



# CORNELIUS TOWN CENTER PLAN

## Project Advisory Committee Meeting #4

Thursday, February 27, 2019, 4:00 pm

Dev. & Operations Conference Room, 1300 S Kodiak Cir.

### MEETING SUMMARY

PAC Members: Karla Antonini, Hillsboro Economic Development; Ralph Brown, Property Owner/Cornelius Public Works Advisory Board; Carol Brown, Cornelius Boosters; Maribel De Leon, Adelante Mujeres; Neal Knight, Business Owner; Jeannine Murrell, Dan Riordan, Forest Grove Planning; Dave Schamp, Cornelius City Council; Heather Sturgill, Washington County; Howard Sullivan, Forest Grove/Cornelius Chamber of Commerce; Mariana Valenzuela Centro Cultural; Jonathan Williams, Metro; Hector Rodriguez-Ruiz, ODOT

Staff/Consultants: Ryan Wells, City of Cornelius; Steve Faust, 3J Consulting.

#### **Town Center Plan Elements**

Ryan Wells reminded PAC members that this is their fourth meeting and that the fifth and final meeting will likely take place in April.

Steve Faust indicated that the consultant team is currently drafting both the Town Center Plan and the Urban Renewal Plan. The purpose of today's meeting is to go through the key elements of the Town Center Plan.

The Town Center Guiding Principles have remained as presented at the last meeting. No comments on the principles were received at the January 9<sup>th</sup> public meeting. The Guiding Principles are:

1. Reconnect with the natural context, including Council Creek and the Tualatin River
2. Strengthen and re-establish "Old Town" as the Heart of Cornelius
3. Create a community gathering space and civic plaza
4. Revitalize close-in neighborhoods
5. Improve context-sensitive highway couplet character
6. Provide gateways to signal Cornelius as a distinct and walkable place
7. Create a contemporary mixed-use village around Fred Meyer
8. Connect to the future Council Creek Regional Trail and potential future regional transit

## Town Center Plan Districts

In response to comments gathered at the last PAC meeting, the City and consultant agreed to change the proposed boundaries of the Town Center. There are two primary reasons for changing the boundaries: 1) to focus on a smaller area helps ensure that urban renewal funds will be impactful, rather than spreading the money and energy out over a large area, and 2) to recognize that the East Gateway District at and around the Fred Meyer store is a distinct area quite different than the Town Center Core.

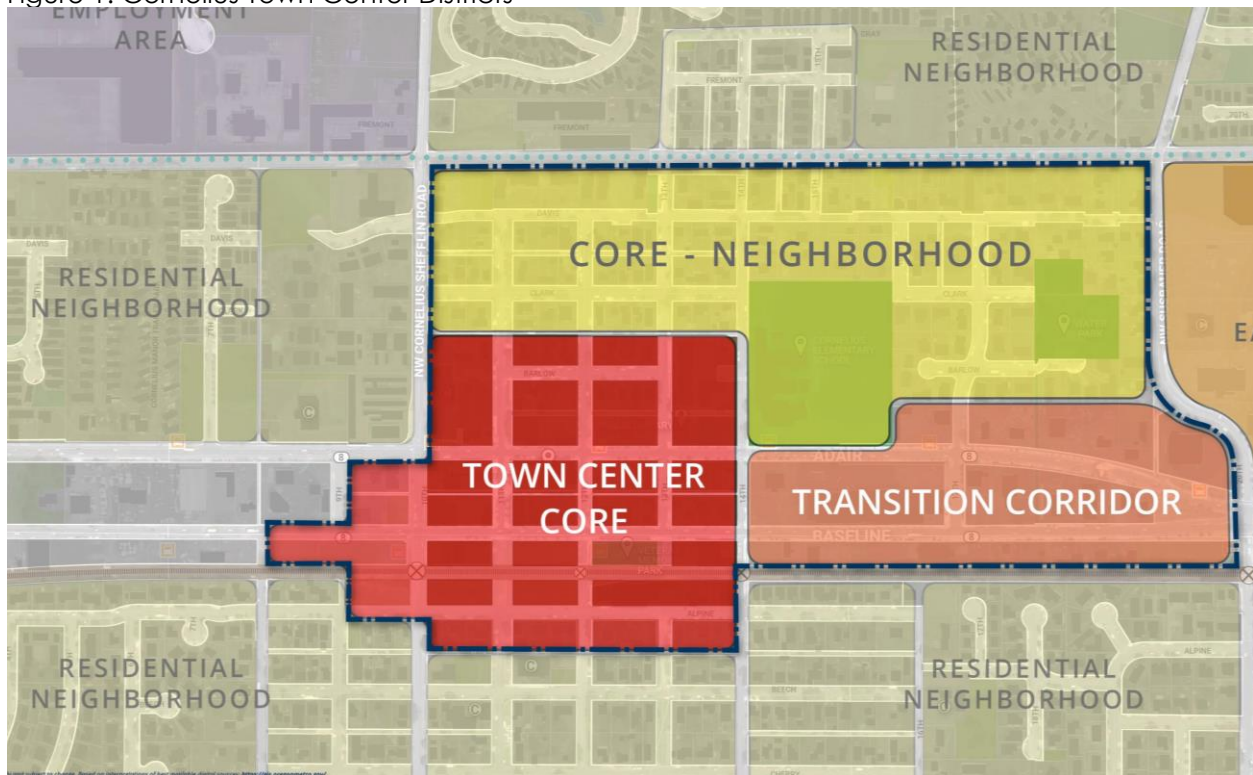
The following are descriptions of the districts within the Town Center boundary as shown in Figure 1:

Town Center Core. Original plat and the heart of the Town Center. The Core has a unique and authentic character, distinct from larger-scale retail along corridor. A walkable place focused on civic uses, wellness, culture, and craft food and beverage.

Core Neighborhood. An extension of the Core with a more residential character. Denser mixed-use neighborhood to support the Core that provides a variety of housing options and opportunities for professional service businesses.

Transition Corridor. Heading east to west, a noticeable transition from auto-oriented businesses to a variety of commercial uses. Clear gateways with art and landscaping prompt a change in the behavior of motorists passing through town.

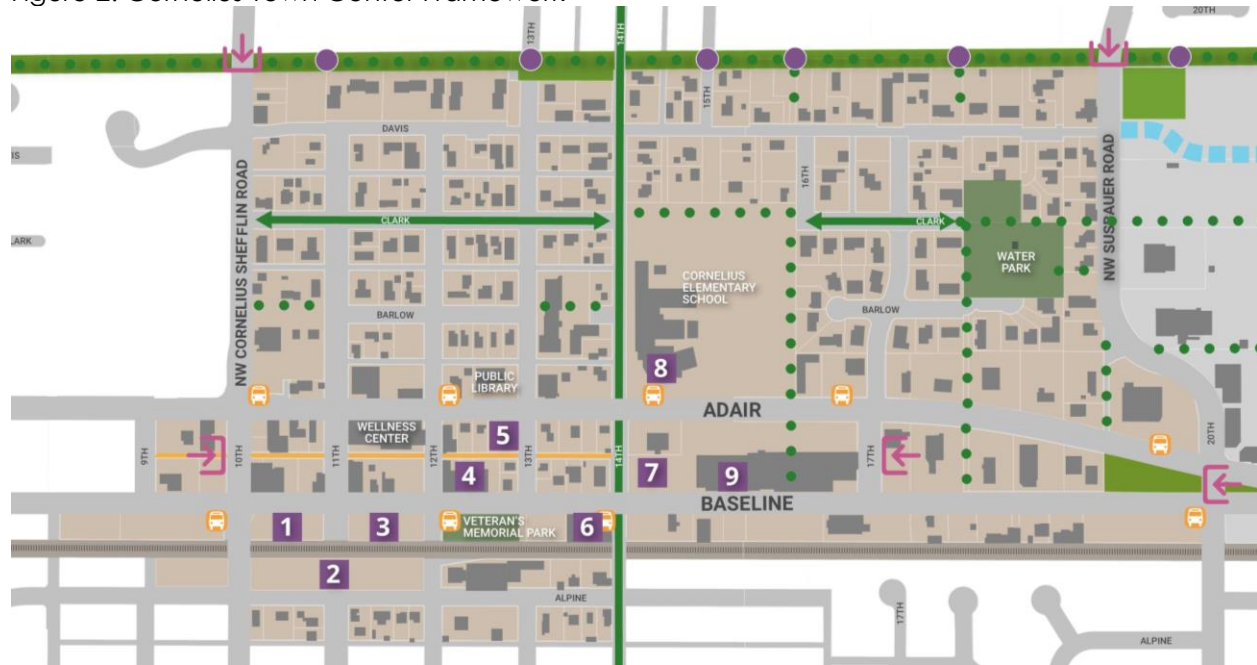
Figure 1. Cornelius Town Center Districts



## Town Center Framework

Figure 2 illustrates Opportunity Sites, road and trail connections, gateways, trailheads and other proposed improvements in the Town Center. Descriptions of the framework elements follow:

Figure 2. Cornelius Town Center Framework



### Opportunity Sites

1. Gas station lot at 10<sup>th</sup> and Baseline (Estby) is undergoing environmental clean-up.
- 2&3. Vacant lots adjacent to the southern rail line provide a potential location for new affordable housing or creative commercial development strategies.
4. Storefronts at 12<sup>th</sup> and Baseline could benefit from façade improvements to facilitate a more attractive Town Center Core.
5. Opportunity for mixed use development on vacant and underutilized parcels across from Cornelius Place.
6. Possible acquisition and redevelopment of Western States Fire Apparatus building.
- 7&8. Potential locations for 10,000 sf public plaza with splash pad.
9. Grande Foods (aka Hank's) is an important site for Town Center revitalization at the entrance to the Core. Currently, a popular community gathering place. Short-term exterior and potentially interior improvements. A long-term candidate for acquisition and redevelopment.

### Town Center Connections

Roadways are depicted as solid green lines and trails as green dots in Figure 2. The primary roadway improvement in the Town Center is to transform 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue into a greenway; a multimodal connection between the Town Center and Council Creek regional trail to the north and the Tualatin River to the south. A unique cross-section would promote (Figure 3):

- Two travel lanes with narrow width to control vehicle speeds
- Parking bays on one side
- Landscaping buffer on both sides to separate vehicles
- Sidewalk on one side
- Multiuse path on other side to serve walking and biking
- Crosswalks and curb extensions at each intersection
- Pedestrian scale street lighting for safety and comfort

Figure 3. 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue Greenway Cross-section



Additional roadway and trail connections include:

- Town Center Core alleyway improvements from 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (between Adair and Baseline) with pedestrian amenities and decorative features.
- Clark Street improvements including sidewalks, curb extensions/ ramps and street trees.
- Trails to promote north-south and east-west connectivity on Cornelius Elementary School site and in other strategic locations throughout the Town Center.
- Several city street connections to Council Creek Regional Trail linking Hillsboro, Cornelius, Forest Grove, and Banks.

### Amenities

Other amenities to enhance the town center experience for residents and visitors include:

- Gateways along the highway couplet and north/south arterials to welcome people to the Town Center.
- Neighborhood trailheads to provide easy access to and from the Council Creek Regional Trail.
- Improvements to transit stops along Baseline and Adair Streets including benches, bike parking, and trash cans. Bus shelters will be considered as ridership increases.

- Public bike parking either spread out with a few spaces on each lot or a larger concentration in one location. Visible areas within 25 feet of building entrances are ideal.

### Parking

The majority of the on-street parking within the Core is marked for each space. This not only delineates the parking area for vehicles moving in the adjacent travel lane, but it also discourages drivers from parking too close to other cars and large vehicles not appropriate for on-street parking. Currently, most drivers find parking on same block face as destination. As the Town Center develops, parking availability (on- and off-street) will decrease. Drivers will need to walk farther to reach their destination. A two-minute walk between parking space and destination is acceptable within an active urban area. As part of the Town Center process, we do propose adding some designated ADA parking spaces to the on-street parking supply in the Core area following applicable standards to allow people with disabilities to more easily access their Town Center destinations.

### **East Gateway District**

While no longer part of the Town Center, the East Gateway District represents an important opportunity for redevelopment in Cornelius. Distinct from the Town Center Core, the East Gateway District is a suburban retail center for contemporary living anchored by Fred Meyer, with easy vehicular access and parking. A connected network of streets is lined with a larger scale and mix of housing, offices, chain businesses, and park areas, as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4. East Gateway District



Figure 5. East Gateway Connections



A future extension of N. Davis Ave collector includes two travel lanes, sidewalks, pathways, and landscaping. A larger trailhead to welcome people to and from Council Creek regional trail and into East Gateway District. A trail network helps pedestrians get through the site.

## Zoning

Development in the Town Center will be implemented through rezoning of properties substantially along the lines of the district boundaries, with refinements for specific properties based on distinct development needs such as the elementary school campus. As shown in Table 1, the proposed rezoning will greatly simplify the number of zones applied within the Town Center to streamline future review and create greater certainty for development. The East and West Corridor districts were removed when the Town Center boundary was changed, but several zone changes along the highway corridor and in the East Gateway District will be made through the Town Center Plan process.

Table 1. Town Center Zoning Strategies

<b>Town Center Subdistrict</b>	<b>Existing Zoning</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning</b>
Town Center Core	-Main Street Retail Commercial -Main Street General Employment -Main Street Civic -Main Street Design Overlay -Multi-family Residential (A-2) -Single-family Residential (R-7)	-Central Mixed Use (new) -Retain A-2 for properties on south side of Alpine St
Core Neighborhood	-Multi-family Residential (A-2) -Single-family Residential (R-7) -Main Street Mixed Use along 19th and 10th Streets	-Core Residential (new) -Corridor Commercial for Elementary School site
Transition Corridor	-Main Street General Employment	-Corridor Commercial (new)
East Gateway	-Main Street Mixed Use -Main Street General Employment -Core Commercial Employment	-Gateway Mixed Use (new)
West Corridor	-Main Street Mixed Use -Main Street General Employment -Highway Commercial	-Central Mixed Use for properties on west side of 10th Ave -Highway Commercial, including NW corner of 10th Ave and Adair
East Corridor	-Main Street General Employment Core Commercial Employment	-Highway Commercial on the south side of highway -Gateway Mixed Use on the north side of highway



Some highlights of the proposed new zoning districts are as follows:

### Central Mixed-Use Zone

Based primarily on Main Street Retail Commercial, Main Street Civic and Main Street Design Overlay zones.

- Dimensions: 3-story height (40-45 feet) limit. Minimum 16-foot height for front facades. Zero-foot setbacks, with max 10 feet.
- Uses: Allow mix of retail, commercial, office, and civic uses. Allow ground-floor residential.
- Design standards: Require limited design elements for sites fronting Adair and Baseline:
  - Weather protection features (arcades, canopies).
  - Distinctive corner treatments.
  - Several from a menu of design choices.
- Second alley-facing entrance and lighting for sites with alley frontage.
- Ensure that existing residential uses can continue. Allow modest redevelopment without triggering compliance with dimensional and design standards.

### Core Neighborhood Zone

The Core Neighborhood Zone will prioritize existing and expanded residential uses in close-in neighborhoods with access to downtown. It will allow limited expansion of service commercial and professional office uses through expansion of home occupation provisions.

- Avoid creating redevelopment pressures on existing, relatively affordable, housing stock. Allow a gradual rather than dramatic increase of density and dimensional standards.
- Expanded residential uses allowed to better match the mix of uses currently present. Allow for gentle infill that supports the nearby Town Center commercial development.
- Expand "missing middle" housing options as permitted uses. Consider allowing two ADUs per home, one internal and one detached.
- A modest density increase will permit up to one unit per 2,000 SF of site area, or 21.8 units per gross acre (18.6 units per acre allowed in A-2 zone). Retain 8 units per acre min density standard for new development.
- Modest increases to dimensional standards. Retain 35-foot height limit, increase max lot coverage by 5-10%, develop standard 5-10 ft setbacks for most uses. Reduce min lot widths to allow infill based on existing lot patterns.
- Reduce parking minimums or exempt certain types of projects from parking, including ADUs.
- Permit modest expansion of commercial service and professional office uses outside Town Center Core. Avoid competing with the Town Center Core for strictly commercial, retail, and office developments.
- Model standards on existing Type B home occupation standards. Modifications to allow home occupations, not restricted to family members, and with no daily customer limits.

### Corridor Commercial Zone

Based on the existing Main Street General Employment zone. It will be applied to important redevelopment sites including Grande Foods and Cornelius Elementary school.

- Dimensional standards will encourage a presence along the street.
- No new drive-throughs will be permitted.
- Schools to be a conditionally-permitted use.

### East Gateway Mixed Use Zone

The zone will accommodate existing Fred Meyer, commercial uses, and mix of employment, retail, and residential uses on undeveloped property.

- Options for horizontal and vertical mixed use, provisions for site design, pedestrian circulation, architectural design.
- Consider applying Corridor Commercial zone to developed portions along north side of highway.

## **Funding**

Through the Town Center planning process, the City has identified a diverse set of infrastructure and public-private partnership projects that will help to spur development in downtown Cornelius. Based on the current development mix and identified barriers to development in the town center area, potential projects fall into the following set of project categories:

Public-Private Partnerships. Public-private partnership that improve private development feasibility and target investments that spur economic development. Preliminary projects include property acquisition, a façade improvement program, demolition of blighted buildings, and brownfield remediation.

Housing Development Tools. Funding tools and incentives that encourage the development of a range of housing types in the town center, including both market rate and affordable housing. Preliminary projects include construction incentives and SDC waivers.

Transportation and Infrastructure Enhancements. Transportation enhancements can include a variety of investments that enhance not only transportation, including streetscape enhancements and intersection improvements. This category also includes utility upgrades to support site redevelopment. Preliminary projects ideas include sidewalk improvements, connectivity projects, road improvements, lighting improvements

Open Space Projects and Downtown Amenities. Improving the appearance of a downtown area can attract new visitors and those interested in development. Potential projects include a public art program, decorative informational signs, a new splash park, gateway projects, and street furniture (bike racks, benches, etc.). Using the project categories outlined in the previous section, the range of potential incentive and funding tools to a list summarized in Table 2.



Table 2. Potential Public Sector Toolkit

Local Funding Tools	State, National, or Private Funding Tools	Tax Abatements and Credits	Locally Controlled Programs and Incentives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Urban Renewal</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Local Improvement District (LID)</u></b></li> <li>• Economic Improvement District</li> <li>• General Obligation Bonds</li> <li>• Construction Excise Tax</li> <li>• Fees or other Dedicated Revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of Oregon Transportation Loans and Grants</li> <li>• Metro TOD Program</li> <li>• Metro MTIP</li> <li>• Community Development Block Grants</li> <li>• Section 108</li> <li>• EPA Brownfield Grants</li> <li>• EB-5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enterprise Zone</li> <li>• <b><u>Vertical Housing Program</u></b></li> <li>• Historic Preservation Tax Credit</li> <li>• Multiple Unit Limited Tax Exemption</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Property Tax Abatement</li> <li>• Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credit</li> <li>• Low Income Housing Tax Credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Land Assembly and Property Price Buy Down</u></b></li> <li>• Expedited or Fast-Tracked Building Permit Programs</li> <li>• <b><u>System Development Charge Financing or Credits</u></b></li> <li>• Reduced or Waived Permit Fees</li> <li>• <b><u>Predevelopment Assistance</u></b></li> <li>• Tenant Improvement Grants/Loans</li> <li>• <b><u>Reduced Parking Requirements</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Incentives for Space-Efficient Housing</u></b></li> </ul>

Funding Recommendations

*Urban renewal is the City's cornerstone funding tool, supported by other tools.*

The City should focus efforts on developing a streamlined list of projects that will primarily be funded with urban renewal dollars. Other tools that can support this vision include a Local Improvement District and potentially a Construction Excise Tax, which may provide a means to provide incentives for affordable housing and infrastructure projects. The City also should pursue appropriate regional, state, and federal funding opportunities for key infrastructure projects.

*Pursue a set of programs and actions to increase attractiveness for development.*

The City has already outlined a set of potential development incentive programs as part of its urban renewal plan process, including SDC waivers and property acquisition.

Incentives: The City is looking at acquiring several catalyst development sites in the Town Center. Offering those sites to developers at a reduced rate and with any site preparation requirements (e.g. brownfield remediation) already complete can provide a big incentive to developers. Those looking to explore opportunities in the Town Center may also be looking for support in predevelopment activities, such as site due diligence or market studies; the City could potentially fund some of those activities.

Regulations: The most powerful regulatory approaches are right-sizing parking requirements, adding flexibility to the development process, and adding incentives for space-efficient housing, such as density bonuses or flexibility in the zoning code.

*Narrow the list of potential tools.*

Once the project list is finalized and any gaps in funding are clearer, the City should develop criteria to further narrow down this list to tools that best meets the City's goals:

- Economic feasibility related to creating and maintaining net revenues:
  - Revenue-generating capacity considers how much money the source can generate.
  - Administrative cost considers the portion of gross revenues that will be spent on administration.
  - Revenue stability and predictability considers whether the source is likely to avoid large fluctuations each year and whether the source is likely to be close to the forecasts analysts might make.
  - Revenue flexibility considers limitations on the types of projects that can be funded with a given source.
- Fairness. A standard definition of fairness in public finance is that the charges that fund the public infrastructure are tied to the users who receive benefits from (or impose costs on) the transportation system.
- Legality and eligibility. In some cases, the Town Center must be an eligible geography, such as for EB5 or New Market Tax Credits.
- Political acceptability. Political acceptability considers whether elected officials and the public at large are likely to support the funding source.

### **PAC Comments**

Following the presentation, PAC members had the following questions and comments. Responses are in *italics*.

- Are the parcels along the railroad the right place for affordable housing?  
*Opportunity sites #2 would be appropriate for affordable housing, while #3 would be appropriate for a commercial business. These areas are owned by the Railroad, and are currently right-of-way, so the Railroad would have to vacate their right-of-way. Some have suggested that these sites be used as a park and ride.*
- What level of development is planned for the trailheads along Council Creek Trail? Is the CCRT part of the Forest Grove-planned "Emerald Necklace"?  
*Primarily simple signage and light landscaping. Not part of the Emerald Necklace system.*

- *City has some concern about awnings, so want to make clear that they would be arcades or structural awnings. Structural awnings have been successful in Hillsboro.*
- Don't require too much in terms of architectural features because don't want the sameness of Orenco Station. Prefer the look of Bisbee, AZ
- Don't require corner treatments where they may not work if, for instance, a light post is located at the corner.
- Final memo should review potential impact of increased densities on the transportation network.
- No height limit higher than three stories as don't want to create a shady, windy, claustrophobic atmosphere. (Glazing can help address this effect.
- Will there be conflicts with the plaza/splash pad at the street and with the school. *The City will work with Cornelius Elementary School and Forest Grove School District as they prepare to redevelop the site, whenever that may be.*

### **Next Steps**

The final public meeting to review the Town Center Plan and to learn more about urban renewal, will be on Thursday, March 7 from 6-8pm at Centro Cultural. A final meeting of the PAC will take place in April, followed by Planning Commission and City Council hearings to adopt the Plan in May and June. Hearings for the Urban Renewal Plan will take place in June and July. Zone changes will be prepared and adopted in September.

### **Adjourn**