Our contractual obligation to our client; and 2) We will maintain open and knowledgeable communication throughout the whole process as we seek a partnership in the development of our product and final recommendations. We will gain trust with our client by demonstrating knowledge and professionalism. The client has defined the study area and set certain parameters. The final product is an agreement between the client and our work group. The findings and recommendations will be produced through a collaborative approach. This approach will encompass stakeholder input through the use of interviews, community workshop-if possible-, and surveys.

We intend to demonstrate competency, integrity and diligence through our dealings with our client. We believe that, as students and future planners, we can provide our client with a fresh prospective. We intend to devote 40-45 hours a week on this project.

## APPENDICES

### Internal Organization: (see appendix chart 3)

The attached Internal Organization chart gives a breakdown of tasks and who is responsible for each task. In addition to the breakdown of responsibilities, each group member will have one area over which they have "Presidential Powers." For example, Wei Liu's primary responsibility will be to render architectural drawings of the study area; Ken Hranicky will oversee aspects related to computer graphics and our multi-media presentation of findings; Bryan Cosgrove will be responsible for client coordination; and Chad Meadows will act as our project manager, which means he will ensure that interviews are conducted, data is gathered and meetings are scheduled. Where there is a difference of opinion on matters that relate to these areas deference will be given to the person responsible for that area.

### Ethics of the Firm:

We will make every effort to achieve consensus in our decision making process. When consensus cannot be reached we will rely on majority rule and refer to the "Presidential Power" clause of this contract. Each group member will be an active participant in this project. Tasks will be assigned equitably and proportionately so that no one member is overburdened. We desire to learn as much as possible in this time period about the planning process, our client, Oregon City and ourselves. It is understood that tasks will be assigned according to the strengths and skills of each group member.

### Relationship of work to AICP code of ethics:

"A planner must strive to provide full, clear and accurate information on planning issues to citizens and governmental decision makers" (AICP Code of Ethics part A, number 3). The nature of our project demands that we do everything possible to satisfy this criteria. We will be providing a product to the Oregon City Community Development Department that contains information and development alternatives. As a result, we must be sure to present our findings with clarity and integrity. We will also provide an honest assessment of our results.

## Qualifications and Interests of Members:

### Kenneth Hranicky

To be perfectly honest, I would not mind working on any of the other projects in this years workshop. The reason I am in this group is that I happen to work well with my fellow group members. There is also the element that each of us brings to our project that complements the other.

Our project was concerned with infill development and my interests in that area dealt with exploring the perceptions of livability concepts against the belief that ownership (both actual and psychological) is necessary for the success of any area.

Our project now deals with the dynamics of a growing city in context of regional designs. Our area is quite specific but the issues being addressed underlie a vision for the future. Our client sees the urban design district as a leading element in the successful development of Oregon City. In turn, a success in this area means that Oregon City would be that much closer to realizing the goal of developing into a Regional Center (as defined in Region 2040).

The 'transition area', that will be studied, will be key in capturing some of the public investment that is being made into the interpretive center. It will be the first thing that people see after leaving the interpretive center. It will effectively act as a gateway to the historical downtown district.

My interests in this project lies in understanding the site in regional and local context and how different parties view this area. I bring to this project computer and analytical skills and a strong commitment in doing a quality job.

### Chad Meadows

I came to Portland with a background in economic development. Perhaps that is why I find this project so intriguing. Here we have a local jurisdiction that not only recognizes the importance of economic development, but also seeks a proactive stance in guiding this development. I believe that economic development is good for an area, but it must be tempered with decisive planning that follows a vision. We see just such a case in Oregon City.



The vision for the North End of the Oregon City Downtown is one of linking the Interpretive Center with the downtown core. It is my feeling that this vision is not only appropriate, but reachable. As the Trail Center comes online in the Spring of 1995, there will be incredible pressures for redevelopment of surrounding areas like the North End. Coupled with this are the ever-increasing transit opportunities that are making their way towards Oregon City. Juxtaposed in this situation is the North End, located in-between the Trail Center and the transit-supported downtown.

Based on these factors, I believe it is safe to assume that the North End will soon be changing. Now, the opportunity presents itself to plan for and help direct this change. This is where my interests in this project lie. I believe that increased development in this area is safe bet; however, whether or not this increased development will support the capital expenditures being made in the area is not such a solid bet. The key here is to encourage the type of development that supports these capital expenditures, while discouraging the development types that don't.

The North End has the opportunity to become a regional tourism center. It can be a transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly environment like The Mall in Washington DC, or it can become an auto-oriented death trap like Orlando, Florida. The difference here is that Oregon City still has a choice about how the development will manifest itself.

I bring three basic skills to this project. Based on my earlier work with the development community, I have a basic understanding of the needs and issues involved with developers. As a result of my working experience with The Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, I have gained a great deal of interviewing experience. And finally, perhaps the greatest skill I bring to this project is personal dedication and perseverance. This is a project that will have my name upon it. As a result, I want this work to be the best it can be.

Bryan Cosgrove

The basis for my interest in redevelopment is to understand what factors are involved in how cities change over time. Oregon City is unique in many ways. It is the historical ending point of the Oregon Trail. This historical significance makes it a regional tourist attraction. It also has challenging topography. Looking up from the downtown area, one notices three distinct plateaus. This is an important aspect of Oregon City that cannot be ignored when planning for redevelopment.

Currently, Oregon City is lobbying Metro to be considered for Regional Center status. This designation would mean that Oregon City would be expected to absorb over 100,000 people in the next several years. Oregon City is located near Interstate 205, Highway 99 and Highway 213. It is also the logical ending point for the South-North light rail because of its historical significance. Further, it is being considered as one of the stops for the High-Speed rail line from Eugene to Vancouver B.C. These factors combined will help them make a sound argument.

My prior experiences include working on the Metropolitan Greenspaces Campaign in 1992, eight years in the military and for the last year I have been a counselor for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The work I did on the Greenspaces Campaign gave me the opportunity to meet many planners and government officials. These contacts will help us throughout the course of this project. The eight years I spent in the Army exposed me to people of diverse backgrounds, personalities, religious beliefs and ethnicity. This experience taught me that there is more than one way to solve a problem and that each person brings a fresh perspective to the table. The work I have done for the Department of Veterans Affairs has taught me patience and compassion. Lastly, coming from a large family where I was the youngest of seven boys, I learned how to take a beating and not complain.

Wei Liu

Redevelopment is not a goal but a channel, together with other means, to achieve broader social-economic and cultural goals. Various solutions intended to cure the problems of current urban development-social segregation, traffic congestion, central-city deterioration, declining urban culture, lack of affordable housing, segregation of work places and labor forces, etc., can be related to redevelopment. These problems and or the relevant broader solutions to these problems should be used as the input of redevelopment policy making.

Redevelopment is a process rather than a project or several projects at the planning level. Current low-density sprawl was the result of various underlying social, economic, political forces at work for several decades. These forces are represented by various land use laws, ordinance, policies and other regulations. To achieve good redevelopment, we need a new set of rules to protect redevelopment to happen at a continuous long time process. So, to study redevelopment, the regulatory aspect must be addressed. At a project by project level, design comes into redevelopment. Current economic ability of giant developers or corporations makes the redevelopment project can happen at large scale and one-time design basis

if they want to. This can be an undesirable thing. One time development at large scale can lead to exclusion of certain groups or activities and one-time design is against the evolution process of urban environment. Architects' role should increase as scale decrease rather than play an overall role from the very beginning. Citizen participation should come into the process at early stage. Architects should play the participants role in the process rather than imposition role.

Urban cultural development will occur under flexible land use regulation and when citizen participate in the redevelopment process and changes and evolution of land use can happen with citizens give input to them. My skill in this project is to develop typography solutions of redevelopment at typography sites. I also address architects' role in the project base at different scales.

## Appendix Chart 1

**Redevelopment:** A process which involves the reconfiguration of existing tax parcels based on the needs, vision and desires of a community.

**Redevelopment Alternatives:** Proposed development schemes for a specific area that is in transition.

**Transition:** An area within a city whose land uses are changing due to internal and external development pressures.

**Experts:** Individuals or groups who possess technical and professional expertise and are familiar with the study area.

**Stakeholders:** Individuals who have a stake in the outcome of any planning initiative.  
eg planning commission, mayor and neighborhood association

**Contextual Examination:** An overview of characteristics of a given area and how that area relates and interacts with what's around it.

**Main Street Axis:** The section of Main street in Oregon City running from I-205 South to the Smurfit Newsprint Plant.

**Urban Renewal District:** The area designated by ORS 457.420 consisting of 1,032 acres or 22 percent of the Oregon City's land area.

**Metro Enhancement Area:** A specific portion of Oregon City designated as an enhancement area because of the placement of the Solid Waste transfer station. This area receives specifically earmarked funds from Metro to make improvements within area boundaries.

**Clackemette Cove:** A portion of land located at the Northern end of Oregon City. This piece of land is located near a lagoon and is scheduled to be developed as office space.

Appendix Chart 3

Responsibility	Group Members			
	Chad Meadows	Bryan Cosgrove	Ken Hranicky	Wei Liu
Data Collection	•	•	•	•
Conducting Interviews	•	•	•	
Architectural Drafting	•			•
Computer Graphics	•		•	
Editing		•		
Client Coordination		•		
Data Analysis	•	•	•	•
Visual Inspections	•		•	•
Formulation of Alternatives		•	•	
Written Documentation		•		•
Presentation of Findings	•	•	•	•

## Appendix Chart 2

### Time Budget

