

Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan



June 2021





This project is partially funded by the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

This TGM project is financed, in part, by federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-Act), local government, and State of Oregon funds. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the State of Oregon.

Acknowledgements

Hundreds of interested and involved community members, stakeholders and staff spent time and energy voicing their needs and ideas, which are reflected in this Plan. Thank you for being involved and invested in the future of Rhododendron.

Additional acknowledgment goes out to the following for their leadership, commitment and support to make this project possible.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Transportation and Growth Management Program (TGM)

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

Clackamas County

Rhododendron Community Planning Organization

Mt. Hood Holdings, LLC.

CONSULTANT TEAM

MIG

Johnson Economics

This page intentionally left blank

Executive Summary

Rhododendron is a community rooted in transportation, from the Historic Oregon Trail and Barlow Road to the proximity of forested trails and location along US 26.

While embracing this identity, the community envisions a future with improved connectivity and better street front environment and opportunities for people to live and work year-round. The Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan builds on the Rhody Rising vision by identifying specific street improvements for US 26 and conceptual redevelopment of two privately held properties on the southwest side of US 26.

A COMMUNITY-BASED VISION

The planning process involved hundreds of community members and included discussions with the project site property owner, Rhododendron Community Planning Organization (CPO), as well as public agency representatives.

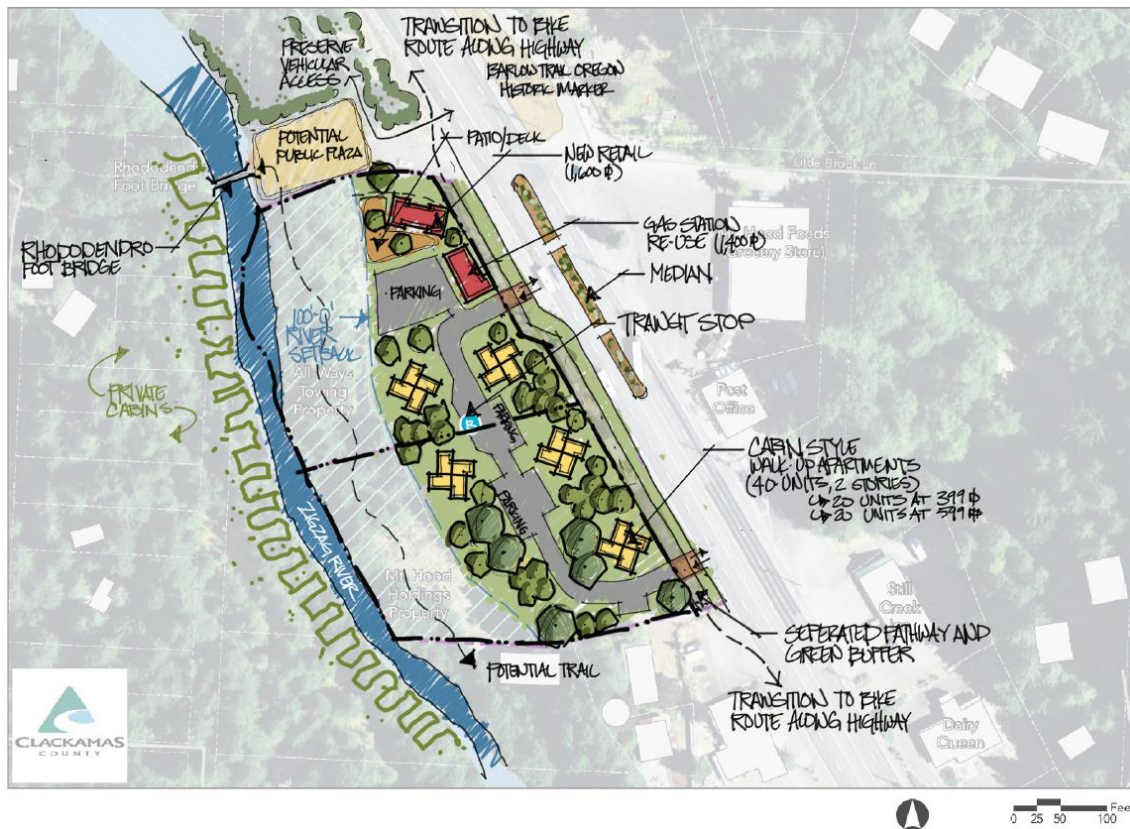
The outcomes from community and stakeholder engagement helped identify the challenges and opportunities facing the study area. Conditions along US 26 for pedestrians and cyclists are one of the biggest priorities for improvement. There is also a need for additional housing, including housing that is affordable, improved transit stops and crossings, as well as amenities such as public space and signage.



PREFERRED CONCEPT

The preferred concept provides guidance for the community, Clackamas County and Oregon Department of Transportation to design the highway in a way that reflects the needs and vision of the community, while encouraging redevelopment of the subject site that reflects community values.

Rhododendron Main Street Preferred Concept



Key features include:

- Additional housing, including two-story walk-up homes;
- New and repurposed buildings for retail or office uses;
- Reuse of unused road right-of-way for public space; and
- Improved highway frontage, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit stops.

The preferred concept is designed to support the existing character of Rhododendron with smaller scale buildings, retention of existing trees and green open space, and buffering between any new uses and existing neighbors of the site.

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose	1
Study Area	2
Planning Process	2
Community and Stakeholder Involvement	3

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Study Area Overview	6
Opportunities	7
Challenges	10
US 26 Planning and Design Guidance	12

3. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Development Feasibility	14
Community Feedback	15
Potential Alternatives	20

4. PREFERRED CONCEPT

Community Feedback Results	26
Preferred Land Use Concept	28
Preferred US 26 Frontage Concept	30
Implementation	33

APPENDICES

- A. Feasibility Study
- B. Community Survey Summary
- C. Survey 2 Comments
- D. Open House Comments

This page intentionally left blank



1. Introduction

The Rhododendron Main Street Site Redevelopment Concept Plan (the project) offers an opportunity for Clackamas County, local residents and businesses to plan for redevelopment in a way that reduces demand on the transportation system while accommodating desired workforce housing.

The project is a partnership with Mt. Hood Holdings, LLC, Rhododendron Community Planning Organization (CPO), Clackamas County, community members and the Transportation and Growth Management Program (TGM).

PURPOSE

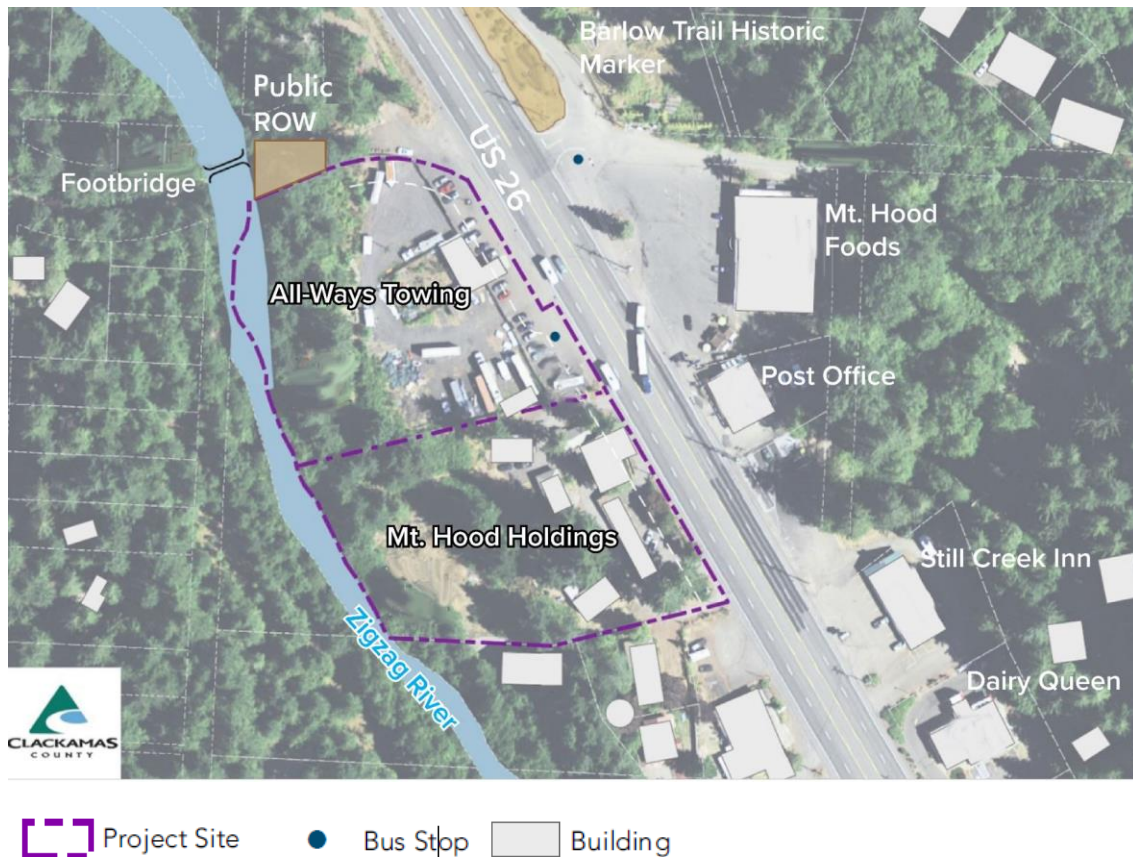
The Rhododendron Main Street Site Redevelopment Concept Plan has four primary objectives.

- Support the community's vision by building on key planning efforts, including the *Rhody Rising Visioning Plan* and *Mt. Hood Ped/Bike Implementation Plan*.
- Integrate transportation and land use planning by outlining potential future land uses, building layout and reuse, and site circulation with the preferred future design of the site's US 26 frontage.
- Recommend land use and transportation improvements to encourage efficient land uses by incorporating transit, pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, while accommodating workforce housing.
- Develop a preferred concept built on community and stakeholder preferences that provides direction for future site redevelopment planning, transit operations and improvements to US 26.

STUDY AREA

The study area is centered on two privately held properties on the southwest side of US 26 totaling 3.73 acres (Figure 1). Publicly owned right-of-way adjacent to the Rhododendron Swinging Bridge is also included in the study area.

Figure 1: Study Area Map



PLANNING PROCESS

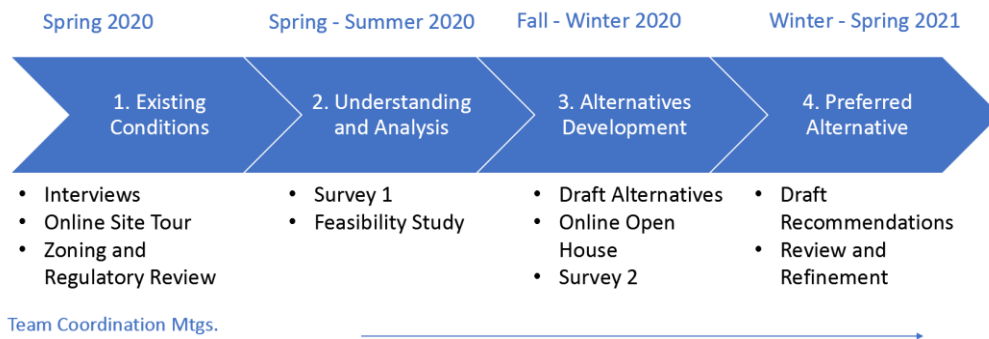
The year-long planning process involved four main phases (Figure 2). The first phase included a thorough analysis of existing conditions to build an understanding of existing site characteristics, and opportunities and challenges to base potential redevelopment alternatives.

In Summer 2020, the project team conducted a feasibility study and polled community members and stakeholders to gauge potential future land uses and design alternatives.

With information from the first two phases, the project team presented alternatives to the community and used feedback from an online open house and survey to develop a

draft of the preferred alternative, followed by refinements and review in the final phase.

Figure 2: Planning Process



COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Community members and owner representatives of the subject site, as well as area stakeholders and state and local government representatives were all directly involved in the development of this plan. Towards the start of the planning process, impacts from the COVID-19 global pandemic and state-issued restrictions on in-person gatherings required a shift towards online engagement for this plan. This included video conference call interviews, an online site tour and open house, and three online surveys.

Together, the project team heard from hundreds of participants and gathered extensive feedback that shaped plan recommendations.

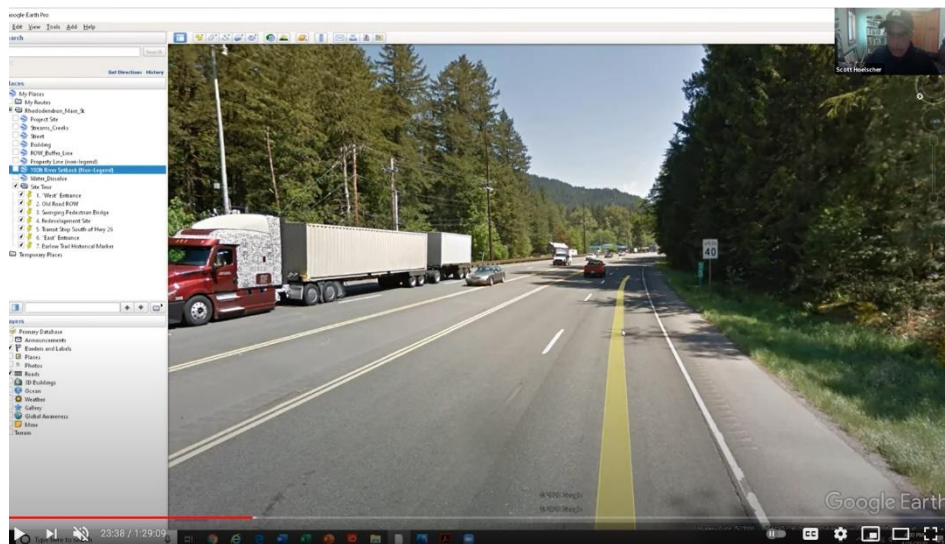
Figure 3: Community and Stakeholder Involvement Overview

- 10+** Online Site Tour
- 3** Interviews with local residents/business owners
- 116** Respondents to Community Preferences Survey
- 239** Completed Open House Alternatives surveys
- 30+** Workshop participants and Comment Form responses

- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Clackamas County, the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), and the MIG consultant team (the project team) held a series of three video conference interviews. The purpose

of these meetings was to provide more in-depth discussion from specific community members and stakeholders with an interest and understanding of Rhododendron, the study area, and its potential future. Similar to the site tour, these meetings were also a chance to discuss existing conditions, opportunities and challenges facing the study area, as well as potential ideas for future alternatives. Participants included:

- > A property owner representative of the project site;
 - > A representative from the Rhododendron Community Planning Organization and part-time resident; and
 - > A local business owner and year-round resident.
- **Site Tour:** On April 16, 2020, the project team held an online site tour using a video conference call, aerial mapping, and site photos. The purpose of this event was to hear from specific community members and stakeholders with an interest and understanding of Rhododendron, the study area, and its potential future. The tour was a chance to discuss existing conditions, opportunities and challenges facing the study area, as well as potential ideas for future alternatives.



- **Survey 1 (Opportunities and Challenges):** From May 28, 2020 through June 19, 2020, the project team conducted a community-wide online survey to understand opportunities, challenges, and preferences for potential redevelopment of the project area. There were a total of 116 respondents to the survey.
- **Open House and Survey 2 (Alternatives Review):** In October 2020, the project team developed an informational project video describing the potential

alternatives that was posted on the project website. Accompanying the video was a second online survey to solicit feedback on the alternatives. The online survey had a total of 239 complete surveys.

- **Preferred Alternative Workshop and Comment Form:** On February 10, 2021, the project team held an online community workshop with approximately 15-20 participants to present the draft preferred alternatives and gather feedback from the community. To expand participation from this event, the project team provided an online comment form that was available on the project website. There were 17 additional responses to the online comment form.



- **Project Team Meetings:** Representatives from the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, Clackamas County and the MIG consultant team held ongoing video conference call meetings throughout the process. These meetings included additional coordination with a representative from the Community Planning Organization, property owner representative and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).



2. Existing Conditions

This chapter summarizes important characteristics that define the study area, including key opportunities and challenges related to site redevelopment and street frontage improvements. Findings in this chapter are based on outcomes of the initial community outreach events and observations from the project team.

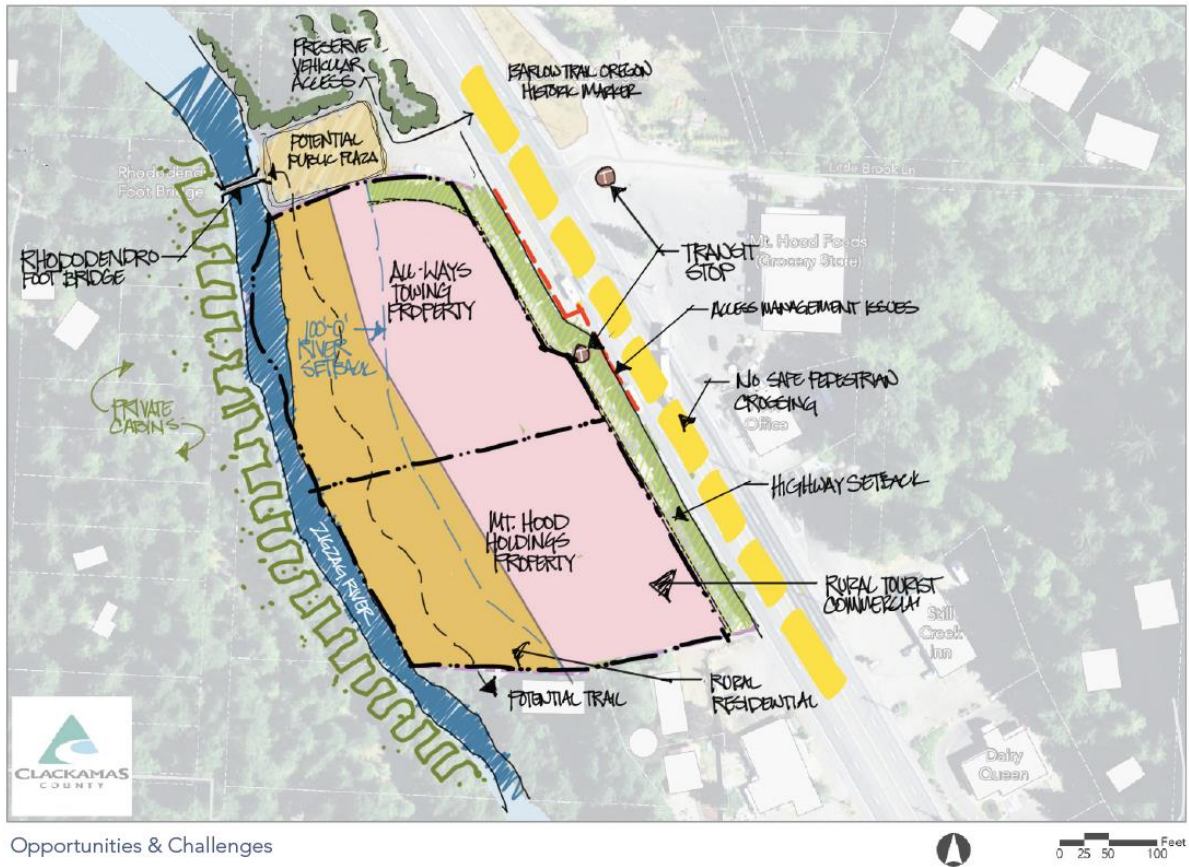
STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

Rhododendron is a small unincorporated community located at the western base of Mt. Hood and located off of US 26. The surrounding forest creates a distinctive setting and visitor experience and the community is home to approximately 150 households and nearly a dozen businesses. This includes several small-scale commercial uses along the highway frontage and small homes and cabins tucked into the forested landscape on both sides of the highway.

The study area is focused on two tax lots totaling 3.73 acres bounded by the Zig Zag River to the west and US 26 to the east (Figure 4). The northern parcel—currently owned by All-Ways Towing—is currently used for outside storage and parking and features a former gas station. Highway frontage along this property is currently unimproved and lacks defined ingress and egress, creating access management challenges.

The southern parcel—owned by Mt. Hood Holdings—features several small cabins and a former hotel that is currently used as housing for ski resort employees. The highway frontage along this site is also unimproved.

Figure 4: Study Area Opportunities and Challenges



OPPORTUNITIES

Community history and pride

The Historic Oregon Trail and Barlow Road routes generally follow the existing US 26 corridor through Rhododendron. The community is located just below the only remaining historic tollgate along the Barlow Road route. The Barlow Trail Historic Marker is located on the opposite side of the highway and is part of a landscaped garden adopted by the Daughters of the American Revolution.



Existing cabin in study area

There are also several historic cabins in Rhododendron including the Alderbrook Lodge located just north of the study area that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Also north of the study area, a pedestrian footbridge (known as the Swinging Bridge) connects residents across the Zig Zag River and is a community landmark.

A community vision and guidance for frontage improvements

The Rhododendron Community Planning Organization (RCPO) serves as Clackamas County's local planning organization for Rhododendron. The RCPO collaborated with the Rhododendron community, and state and local agencies to develop a vision plan for the community known as Rhody Rising. Together with the Mount Hood Community Plan (Chapter 10 of the Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan) and Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan, Rhody Rising provides guidance for how the community envisions future growth and development.

"...a vibrant, inviting, accessible and growing community which offers coordinated and safe access to local residences and businesses...an environment where people want to stop, do business and contribute to the economic vitality of our community."

– *Rhody Rising Vision*

Access and visibility

The study area has excellent access to US 26 providing connectivity to nearby communities, the Portland metro area and recreation destinations on Mt. Hood. This site also has an eastbound transit stop for the Mt. Hood Express, a transit system, linking Rhododendron to the cities of Sandy and Gresham to the west, and Government Camp to the east. Buses are scheduled to run seven days a week with three-hour headways that run from about 6 AM to 7 PM. The westbound stop is located across the highway near the Mt. Hood Foods parking lot.

Recreational tourism

Rhododendron and the surrounding area draw visitors year-round from around the region and from outside of Oregon and the U.S. The community's location along the highway serves as a stopping point for travelers going up or down the mountain. Cyclists often park/stage at the existing gravel parking to ride the Mt. Hood Express to higher elevation destinations and then bicycle downhill back to Rhododendron. Along with winter sports, hiking and cycling, fishing is another popular activity that takes place in the area including during less busy shoulder seasons.

Potential for redevelopment and public space

Representatives from Mt. Hood Holdings (owners of the southern parcel) are interested in potential redevelopment of their parcel, with an interest in acquiring and redeveloping the northern parcel. While the study area currently has a mix of residential and commercial uses, the site has capacity for additional uses including the potential for additional needed housing. There is also a lack of public space in Rhododendron. There is unused right-of-way north of the site that has potential for use as a public space, with connectivity to the Swinging Bridge.



Zoning that allows for small scale housing and commercial uses

The Mt. Hood Community Plan has unique zoning requirements for Rhododendron, calling for a low intensity development character. The study area has two base zoning districts: Rural Residential (along the interior of the site) and Rural Tourist Commercial (along the site’s highway frontage). The Rural Tourist Commercial (RTC) zone allows for a range of commercial uses including offices, motels/hotels, retail, and commercial services. The maximum building floor space is 4,000 sq. ft. for non-residential uses.

In Rhododendron, the Mt. Hood Community Plan (Chapter 10 of the County Comprehensive Plan) allows for the application of the Rural Tourist Commercial (RTC) zoning designation which allows for a variety of rural commercial uses, multifamily dwellings, resort housing and motels. For housing and resort accommodations, specific density requirements are limited to a maximum number of units per acre based on the square footage of the dwelling units associated with a given development. In general, density is lower for larger residential units while density increases for smaller ones. Table 1 below shows the calculated density (units per acre) based on the RTC zoning.

Table 1: Rhododendron Residential Area Calculations

Floor area per unit (sq. ft.)	# units/acre at development levels
1200+	4
1000-1199	5
800-999	6
600-799	8
400-599	12
200-399	22

CHALLENGES

Highway conditions

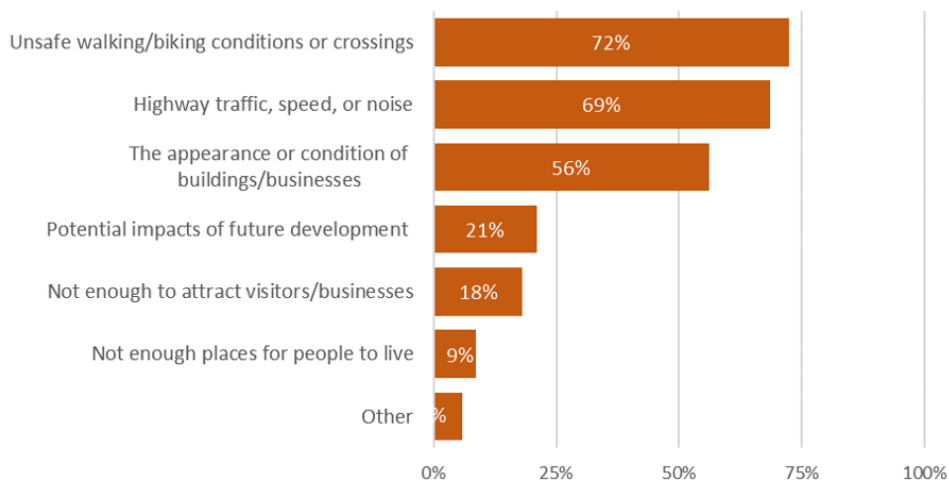
Along the study area frontage, US 26 is a four-lane highway with a center turn lane. US 26 splits the community to the north and south and the lack of a designated highway crossing creates a significant challenge.

Rhododendron used to have more commercial uses and services, including a hotel, gas

station and liquor store. Eventually, 1960's highway development changed land uses and many buildings relocated to the back of the lots with parking in front.



Figure 5: Top Concerns Facing Rhododendron (Survey 1)



The speed limited posted through this corridor is 45 mph, reduced to 40 mph through Rhododendron. Traffic noise, volumes and speed are a major challenge to the study area. Feedback from the interviews, online site tour and initial survey indicated a concern that vehicles typically speed up to pass or position as the travel lanes narrow from four lanes to two heading east bound.

Setback limitations

River and property line setbacks define the developable footprint of the site. The study area is bounded by the Zig Zag River along the west and US 26 along the east. Clackamas County lists the Zig Zag River as a Principal River requiring 100-foot setbacks from the mean high-water line. Along the site's highway frontage, Rural Tourist Commercial (RTC) base zoning requirements also require a 25-foot setback from the front property line.



Limited housing and affordability

Residential uses in Rhododendron are predominantly small-scale cabins dispersed throughout the community. Conversations from stakeholder interviews indicated a concern that this limited residential density would not provide enough foot traffic to support additional commercial uses. A lack of commercial uses makes it difficult to attract people and get them to stay and explore. Affordability is also an issue. Many local jobs are low wage though many people relocate to the area so they can be close to outdoor recreation.

Lack of a common identity

Rhododendron lacks community identifiers such as gateway signage, continuous sidewalks and landscaping, or common architectural style. There are no visual cues that convey a distinctive community such as prominent signage and street front improvements. Respondents to the community survey felt strongly about improving the appearance along the highway.

Climate and elevation

Rhododendron is approximately 1,650 feet above sea level and has a four-season climate. Stakeholder interviews noted that the area’s seasonal nature makes it challenging to lease commercial space year-round and the wet weather and climate have taken their toll on building materials and the integrity of structures. Climate change is also an issue and has already been changing seasonal sports such as skiing. Snow and snow removal also impact highway maintenance and snowplow operations restrict the presence of curbs along the highway.

US 26 PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDANCE

US 26 is a defining aspect of the study area offering excellent commercial visibility, transit access, and connectivity to the mountain and region. While the presence and design of the highway is also a key challenge facing Rhododendron and the study area, planning and design guidance from Clackamas County and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) provides direction for potential improvements to the site’s highway frontage. As a state facility, the design of US 26 is guided by ODOT’s Blueprint for Urban Design (2020) manual that designates the study area’s highway frontage as a Rural Community.

Sidewalks and bike lanes

Rhody Rising and the Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan recommend continuous sidewalks and bike lanes on either side of US 26, including the potential for curbless sidewalks to reduce damage to snow removal equipment as required by ODOT. Stormwater drainage is another design option that should be addressed in the design of street front improvements. As a Rural Community, ODOT’s Blueprint for Urban Design manual gives a high priority for bicyclists and pedestrians, and recommends continuous sidewalks buffered from the highway, with separated bike facilities.



US 26 looking west

Enhanced US 26 crossing

The Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan also recommends a highway crossing in Rhododendron to improve pedestrian access, especially for transit users. While the Implementation Plan recommends a marked crosswalk, subsequent conversations with the community and stakeholders suggest a preference for landscaped medians to provide refuge when crossing. The Rhody Rising vision and feedback from community outreach identified the need to evaluate center medians as a way to provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing the highway and as a way to provide visual cues for the community. The Blueprint for Urban Design also offers pedestrian crossing refuges as an option for crossings in Rural Community settings.

Signage and streetscape improvements

Signage and pedestrian lighting are also recommended in Rhody Rising and the Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan. This could include village identification signage at entrances to Rhododendron, and wayfinding signage that directs visitors to explore different businesses and natural areas including the Zig Zag River.



US 26 looking east

Access management and driveway consolidation

Currently there are no clearly defined access points or driveways along the site's highway frontage. The Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan call for the consolidation of multiple access points to reduce conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists and create a more predictable traffic pattern.



3. Alternatives Analysis

This chapter summarizes findings from the feasibility study, existing design and planning requirements and results from the community survey. This information formed the basis for potential redevelopment alternatives and highway frontage improvements for the study area.

DEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY

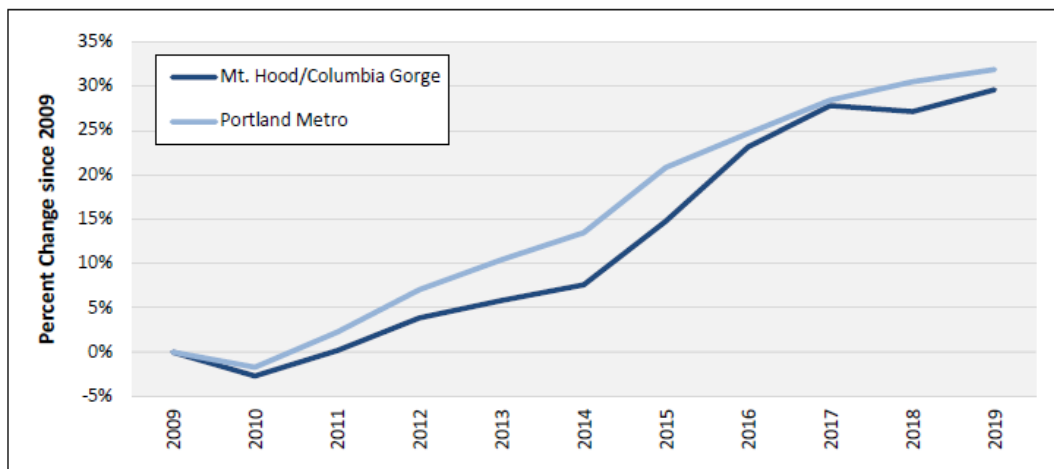
The project team developed a feasibility study to assess recent market trends and current conditions and provide a perspective on potential development programs. Findings from the study helped identify suitable types of land uses to consider for the alternatives. The study found some demand for rental housing, hotels, and certain types of commercial uses such as small-scale business space. Appendix B provides a more detailed analysis of market conditions.

Employment Trends

The corridor employs a relatively large share of young workers, which is common in tourist-oriented industries. As of 2017, 32% of the workers were below the age of 30, compared to 22% in the county. The corridor has relatively few workers between 30 and 54, accounting for 46%, compared to 54% in the county.

Tourist activity increased steadily during the last decade, both in the Portland Metro Area and in the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge tourist region (Figure 6). Tourism has until recently been on a robust upward trend in the Mt. Hood and Columbia Gorge area. Adjusted for inflation, visitor spending increased by 30% over the past 10 years, reflecting a 2.7% annual growth rate. Spending on accommodation grew by 86% over the period, while food services grew by 52% and retail spending 22% – adjusted for inflation.

Figure 6: Cumulative Growth in Visitor Spending Since 2009



SOURCE: Dean Runyan Associates, JOHNSON ECONOMICS

Housing

The feasibility study expects rental vacancy rate in Rhododendron to be lower than reflected in the comparable data for NE Clackamas County. In the survey of rental properties within the area, the study did not identify a single vacant unit. Out of the net increase of 450 jobs in area east of Sandy between 2010 and 2017, nearly two-thirds were held by workers living outside the area. This may indicate a shortage of appropriate housing inside the area, although this share is only slightly higher than in the past.

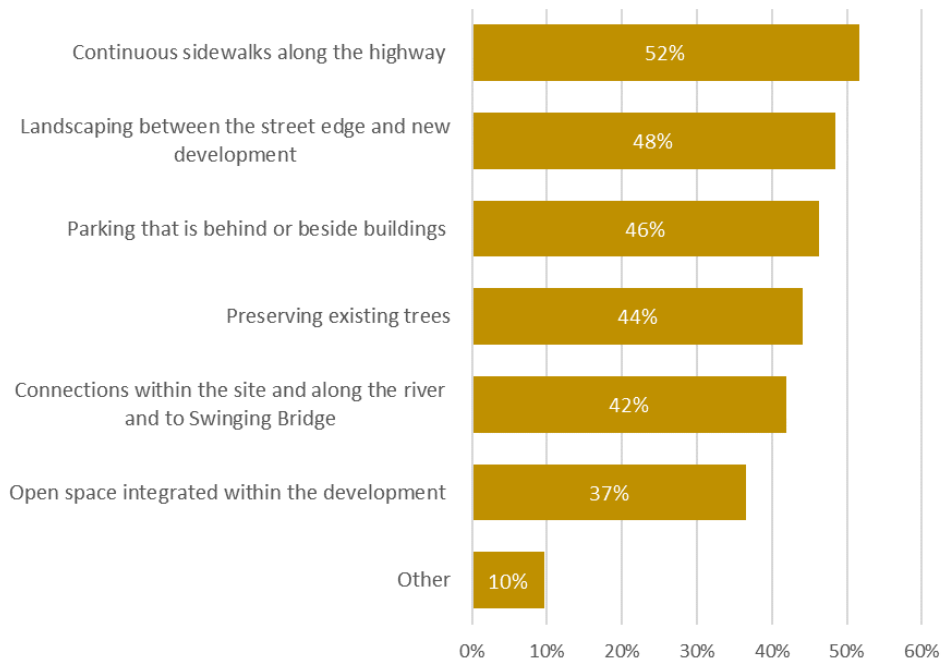
Hospitality

The 2020-2021 Coronavirus Pandemic has had major impact on the hotel market. As of mid-April 2020, revenue per available room in the Mount Hood/Columbia Gorge tourist region has declined 64% since the same time in 2019. The occupancy rate is currently 29%, compared to 64% at the same time last year. The average daily room rate is \$76, down from \$96 in 2019. The crisis is not expected to impact demand over the long term. Rhododendron's location along Highway 26 indicates that the subject sites are best positioned toward recreation visitors to Mt. Hood.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Results from online community survey provided insight on preferences for potential future land uses and street front design to test in the alternatives (Figure 7). Overall, respondents prioritized street frontage improvements including continuous sidewalks and landscaping. Survey results also helped highlight different types of residential and non-residential uses that could be suitable within the study area. In particular, comments also expressed a need to preserve the forested setting and small-scale development pattern.

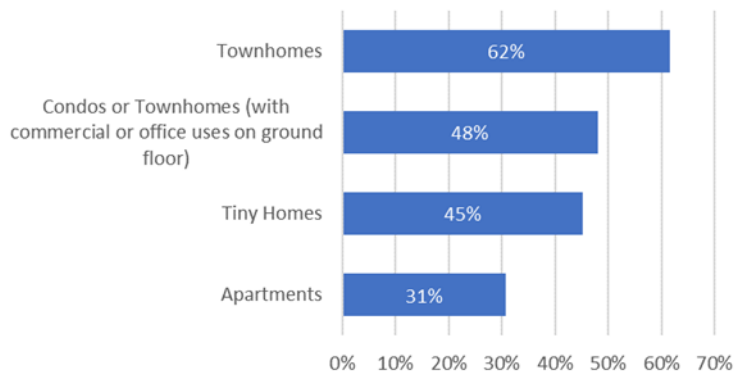
Figure 7: Top Features for Any New Development (Survey 1)



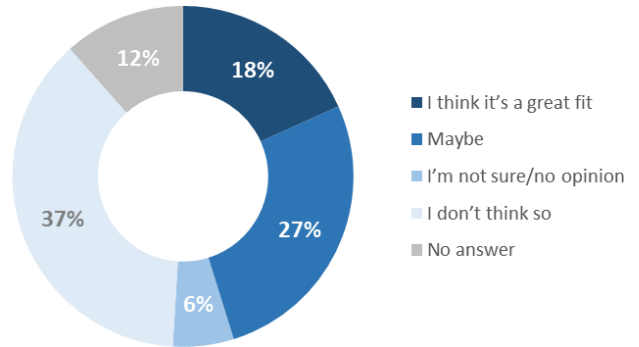
Residential Uses

There was general support for future residential uses in the study area, with greater support for townhomes and condos or townhomes with commercial uses on the ground floor (mixed-use). Apartments had the least support. The following shows results from the survey that asked participants what they thought of a series of example residential images.

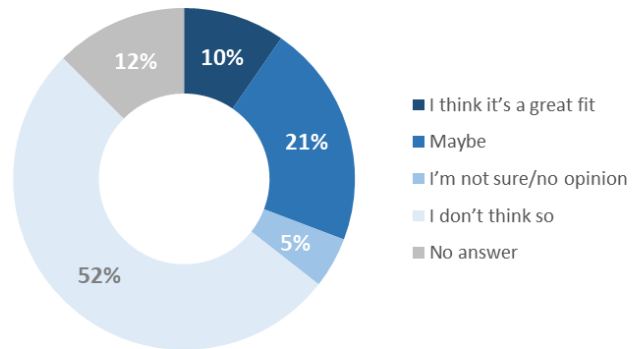
Figure 8: Residential Land Use Preferences (Survey 1)



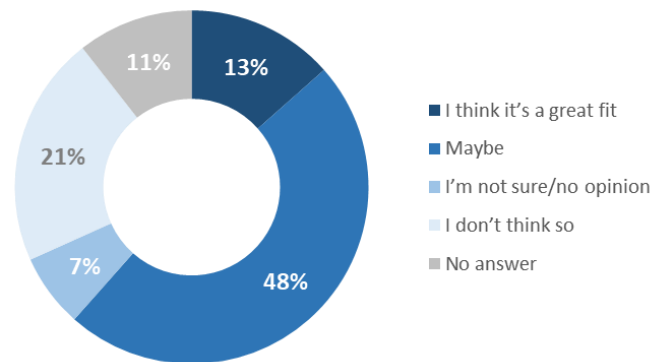
Tiny Homes (detached)



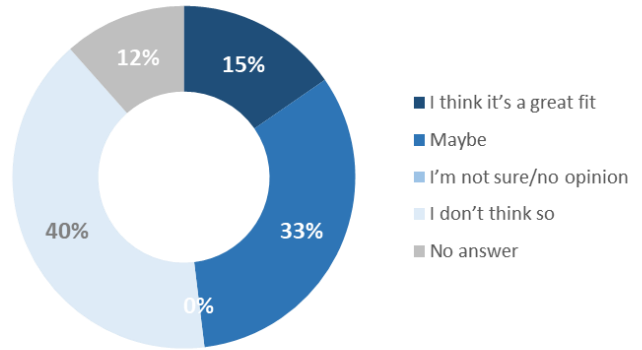
Apartments



Townhomes (attached)



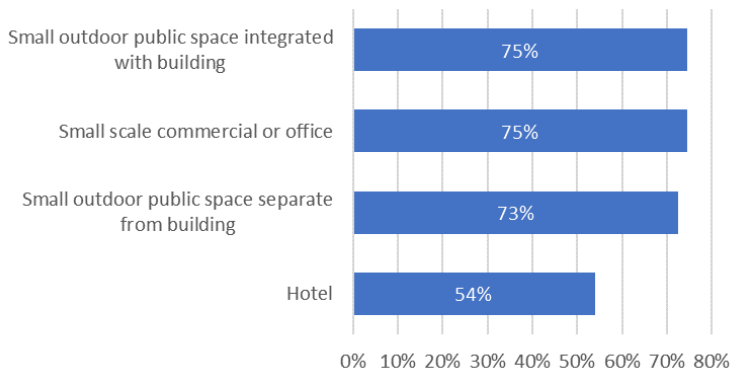
Condos or townhomes with commercial or office uses on ground floor (2 – 3 stories)



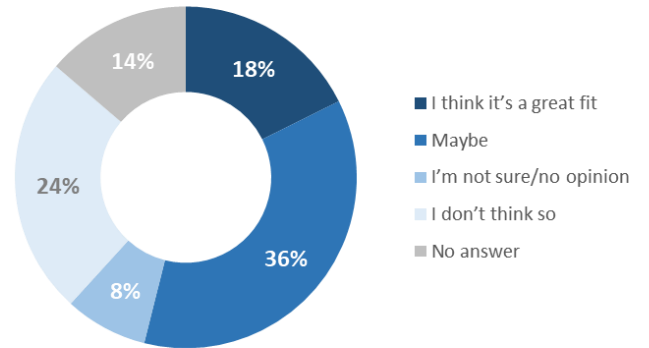
Non-Residential Uses

In addition to residential uses, survey respondents expressed overall support for small-scale commercial or offices uses (1-2 stories). There was also some support for a 2-3 story hotel. There was also support for future public outdoor space. Comments from the survey also highlighted the need for native landscaping. The following shows results from the survey that asked participants what they thought of a series of example non-residential images.

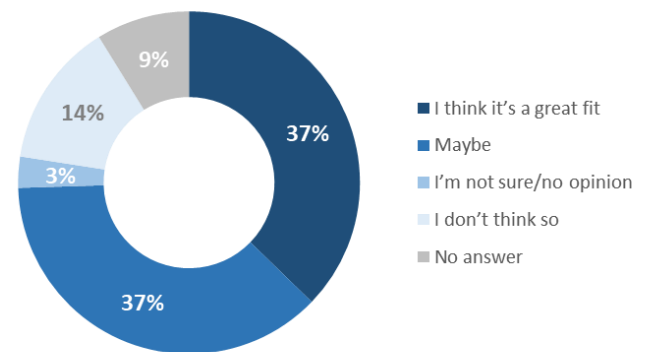
Figure 9: Non-Residential Land Use Preferences (Survey 1)



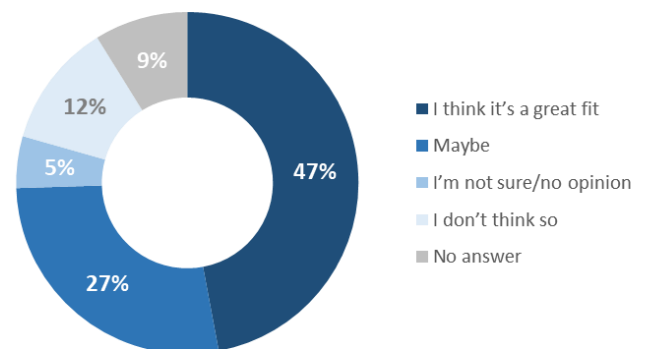
Hotel (2 – 3 stories)



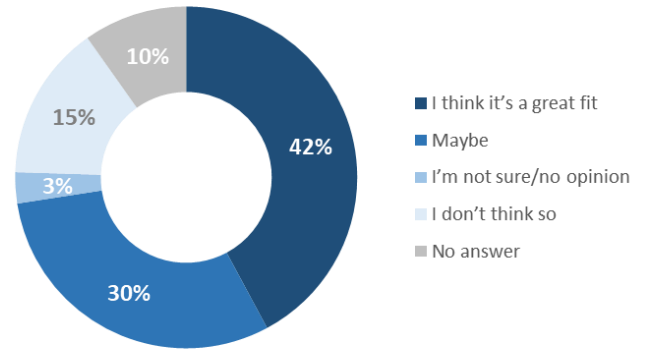
Small-scale commercial or office uses (1 – 2 stories)



Small outdoor public space integrated with building



Small outdoor public space separate from building



POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES

The potential alternatives are intended to demonstrate different land use options and street front designs based on site opportunities and challenges, community feedback, and findings from the feasibility study and Blueprint for Urban Design guidance. There are three different land use alternatives and two different frontage improvement concepts illustrating potential different options for the future of the study area.

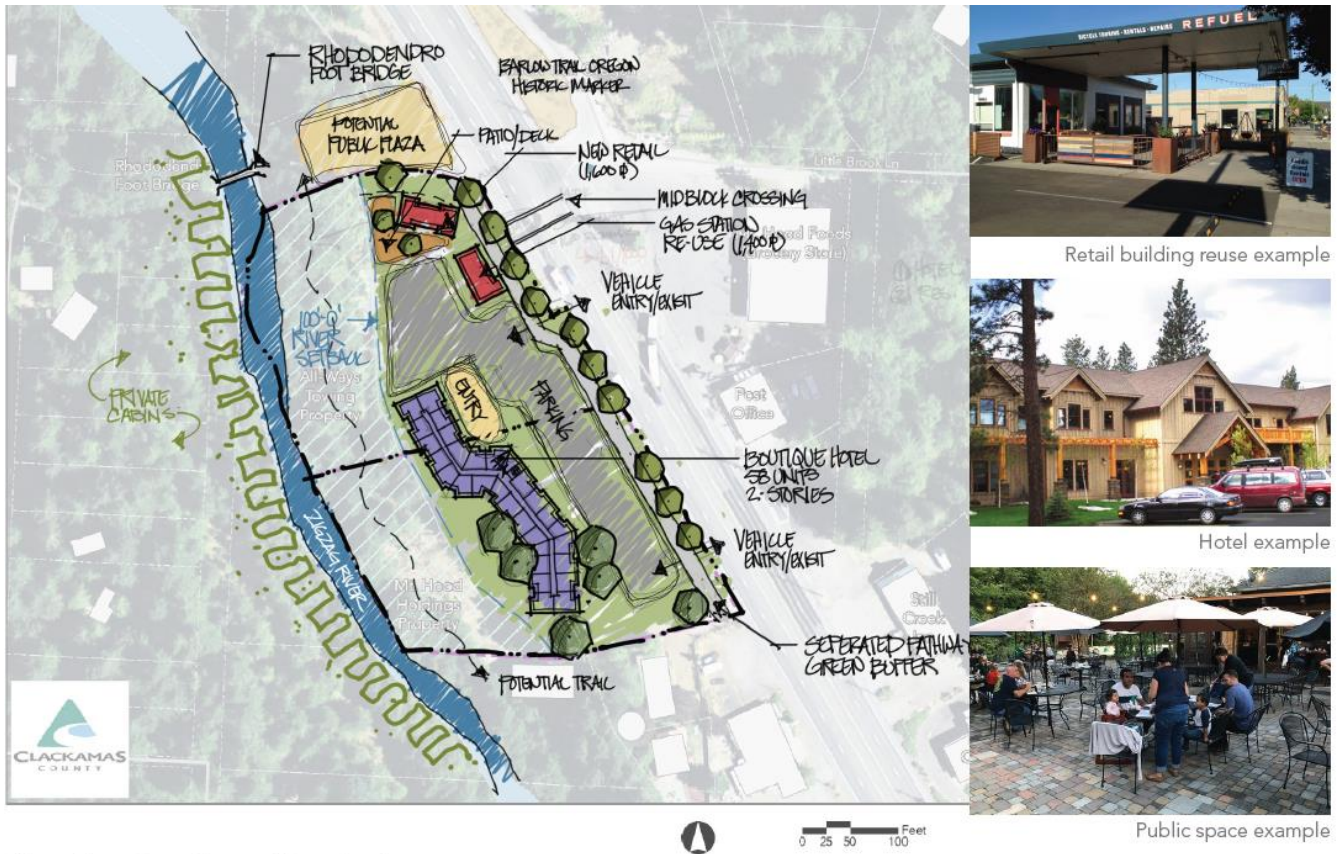
Land Use Alternatives

The following summarizes the three different land use alternatives for the study area. All three alternatives include an improved transit stop, a new public plaza north of the site that is currently publicly owned, as well as a potential soft surface trail along the Zigzag River of the subject site.

Alternative A

Alternative A would provide a two-story, 58-unit hotel, landscaping and required parking on most of the site. This alternative would include two small-scale retail buildings at the north end with a small outdoor area, including reuse of the former gas station building. An improved crossing would also be provided at the north end of the site to connect the retail uses to commercial activity across the highway.

Figure 10: Alternative A

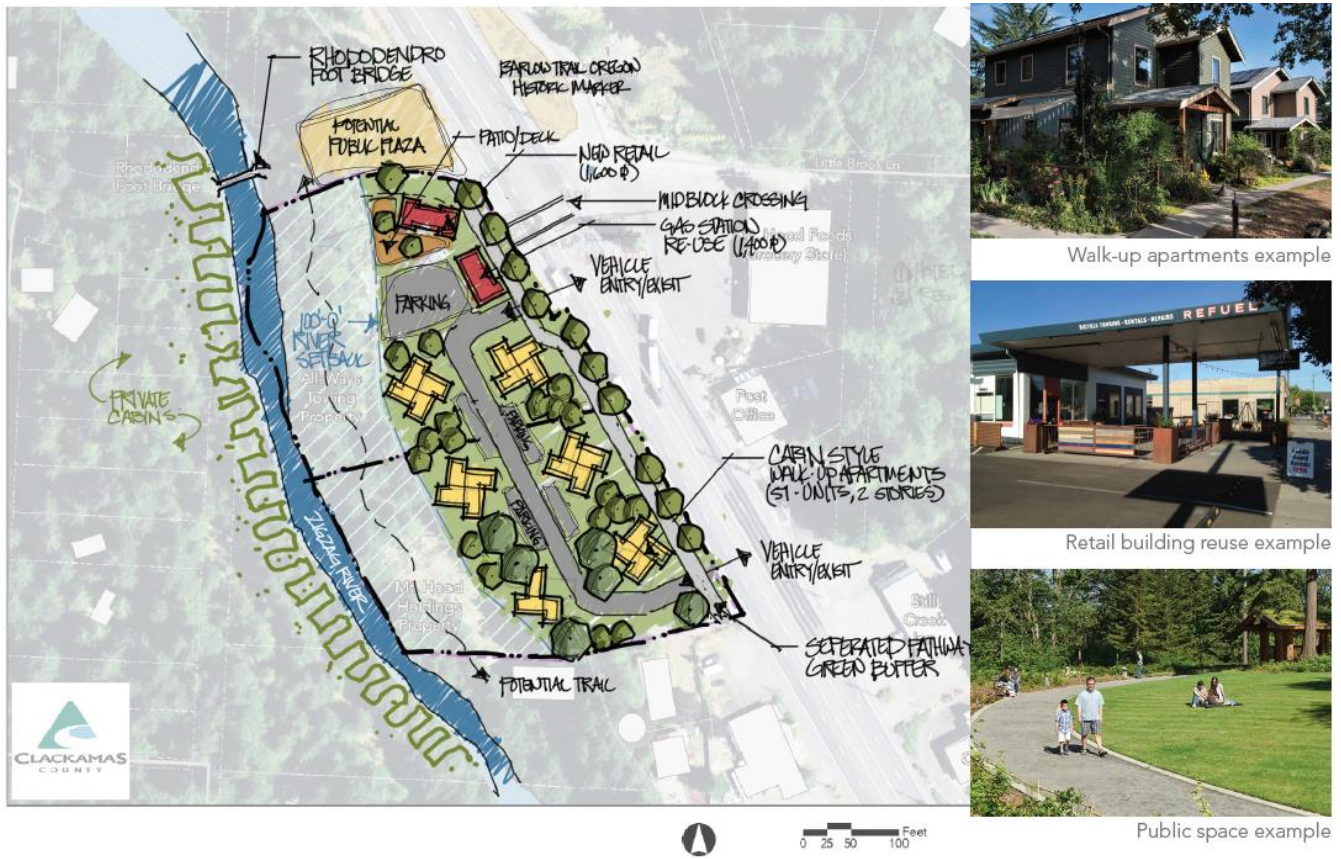


Alternatives Open House: Alternative A

Alternative B

Alternative B would provide six two-story cabin style walk-up apartments, totaling 51 units, as well as landscaping and required parking. Like Alternative A, this alternative would also include two small-scale retail buildings at the north end with a small outdoor area, including reuse of the existing former gas station building. An improved crossing would also be provided at the north end of the site similar to Alternative A.

Figure 11: Alternative B

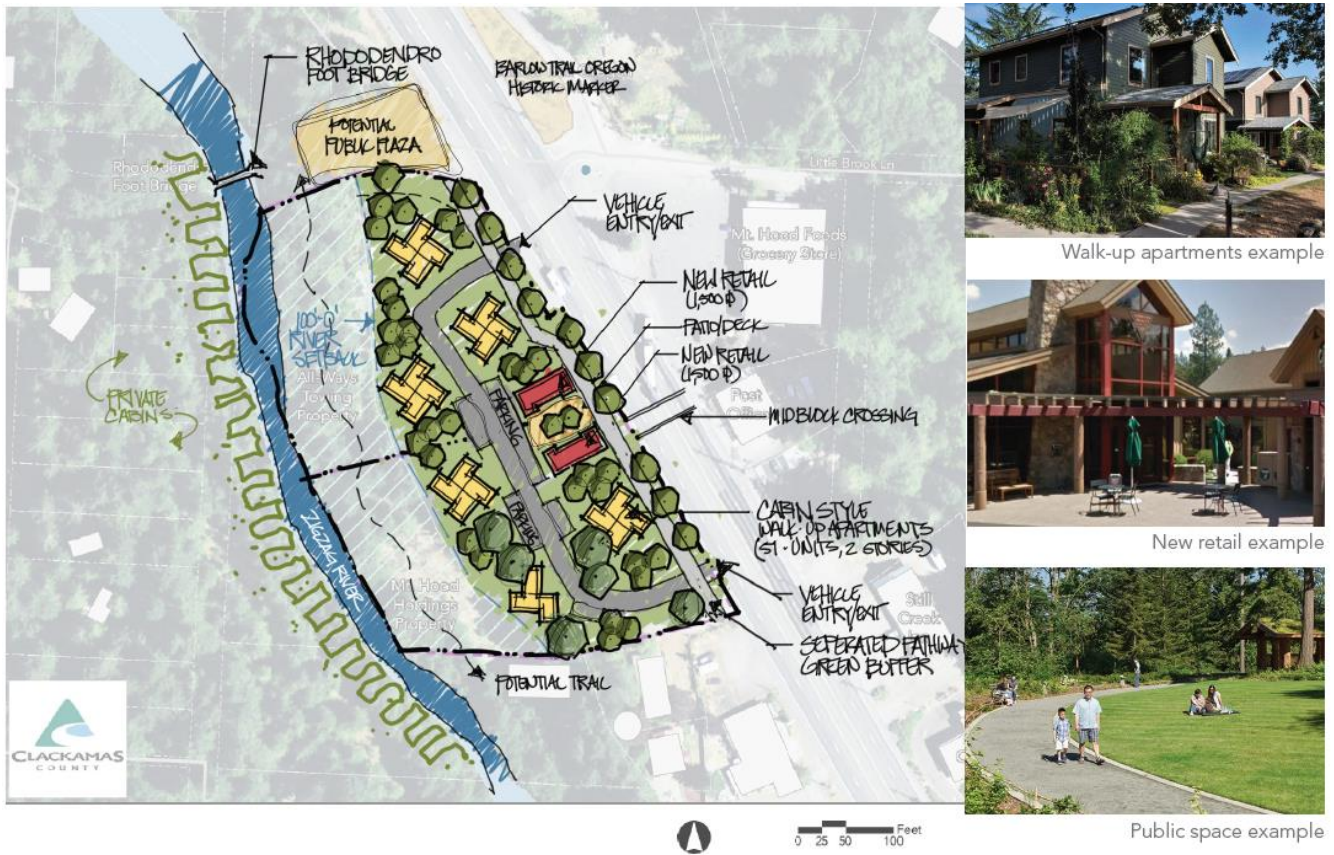


Alternatives Open House: Alternative B

Alternative C

Alternative C would provide the same type and number of cabin style walk-up apartments as Alternative B but features small-scale retail buildings towards the center of the site. Unlike the first two alternatives, this alternative features two new 1,500 square foot retail buildings with a central gathering space that aligns with an improved highway crossing connecting the site to the Post Office building.

Figure 12: Alternative C



Alternatives Open House: Alternative C

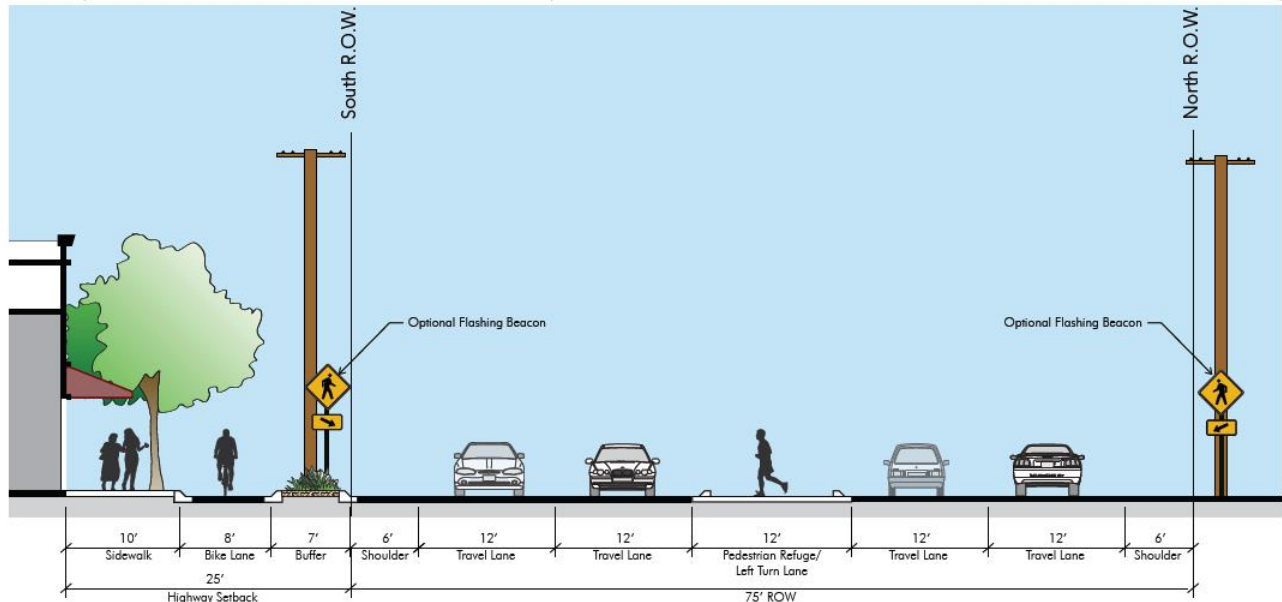
US 26 Frontage Concepts

Along with potential land use alternatives, there are two potential street front concepts based on existing state and local planning recommendations and guidelines. Both concepts assume use of a center pedestrian refuge for the highway crossing and potential pedestrian crossing signals. Any final design would require approval by ODOT.

Concept A

Concept A would provide a continuous ten-foot sidewalk and separated eight-foot bike lane along the site's highway frontage. A seven-foot landscaped area would provide a buffer from the highway.

Figure 13: Street Front Concept A

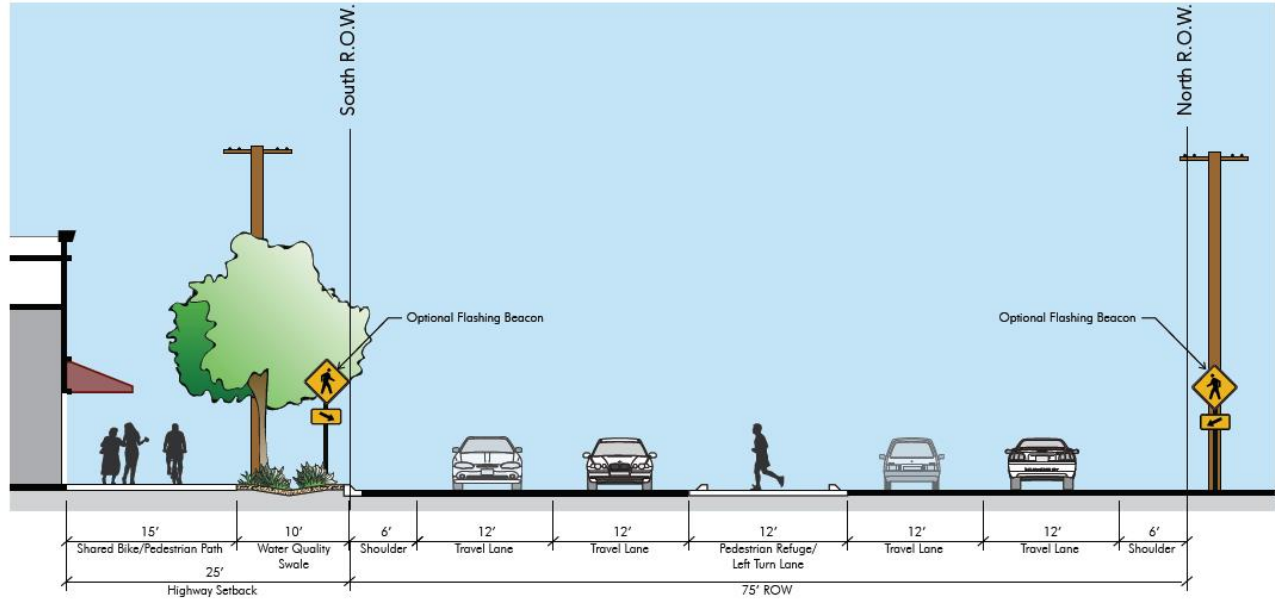


Alternatives Open House: Frontage Improvements Concept A

Concept B

Concept B would provide a shared, 15-foot wide bike and pedestrian path along the site's highway frontage. A wider, 10-foot landscaped area and water quality swale would provide a buffer from the highway.

Figure 14: Street Front Concept B



Alternatives Open House: Frontage Improvements Concept B



Conceptual illustration of the envisioned study area

4. Preferred Concept

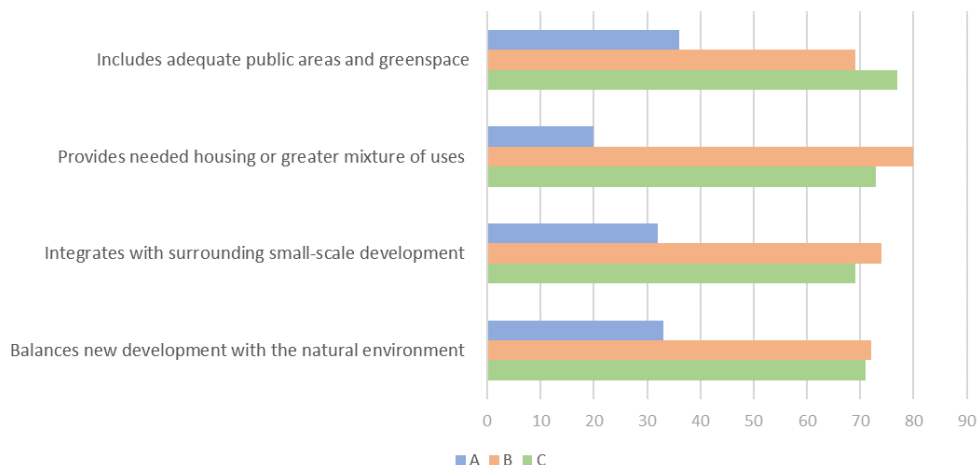
The alternatives helped convey different options for potential future development in the study area and test each option against community values and preferences. The project team provided an online open house to present materials and included a second online survey to understand the preferred site concept. This chapter presents the preferred concept for the study area.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK RESULTS

Land Use Alternative

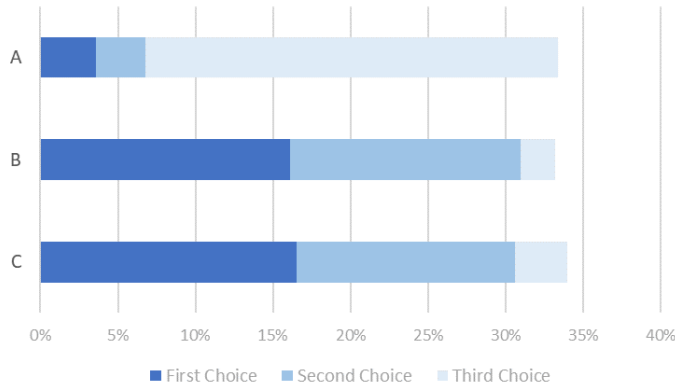
Results from the online survey and comments received from the community indicated an overall preference for housing within the study area. When asked how well each of the three alternatives met different community values that were identified during the initial phase of the project, the two alternatives with a housing focus (Alternatives B and C) received the greatest support (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Ranking of Alternatives by Community Values (Open House Survey)



When asked to rank each of the three land use alternatives by preference, the housing alternatives were also respondents' top first and second choices (Figure 16). Alternative C, featuring a hotel, did not receive substantial support.

Figure 16: Ranking of Alternatives by Priority (Open House Survey)

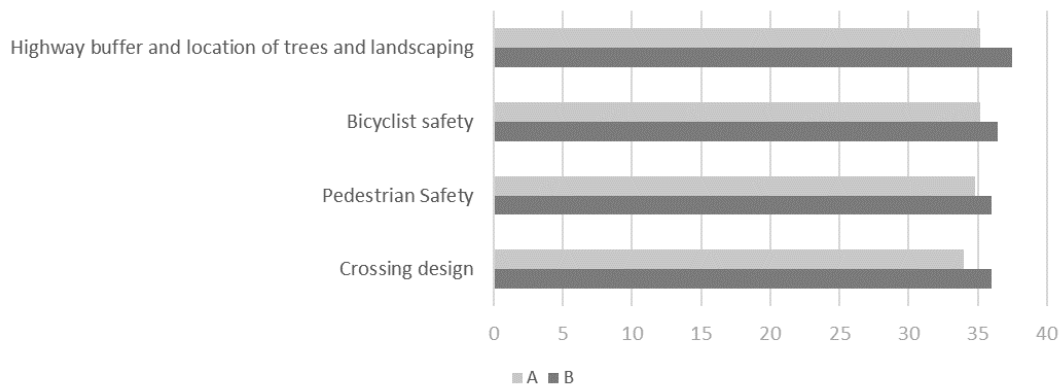


Street Frontage Concept

Community feedback from the US 26 frontage improvement concepts highlighted overall support for some type of improvement. Several comments noted that any basic level of improvement would provide a safer environment for walking and biking than what currently exists.

Based on the results, participants indicated a preference for both concepts based on how well each design met different design needs. Concept B that features a shared-use pathway had a slightly higher percentage of respondents that felt this concept met the design needs. When asked to compare Option A and Option B, 24% preferred Option B compared to 14% to Option A.

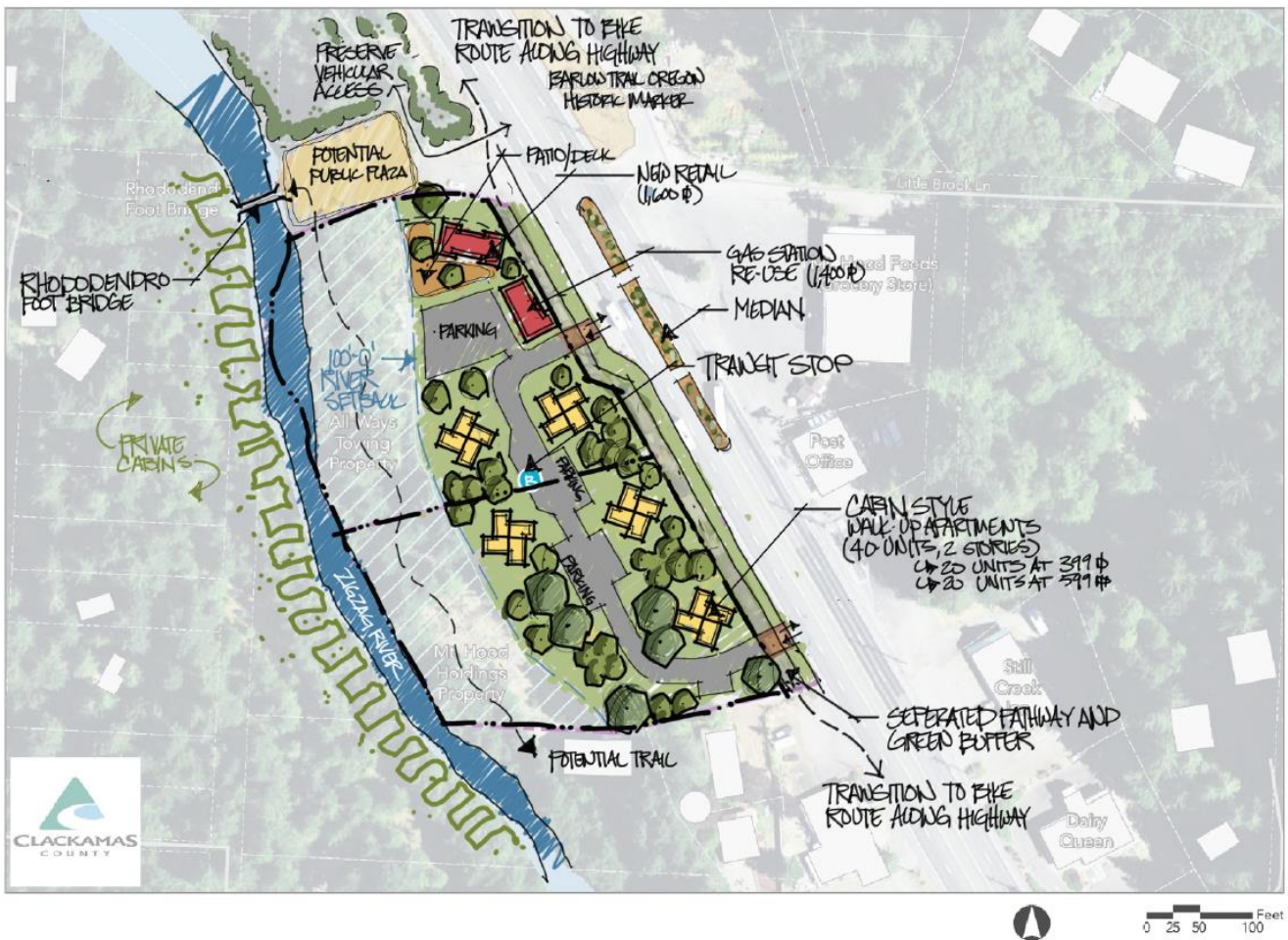
Figure 17: Ranking of Concepts by Design Need (Open House Survey)



PREFERRED LAND USE CONCEPT

The preferred concept for the Rhododendron Main Street study area builds on the opportunities identified for the site while addressing key challenges related to the highway, site constraints, needed housing and community identity. The preferred concept is also designed to support the existing character of Rhododendron with smaller scale buildings, retention of existing trees and green open space, and buffering between any new uses and existing neighbors of the site (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Preferred Land Use Concept

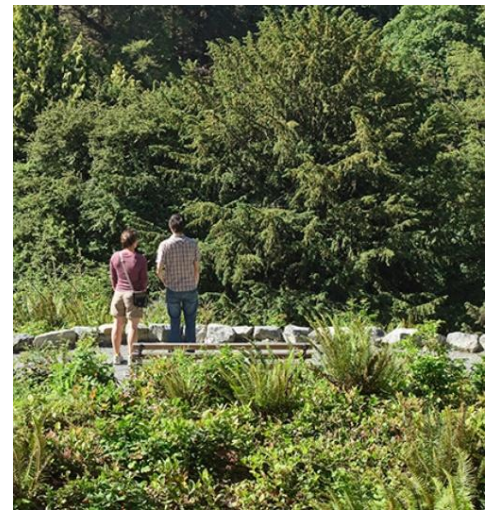


Key Elements

- Housing:** Based on current zoning the concept would allow for five detached two-story cabin-style walk-up homes totaling up to 40 units, depending on the size of the units. The maximum height under current zoning is 35 feet. Buildings would include a mixture of up to 399 sq. ft. and 599 sq. ft. units. The smaller dwelling unit sizes help meet the need for affordable housing and identified

demand for rental housing. Larger units would decrease the allowable density under the RTC zone.

- **Retail:** The smaller retail spaces were also supported by respondents to the community survey. Located at the north end of the study area, proposed retail spaces could include reuse of the existing 1,400 sq. ft. former gas station and a new 1,600 sq. ft. retail building. This location could also feature a small outdoor seating area fronting the river and adjacent public space.
- **Public Space:** The existing unused former road right-of-way east of the existing access road north of the site and located adjacent to the Swinging Bridge could serve as a new public space. Comments from the alternatives review expressed a desire to promote a natural landscape and that any use of this location for a public space would require preservation of the existing access road to the residential parcel north of the study area. Potential elements could include native landscaping, natural surface trails, seating and public art (examples below). Public restrooms were not supported for this location.



(Left: Denali Square, Alaska; Center: Stoneview Nature Center, California; Right: Washington Park Arboretum, Washington)

- **Parking and Circulation:** Designed for walk-up housing, resident parking would be provided via a series of small parking bays accessed via a circular drive-aisle. A total of 33 spaces would be required based on the RTC zone designation. There is also a small parking lot to serve the retail uses at the north end of the site with 12 required spaces. Comments from the community expressed a need to designate this parking area for retail use only (any parking for off-site use should be prohibited). This design would require two access points to US 26 spaced approximately 300-feet apart. Well-defined highway access points would enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety, while a potential natural surface

trail located along the subject site’s river frontage could provide for greater connectivity through the site while connecting to the Swinging Bridge.

- **Transit:** The existing east-bound transit stop would be relocated to the interior of the site. During discussions with ODOT and the project team, needed improvements along the site’s highway frontage to accommodate transit operations would reduce the developable area of the site which is already constrained by the river and highway setbacks. A transit stop within the site would allow transit vehicles to safely maneuver off of the highway for passenger pick-up/drop-off, then safely return to US 26 at the south end of the site.

PREFERRED US 26 FRONTAGE CONCEPT

The preferred street frontage concept builds on the need for safer conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users while enhancing the community image as a mixed-use village. Discussions with ODOT and the project team as well as feedback from the community helped refine the draft concept options for the study area’s US 26 frontage and potential crossing.

Figure 19: Study Area Looking East – Existing (left) and Future Concept Simulation (right)



Frontage Improvements

The preferred concept assumes an existing right-of-way of approximately 90 feet (Figure 20). Future improvements to the study area’s highway frontage would include additional dedication of about ten feet to accommodate a 12-16-foot shared-use path recommended in ODOT’s Blueprint for Urban Design manual, separated from the highway by a six-foot vegetated buffer. The shared-use path was the preferred design option based on feedback from the online open house and survey.

Additional comments noted the priority for a curbless landscaped buffer to provide green space, stormwater management and separation from the highway. These improvements would coincide with redevelopment of the study area based on the preferred land use concept (Figure 21).

The proposed building layout shows a minimum building setback of five feet from dedicated right-of-way. Proposed development is sited at an angle to reduce the apparent bulk of new development from the highway while retaining existing trees. With necessary dedication for public frontage improvements and the resulting reduction in developable area for housing, any proposed development would require a setback variance from Clackamas County Planning and Zoning Division to allow a reduction in property line setbacks as shown.

Crossing

Community feedback and conversations with ODOT indicated that a pedestrian activated crossing with flashing signals is not the preferred treatment for the study area. The envisioned future phase of US 26 improvements along the study area would include a landscaped median with a series of openings to provide refuge for pedestrians crossing the highway. This future phase would also include eventual frontage improvements on the opposite side of the highway to match the design shown on the study area frontage (Figure 22).

ODOT has specific requirements for the design of any improvements to the right-of-way including the potential landscaped median which must be addressed during subsequent engineering. In addition, the specific location of a landscape median would require further study to determine median openings and property access on either side of the highway.

Figure 20: Existing US 26 Cross Section (all dimensions approximate)

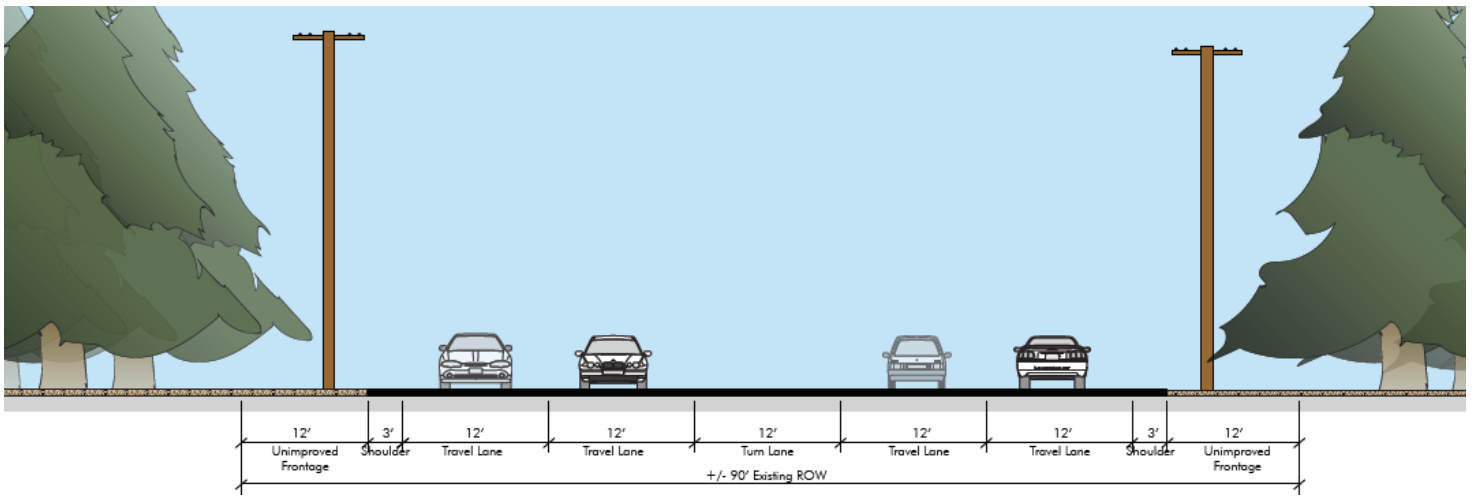


Figure 21: Subject Area Frontage Improvements US 26 Cross Section (all dimensions approximate)

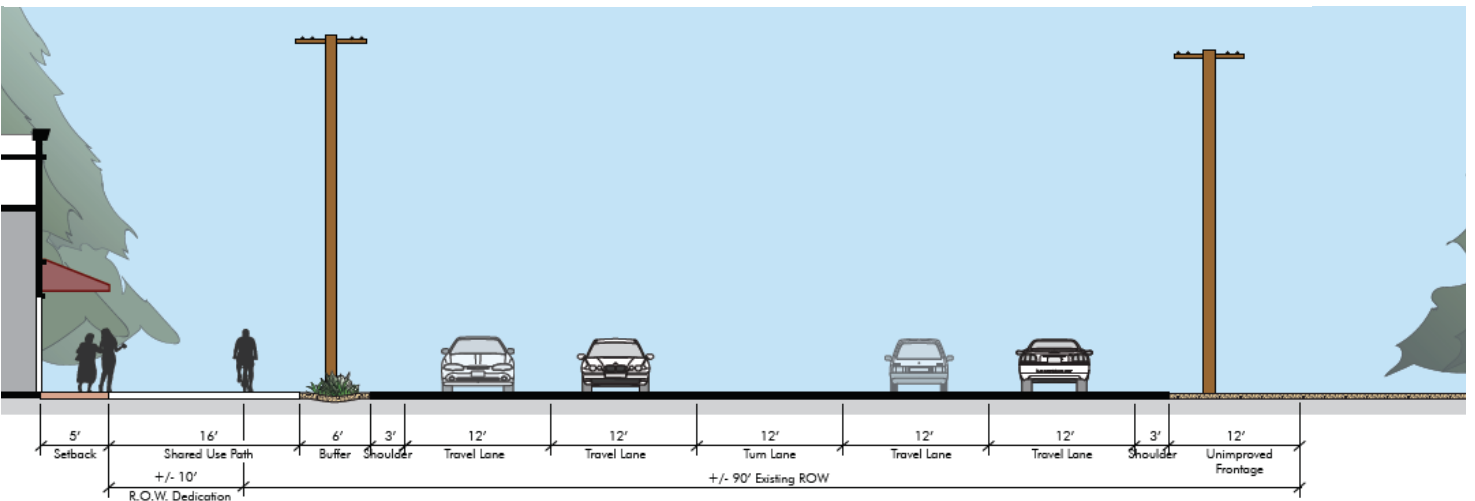
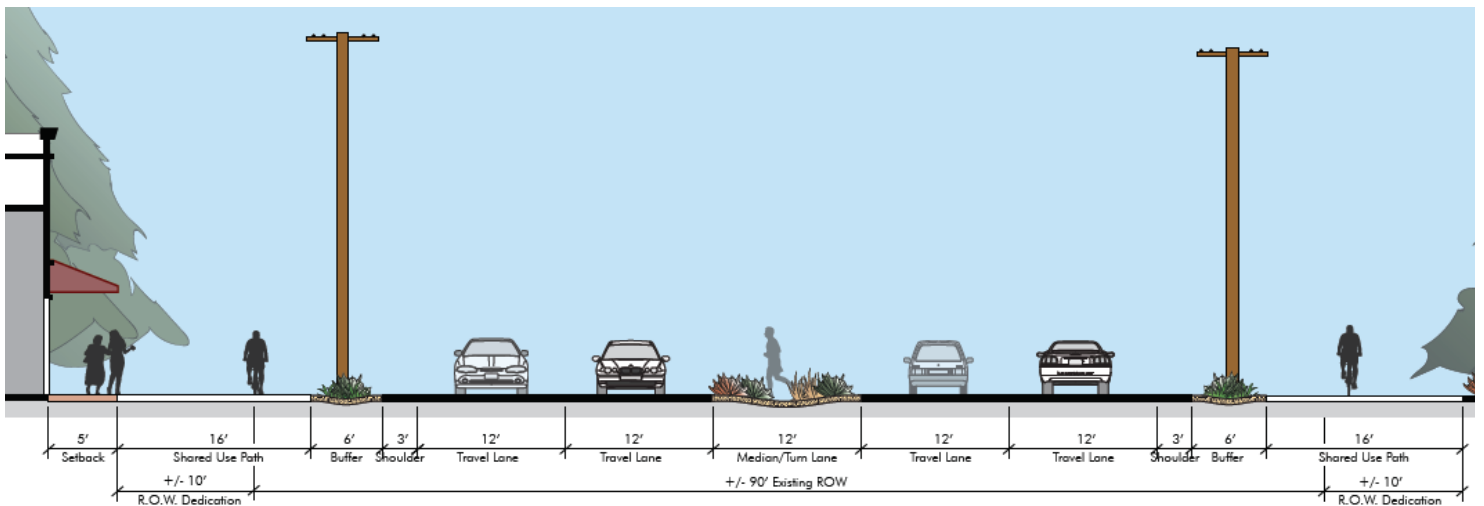


Figure 22: Future Phase Improvements US 26 Cross Section (all dimensions approximate)



IMPLEMENTATION

The long-term vision for Rhododendron’s future and envisioned development of the study area will take continued effort. While the future of the subject site and timing of any new development within private property is dependent on decisions of the property owners, highway design improvements will require ongoing discussions with the community and public agency partners.

The following recommendations provide strategic guidance for implementing the preferred concept. Many of these will take place at the site planning stage as the subject property develops.

Housing and Affordability

Recommendation	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider allowing a wider range of housing options by amending the housing density standards in the District Land Area Standards of the Mountain Recreational Resort (MRR) zoning district – Table 317-3 of the Clackamas County Zoning and Development Ordinance (ZDO). 	County	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review setback requirements of the underlying Rural Tourist Commercial (RTC) zoning district to determine if a variance is needed to implement preferred concept. 	Property Owner	Site Planning

US 26 Planning and Design Guidance

Recommendation	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement ODOT’s Blueprint for Urban Design (2020) for Rural Communities along Hwy 26 through Rhododendron, with guidance of the specific design outlined in the Rhododendron Main Street Site Redevelopment Concept Plan. 	ODOT	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Villages at Mt Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan recommendation for continuous multimodal facilities on both sides of Hwy 26 through Rhododendron. 	ODOT	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve pedestrian and transit user access through enhanced pedestrian refuge for pedestrian crossing Hwy 26. 	ODOT	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adding Figure 21: Subject Area Frontage Improvements US 26 Cross Section and Figure 22: Future 	County/ ODOT	Ongoing

<p>Phase Improvements US 26 Cross Section into the Mt. Hood Community Plan – Chapter 10 of the Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>Perform this step in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and determine how the subject property cross sections can be applied to the larger Rhododendron community as either a capital project and/or during future redevelopment activity.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider developing a maintenance agreement with ODOT for maintaining new street features including the landscaped median and sidewalk landscaping and stormwater features. 	CPO/ ODOT	Hwy. Design

Signage and Streetscape Improvements

Recommendation	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement signage and pedestrian lighting recommendations included in Villages of Mt Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan. 	CPO/ Property Owner/ ODOT	Site Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement consolidation of multiple access points to reduce conflicts as outline in the Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan. 	Property Owner/ ODOT	Site Planning

Transit

Recommendation	Lead	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with Mt. Hood Express representatives to identify future transit stop and operational considerations within the site. 	Property Owner/ Mt. Hood Express	Site Planning