
Park Avenue Community Project
Park Avenue Community Advisory Committee (PACAC)
Phase II: Development and Design Standards

Preliminary Key Themes from Phase I

BACKGROUND: Throughout Phase 1, the project team compiled community feedback through in-person meetings (including seven meetings with property owners, developers, business owners, senior housing providers, residents, and active community members); presentations at MAP-IT & Oak Grove Community Council meetings and a community open house. Additionally, a digital survey that asked community members to rank the priority of the existing 35 MAP projects and programs resulted in 377 responses.

To address the findings and synthesize feedback, Preliminary Key Themes were defined and presented to the community for their feedback. At the open house, attendees could respond via “live survey” on their phones or complete a “hard survey.” In addition, the survey was available online. The key themes listed below resulted from the community feedback and survey.

#1: Focus the project on the area ½ mile from the light rail station

The original *Park Avenue Community Project Phase 1: Community Engagement* scope of work explicitly states that the project will identify new design and development standards for the commercially zoned properties along McLoughlin. However, throughout the engagement process, we heard from community members the desire to focus on areas such as Oatfield Road and other areas. Additionally, stakeholders affirmed there is not a cohesive vision clearly understood for the Park Avenue community within the ½-mile radius area. Furthermore, of the 35 MAP programs and project, the survey results determined that the community ranked the priorities in the following order:

- #1 Enhance natural areas
- #2 More lighting at key locations (Trolley Trail)
- #3 More community events
- #4 Develop new parks and open spaces

In order to address these most important projects and programs, consideration for improvements beyond the commercially zoned property is necessary. Therefore, the following statement was posed to the community. *Question #1: In Phase 2, study the following unincorporated areas within a ½-mile radius of the light-rail station...* 91 people agreed that both residential and commercial areas should be explored, 13 would like to focus on commercial properties only, 3 would like to focus on residential property only and 4 responded with other.

#2: Enhance connectivity

Throughout the engagement process, we heard from community members the desire for improved walkability through improved sidewalk improvements and areas to walk to. We also heard that the Trolley Trail is a community asset for pedestrian and bike mobility and no automobile traffic should cross it. Furthermore, of the 35 MAP programs and project, the survey results determined that the community ranked the priorities in the following order:

- #5 Improve pedestrian and bike connections to the Trolley Trail
- #6 Need convenient and safe access to the light-rail station and surrounding businesses for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit-riders
- #7 Improve pedestrian and bike connections to schools, parks and other important community destinations

In order to address these prioritized projects and programs and desire for a walkable community, the following statement was posed to the community. *In Phase 2, study connectivity throughout project area (but not automobile connections across the Trolley Trail).* 68 people agreed with this statement, 22 were neutral, 12 disagreed, and 7 replied other.

#3: Encourage employment along McLoughlin Blvd

Several national and regional trends show that traditional auto-oriented retailing is declining due to the rise of online shopping per the following chart. Furthermore, the state is projecting employment growth within healthcare, professional services, and manufacturing. The current zoning requirements along McLoughlin permit the majority of these employment opportunities. One of the few restrictions, however, is on the primary processing of raw materials, which causes restrictions on uses such as breweries and processing of wheat that could be done at bakeries.

In order to increase employment opportunity within Park Avenue, we asked people to respond to the following statement. *In Phase 2, explore how to develop new types of employment uses such as craft manufacturing or professional services along McLoughlin.* 86 people agreed, 7 were neutral, 11 disagreed and 6 replied other.

#4: Increase workforce housing

Housing demand is a significant issue facing all growing metropolitan areas across the country. This is a complex issue that requires various approaches to meet numerous market conditions. A key element to reducing housing costs - or at least reducing the rate of housing price growth - is to build more housing for all income levels. We heard clearly from Willamette View and Rose Villa representatives that their hundreds of employees want to live nearby and would benefit greatly from affordable housing aligned with their income. Constructing some of these affordable units near a light rail station is appropriate as one of the most significant cost-of-living burdens in addition to housing is transportation.

Based on this housing need, we presented the following statement. *In Phase 2, study how more affordable / workforce housing (e.g., apartments, duplexes) can be provided within the commercial zone along McLoughlin Blvd.* 75 people agreed, 14 were neutral, 16 disagreed and 5 replied other.

#5: Focus on the side streets first for development

McLoughlin is a challenging location to initiate infill development. Areas with smaller parcel sizes offer smaller scale projects that equate to less risk for regional developers new to the area. For this reason, the ability to explore other areas such as along Park Avenue or River Road is important to implement investment in the near future.

We presented the community the following statement based on these real estate development market needs. *In Phase 2, explore other areas where it may be more feasible to develop affordable/workforce housing (apartments, duplexes) rather than on McLoughlin Blvd, such as River Road or roads perpendicular to McLoughlin.* 75 people agreed, 13 were neutral, 17 disagreed and 6 replied other.

#6: Natural areas are an asset, not a barrier

Throughout the community engagement process, it was clear that preserving the natural environment is very important to local residents. The tree canopy serves as significant community asset and point of pride. Furthermore, prior efforts including the Re-greening of Park Ave Park-and-Ride Metro Nature in Neighborhoods Grant further the efforts of the community to preserve and enhance this asset. Finally, as indicated in the digital survey, “enhancing natural areas” is the number one priority of all 35 MAP projects and programs. Therefore, we presented the community the following statement. *In Phase 2, study how natural areas can be enhanced and integrated with development.* 86 people agreed, 11 were neutral, 8 disagreed and 5 replied other.