



Lake Oswego Planning Commission

List of Potential 2015 Projects/Goals

The Planning Commission and Commission for Citizen Involvement are developing a set of goals for 2015. We are seeking input from the community regarding which goals should be pursued, which goals should be deferred or dropped, and how the goals should be prioritized from most important to least important. With community input, the Commission will recommend a set of 2015 planning goals, and will prioritize the goals for City Council review and direction at the City Council's 2015 Goal Setting meeting in January.

Work-in-Progress – The following current projects are expected to extend into 2015:

Code Streamlining for Commercial Land Uses

The purpose of this project is to make the City's zoning regulations easier for the public to navigate, use and understand; and to eliminate repetitive, confusing and out-of-date standards relating to commercial land use. The code update would consolidate a list of 137 commercial land uses into fewer, broader use categories, which would allow more flexibility for businesses to operate in the city's commercial zones. It would also create definitions for commercial uses. This project was put on hold in 2012 pending completion of the Comprehensive Plan Update, which has now been completed.

[Click here for project webpage.](#)

Implementation of the Lake Grove Village Center Plan

Two projects are in progress to implement the Lake Grove Village Center Plan: a design handbook and a parking management plan. The handbook will assist property owners and developers in complying with the Lake Grove Village Center code, which is very detailed and contains standards for streetscapes and architectural variety. The parking plan will provide an overall strategy for parking in the district as it continues to redevelop. The plan will identify potential locations and costs for public parking, and may include amendments to the City's parking regulations. This work is being coordinated with the design of the Boones Ferry Road Improvement Project. A Planning Commission representative is participating on the project advisory committee, and the Commission will review and make a recommendation to City Council on the draft plan. The project must be completed by the end of June 2015.

[Click here for Lake Grove Village Center Plan.](#)

Neighborhood Planning

Applications are being accepted from neighborhood associations for City assistance with neighborhood planning efforts, to begin at the outset of 2015. The City can provide assistance with the development of a new neighborhood plan, neighborhood code amendments, zoning changes, or other projects that neighbors support. Applications are due November 10. The Planning Commission is scheduled to make a recommendation to City Council in December.

[Click here for project webpage.](#)

A Plan for the Southwest Industrial/Employment Area

This plan would cover the Southwest Employment Area of the city, which includes industrial park, general commercial, and neighborhood commercial zoning in the area generally bound by Lakeview Boulevard, Pilkington Rd, the Union Pacific Railroad line, and Boones Ferry Road. The goal of this project is to remove barriers to private investment and to enhance opportunities for redevelopment and high-quality job creation. This planning effort was identified by the Planning Commission several years ago, and is called for in the updated Comprehensive Plan. Public meetings and work sessions will be held with the Planning Commission over the next year. A Planning Commissioner is also a member of the project advisory committee. This project, which is funded by a Construction Excise Tax grant from Metro, is scheduled for completion by the end of 2015.

[Web page under construction; see Planning home page for info by September 25.](#)

Sensitive Lands Revisions (City Council Goal)

One of the City Council's current priorities is to revise the Sensitive Lands program and create a new approach to natural resource protection that reduces the regulatory burden on private property owners. The City is proposing to replace the Sensitive Lands regulations with a new Natural Resource Protection Program that:

- Aligns the City's regulations for stream and wetland protection with minimum Metro Title 3 requirements;
- Increases protection of riparian and upland wildlife habitat (Metro Title 13 resources) on public property and private open space tracts; and
- Replaces Title 13 regulations on private property with incentive-based programs.

In June, a draft framework of the new program was presented for Council feedback. In July, the Council received information on how to best coordinate the proposal with the City's compliance of the Clean Water Act – specifically with the requirement to maintain tree cover and riparian vegetation to shade streams and protect water quality.

Using new topographic data available this fall, the City will perform an analysis to ensure the new program meets federal, state, and regional requirements. To perform this analysis and make any needed adjustments to the program, the timeline for completing the Sensitive Lands revisions has been extended into 2015.

The City Council has also directed staff to prepare a series of interim Sensitive Lands code amendments for adoption in 2014. The purpose of the interim amendments is to address obvious problems with the existing code as soon as possible, as the City continues to work on program reforms. The proposed amendments will be available for public review in September. The Planning Commission and Council will hold study sessions in October and hearings in November and December.

[Click here for the project webpage.](#)

New Projects – Identified by Planning Commission and City Council

Definition of “Lot” and Substandard Lots

Lake Oswego’s older neighborhoods, including First Addition -Forest Hills, Evergreen, Old Town, Lakewood, McVey-South Shore and Hallinan Heights, were originally platted in the mid- to late-1800s, before the area had zoning. As a result, all have historically platted lots that are smaller than the minimum lot sizes required by zoning. The Planning Commission and City Council have received input recently from residents who are concerned about development on historically platted, substandard lots, as it can affect neighborhood character. The Commission and Council are also sensitive to the rights of property owners; a change to the definition of lot could affect property rights if it limits allowed uses or development. The Planning Commission and City Council have made it a priority to review the definition of Lot, or what constitutes a legal lot for purposes of development, as part of the Commission’s 2015 work plan.

Multiple Duplexes on a Lot

Prompted by a recent development in their neighborhood, the First Addition-Forest Hills Neighborhood Association asked the City to review the Community Development Code as it applies to duplexes. Currently, only Ministerial (building permit) review is required for duplexes in nearly all zones where duplexes are allowed, regardless of the number of units proposed. There is no public notice or opportunity to comment in the Ministerial process. This is a concern to neighbors because a project with multiple duplexes (two or more buildings each with two dwelling units) on a lot can have land use impacts similar to a Multi-Family dwelling, which is defined as “A building on one or more lots designed to contain three or more dwelling units that share common walls or floor/ceilings with one or more units.”

A key policy issue is whether to classify as Minor Development “more than one duplex on a lot”; or to define Multi-Family Dwelling to include more than one duplex on a lot. Both options would make this style of development subject the Minor Development process, which provides for public notice and an opportunity to comment. The Minor Development process also authorizes exactions, or requirements for needed infrastructure improvements that are proportionate to the impacts of development. The first option would not limit allowed uses in the R-0, R-3, R-5 and R-DD zones, because currently those zones allow both duplexes and multifamily housing; however, the second option would limit land uses in the R-2 zone (in First Addition) as that zone does not permit Multi-Family dwellings.

Farm Stands, Part 2

The City Council adopted code changes earlier this year allowing farm stands in the City’s commercial zones. The Council at that time expressed interest in allowing farm stands in the Public Functions (PF) and Park and Natural Area (PNA) zones subject to approval of a conditional use permit. This project would amend the PF and PNA zones to allow farm stands, and establish objective design standards to reduce the permitting cost and time it takes to open a farm stand.

Downtown Parking

The Planning Commission has requested to reconvene the Downtown Parking Task Force, which included the Chamber of Commerce, to review the 2010 Downtown Parking Study prepared by a consultant. That study included a package of code changes that the Commission had recommended for City Council consideration in 2012, before the Council put the project on hold. The project was put on hold because it appeared that there was not agreement in the community on the recommended direction for downtown parking. Since then, the Planning Commission has received public comment, mostly in the context of the Wizer's project, and has requested a review of the current standards, particularly the downtown parking reductions known as parking modifiers.

Tree Code Review

A current City Council goal is to "Convene a community dialogue on the tree code to see if there is a better way to meet the intent of the code while responding to residents' desire for less stringent regulation." The last major review of the Tree Code was in the early 2000s. There have also been incremental changes to the code since then. The Planning Commission has a limited role in reviewing the Tree Code. The Commission is empowered to advise City Council on parts of the Code that pertain to new development, particularly new land divisions and housing, and not existing residences. The City Council may review and amend any part of the Tree Code.

Potential New Projects – Identified by Planning Commission and pending City Council review and direction.

Align the Development Code with Updated Transportation System Plan (TSP)

Amend the Community Development Code (CDC) as needed to implement the TSP. This work would include adopting criteria for traffic impact studies that are required for development applications, reviewing the policy on access management for arterial streets, and revising language on "excessive" parking, among other changes.

Annexation of Unincorporated Islands

Work to implement the Comprehensive Plan policy calling for the City to encourage owners of unincorporated property within the Urban Services Boundary to voluntarily annex to the City. Explore methods to encourage annexation and provide information and outreach to owners of unincorporated property.

Audit the Community Development Code for Consistency with New Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the guiding policy for land use and development in the city. The Community Development Code contains the standards and development review procedures that implement the Plan. The purpose of this project is to identify changes to the Code that are needed to ensure the documents are consistent with one another. Some of those changes are already listed here. The audit would help identify the ones that are not, and therefore it would potentially add to the list of Planning Commission projects.

Downtown Development Standards

During the Planning Commission's review of proposed amendments to the City's housing standards in 2014, and in light of the Wizer Block redevelopment proposal, it was suggested that the City review the development standards for the Downtown Redevelopment Design District. The purpose of the review would be to ensure that standards for building design, height, floor area, parking, and open space, among others, clearly implement the community's vision for the downtown and are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Future Zoning Designations Upon Annexation

The City's Comprehensive Plan Map assigns unincorporated parcels with specific zoning designations to be applied upon annexation. For example, where the Comprehensive Plan designates a property R-10 (10,000 square feet per lot), upon annexation the property is zoned R-10. This proposal would change the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate a wider a range of residential zones, so that upon annexation an area planned Low Density Residential, for example, could receive any one of four Low Density Residential zones (R-7.5, R-10, R-15, or R-20), subject to review and approval by the City Council.

Residential Infill Design (RID) Review Procedure

Residential Infill Design (RID) Review is an optional variance procedure. It offers flexibility for residential projects that conflict with the objective standards of the code but are compatible with the character of the neighborhood and surrounding residences. The Planning Commission has repeatedly heard concerns about RID from members of the public. The Commission would like to evaluate RID, both for its effectiveness in meeting the above intent and the adequacy of the process in providing for public input.

Residential Infill Issues

Along with reviewing the ability to develop homes on historically platted, substandard lots, as described above, the Commission has suggested conducting a broader review of issues and policies related to residential infill development. This might include a review of the current infill development standards, which were adopted in 2003 and last updated in 2010. Infill development standards attempt to protect neighborhood character, including streetscape appearance, by controlling garage orientation, building mass (front and side setback planes), and building articulation (standards that break up large walls).

Ongoing Planning Commission Process & Outreach Projects – Identified by Planning Commission

Neighborhood Association Outreach

Work with staff/Council to encourage neighborhoods to get active and involved, and to identify neighborhood association meetings for Planning Commissioners to attend. The Commission is also interested in touring the city's neighborhoods with neighborhood association representatives, and attending the Mayor's monthly meetings with the neighborhood association chairs.

Process Improvements

The Planning Commission recently began accepting public comment on preliminary drafts of code changes prior to conducting work sessions on such proposals. These “public discussion drafts” along with opportunities for public comment during Planning Commission work sessions were intended to improve the public review process in advance of Planning Commission hearings. The Commission would like to evaluate the effectiveness of the new procedure and explore ways of responding to citizen requests more quickly.

Planning Commission Open Work Sessions

Hold two Planning Commission work sessions annually with no staff reports, just commissioners discussing issues they believe to be relevant to City planning subjects.

Planning Commission Outreach (Liaisons/Representatives)

Prepare a brief statement regarding the liaison’s role (listen, learn, discuss, debate, report back as needed); and assign PC reps to appropriate commissions/groups as needed.

Planning Commission Training or Roundtable

On June 9, the PC discussed options for training. It was agreed that a roundtable discussion on best practices and potential process improvements would be beneficial. The last formal PC training was a retreat held in 2009. Commissioners have also expressed interest in continuing to attend workshops, as opportunities arise and schedules allow.