

10.318 GRESHAM CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Gresham Civic Neighborhood describes a partly developed superblock site of 130 acres close to the core of the city. Bounded by Burnside, Eastman Parkway, Division and Wallula (212th Ave.), the block is bisected by light rail. The term “Civic Neighborhood” connotes an urban neighborhood which includes uses and features associated with the center of a city; an area which embodies civic qualities and is likely to inspire a sense of civic pride in those who use it.

During 1994-95, the City was joined by Metro, Tri-Met, property owners, and PGE in preparing a mixed-use master plan for the superblock which became known as the Gresham Civic Neighborhood. An important purpose of the plan is to demonstrate that development of mixed uses at relatively high densities is not only feasible in Gresham, but can offer advantages not found in conventional suburban development. This is to be a transit-oriented neighborhood with good connections to adjacent neighborhoods – on foot as well as by car and bicycle. Those who live and work in the Civic Neighborhood will generate fewer automobile trips than their counterparts elsewhere; not only because of the proximity of light rail, but also because it would be more convenient to walk to nearby commercial uses to obtain needed goods and services.

By guiding development within the Civic Neighborhood towards a mix of uses at relatively high densities, Gresham will demonstrate the advantages of sustainable development and set an important precedent for the region.

HEALTH AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

In 2011, the City Council Work Plan included a project to examine how city goals and policies related to the built environment affect health, especially related to obesity. The built environment includes sidewalks, bike lanes, parks, land uses and schools, and plays a role in people’s health by providing access to food options and opportunities for physical activity as part of normal routine. Opportunities to walk, bike and use transit promote active living and a healthier lifestyle. A well-designed and planned variety of uses – such as grocery stores, schools, parks, and employment centers – in close proximity to where people live increases the opportunity for active living. Providing these opportunities, ensuring they are part of a complete network, and ensuring they are designed to promote pleasant and safe experiences increases the likelihood that people will use these modes of travel and increase their physical activity.

HOUSING AND THE GRESHAM CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN DISTRICT

In 2013, the City Council Work Plan included a Housing Policy project designed to result in a long term strategy for meeting and investing in Gresham’s Housing needs. This project was to address:

- Types and amounts of housing required by various economic segments;
- Housing needs based on current and projected population;
- Existing conditions, challenges and opportunities in the city’s Housing market.

The Civic Neighborhood Plan was adopted by Gresham City Council in 1995. Since the first part of the project developed commercially in 1999, it has quickly become a home to several residential and mixed use developments. The median sale price of housing is approximately

10% higher than that found in the Downtown. Rents in the Civic Neighborhood are higher than the city average.

The Civic Neighborhood has some of the city's best examples of Transit Oriented development. It has, however, taken public-private partnerships to achieve most of this development.

Although the Civic Neighborhood experienced rapid development soon after the Civic Neighborhood Plan was adopted, this development stalled with the 2008 economic downturn. Several large vacant and underdeveloped parcels remain that present opportunities for additional transit oriented development. One of the largest, the K-Mart site on the northwest corner of the plan area, could present a future redevelopment opportunity.

An additional Civic Neighborhood MAX station was constructed next to the Center for Advanced Learning in 2010, providing residents with additional options for access to services and amenities.

The Multi-Family Residential Design Standards apply to residential development in the Civic Neighborhood, but no projects have yet been constructed using these standards.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING GOAL

The Civic Neighborhood will continue to be developed with medium to high density quality housing that complements its mixed-use transit oriented character.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING POLICIES

1. Ensure that the Civic Neighborhood land use regulations provide for a variety of housing types that support a transit-oriented mixed use neighborhood.
2. Allow for housing types that accommodate citizens with special needs, such as the elderly and those requiring care for disabilities.
3. Promote home ownership opportunities in the Gresham Civic Neighborhood.
4. Encourage the development of higher end, executive home ownership and rental housing in the Gresham Civic Neighborhood.
5. Incent Civic Neighborhood housing development through all means practical.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING ACTION MEASURES

1. Create residential Design Standards specific to the Gresham Civic Neighborhood.
2. Proactively work with developers proposing all residential and mixed use projects in the Civic Neighborhood to ensure that the character of the Civic Neighborhood is promoted.
3. Review all forms of potential incentives including, but not limited to, the TOD program, fee adjustments, process adjustments and any other partnership opportunities that could provide additional impetus for Civic Neighborhood housing developments.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY

It is the City's policy to create on the Gresham Civic Neighborhood site a mixed-use, transit-oriented urban environment with a strong civic presence, accommodating some of the highest intensities of residential and commercial uses in Gresham.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

LAND USE

1. Provide for a compatible mix of land uses which support and complement nearby uses.
2. Provide for uses of a density and configuration that will capitalize fully on the presence of light rail and bus service.
3. Uses which are consistent with the urban character of a civic central neighborhood will be encouraged.
4. A mix of commercial developments will be encouraged to:
 - Create new jobs
 - Generate direct and indirect tax revenue
 - Attract new central area residents
 - Provide new amenities
5. Accommodate an appropriate mix of uses to satisfy community needs, including:
 - Support regional goals for increased densities
 - Provision of new housing options in Gresham
 - Reduced dependence on automobiles
 - Public open space and other public facilities

OPEN SPACE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

1. Create a comprehensive pedestrian network, linking the Civic Neighborhood with adjacent areas and developments.
2. Integrate public open spaces and landscaped areas as a cohesive system.
3. To the extent that it is practical to do so, integrate the pedestrian system and the open space system.
4. Use open space and pedestrian circulation to reinforce desired land use patterns.
5. Encourage access to public and commercial facilities by those who live or work in adjacent areas, without use of automobiles.
6. Provide safe and convenient access for all to transit stations.
7. Capitalize on the near and distant views which distinguish this location.
8. Integrate flood control measures with components of public and private landscape.
9. Capitalize on flood control measures to enhance the quality and attractions of the superblock to appropriate land uses and development types.
10. Maintain the special character of the Wallula corridor and its natural features.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Design the Civic Neighborhood as a model multi-modal access community, accommodating the needs of all modes in a balanced and non-exclusionary manner.
2. Capitalize on the presence of light rail at the site.
3. Locate and configure parking in ways which will not dilute urban densities nor interrupt street frontages or public open spaces.
4. Parking should be convenient yet not dominant; adequate but not over-provided for normal, day to day needs.

5. Provide a hierarchy of local access streets within the superblock which will provide flexibility in circulation options and will be effective in serving a changing range of land uses over time.
6. Respect the established character and functions of existing streets in the vicinity.
7. Dimension streets for their local access functions, using no more land than is necessary.
8. Improve accessibility to the rest of central Gresham, with which this superblock is intended to function as an integral part.
9. Accommodate an effective link between historic downtown Gresham and the Civic Neighborhood.
10. Actively encourage walking and use of bicycles and transit.
11. To mitigate external neighborhood traffic impacts in the Civic Neighborhood environs, the City will develop a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan in cooperation with all adjacent neighborhoods, Civic Neighborhood owners and developers, and interested parties.
 - a. The Plan's goal is to reduce and minimize non-local Civic Neighborhood vehicle trips on surrounding local and neighborhood collector streets, between Powell and Stark, Birdsdale to Eastman/223rd.
 - b. The Plan should assure convenient pedestrian, bike and transit access between the Civic Neighborhood and its surrounding community.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

1. Foster a character for the Civic Neighborhood which is appropriate to its central location and complementary to its residential and commercial neighbors, including West Gresham.
2. Project an image of a welcoming environment.
3. Encourage architectural diversity within defined parameters of building scale and density.
4. Design the street system as the framework for a walkable scaled and densely developed central city district; streets that feel safe to walk on by day and after dark.
5. Set a precedent for the quality of public and private development with the design, materials and workmanship evident in all public infrastructure improvements.
6. Establish design guidelines to be used uniformly throughout the superblock to ensure consistency in adherence to these objectives.
7. Phase development so that it appears to be fully integrated with other components of the neighborhood. Avoid leaving unfinished edges between phases.
8. Respect the integrity of nearby neighborhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION

The guiding principles for this implementation strategy are summarized below:

1. Development within the Civic Neighborhood is a primary City priority.
2. Public investment in major infrastructure improvements which have regional and community-wide significance should be given high priority by the City and throughout the region.
3. Public actions should be focused on development products which support transit and contribute to the role of a Regional Center. Primary development types include medium- and high-density housing, and office projects. Public actions should be re-evaluated five years from the adoption of this policy.
4. Public investment activities in the near-term will consider known funding sources including the City's capital improvement programs, development fees and City share of

regional implementation programs. In the longer term, other funding sources will be considered, including urban renewal, residential tax abatement, and other programs as they may become authorized and feasible.

(Section 10.318 added by Ord. 1366 passed 7/11/95; effective 7/11/95)
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(Amended by Ordinance 1735 passed 11/19/13; effective 12/19/13)

10.319 CENTRAL ROCKWOOD AREA

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Central Rockwood Area is identified in Appendix 39, Volume 1 of the Community Development Plan. This area is focused on the triangle formed by SE 181st Ave., E. Burnside, and SE Stark, but also includes the Rockwood area MAX stations and land within roughly one-half mile of those stations. Unlike the historic core of downtown Gresham, most of Central Rockwood was developed after World War II, when the patterns of land use were driven by a desire to accommodate convenient use of the automobile. To some extent, the area went directly from farmland and open space to suburban subdivisions, strip malls, and high-volume arterial streets over the period from roughly 1950 - 1990. Nearly all of the few older buildings and landmarks which had provided a visual link to Rockwood's origins as a rural crossroads community were removed. The result has been an auto-oriented, low-profile patchwork of land uses and activities which are often poorly integrated and visually unappealing. Although there is little vacant land in Central Rockwood, much of the developed property is inefficiently used.

For these and other reasons, the Central Rockwood area has suffered from a lack of focus and identity. Its role in mid-Multnomah County and, more recently, in Gresham has been poorly defined. This began to change in 1986 with the appearance of MAX light rail transit service, and again in 1992, with completion of the Gresham 2020 Vision. The MAX line had the effect of linking Central Rockwood much more closely to the rest of the region, and in particular to the regional employment center in central Portland. The 2020 Vision acknowledged Rockwood's importance as a part of Gresham, and gave it a specific role to play. Central Rockwood was identified as a sub-center of Gresham, second only to the downtown and Civic Center areas in terms of development density and activity levels. It was envisioned as a "live-work" district, where jobs, commercial services and a variety of housing would be encouraged. The organizing principle for the future was to consist of two basic elements: a new "community center" focal point at the triangle formed by NE 181st, Burnside, and Stark, and a strong orientation to the existing MAX stations.

HEALTH AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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