

# CORNELIUS TOWN CENTER PLAN

## Public Meeting Summary

Thursday, March 9, 2019

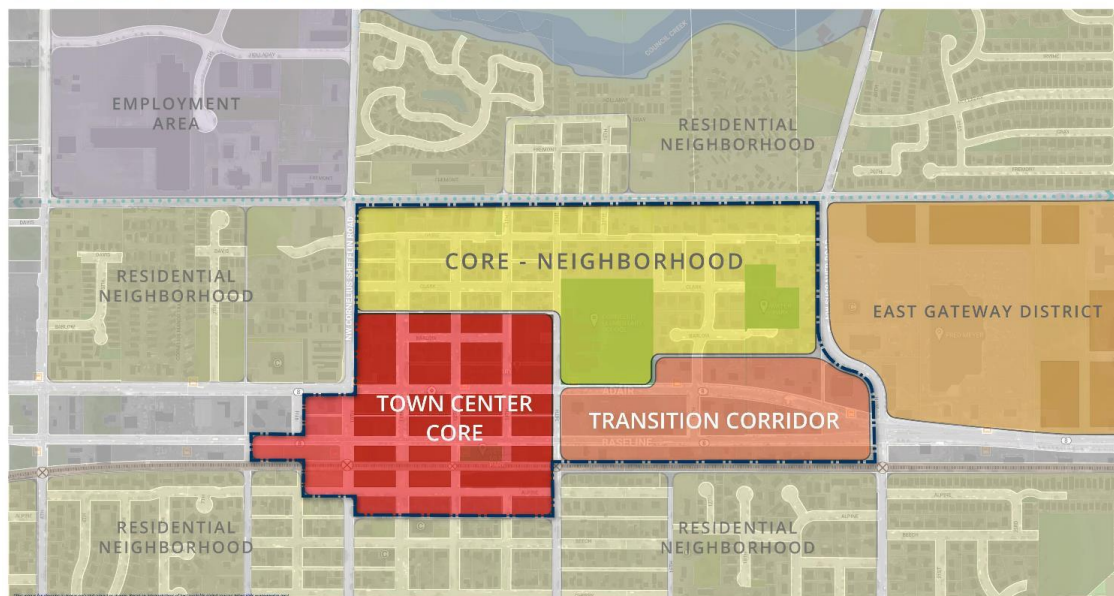


On Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 the City of Cornelius hosted a community Open House for the Cornelius Town Center and Urban Renewal Plans. The purpose of the Town Center Plan is to guide future growth and development in the city's downtown. The Urban Renewal will provide a mechanism for funding improvements identified in the Town Center Plan and other areas within the proposed urban renewal area.

Approximately 10 people attended the Open House at Centro Cultural. The Open House began at 6 p.m., and Ryan Wells, Community Development Director, welcomed the group and provided opening remarks. Then Steve Faust, 3J Consulting, provided a presented an overview of elements of the Town Center Plan, as well as zoning and funding implementation tools. Elaine Howard, Elaine Howard Consulting, provided an overview of urban renewal in general and some details on how it will work in Cornelius.

After the presentation, participants were invited to visit several stations around the room and provide feedback. Comment forms were provided and project staff were available to take questions and record notes on flipcharts at each station. Handouts on urban renewal and urban renewal projects are included as attachments to this meeting summary. Results of these conversations are summarized below:

### Town Center Plan Districts



1. Are these the right districts? Are they in the right locations?

- Yes. As you come into the Main Street area, you see the memorial park surrounded by storefronts that need help.

**Town Center Plan Framework**



**URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK PLAN**

URBAN RENEWAL PLAN & TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN



2. What are your ideas for the opportunity sites? Are any sites missing?

- Smart-Cities. Grants need to be researched.

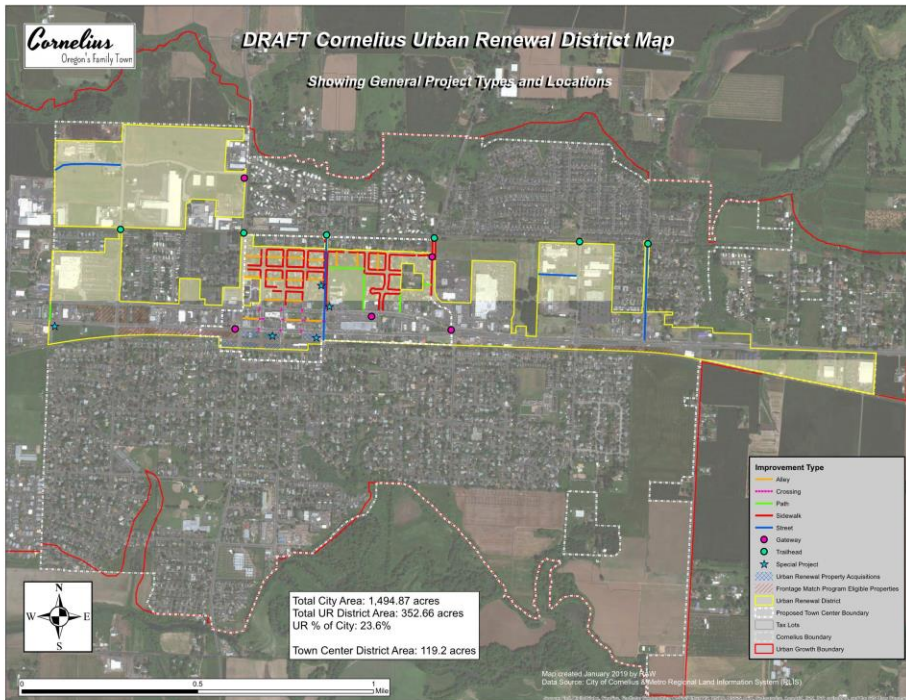
3. Are the key road, alleyway and trail connections in the right places?

- Yes. I'm excited by the walkable alley concept. Has an Austin, Texas feel.
- Alleys provide an opportunity for gathering and celebration with lights and music.

4. What do you envision for the proposed gateways and trailheads?

- Smart Trails. Education and safety opportunity.

## Town Center Plan Implementation - Zoning



### 5. Are these the right projects to implement the Town Center and Urban Renewal Plans?

- Smart Cities that preserve local heritage.
- Maintain the Cornelius identity.

### 6. Other Questions or Comments.

- Will the Urban Renewal Plan work? It seems that it will take a long time to collect enough money to implement some of the larger projects. *Yes. There are examples in Forest Grove and Hillsboro. Early projects will include things like a façade improvement program. Simple upgrades could be funded by grants, while larger projects would require a private match.*
- Investigate the Technology Association of Oregon and the Oregon Fiber Initiative.
- Pursue Smart City grants for culture and safety.
- The dog park in Water Park should show as a distinct place on the map.
- Town Center lighting should be shielded to prevent conflicts with motorists and wildlife.

## **Why use Urban Renewal in Cornelius?**

Cornelius is in the process of completing a Town Center Plan that will provide guidance for developing Cornelius as a vibrant and prosperous city, drawing people in from other areas of the city and neighboring communities. The Town Center Plan will contain a list of projects that should be completed to enable Cornelius to develop according to the vision of its citizens. The funding from creating an urban renewal area will provide a financing tool to help complete these projects and other needed projects in your community.

## **What is Urban Renewal?**

Urban Renewal is one of the few tools for encouraging local economic development. It has been used for decades in cities including more than 100 urban renewal areas in Oregon. Urban renewal plans provide cities with an alternative revenue stream called tax increment financing. This revenue stream may be used on projects and programs in specifically designated urban renewal areas.

## **How is an Urban Renewal Plan Started?**

Cornelius convened a technical advisory committee to discuss urban renewal boundary options, potential projects, and financial information. Upon completing the advisory committee process, the recommendations will be used to prepare an urban renewal plan which will establish an official urban renewal boundary, goals and objectives for the area, and outline projects and programs which will help improve conditions of the area. The plan also sets the spending limit, or maximum indebtedness, for the urban renewal area. The urban renewal plan is also accompanied by a technical report which contains the financial feasibility analysis and makes projections for when funding will become available to pursue projects within the area.

## **How is an Urban Renewal Plan Adopted?**

Prior to being adopted by the City Council, every urban renewal plan must go through the public review process which includes:

- Urban Renewal Agency meeting
- Consult and confer with all overlapping taxing districts
- County briefing
- Planning Commission meeting
- City Council hearing and vote

Any action by the City Council must be by non-emergency ordinance and after a public hearing is held. Notice of the public hearing must be sent to households in the city. Non-emergency ordinances can be referred to voters within 30 days of adoption.

## **How does Tax Increment Financing Work?**

While urban renewal itself does not increase property tax rates, it does function on the increases in property tax revenues from year-to-year. An individual property tax payer's property taxes may increase for two reasons. One, the assessor can increase property values at a rate of 3% per year and does so in most cases, and, two, if the individual completed a substantial renovation or new construction on their property resulting in increased assessed valuation. When an urban renewal area is created the property tax revenue from that area is diverted into two revenue streams. The first stream is called "the frozen base". The frozen base is the total assessed value of the urban renewal area from the year the urban renewal area was formed. The property taxes from the

Frozen base revenue stream continues to go to the regular taxing jurisdictions, such as the city, the county, and the school district. The second revenue stream is any increase over the frozen base which is called “the increment”. The increment represents the basis for tax increment financing and is any increase assessed valuation and the resulting property tax revenues above the frozen base. The second revenue stream goes to the urban renewal agency for use on projects, programs, and administration throughout the life of the district.

### **How are Overlapping Taxing Districts Impacted by Urban Renewal?**

The overlapping taxing districts continue to receive property tax revenues on the frozen base assessed value of the area, but do not receive property tax revenues from any growth in the area. Schools are not directly impacted by urban renewal. They are funded on a per student basis from the State School Fund as determined by the Oregon Legislature. That per student funding amount is not directly impacted due to urban renewal in your community.

Once an urban renewal area is terminated, there will generally be an increase in property tax revenues to all taxing jurisdictions. This increase of property tax revenue is a result of the ability to concentrate funding in a specific area, encouraging economic development in the area.

### **How does an Urban Renewal Area Function?**

An urban renewal area is run by an urban renewal agency which at its most basic level has income, expenses, and a spending limit. The income for an urban renewal agency is its yearly tax increment financing revenues. The expenses for an urban renewal agency are its yearly expenditures on projects, programs and administration. The spending limit for an urban renewal agency is its maximum indebtedness. Maximum indebtedness is the total amount of money that can be spent in

an urban renewal area on projects, programs and administration.

### **What types of Programs or Projects are Eligible under Urban Renewal?**

Urban renewal agencies can do certain projects or activities under an adopted urban renewal plan. These activities generally include:

- Construction or improvement of public facilities including streets, utilities, parks and other public uses.
- Acquisition and improvement of property.
- Participation with developers for property improvement.

### **How does Urban Renewal Impact Property Tax Payers?**

The “division of taxes”, which represents the vast majority of tax increment financing revenues, does not increase property tax rates. Regardless, every taxpayer in a city where an urban renewal district exists will see an indication of urban renewal as a line item on their property tax bill. This can be confusing, but just remember that when an urban renewal area is created, it changes how the existing taxes paid on a property are divided out amongst the taxing districts. Your property tax bill would remain exactly the same with or without urban renewal, the money would just be distributed differently among the taxing jurisdictions. This division of taxes allows for a portion of the property taxes to be paid to the urban renewal agency to complete projects in your community.

## Cornelius Urban Renewal Plan

### Proposed Projects

#### Transportation

- Reconstruct downtown couplet alleyways with pedestrian amenities and decorative features – These treatments include but are not limited to stormwater-friendly surfacing, bulbouts at entrances, special paving, lighting, minor furnishings, minor landscaping (planter boxes), utility work (drainage), curb extensions with driveway aprons at street entries, miscellaneous building adjustments.
- Core Neighborhood alleyway improvements – Install concrete alleyway improvements to improve connectivity and reduce maintenance.
- Alleyway connection road treatments (11th, 12th, 13th, 14th Streets) – Install colored or textured street crossings to reinforce connectivity.
- Other downtown street crossing treatments – Install colored or textured street crossings to reinforce connectivity.
- 1st Avenue pathway connectivity – Pedestrian-friendly connection between Baseline and N Adair Street at 1st Avenue.
- Close-in Neighborhood Frontage Improvements – Install sidewalk improvements including the planting of street trees.
- Core Neighborhood pathways – Improve the core neighborhood pathway system, particularly around Cornelius Elementary.
- Fred Meyer road frontage improvements – Install improvements to the Haney site which is defined as North 26th Avenue to Lot 3. Improvements include street and frontage improvements.
- Access management plan with ODOT – Work with ODOT to prepare an access management plan to help facilitate development of properties and safe access along ODOT rights-of-way at the eastern end of town.
- Downtown bike racks, garbage cans, and benches – Addition of bike racks, garbage cans, and benches that fit with the current streetscape.
- Bus stops/amenities – Add and upgrade transit stop amenities as needed, to include sheltered stops with seating, landing pads, route information, bicycle parking and improved lighting.
- North 29th Avenue Frontage Improvements – Supplement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Washington County Transit Development Tax (TDT), and other funding sources for frontage improvements including curb, gutter, sidewalk, street trees, street lights and utility undergrounding.
- Neighborhood Trailheads – Provide neighborhood trailheads on Council Creek Regional Trail that include light landscaping, simple signage, light paving for access, fencing and bollards.

- North Holladay Extension (4th Avenue to City Boundary) – Extend Holladay Street from 4th Avenue to the west city limits, construct as an Industrial Collector, with sidewalks and bike lanes. Alignment should connect with a future street extension from Yew Street. (Maximum urban renewal expenditure 50%).
- Add bulbouts along 11th - 14th Avenues between Adair and Davis Streets – The extension of the sidewalk area into the parking lane provides a more convenient and comfortable pedestrian connection.

### **Developer Incentives**

- Town Center Core façade improvement grant program – Allows the Area to establish a Façade Improvement Program. Preliminary plans include the first \$5k as a grant, and then requiring 1:1 match up to \$30k city expenditure. Further guidelines on how the Development Assistance program will be operated will be developed by the Agency once the Plan is adopted.
- Cost share program for frontage improvements (sidewalks) for highway commercial development – A 50% of total cost (1:1 match) would be offered to developers in the following locations: S. side of Baseline, 4th to 10th and 26th to 345th; this offer would also include select couplet properties with 2+ frontages. Treatment includes curb, gutter, sidewalk, street trees, street lights, and utility undergrounding.
- Downtown blighted building demos – This project would provide assistance in demolition of blighted buildings in the Area to prepare the sites for future development.
- Design and development assistance – This project authorizes the Area to create a fund to provide development assistance. Further guidelines on how the Development Assistance program will be operated will be developed by the Agency once the Plan is adopted.
- Targeted SDC waivers/reductions – This project allows the Area to waive or reduce System Development Charges (SDCs) on specific properties of interest. Further guidelines on how the Development Assistance program will be operated will be developed by the Agency once the Plan is adopted.

### **Acquisition**

An acquisition program will be established. Prior to any property being acquired, it must be identified in the Plan. The following properties are specified identified for future acquisition:

- Western States Fire Apparatus building acquisition and redevelopment into indoor farmer's market – This project authorizes the purchase of the Western States Fire Apparatus building and also the costs incurred to bring it up to current seismic standards.
- Railroad ROW property acquisition – This project authorizes the purchase of the Railroad ROW within the Area; assumes state grants for brownfield cleanup.
- Community Investment Trust (CIT) property – Assumes turning empty Railroad property next to Veterans Memorial Park into a CIT project.
- Purchase and demolition of house adjacent to Cornelius library, development and parking – \$300k for house, \$20k for demo, \$100k for paving, striping, and frontage costs.

- Estby purchase and brownfield remediation – \$200k for purchase, \$60k for demolition; assumes state grants for cleanup.

### **Creating Community**

- New "Welcome to Cornelius" sign on west side; easement acquisition – The building of monument similar to monument on the east side of City.
- Electrical Conduit and Service – Add electrical conduit and service to downtown.
- Decorative Informational Signs – Design, construct, and install decorative informational signs.
- Convert Downtown Streetlights – Convert downtown streetlights to LED and Option C (City owned & maintained).
- Splash Park – 100' x 100' foot plaza with pavement, utilities, furnishings, lighting, landscaping, art, shelter, splash pad fountain and signage.
- Town Center Gateway Features – Design construct and install five gateways (3 along highway couplet, 2 at north/south arterials). Gateway features may include but are not limited to signage, flag poles, landscaping, lighting, art piece, curb extensions and utility work.
- Public Art Program – Develop a program to support and incentivize public art installations.
- 14th Avenue Greenway Treatments – Provide a multi-modal connection between the Town Center and the Council Creek regional trail to the north and the Tualatin River to the south (Alpine Street to Council Creek Trail). The greenway treatments include a local street rebuild with multi-use pathway, lighting, signage, parking bays on one side, landscape buffer on both sides to separate vehicle, sidewalk on one side, crosswalks, and curb extensions.
- Add Shepherd's Crook Lights – Add shepherd's crook lights between Adair Street and Barlow, Street 11th -14th Avenues.
- Connections and Equipment for Downtown Holiday Lighting – Authorizes the purchase of and installation of equipment for downtown holiday lighting.

### **Administration**

- Administration – Authorizes expenditures for the administrative costs associated with maintaining the urban renewal area.