

Neighborhood Planning Options

The following is a list of neighborhood planning projects that Lake Oswego neighborhood associations may want to pursue with staff assistance. If your neighborhood has a different type of project in mind, please contact your Neighborhood Planner to discuss your idea.

For all options, it is important to remember the following:

- Strong neighborhood support will need to be demonstrated in order for any plan, zoning or code change to be adopted. Staff will assist the neighborhood in this task, but will rely heavily on the neighborhood to conduct outreach. This is particularly important for neighborhoods proposing new regulations. Gaining sufficient support has in the past proved challenging and resulted in narrowing the scope of proposed new regulations.
- If capital improvements are identified, they must go through established City channels for prioritization and funding (unless an alternative funding solution is identified by the neighborhood). Inclusion in a neighborhood planning process does not guarantee immediate funding.
- The timeframe for neighborhood planning projects has many factors, including the scope and complexity of the project, the ability to gain broad neighborhood support, the number of neighborhood planning projects undertaken at once, availability of staff resources and neighborhood contribution to the planning process.

1. Develop a New Neighborhood Plan

This is the most comprehensive approach, designed to identify neighborhood goals and action items for multiple aspects of your neighborhood, supported as needed with proposed code changes. The Neighborhood Planning Kit provides a detailed framework for the development of new plans. Please review this document if you are interested in developing a neighborhood plan.

Variations on this Process:

The Neighborhood Planning Kit describes plan development as a collaborative process between City staff and the neighborhood association. What if your neighborhood association has already drafted a neighborhood plan on your own? If your draft plan is based on the new Neighborhood Plan format, staff will work with you to review the draft, and provide assistance with neighborhood outreach. If your draft is based on an old format, this can be used as a starting place for Plan development.

2. Update an Older Neighborhood Plan (adopted prior to 2007)

If your neighborhood feels that your plan is outdated, it could initiate a process to review and update the document. This task would involve removing goals, policies and action measures that are no longer applicable, have been accomplished, or are already included in the Comprehensive Plan. It should also involve updating the Recommended Action Measures and revising the format to match new Neighborhood Plans (would primarily involve re-organizing and renaming sections/terms). Neighborhood outreach would be needed to confirm that updates are in line with neighborhood priorities.

3. Codify an Adopted Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood associations have struggled with the desire for their neighborhood plans to “have teeth” or serve as decision-making criteria for development. To do this, specific code regulations need to be put in place to serve as criteria during the land use review process. This would be based on policy direction from the neighborhood plan, and would likely take the form of a zoning overlay, which is additional regulation that adds to or modifies the existing code (e.g. neighborhood-specific zoning layered on top of the R-7.5 base zoning code). The process would involve neighborhood assessment, development of code concepts, and drafting code based on neighborhood-supported concepts. If your neighborhood is interested in codifying your neighborhood plan, it may be valuable to talk with the Glenmorrie, Lake Grove, or Evergreen neighborhood associations to get their insights on this process.

4. Create a Zoning Overlay to Address Neighborhood-Specific Development Issues

Some neighborhoods may be interested in developing an overlay zone as a stand-alone project, without first developing a full neighborhood plan. If a neighborhood wants to address a unique development issue/s, this may be an option. The process would be similar to codifying a neighborhood plan, and include conducting an assessment of the issue/s, setting neighborhood objectives for the overlay, looking at alternatives, and conducting neighborhood outreach to determine the preferred approach.

5. Pursue Changes to the Base Zoning Designations

Over the years, some neighborhood associations have expressed interest in down zoning or re-allocating allowed densities in their residential areas. This is a major undertaking due to the City’s requirement for no net loss in residential density, and the impact that reducing allowed density would have on the subject properties. Measure 49’s “pay or waive” requirement is applicable to down zoning lots in cities, and either just compensation must be paid for the reduction in fair market value, or the City must waive the application of the rezone/allow the property owner to opt out of down zoning. Significant land use analysis and neighborhood outreach would be involved in this type of planning project.

6. Explore Solutions to Infrastructure Issues (transportation, stormwater)

Is the top issue in your neighborhood to improve infrastructure-related issues such as transportation or stormwater management? If you would like help exploring this type of issue (which may be very site-specific within your neighborhood), Neighborhood Planning staff could work with the Public Works Department to assess the issue, determine how improvements fit with citywide plans, and identify possible solutions. Please note that most infrastructure improvements will come with costs, and short-term implementation may require creative strategies.