



USEPA AREA-WIDE PLANNING PROJECT
Resolution 1765

December 2016



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thank you to the members of the St. Helens community who set aside time to offer thoughtful input throughout this planning process. Your engagement and dedication to the redevelopment of the St. Helens waterfront has been crucial to the creation of this document and the overall success of this project. We deeply appreciate your ongoing commitment to guide the future of St. Helens.

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Gainor Rikor - Big River Bistro
Bemis Printing
Columbia River Receptions and Events at Meriwether Place

CONSULTANT TEAM



MARINA WORKS



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St. Helens, Oregon thrived as a leading exporter in the timber industry since the time of its founding in 1850. However, the decline of the timber industry and eventual closing of most mills in the 2000s created negative ripple effects throughout the community. Downtown St. Helens has failed to fully recover and is characterized by struggling businesses, vacant storefronts and a decline in residential development. City leaders and community members recognized the need for a change on the waterfront and have been actively developing a future vision for the waterfront, planning for new public amenities as well as employment opportunities.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Area-Wide Planning (AWP) program, is the most-recent step in this community-driven effort to reshape the St. Helens waterfront. The AWP program has benefited from the planning and visioning completed through previous programs to focus on an action-oriented plan for that will guide implementation of the waterfront redevelopment. That action-oriented plan is this Framework Plan. It is the culmination of countless hours dedicated by City staff, members of the Waterfront Advisory Committee, and the St. Helens community.

The purpose of the St. Helens Waterfront Framework Plan is to provide an understanding of the opportunities these catalytic properties present and outline the major City-led investments that are necessary to spur the next phase of development. The planning process was supported by the enduring commitment of the St. Helens community. An average of over 100 people attended each public event. This plan seeks to capture and represent their collective preferences, which helped drive the recommendations made in this report. The Framework Plan creates certainty for developers by indicating where development can occur on the site, and defining the criteria that the City will use as it considers different development options. Lastly, this plan creates a clear path forward to implementing the Framework Plan and presents a detailed outline of projects that will guide the City through the steps toward redevelopment in the short- and long-term.

The immediate next step is for the St. Helens City Council to adopt this Framework Plan. The following actions summarize the pathway forward:

1. **Attract a Developer:** Success requires a private development partner. The recommended approach for development is to market the property, release a Request for Information or Qualifications to interested developers, and work with the selected developer to produce a Master Plan. Ideally, the Master Plan will lead to a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) that outlines roles and investment responsibilities for the development partner and the City.
2. **Address the Zoning Code:** Once the City has determined its preferred development approach, it should ensure that the zoning code enables that approach. Options available to the City range from small changes to reflect the Framework Plan to a full re-zone of the Veneer Property.
3. **Fund Necessary Improvement Projects:** To create certainty for development, the City should create a comprehensive funding program for the property's infrastructure that includes a combination of urban renewal, state grants, and public-private partnerships.



INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

The City of St. Helens (city) is located at the confluence of the Multnomah Channel and the Columbia River, where it surveys the northern tip of Sauvie Island and across the water, toward Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens. Perhaps this is the same view Lewis and Clark marveled at during their stay with the Chinook Indians, who occupied the area in 1804. The city was founded in 1850 and thrived as a hub for the region's booming lumber industry. The waterfront blossomed with activity as numerous mills and manufacturing plants, specializing in the production of paper and wood products, were built. The waterfront and downtown areas provided places for the many workers and their families to live, work, and play.

Industry has been at the heart of the city's waterfront and its economy up until the remaining mills closed most or all of their operations in the early 2000s. As the jobs disappeared from the heart of the city, so did many of the people, and the historic downtown has grown quieter. The city has since been dedicated to reclaiming the waterfront

so that it may serve the community in new ways, paying homage to both the past and the future by creating new amenities that can attract both new employers and residents to St. Helens.

City leaders and community members recognized the need for a change on the waterfront when the Boise veneer plant finally closed after years of declining profitability. The City adopted a new overlay zone that would permit commercial and mixed-use development on the site of the former plant. The community has since been actively developing a future vision for the waterfront that includes new amenities for the community and focuses future industrial and employment development further south on the industrial land formerly occupied by the Boise White Paper mill.

The City government of St. Helens (City) has acquired approximately 225 acres of waterfront property along



Looking south down The Strand towards the former industrial uses on the Veneer Property (approx. 1910)

1.1 CONTEXT

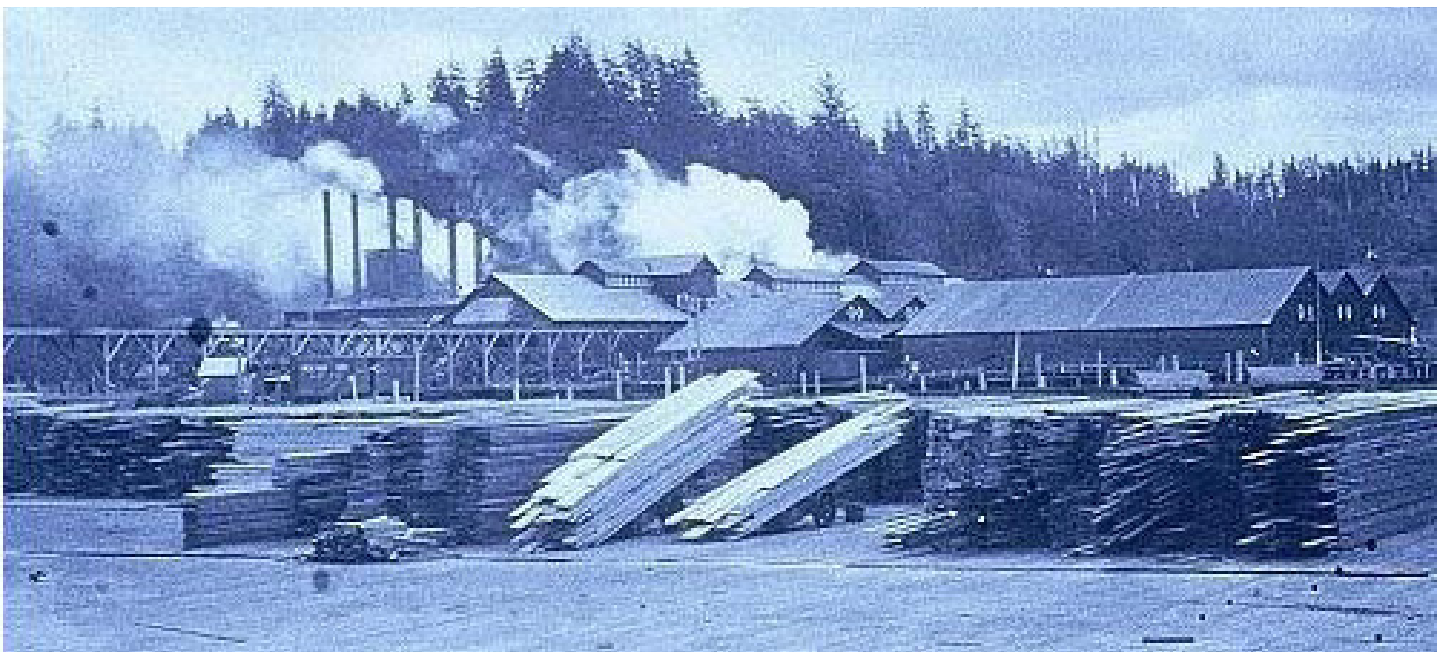
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Area-Wide Planning (AWP) program assists communities responding to local brownfield challenges, particularly where multiple brownfield properties are in close proximity; are connected by infrastructure; and limit the economic, environmental, and social prosperity of their surroundings.

the Multnomah Channel and the Columbia River. A key development opportunity is an approximate 25-acre property that is the former location of a plywood veneer plant, identified in this report as the Veneer Property. The Veneer Property's unique waterfront location, volcanic views, and proximity to downtown create a rare opportunity to bring new, mixed development to St. Helens. To the south lies a second key industrial property that was formerly the location of the Boise White Paper, LLC main mill operation, referred to in this report as the Boise White Paper (BWP) Property. It is approximately 205 acres, only 10–20 acres of which are occupied today by Cascade Tissue. This expansive industrial area is located close to US 30 and the City owns 58 percent of the land area, presenting the City with a significant opportunity to attract new employers to the area.

Three core principles guided this project:

- **Public Access.** Redevelopment should connect to city neighborhoods, reconnect the people to the waterfront, and connect the city to the greater local region. Safe and secure access to the waterfront and other green space is imperative. Redevelopment should also encourage water-related uses and preserve adequate public space while allowing for flexible private enterprise.
- **Natural and Cultural Heritage.** This project is an opportunity to return the highest public benefit to the greatest number of citizens over multiple generations. Green and sustainable development will be encouraged, and planning should anticipate a dynamic and changing future climate. Redevelopment should coexist with the Riverfront District both visually and economically.
- **Sustainable Economic Development.** Redevelopment should focus on a mix of housing, commercial, and recreational uses to create a “working waterfront.” This mix of industry and amenities is optimal for creating a space to attract development and drive jobs back to the city.

This plan is organized as follows: opportunities and constraints (Section 2); a summary of public outreach (Section 3); a vision for the Veneer and BWP properties (Section 4); a discussion of the framework plan (Section 5); and an implementation strategy (Section 6).

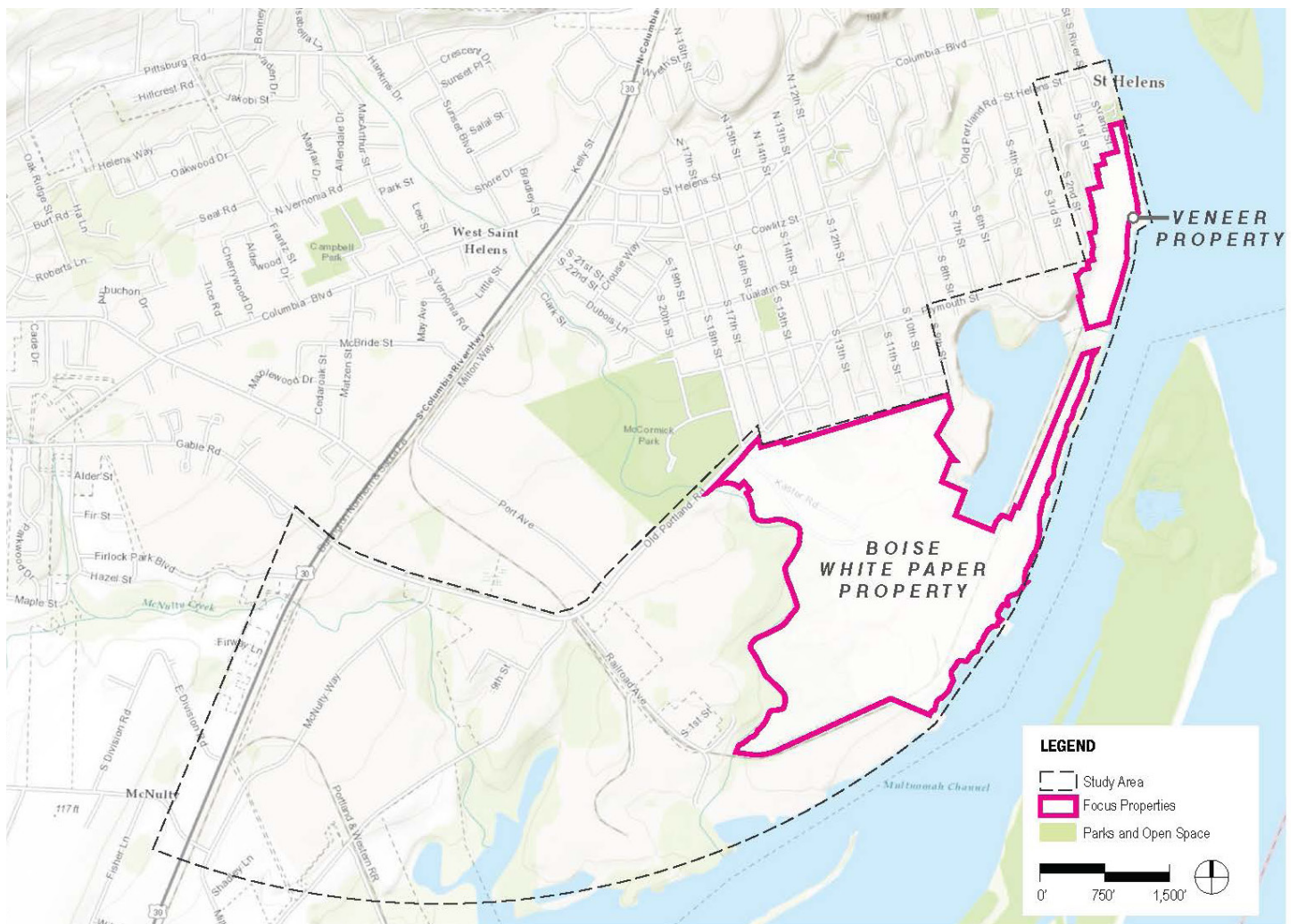


St. Helens Lumber Mill.

1.2 STUDY AREA

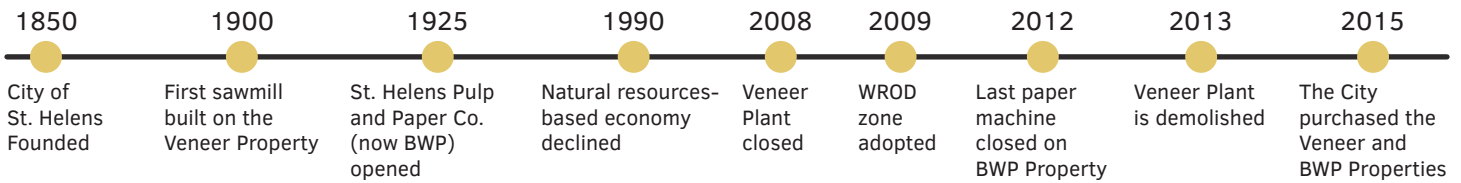
As shown in Figure 1-1, the study area includes a portion of the main street corridor, historic downtown, and two catalyst brownfield properties, Veneer Property and BWP Property, located on the city's waterfront adjacent to the historic downtown area. In this report, the primary focus is redevelopment of the Veneer Property. The study area provides the larger context for understanding how the local environment may help or hinder redevelopment of the Veneer Property. The BWP Property serves as a complementary catalyst property that will be able to support future industrial and employment development; it does not require the same level of planning, because its primary use is not expected to change. The Veneer Property presents an opportunity for St. Helens to build something new that is rooted in the community's identity and may grow to attract visitors, residents, and employers to the region.

FIGURE 1-1. STUDY AREA



1.2 STUDY AREA

PROPERTY HISTORY



PROJECT HISTORY

In 2014, the City participated in the prestigious American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program. The SDAT program involved intensive workshops and outreach to both the public and local experts and stakeholders, culminating in a set of preliminary guiding principles. These guiding principles led the City to further engage and educate the community regarding the existing conditions, potential contamination issues, and potential future for the two focus properties.

In 2015, an Integrated Planning Grant (IPG) from Business Oregon extended future planning that focused on advancing the work of the SDAT program and preparing the City to implement a USEPA-funded AWP project. Specifically, the IPG project convened and engaged with an advisory group of community leaders and stakeholders, who confirmed and refined the vision and guiding principles for redevelopment of the waterfront, and broadly involved the community in the planning process through an open house. In 2015, the City obtained a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Area-Wide Planning (AWP) grant to explore the redevelopment potential of City-owned parcels on the St. Helens Waterfront through a framework planning process.



The images on this page are renderings created during the SDAT process. Top right is a rendering of a marina with multi-use buildings. The middle is a rendering of residential mixed-use buildings. On the bottom left is a rendering of what a boardwalk would look like. In all cases, the border of the river is kept within the public realm, but development comes close to the water's edge benefiting from the prime real estate the property has to offer.



OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

2.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project team analyzed the existing physical, cultural, economic, and environmental contexts of the study area between October 2015 and January 2016. This analysis provided an understanding of the existing conditions, opportunities, and constraints, and served as a foundation for the AWP process to guide future planning. The full Existing Conditions report is available on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project webpage located under the Planning Department. Table 2-1 summarizes the basic site characteristics for the Veneer and BWP Properties.

TABLE 2-1. VENEER AND PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

| SITE CHARACTERISTIC | VENEER PROPERTY | BWP PROPERTY |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Size | 25 acres | 205 acres |
| Number of Parcels | 1 | 13 |
| Zoning | Predominantly HI, some Apartment Residential, WROD overlay | Predominantly HI, some light industrial, Willamette Greenway overlay |
| Ownership | City of St. Helens | City of St. Helens |
| Existing Structures | None | ~20 |
| Environmental Contamination | Yes, in small, contained areas. | Yes, exact extent and degree is unknown. |
| Environmental Risk Management | Prospective Purchaser Agreement | Environmental Indemnification Agreement |



Photograph looking south from downtown St. Helens, across the Veneer Property towards the BWP Property.

2.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following tables summarize the opportunities and constraints identified on the Veneer and BWP Properties. Figure 2-1 provides a graphical depiction of the Veneer Property's opportunities and constraints.

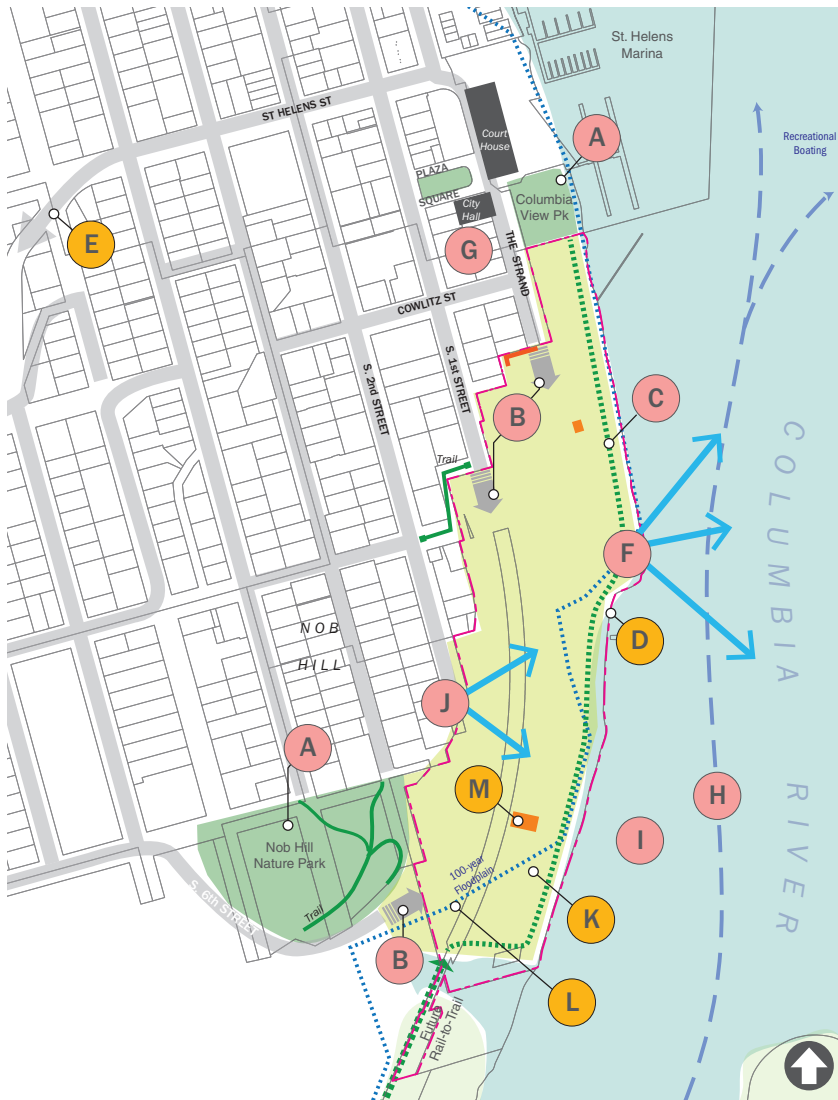
TABLE 2-2. VENEER PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

| CORE VALUE | OPPORTUNITIES | CONSTRAINTS |
|---|---|--|
| Public Access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to Columbia View Park • Existing Street Grid at Pedestrian Scale • View Corridors • Trails • Boardwalk • Public Ownership • Community Interest and Existing Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from US 30 • Limited Connection to River |
| Natural and Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverfront Mountain Views • Community Support • Historic and Cultural Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial Fill |
| Sustainable Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to the Columbia River Downtown • Prospective Purchasers Agreement • Bluff Development • Public Ownership • Existing in-water infrastructure (e.g., pilings) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Infrastructure • 100-Year and 500-Year Floodplain • Waterfront Redevelopment Overlay District • Floodway Close to Shore • Riparian Overlay • Shallow Bedrock • Heavy Industrial Zoning • Restricted Areas • Large Amounts of Fill |

TABLE 2-3. BWP PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

| CORE VALUE | OPPORTUNITIES | CONSTRAINTS |
|---|---|---|
| Public Access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US 30 Connection • Planned Access Improvements • Public Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal Public Access • Problematic Intersections |
| Natural and Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return of Legacy Industry • Proximity to the Columbia River | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial Fill |
| Sustainable Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match Jobs to Workforce • Create Live-Work Community • Environmental Indemnification • Existing In-Water Infrastructure (e.g., pilings) • No Floodway | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Infrastructure • Developable Parcels Unknown • Stormwater • Shallow Bedrock • Developer Uncertainty: 100-year floodplain, 500-year floodplain, and Milton Creek and associated riparian area |

FIGURE 2-1. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS



PUBLIC ACCESS

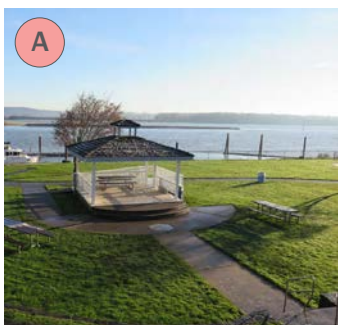
- A** CONNECTION TO EXISTING PARKS, OPEN SPACES, AND TRAILS
- B** DIRECT ACCESS FROM CITY STREETS
- C** OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW PUBLIC PATH ALONG WATER'S EDGE
- D** STEEP RIVERBANK LIMITS DIRECT WATER ACCESS
- E** HARD TO FIND FROM HWY 30, 3.5 MILES AWAY

NATURAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE

- F** VIEWS OF MT ST HELENS, MT ADAMS, AND MT HOOD
- G** CONNECTION TO HISTORIC DOWNTOWN CREATES REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITY
- H** EXISTING WATER TRAILS CONNECT SITE TO SURROUNDING NATURAL AREAS

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- I** DEEP WATER (~30 FT) CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR RECREATION AND INDUSTRY
- J** STEEP BLUFF PROTECTS EXISTING VIEWS FROM POTENTIAL MULTI-STORY DEVELOPMENT
- K** ARTIFICIAL FILL ON SHALLOW BEDROCK CREATES CHALLENGE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESTORATION
- L** 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN MAY CONSTRAIN DEVELOPMENT
- M** RESTRICTED SOILS AND POTENTIAL GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION



2.2 DEVELOPER INTERVIEWS

In spring 2016, members of the project team met with representatives of seven different real estate development firms to discuss development possibilities and issues regarding the St. Helens Veneer Property. There was general agreement among the developers of the value and scarcity of developable waterfront land. The property's beautiful views, connections to downtown, and relatively unconstrained development potential suggest it as an excellent location for waterfront residential development. All developers agreed that the biggest challenge for this property was the ability for St. Helens to prove that it can attract residents at high-enough incomes to support new construction. This suggests that the City will need to focus its efforts on marketing the city's economic development potential to attract new jobs.

Developers also noted that there are relatively few comparable developments nearby that serve as comparable development to meet underwriting criteria. Other themes that emerged were the importance of a vibrant downtown and the opportunity for the property to provide access to river users. Developers were in agreement that the City would need to provide a multi-pronged incentive toolkit and to expect that the property will develop in phases over many years. Several developers requested to stay informed on the development opportunity as it progresses.

A full summary of these meetings is available on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project webpage located under the Planning Department.

1.3 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The Veneer Property's competitive advantages are the conditions that make it more desirable for development compared to other locations.

- **Waterfront location and views.** The Veneer Property has sweeping views of the river, Mt. Hood, and Mount St. Helens, and is located adjacent to the historic downtown area.
- **City commitment to project success.** The City has acquired the land and continues to take the steps necessary to make it ready for development. The City remains committed to the community's vision for the waterfront and will provide incentives to attract a development partner who can help realize the vision.
- **Low cost of living.** St. Helens offers a small-town lifestyle within a relatively short commute to Portland-area employers and a lower cost of living. As housing costs in the Portland area increase, the City expects to see new residents appreciate the quality of life in St. Helens and seek a lower-cost home.
- **Water access.** Proximity to the water in a region where there is high demand for renting, mooring, and docking watercraft presents an opportunity to draw visitors not only from US 30 but also from the Columbia River. These visitors will support a vibrant mixed-use development on the Veneer Property and in the existing downtown that provides complementary amenities, such as a restaurant, a hotel, retail, and open space.



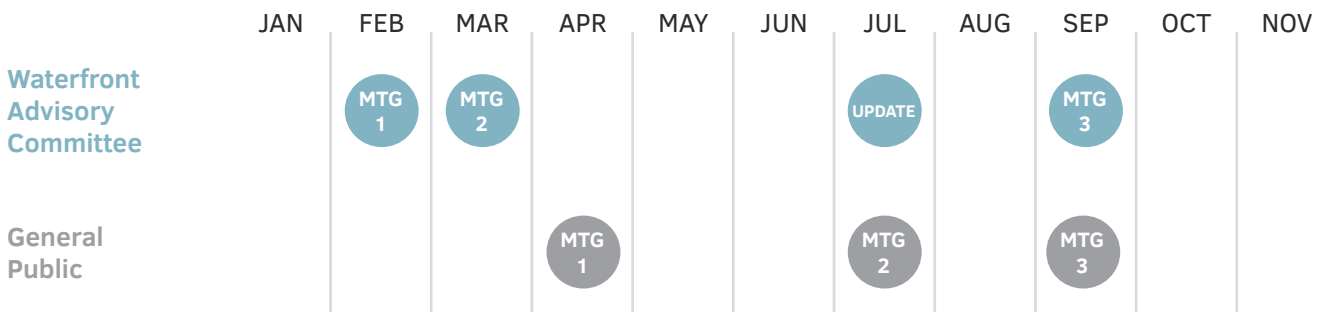
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

3.1 WHAT WE DID

Well before the SDAT planning effort in 2014, the St. Helens community has been actively involved in redevelopment of the waterfront. Beginning with the IPG project in 2015, the City established a Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) consisting of City Councilors and representatives from the Port of St. Helens; Parks Commission; Arts Commission; Planning Commission; and Public Health Foundation of Columbia County. This same committee was convened for the AWP process, meeting

four times between February and September 2016. The general public was also kept actively engaged in the process. Three public events were held between April and October 2016, each of which was attended by an average of over 100 people and included people who were becoming newly engaged in the project. Detailed meeting notes from the WAC meetings and public open houses are available on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project webpage located under the Planning Department.

FIGURE 2-1. CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS



Community members at the October 12, 2016 project completion celebration on the Vener Property.

3.2 WATERFRONT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The WAC was established to serve as an advisory panel through planning and redevelopment of the waterfront properties. This committee held three meetings, including a workshop for developing the Framework Plan, review of the framework and demonstration plan options, and review of the implementation strategy. The Committee was composed of 12 members selected to represent a diversity of stakeholder interests with long-term commitment to the community, including business, regional economic development, parks, arts and culture, and public health.

The full meeting minutes are available on the City website, listed on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project webpage located under the Planning Department.

MEETING 1: INTERACTIVE PLANNING WORKSHOP

The purpose of this meeting was to welcome the WAC to the AWP project, review the findings of the existing conditions report, and walk the committee through the interactive planning exercise. The interactive planning exercise was designed to help the committee imagine and prioritize how buildings, streets, trails, and open space could be organized on the Veneer Property. The WAC was split into two groups, each of which produced several framework plan scenarios. Several themes emerged from this interactive planning exercise, including:

- Desire for a marina located at the south end of the property
- Concerns regarding building heights and maintaining views
- Preference for a connection between 1st Street and Plymouth Street
- Overall demand for a greenway meant for the public
- Resistance to placing private development on the waterfront edge
- Support for on-water development, such as a floating restaurant or pier.



WAC members use chips to brainstorm layouts for streets, open space, and uses on the Veneer Property.

3.2 WATERFRONT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING 2: FRAMEWORK PLAN OPTIONS

The purpose of this meeting was to review the outcomes from the previous meeting's interactive planning exercise, present alternative framework plans for the Veneer Property, and discuss the economic trade-offs of the different plans, as well as the feasibility of the marina. The WAC provided specific feedback on transportation and parking, uses and services, environmental concerns, and other observations in advance of the framework plan alternatives being presented to the public.

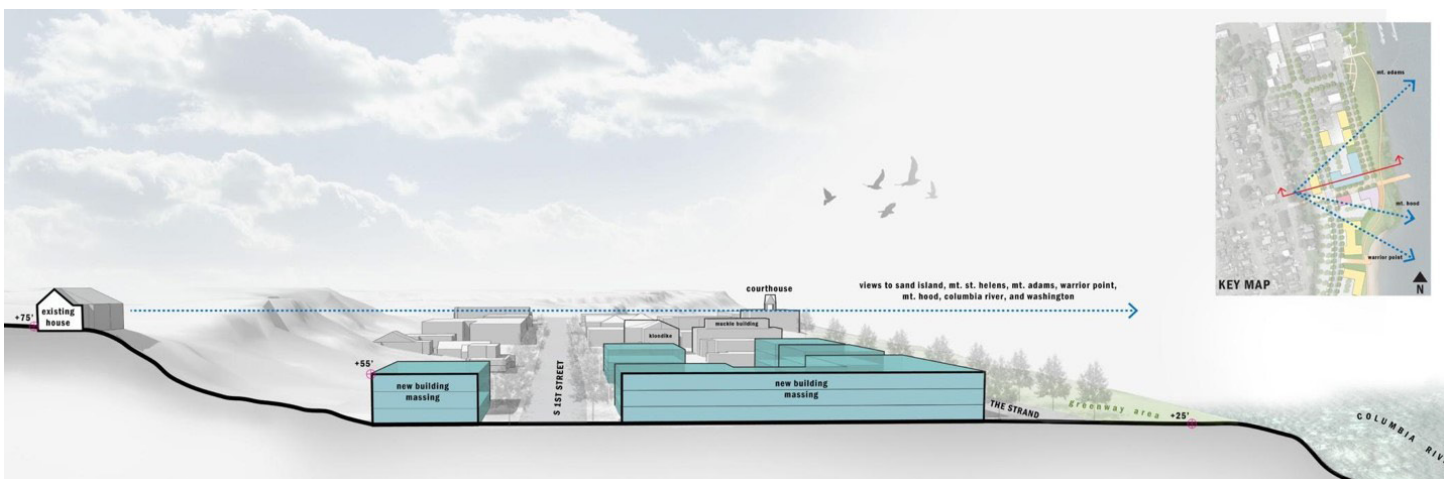
MEETING 3: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The purpose of this final meeting was to review the preferred framework and demonstration plans, and proposed implementation strategy to address any remaining concerns the committee had regarding the plans, as well as to review the project sheets, which provide an outline for how to move the Veneer Property toward and through redevelopment. Dwight Unti of Tokola Properties gave a presentation to the Committee to provide a developer's perspective on the existing opportunity that the waterfront presents, and what a developer will look for when he/she is interested in becoming involved in future development on the Veneer Property.

The Committee approved the preferred framework and demonstration plans, agreeing that the framework plan should be adopted by the City Council and that it explicitly state that the following elements be included:

- A connection between 1st Street and Plymouth through the property
- An extension of The Strand
- Pedestrian access ways through the property
- A greenway that is about 50 feet wide and a minimum of six acres
- A special waterfront-use area to allow for development fronting the water
- Development parcels that include a mix of uses

Lastly, the WAC confirmed which items are public-requirement must-haves versus preferences. This list was meant to serve as a starting point that may evolve over time, but can be included in a future Request For Information the City releases to developers.



The height of new development relative to the bluff was conveyed to the WAC utilizing the cross section above.

3.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

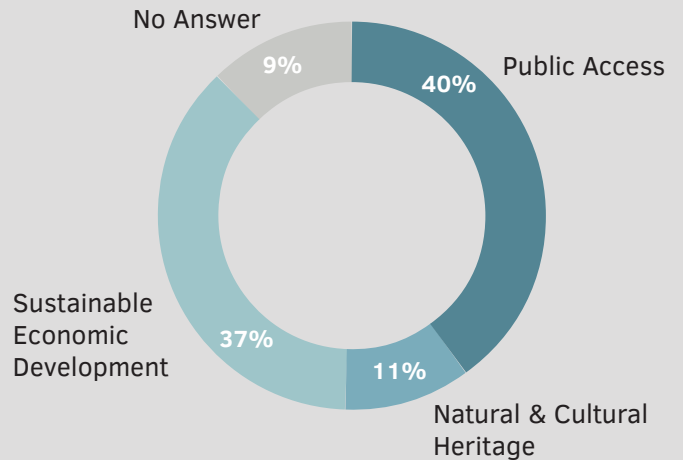
Engaging the St. Helens community was an integral part of this project. During the course of this AWP project, three public open-house events were held. Over 100 people attended each event, each time including people who had not previously been involved in the process. It was clear that the community felt passionate about how the waterfront should be redeveloped; their preferences are reflected in the final outcome. The notes from each public open house are available on the City website, listed on the Waterfront Redevelopment Project webpage located under the Planning Department.

OPEN HOUSE 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE AWP PROGRAM AND PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK PLANS

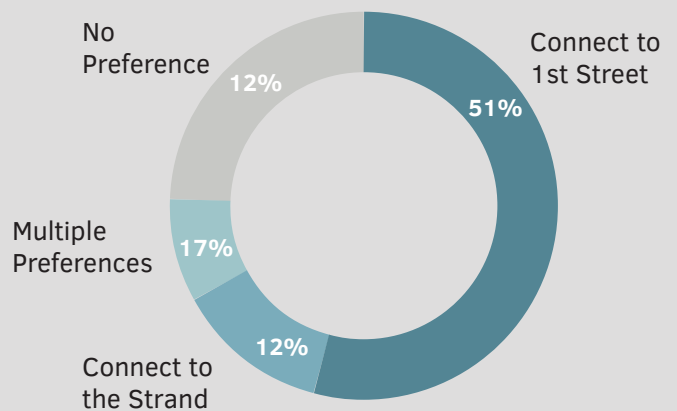
The first open house was held on April 27, 2016. The purpose of this event was to present the preliminary framework plan scenarios and receive feedback on the street layout, amount of open space, and types of uses. There were five stations through which attendees could circulate and talk to staff, including a review of the AWP process, a station for each framework plan scenario, and a station where participants could design their own framework plan scenario. Attendees were provided with fact sheets that they could reference during the open house and comment cards where they could provide feedback. A total of 75 comment cards were received.

FIGURE 2-2. COMMENT CARD FEEDBACK

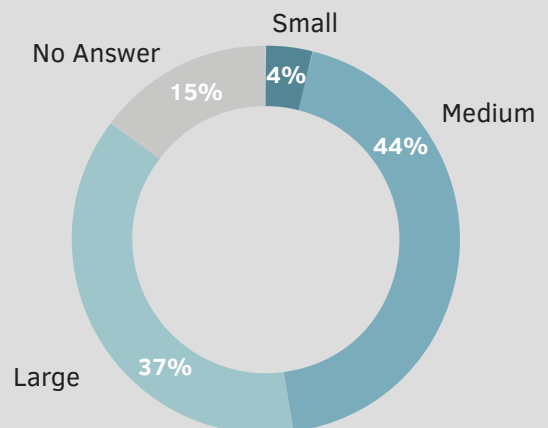
Which core value do you connect with most?



Which road alignment do you prefer?



How much open space should there be?



3.3 PUBLIC OUTREACH

OPEN HOUSE 2: PREFERRED FRAMEWORK PLAN

The second open house was held on July 6, 2016. The purpose of this event was to keep the community engaged in the redevelopment process and covered topics including the preferred framework plan, potential strategies for implementation, the festival street concept, branding, and repurposing the wastewater lagoon located between the Veneer and BWP properties. To facilitate small group conversations on these topics, staff set up six stations, including an overview of the AWP process; the preferred plan concept; implementation; streets; the public realm; and branding. There was also a station for a related but separate project on the repurposing of the wastewater lagoon located between the Veneer and BWP properties.



OPEN HOUSE 3: CELEBRATION

The final open house was held on October 12, 2016. Approximately 70 people attended the event. This event was a celebration of the effort put forward by the community, WAC, and City staff on the AWP project. Boards were set up showing the final preferred framework plan, demonstration plans, diagrams showing views of the river from the bluff given various building heights, and a rendering of future development. Additionally, information about the next steps in the redevelopment process was distributed, with an emphasis on the upcoming urban renewal planning process. Many of the attendees were excited about the work that had been done and happy that the City was actively working towards the next steps of the project.



Final public open house attendees show their support for the St. Helens Area-Wide Planning Waterfront Redevelopment Project.



A VISION FOR THE WATERFRONT

4.1 VISION STATEMENT

For centuries, people have come to the banks of the Columbia River at its confluence with the Multnomah Channel and the Lewis River. The fertile Sauvie Island was once home to thousands of Native Americans. It was here, where thickly forested slopes met a wild and wide river that the community of St. Helens began and grew. The city's riverfront was its lifeblood for decades, where timber and paper were processed and exported, where ships were built and salmon were pulled from the Columbia River. With economic and societal changes, over the years the riverfront has also changed. What was once a fully industrial, working place with very little opportunity to see or touch the river is becoming a more diverse riverfront, with greater environmental protection balanced with opportunities for new recreation, employment, and housing.

The vacant Veneer Property is the focus of this Framework Plan. With its direct connection to downtown St. Helens, it offers the potential for a **vibrant waterfront district** with amenities that can attract new residents and employers to St. Helens, as well as new residents. Both groups will enhance the community's tax base, generating further opportunities for current and future members of the St. Helens community. The St. Helens riverfront will seamlessly extend from downtown, with walkable, tree-lined streets. Along the Columbia River, where people have gathered for millennia, an expansive park with trails and recreation will once again provide the setting for the community to return to its river.



A rendering of the future St. Helens waterfront.



FRAMEWORK PLAN

5.1 WHAT IS A FRAMEWORK PLAN?

There are a number of potential future scenarios for redevelopment of the St. Helens riverfront. The Core Values stated in the Introduction play a fundamental role in establishing civic intent for the property's redevelopment. In the coming years, citizen advocates and City staff will closely observe the redevelopment process. A Framework Plan that creates both certainty and flexibility in the future with a general layout for the property. This Framework Plan is designed to establish non-negotiable plan elements described in the following sections.

This Framework Plan is a simple and general outline that will guide future, more detailed development plans, to be prepared by separate design and engineering teams as property improvements take place. The framework focuses on securing and cementing the most important public improvements that will form the basis for future public-private redevelopment: it shows general alignments for roads and public access ways, outlines areas for future development, and defines the large, contiguous area that will remain as a public park and greenway trail area along the water's edge. The Framework Plan will be adopted by the City Council and recognized in the City's development code, thereby regulating the essential improvements to the property and guiding future qualitative assessment of more detailed plans for individual properties and buildings.

A similar Framework Plan has not been prepared for the BWP Property to the south, because it is expected to continue its existing industrial operations.

The demonstration plans that follow the Framework Plan display different ways in which development under the Framework Plan could be realized in terms of building massing, development of the waterfront park and trail, and distribution of uses.

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

The physical design proposed for the Veneer Property is intended to provide some level of certainty to guide future City decisions, along with a more flexible approach, to the form and arrangement of development on a number of parcels.

LAND USES

A wide range of land uses is possible for the Veneer Property and is supported at a certain scale by market conditions, described earlier. For example, townhouses could be a potential use, but not in large numbers. Retail is another potential use, but recent market studies (ECONorthwest, 2015) suggest that no more than 12,000 square feet of retail can be supported, which is essentially one to two small structures. Page 24 shows images of potential development types at an appropriate scale, all of which were deemed appropriate by the WAC and the public.

VENEER: PHYSICAL LAYOUT

The plan offers a general framework for the property and outlines, with more certainty, some important plan elements. All of these elements will be further studied and refined as part of future design and engineering processes. These elements include:

- Extension of 1st Street south into the property, with a similar right-of-way (ROW) width of 80 feet.
- Connection of this 1st Street extension through the property to a future southern entrance to the property, where Plymouth Street currently terminates as also identified in the City's Transportation System Plan (2011).
- Extension of The Strand south into the property, at a ROW width of 70 feet.
- New east-west connection between the extensions of 1st Street and The Strand (known as 1st and Strand connector) with a ROW width of 70 feet. This new east-west portion of The Strand will be in direct alignment with the street grid in the Nob Hill neighborhood.
- An effective grid of streets or access ways radiating from 1st Street, providing regular gaps in development to allow public riverfront access and views. The southernmost access way should be aligned with a view of Mt. Hood from the property and from the adjacent bluffs.

FIGURE 5-1. FRAMEWORK PLAN



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT LAND USE TYPES



Light Industrial/Marine Commercial



Light Manufacturing/Brewery



Restaurant



Mix of Uses



Civic/Institutional



Hotel



Apartments



Retail

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

- Realignment and improvement of the existing stairs that currently extend from the east end of Tualatin Street down toward 1st Street and the Veneer Property.
- Formation of large new development parcels accessed from this grid of new streets and access ways.
- Dedication of a significant new greenway open space along the entire length of the property's Columbia River frontage, with a minimum width of 50 feet and an approximate or minimum size of at least six acres.
- An extension or enlargement of the existing Columbia View Park to the south, creating a contiguous park that allows for growth in programmed activities at the park and potential growth of play areas or active sports.
- A continuous trail through this greenway, from Columbia View Park to the southern end of the Veneer Property at Frogmore Slough, with potential for further extension over an existing rail trestle to the BWP Property.
- Restoration of the riverbank associated with the new greenway.
- Protection and restoration of the steep slopes and cliffs that form the property's western boundary, including portions of Nob Hill Nature Park.
- Building footprints placed on the street edges (or frontage) of development parcels suggest a preferred urban design arrangement that echoes the more traditional urban form of downtown St. Helens and other Oregon towns, rather than an auto-oriented layout that sets buildings back away from the street edge.

Demonstration Plan A

This plan proposes a dramatic new urban open space on the riverfront, extending Columbia View Park south to the future street connecting The Strand and 1st Street. The scale and style of development that exists along The Strand and 1st Street continues onto the property, with small-scale buildings lining the street extensions and facing east of the Columbia River. At the 1st and Strand connector, a large development parcel on its north frontage is shown with a major institutional or civic use such as a museum, healthcare facility, or educational entity. Commercial or retail uses and a restaurant are suggested on the south side of the 1st and Strand connector, providing a level of urban activity and energy that can form the heart of the new neighborhood. The 1st and Strand connector terminates in a public plaza with a pier extending over the Columbia River. A trail along the riverbank intersects with this plaza and continues south, intersecting with public access ways at two locations with small plazas and overlooks the river's edge. At the south end of the property in this Demonstration Plan, a small marina is proposed with a brewery or restaurant on the upland property, including outdoor seating. On the east side of 1st Street, new uses are shown arranged to maximize view frontage to the river while providing additional surface parking to complement on-street parking and the surface lots west of 1st St.

Demonstration Plan B

This plan illustrates a slightly different configuration of uses on the property. New buildings line the extensions of 1st and The Strand. The 1st and Strand connector will still be an active core for the neighborhood, perhaps with more retail or commercial uses. In this plan, a new restaurant is shown on the east side of The Strand, providing a dramatic site surrounded by public access, including the extended greenway trail. In place of a pier, a large overlook plaza is shown at the end of The Strand. An option is shown for a Waterfront Special Use Area (see Figure 5.1) that proposes additional development east of the Strand, recognizing that these parcels will hold much potential appeal for certain destination uses, including a brewery, restaurant, café, or other commercial use. This type of use could also help create activity on

DEMONSTRATION PLANS

In addition to the fundamental infrastructure improvements proposed in the Framework Plan, this document includes two illustrative plans that provide examples or “demonstrations” of how future development is envisioned by the community. These demonstration plans include the following consistent components:

- Framework Street extensions are illustrated with trees and sidewalks to provide a sense of the character of these future streets.
- West of the 1st Street extension, surface parking lots are proposed with shade trees. This parking will be available to serve future development use to the east of 1st Street, and can be replaced with buildings if market conditions change in the future.
- Generally, new development is shown as simple building envelopes that are sized to reflect current real estate market trends for residential and commercial footprints.

FIGURE 5-2. DEMONSTRATION PLAN A



FIGURE 5-3. DEMONSTRATION PLAN B



5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

the waterfront, a place to relax and enjoy the views, and could help to keep “eyes” on the expanded Columbia View Park, making it safer for the community. This Waterfront Special Use Area should include additional development regulations to ensure that future buildings provide ample public access as well as building and site design that are sensitive to such a visible location. The plan also shows a potential mix of uses between 1st Street and the greenway park, but in this demonstration, the buildings provide more frontage on 1st Street, with semi-public courtyards facing the river and effectively enlarging the size of the waterfront open space. At the property's south end, a Marina is also demonstrated, along with a destination use such as a hotel or restaurant.

STREET DESIGN

The two new street cross-sections in the Veneer Property are designed to create a pedestrian-friendly district, maximize safety, increase availability of parking for events, and facilitate public enjoyment of the waterfront and property as a whole. The extension of 1st Street will maintain its designation as a Collector (per the City's 2011 Transportation Systems Plan), and the extension of The Strand is proposed as a new “festival street,” with special paving and booth space that can be closed to vehicles during events.



All new streets should reflect Complete Street design principles: walkable, bikeable, and green.



Green parking lots with trees and stormwater planters.



Low-impact stormwater treatment along pedestrian accessway.



Pedestrian accessway.

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

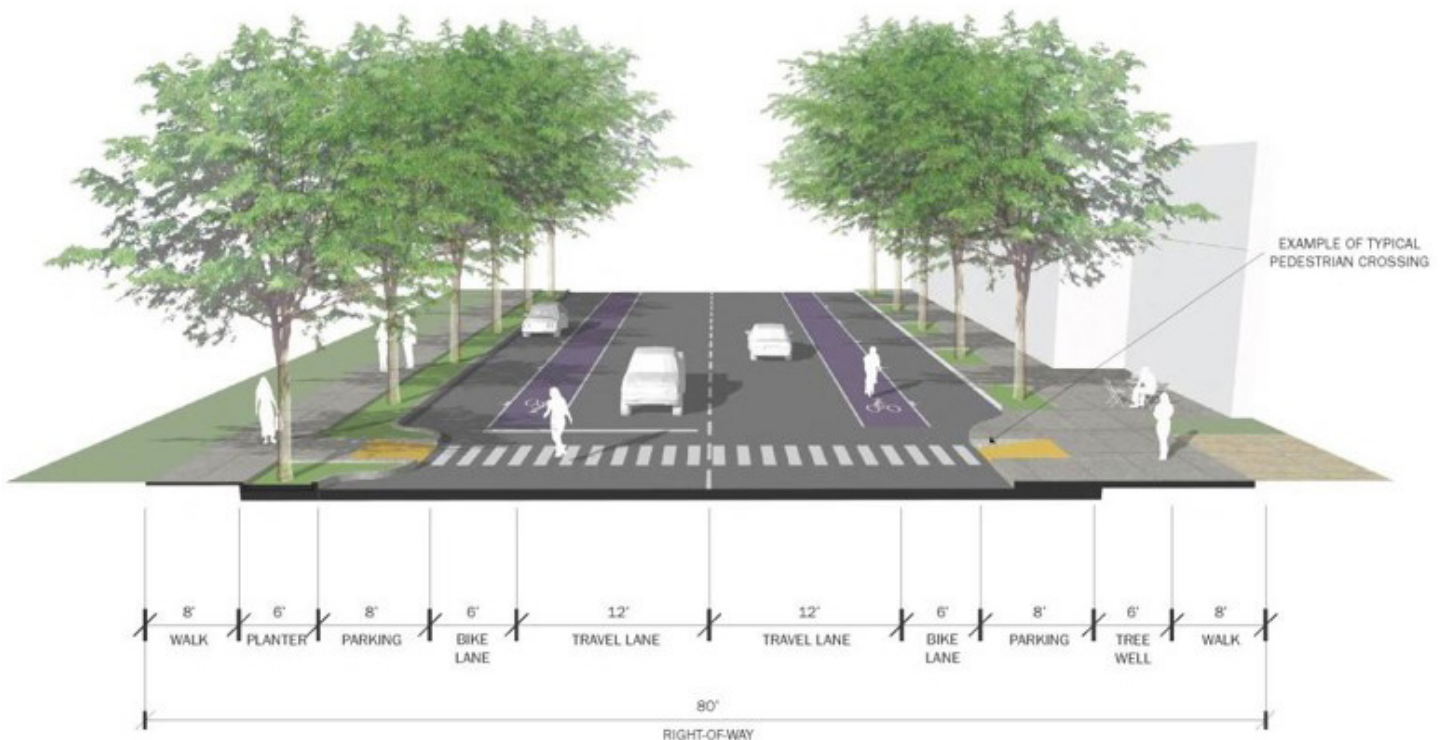
1st Street

The extension of the 1st Street collector is shown with a modified ROW width of 80 feet to allow for on-street parking and buffered bike lanes to maximize cyclist safety. On the west side of the street, continuous planter strips with street trees and stormwater treatment swales will create a green edge between the street and the surface parking lots proposed at the base of the bluff. On the east side, adjacent to future development, street trees can be planted in tree wells or with tree grates to create a more urban pedestrian environment and wider, effective sidewalk width.



FIGURE 5-4. 1ST STREET CROSS SECTION

S 1ST STREET CROSS-SECTION - BIKE LANES ADJACENT TO TRAVEL LANES



5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

The Strand Festival Street

The Strand festival street cross-section shows a ROW width of 70 feet—20 feet wider than its Local Street designation—to allow for additional event space and amenities. The festival street includes two travel lanes and on-street parking on either side of the street: parallel parking on the west side and angled parking on the east side facing the new greenway and river view. This was designed based on community desire for space to park on rainy days and watch the river go by. These on-street parking spaces would also double as booth space for events such as markets, fairs, art walks, or other programming, as shown in Figure 5-5.

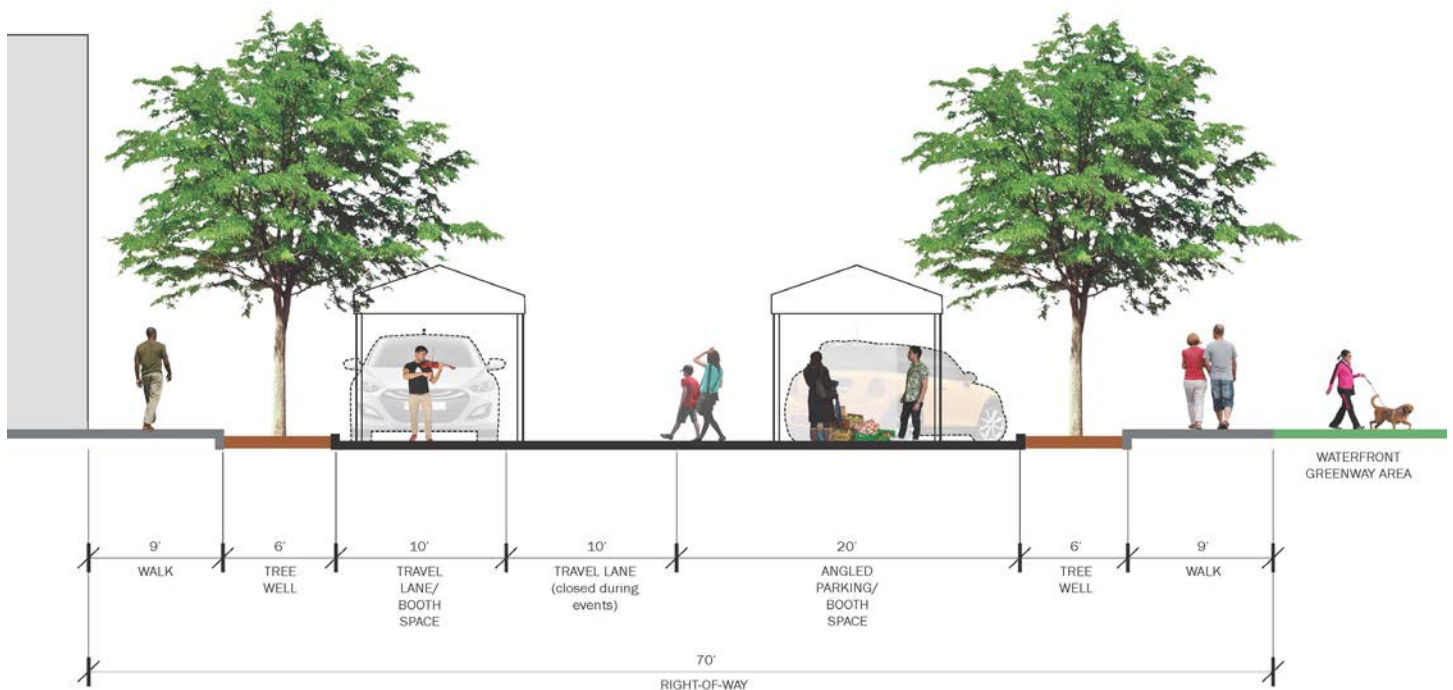


Above: A “festival street” extension of The Strand could be closed to vehicular traffic for special events or markets.



Left: Angled parking on the riverward side of The Strand festival street could provide a place to view the water on rainy days.

FIGURE 5-5. THE STRAND CROSS SECTION



5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

GREENWAY DESIGN ELEMENTS

The new public waterfront greenway on the Veneer Property will provide at least six acres of continuous open space along the river's edge, emphasizing public access to the river as the highest priority for the property. The greenway area will provide opportunity for a range of different active and passive recreational space. This could include gardens, lawns, natural play structures, designated areas for dogs, and other amenities. Access to the water's edge will also be incorporated in the greenway design, whether through creation of a beach (if desired and feasible) or through smaller areas accessed by trails down from the top of the bank. Specific designs for the area will be determined with public input when the City implements the greenway project.

A new waterfront trail will be a central element to the new greenway area. It will connect to Columbia View Park at the north and lead to the southern end of the Veneer Property, where a future connection over the existing rail trestle can be made further south, onto the BWP

Property and beyond. The trail and its offshoots may vary in width and material, and will be punctuated by areas for amenities like seating, viewpoints, and overlooks at each east-west connection back to 1st Street. These connections or public access ways will be required as part of future development, and will be pedestrian streets with access for service and emergency vehicles only.

Along with human use of the waterfront, habitat for fish and wildlife will also be integral to complete improvements to the Veneer Property. Currently, passers-by can observe osprey nests at the south of the Veneer Property's waterfront. The water's edge should remain a viable habitat area for osprey and other wildlife. This can be accomplished through appropriate restoration of the riverbank to a native vegetation structure and by restoring shoreline habitat—for example, upland portions of the bank can be planted to improve the water quality of runoff, and the water's edge can be restructured to provide shaded, cool-water refuge for aquatic wildlife.



A rendering of a future greenway space along the Veneer Property waterfront.

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

MARINA

A number of boating-related uses have been suggested for the southern end of the Veneer Property to complement and energize proposed development. This location is relatively protected from prevailing northwest and eastern winds, and is not subject to currents from the main channel of the Columbia River, or the Willamette's Multnomah Channel. Although the site is not particularly suited to marine-related industrial uses, it could be developed to provide an amenity for residents of the new waterfront community, a better-protected, permanent moorage for other local residents, as well as new entertainment and service amenities for cruising boaters from other areas of the Portland marketplace.

The St. Helens regional boat moorage market seems to have nearly recovered from its pre-recession slump, with some slow growth occurring in mid-size (>30') and larger boats (>40'). Most of the moorage available in this stretch of the Columbia River and Multnomah Channel is old and tired. Newer facilities, such as McCuddy's Big Oak Marina (12 miles south of St. Helens), are generally exhibiting a higher demand than the older facilities. Initial

plans for the marina could focus on accommodating and attracting these larger vessels as permanent tenants, because there seems to be some unfulfilled demand for larger slips in the Portland regional market that are attractive to boaters with large investments in this lifestyle.

A new moorage facility in this location could generate strong synergy with upland source of entertainment (such as a brewery or restaurant). The combination could become a second focus for community activities, an attractive feature for marketing the new residential neighborhood and a drawing card for visitors arriving on land as well as water. The upland facility could be designed to include restrooms and showers for visiting boaters. It could also include a small supply shop and convenience market, a marine maintenance and detailing service, or other service-based businesses that would benefit from being on the water.

The next steps for implementing a marina on the Veneer Property are discussed on Project Sheet C7 in Appendix A.



The marina at Scappoose Bay.

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

BOISE WHITE PAPER: DEVELOPABLE PARCELS

Maintaining industrially zoned land is an important part of the city’s and the region’s economic development strategy. Since the City owns the BWP Property and several other parcels in the northwest portion of the study area, it is important to understand the opportunities that exist to market this land to potential employers. This preliminary analysis provides an overview of where there is concentrated potential for industrial

redevelopment in this area. The analysis looks at all of the industrial parcels that are vacant or underutilized, and that are in or adjacent to the study area. For this analysis, “underutilized” means that the ratio of improvement to land value is 50% or less. The analysis grades how developable the parcels are based on the factors described in Table 5-1. A higher score means there are fewer barriers to developing the parcel. This includes approximately 560 acres of industrial land, and a total of 65 parcels.

TABLE 5-1. BWP PROPERTY DEVELOPABLE PARCELS CRITERIA AND SCORING

| FACTOR | GRADING | SCORES |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Site Characteristics | | |
| Acreage | Based on size of parcel; based on market demand for larger industrial parcels | 2: 21+ acres 1: 6–20 acres 0: 0–5 acres |
| Ownership | Based on whether or not the parcel was already owned by the City | 1: City-Owned 0: Other Owner |
| Vacant | Based on whether or not the parcel is currently vacant | 1: Vacant 0: Not Vacant |
| Underutilized | Based on whether or not the parcel is currently underutilized | 1: Underutilized 0: Not Underutilized |
| Transportation | | |
| Proximity to US 30 | Based on the parcel’s distance from US 30 | 2: < ¼ mi 1: ¼ – 1 mi 0: >1 mi |
| Utilities | | |
| Water | Based on parcel’s proximity to existing water utilities | 2: 0–250 ft |
| Sewer | Based on parcel’s proximity to existing sewer utilities | 1: 251–1000 ft |
| Stormwater | Based on parcel’s proximity to existing stormwater utilities | 0: 1000+ ft |
| Environmental | | |
| Wetland | Based on whether or not the parcel was in a wetland area | |
| Floodplain | Based on whether or not the parcel was in the FEMA 100-year floodplain | 1: No |
| Critical Habitat Area | Based on whether or not the parcel was in a critical habitat area | 0: Yes |
| Contamination | Based on whether or not there is suspected or known contamination on the property | |

5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

The historic industrial use of this property, its separation from downtown, and its proximity to OR US 30 make the BWP property suited to accommodate future industrial development. The parcels within the BWP property were evaluated to determine how developable they are. The analysis included an assessment of the parcel conditions, proximity to US 30, access to utilities, and environmental constraints (the full score table is available in Appendix B).

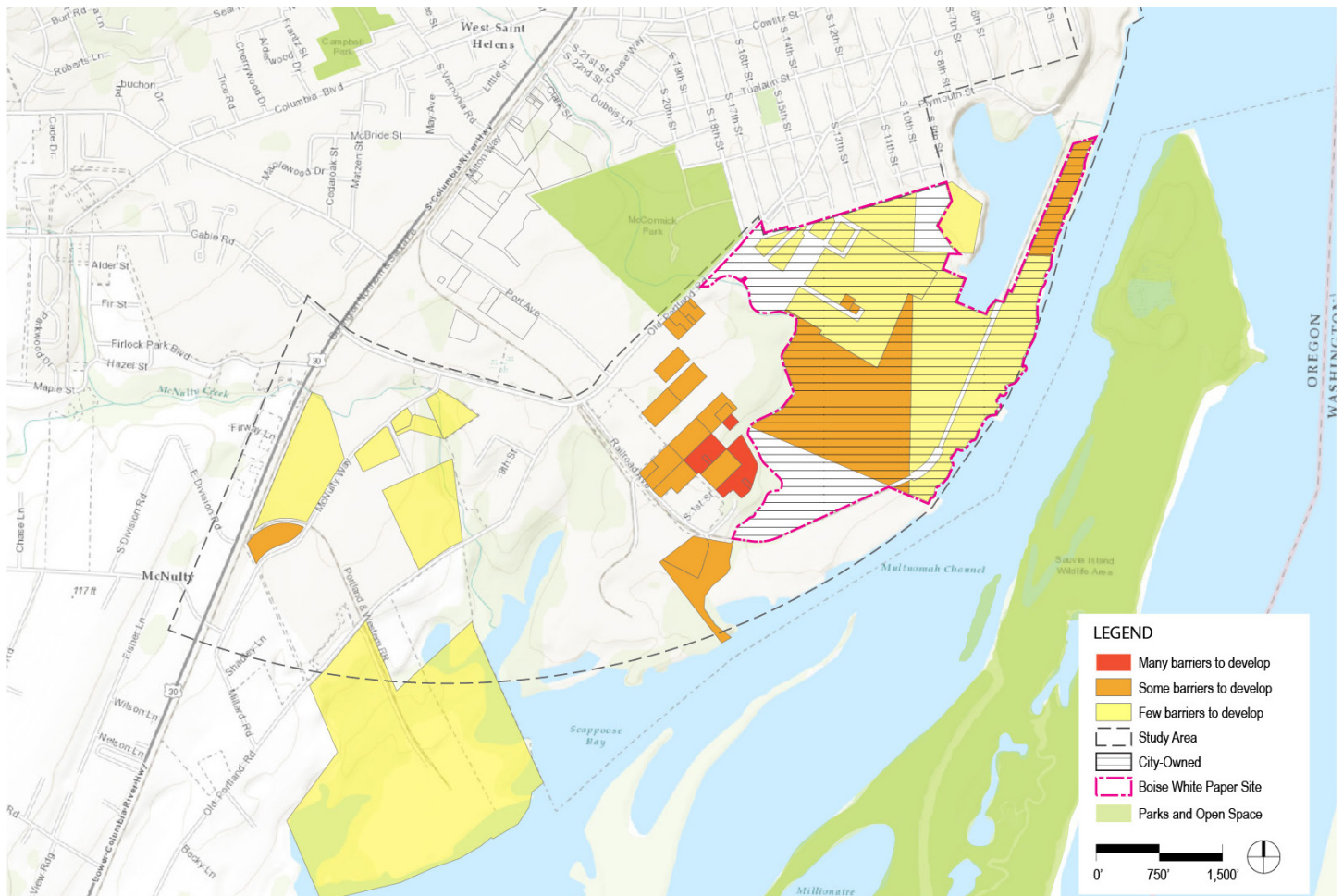
Figure 5-6 shows the scoring of the parcels. The primary findings from this analysis are:

- **Of the 13 City-owned parcels, 8 have few barriers to development.** This means that the City will need to use these findings to address the remaining barriers and make these properties more marketable. This might include aggregating properties that are too small for the industrial market, updating the

riparian designation in the St. Helens Municipal Code (SHMC), and improving transportation connectivity to parcels farther from US 30.

- **The average size of City-owned parcels is 21.4 acres.** Most of the City-owned parcels are large and would be attractive to future industrial employers. The smaller parcels the City owns are in close proximity and could be aggregated into a larger property that would be more attractive for redevelopment.
- **Many of the BWP Property parcels have known or suspected contamination.** The unknown degree of contamination is a deterrent for future development. It is important to communicate to potential developers the protections provided under the environmental indemnification in effect on the BWP Property parcels.

FIGURE 5-6. BOISE WHITE PAPER DEVELOPABLE PARCEL ANALYSIS



5.2 PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

- **Many of the BWP Property parcels are in a wetland, riparian, and/or critical habitat area.** These designations will require a future developer to go through a sensitive lands analysis and may act as a disincentive. It would be beneficial for the City to re-evaluate these designations on properties that have had a long history of industrial use and no longer support these sensitive environmental conditions.
- **There are many developable parcels closer to US 30.** As shown in Figure 5-6, there are many developable parcels that are closer to US 30 than the City-owned parcels. To counteract this, the City will need to address any transportation issues that inhibit traffic flow through to its parcels and support these improvements with way-finding infrastructure. A marketing strategy should be developed to make the parcels more attractive to developers. City ownership can be an asset in that the City can offer incentives, such as an expedited permitting process for redevelopment of these parcels.

Further review may be required to determine if parcels are lots of record.

5.3 STUDY AREA

The study area was evaluated to determine what off-site improvements are needed to facilitate redevelopment of the waterfront. It is likely that the Veneer Property will be developed in phases, starting at the north end to create synergy between the new development and the existing downtown. To support development, the City can do the following:

- **Put out a Request for Information or Qualifications (RFI or RFQ) to prospective developers rather than a Request for Proposal (RFP).** Since the layout and type of development on the Veneer Property will remain flexible under the adopted Framework Plan, it makes more sense to put out an RFI or RFQ, which will allow the developer to create a vision for the property with the City and the community.
- **Compile a one-page sheet describing key existing conditions in the community.** This could include demographics, school enrollment, median household income, vacancy rates, etc., which will give potential developers a sense of the community context.
- **Consider the range of financial tools the City can leverage.** Some tools include an urban renewal district, a vertical-housing tax abatement zone, and a development permit fee-relief policy.
- **Show dedication to revitalization.** This plan includes a list of projects to support redevelopment. The City should complete pre-development projects (e.g., activating the downtown business association, the St. Helens Economic Development Corporation or SHEDCO) to show that the City and the community are dedicated to redevelopment.
- **Support residential development downtown.** Currently the downtown area has very little residential development, which minimizes the demand for retail and other amenities, especially after 5pm. Adding residential development means creating 24-hour demand in the downtown area, which will support the existing businesses and encourage more employers to relocate to downtown.
- **Prioritize employment in the appropriate areas.** Having a major employer in the area would create another reason for people to live downtown. However, this type of development is better suited to the BWP Property and surrounding vacant and underutilized properties. The Veneer Property is a unique community asset, and should be reserved as a public asset and a space for vibrant redevelopment.
- **Expand art and cultural activities in downtown.** This will help create a sense of place and demonstrate community pride.

5.4 TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS

In order for development to occur, it is imperative to improve transportation connections to and through the Vener Property and the downtown area for pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles. These physical improvements need to be coupled with a way-finding strategy so that people know to turn off the highway or pull up their boats to get to this area. The following projects are discussed in more detail on their individual project sheets in Appendix A, but are important transportation elements in the larger context of the study area (see Figure 5-7 below).

- **Old Portland Road/Gable Road.** A realignment of this intersection and installation of a traffic signal to encourage motorists to use McNulty Way rather than Old Portland Road to travel between US 30 and the St. Helens downtown and waterfront redevelopment area.
- **Old Portland Road/Plymouth Street.** A realignment of Old Portland Road, Plymouth Street, or installation of a three-, four-, or five-leg roundabout in order to better accommodate large delivery vehicles that frequently travel through this area and to provide better visibility.

- **Old Portland Road/Millard Road.** Increase the turning radius in the northeast corner of the intersection to accommodate the swept path of large vehicles turning from Old Portland Road onto Millard Road.
- **Plymouth Improvements.** The segment of Plymouth Street, located between S. 6th Street and the Vener Property, is relatively narrow due to embankments on the north and south sides of the roadway, as well as the waste-water treatment area and associated facilities on the south side of the roadway. Increased pedestrian activity and bicycle activity are anticipated along the roadway corridor as the Vener Property redevelops and connectivity to the downtown area is improved. Improvements could include a shoulder, a bicycle lane, a sidewalk, and landscaping.

Note that the new traffic signal and intersection improvements listed above are not currently listed in the City's 2011 Transportation Systems Plan or any addendum thereof.

FIGURE 5-7. TRANSPORTATION CONNECTION OPTIONS



COLUMBIA
VIEW
PARK

PHASE I



IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

The Framework Plan’s vision for an active and attractive mixed-use development along the waterfront cannot be achieved without the commitment of the City and private partners. The City must invest in the waterfront park, roads, and other infrastructure to provide the foundation for a great community. Private developers will invest in high-quality vertical development: the housing units, retail space, and other development that create a vibrant destination. This implementation strategy details how to move from the framework vision to reality, pay for infrastructure, and coordinate the efforts of many partners.

This implementation framework focuses on the Veneer Property but includes all of the larger programmatic and off-site improvements necessary to support waterfront redevelopment. It increases certainty for potential private-sector partners and developers by demonstrating that the City is committed to smart implementation, has carefully considered funding and phasing for infrastructure and development on the property, and has done what it can to set the table for a successful partnership.

The City does not have the resources to develop the Veneer Property on its own and will need partners that can participate in vertical development and make investments that help to promote the area as a whole. The City’s goal is to leverage limited city resources to

The Role of Public-Private Partnerships on the Veneer Property

A public-private partnership on the Veneer Property will allow the City to best support development on the property over time, through phased investments in infrastructure and open space that are coordinated with private development. The public sector will have the greatest leverage near the beginning of a market cycle (not at the peak, as it appears to be at the time of this Action Planning process), when construction costs are lowest and when developers are seeking new projects.

generate the largest positive impact for the community. Table 6-1 shows the roles for different partners in advancing the implementation of the framework plan.

These partners will work together in three main near-term actions: (1) Attract a Developer; (2) Clarify Development Regulations; (3) Develop a Funding Plan. The remainder of this section provides detail on these actions; project sheets in Appendix A provide more detail about these actions, as well as the specific infrastructure improvements that are needed on and off-site to support development.

TABLE 6-1. PARTNERS

| PARTNER | ROLE |
|--------------------------------|--|
| LEADS | |
| City of St. Helens | Coordinate all implementation actions; lead efforts to improve the waterfront and public sites; provide funding for infrastructure to support new private development; initiate and lead interactions with private developer(s). |
| Developer Partner | Bring private capital to invest in new waterfront development that aligns with the City’s vision; create a development master plan that refines the ideas for private development contained in this Framework Plan. |
| PARTNERS | |
| SHEDCO and Downtown Businesses | Implement the Main Street Program to promote the Riverfront District through business outreach and pursuit of grants. Attract and retain businesses in St. Helens. |
| Community Members | Provide input on connections to the property through the Nob Hill Neighborhood. Consider creation of a “Friends of the Waterfront” composed of local neighbors, businesses, and other champions for the waterfront. |

6.1 ACTION 1: ATTRACT A DEVELOPER

Action Summary

The recommended approach for development is to market the property, release a Request for Information or Qualifications to interested developers, and to work with a selected developer to produce a Master Plan that leads to a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) that outlines roles and investment responsibilities for the development partner and the City.

See Appendix C for Alternative Development Approaches.

The size and scale of the property is such that any development approach will take several, and perhaps many years to fully implement and will require continued City management. Economic cycles will also affect the pace of development and the land-disposition process, the availability of tax revenues from new site development, and the risks associated with any City investment obligations. It will be critical that the City find a trusted, capable development partner and enter into a legally binding DDA to move this project forward.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH: DISPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

Given the potential risks and considerable public expense of infrastructure to support developable parcels, we recommend that the City pursue a DDA as it moves forward with development. A DDA is a legally binding agreement that ties a developer to performance

requirements (which may include requirements for investments in infrastructure, development timelines, or other requirements) in exchange for the City agreeing to fund and otherwise support redevelopment.

DDAs are typically organized around a detailed property Master Plan that outlines building-level details and engineering specifications for roads and other infrastructure. The City would work with a developer to create a master plan for the initial phase(s) of development on the property, and would time investment in public infrastructure so that it supports and leverages private investment in buildings to ensure efficient and effective property development that aligns with the Framework Plan goals. This entails entering into a DDA with a developer to create a Master Plan for the property that will address phasing, specifics of “special-use areas,” use mix, etc., as well as identifying who will pay for which pieces of infrastructure with which tools. Steps include:

STEP 1: PROPERTY MARKETING

The City should initiate a set of informal property-marketing actions, including setting up a development opportunity website, developing materials that clearly communicate the opportunity available on the Veneer Property, drafting press releases on the planning work to-date, and hosting informal tours with developers.

STEP 2: DEVELOP A SOLICITATION THAT OUTLINES KEY PUBLIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE PROPERTY

The City has considerable, but not complete, influence over the eventual development form for private development on the property, and needs to be clear in its requirements and communications with development

TABLE 6-2. PUBLIC-SECTOR DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

| CORE VALUE | DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | |
|---|--|--|
| | Public-Sector “Must-Haves” | Public-Sector “Preferences” |
| Public Access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active open space along the waterfront for pedestrians and bikes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active access to water (i.e., marina, boat launch, beach) |
| Natural and Cultural Heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved natural function of the shoreline Multi-modal connectivity (to street grid and transportation network) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited impact on view sheds |
| Sustainable Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelopment supports existing businesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of residential with some retail; possible residential-compatible employment uses |

6.1 ACTION 1: ATTRACT A DEVELOPER

partners about what it must have and what it desires as a result of public participation in funding infrastructure and development on the property. Through the framework plan process, the City developed a set of key objectives that stemmed from outreach with residents, as shown in Table 6-2. The City will want to refer to these objectives as it considers its approach to attracting developer(s) to the property.

STEP 3: DISPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

Public-private partnerships work best when the public partner is clear about its investment goals. The City has developed an initial set of expectations that it will consider as it evaluates potential private development proposals, shown in Table 6-2. These criteria respond to the overall guiding principles for the project and were developed in coordination with the WAC.

The DDA should include “claw-back” language that enables the City to ensure performance or to have beneficial property reversion rights.

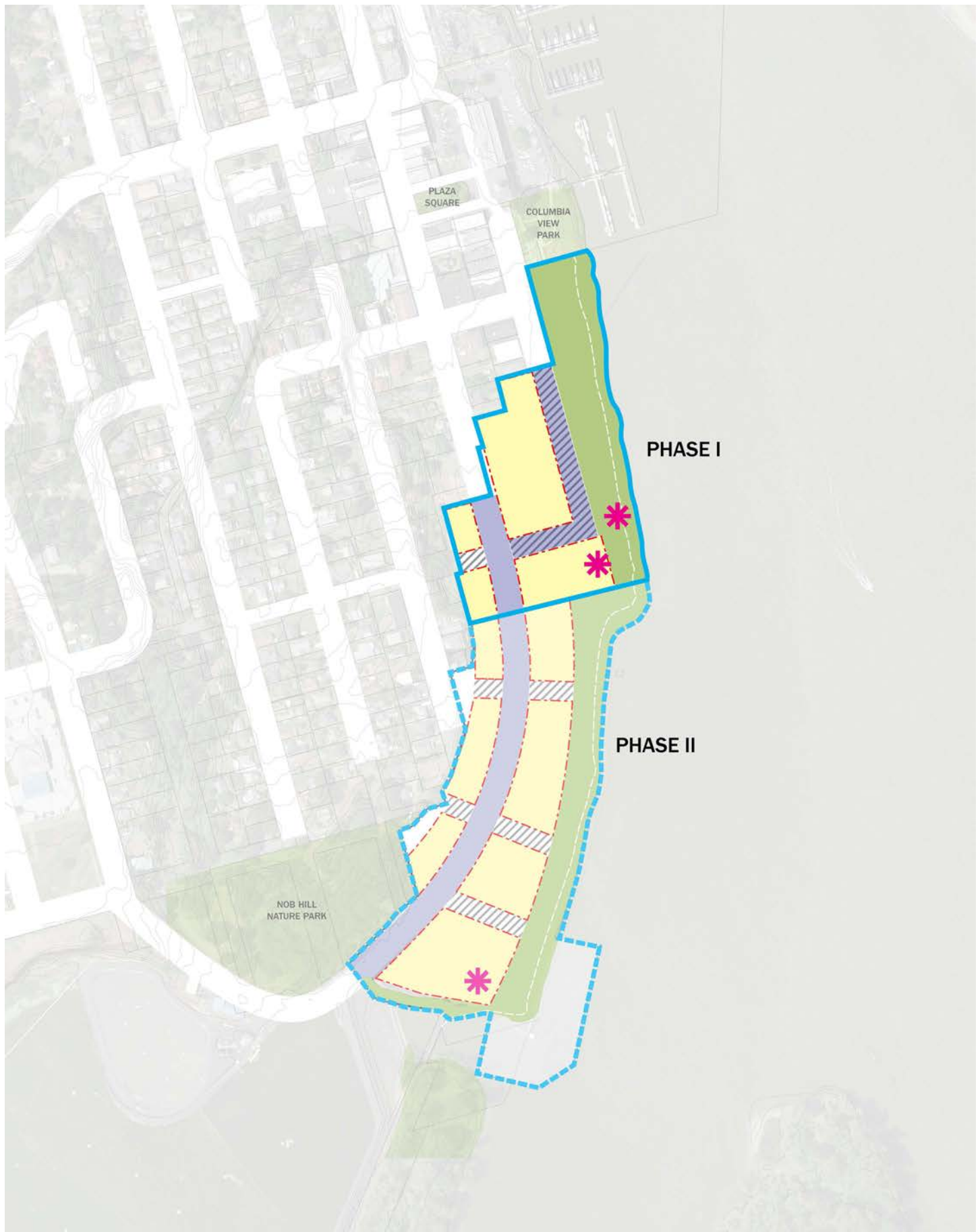
STEP 4: MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY FOR FUTURE PHASES

The City is unlikely to see all private development move forward at once, given current development market conditions and the City’s ability to fund investments in infrastructure and open space. While the details of the phasing should be worked out in partnership with a selected developer, we have suggested a first phase for planning and budgeting purposes. Based on interviews with development professionals and outreach with residents and downtown business owners, the most logical place for the City to focus new development is closest to existing shops and civic uses in the Riverfront District.

- Phase 1: The first phase will most likely be north of the 1st and Strand connector, to build off existing momentum in downtown St. Helens. Phasing development will allow for initial projects to build off existing energy and investments.
- Phase 2: The area south of the 1st and Strand connector is likely to take longer to develop and will leverage the development created in Phase 1, as well as the investment in waterfront open space.
- Long-term: A long-term strategy for the waterfront includes repurposing the waste-treatment lagoon by filling it in. This creates the potential for additional development or public amenities on and near the property. One source of income for implementation could be tipping fees for fill.

The recommended development phasing is shown in Figure 6-1.

FIGURE 6-1. PHASING CONSIDERATIONS



6.2 ACTION 2: ADDRESS THE ZONING CODE

Action Summary

Once the City has determined its preferred development approach, it should ensure that the zoning code is best suited to enable that approach. Options available to the City range from small changes to reflect the Framework Plan to a full re-zone of the Veneer Property.

The City should ensure that its development code is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of development types while still ensuring an appropriate level of control over the outcomes and fulfilling the goals of the Framework Plan. Uncertainty, inconsistency, and complexity in the code can have negative, even fatal, outcomes on development prospects. Any changes to the zoning should yield a simple solution that references the Framework Plan and provides control to the City and flexibility to the developer.

DEVELOPMENT AND DDA

The Waterfront Redevelopment Overlay District (WROD) was established in 2009 (SHMC 17.32.180) to provide an alternative zoning and development option that may be used to implement City goals and policies for economic development on the Veneer Property at a time when the property was not under City control. The WROD relies on a DDA for implementation since it is a “floating zone,” which does not supersede the underlying Heavy Industrial (HI) zone until the DDA is approved. According to the WROD, “the development agreement shall include a development plan or plans that has/have been approved through a site development review and/or conditional use permit and that has/have been revised as necessary to comply with city standards and applicable conditions of approval. Applicant bears responsibility for the development plan(s).”

The WROD could be modified in a number of ways to help accommodate development envisioned through the Framework Plan. At a minimum, it would need to be amended to include reference to the goals and principles of this plan. Additional modifications could be made to reduce reliance on the standards and processes it currently enforces.

If the City opts for the recommended approach outlined in Action 1, the WROD can be used with minimal modifications. However, it is an imperfect tool to accomplish City goals because it maintains the underlying HI zone and includes many burdensome and complicated standards.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH: REZONE

In order to provide certainty, clarity and simplicity to the development process, it is recommended that the City remove the WROD and change the underlying HI zone to a new zone that is specifically for the Veneer Property and could be extended south in the future if the lagoon area were to be redeveloped. This new zone would reference the requirements of the Framework Plan and rely on a DDA for implementation. Development requirements not specifically laid out in the Framework Plan or laid out in the DDA will default to City Code. Rezoning will require a legislative process that would be necessary even if the City were only changing language in the existing zones. However, a full zone change will produce a simpler result and will reflect the true long-term expectations for the property’s redevelopment as a vibrant, mixed-use waterfront district.

6.3 ACTION 3: FUND NECESSARY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Action Summary

To create certainty for development, the City should create a comprehensive funding program for the property's infrastructure that includes a combination of urban renewal, state grants, and public-private partnerships.

Based on the findings from the market analysis, investment in new mixed-use development may be difficult for a developer to finance. Limited new multifamily or mixed-use development has occurred in St. Helens in the past decade, and achievable rents in the current market are generally lower than necessary to support the cost of new construction. In that context, a key purpose of this implementation strategy is to increase certainty for developers regarding where and how private development can occur, and what funding tools are available to support investments in infrastructure and new vertical development.

The framework planning process included estimation of infrastructure costs to support redevelopment in Phase 1 and 2 on the Veneer Property, including utilities, road infrastructure, and open space. These costs are summarized in Table 7-3. The magnitude of the costs outlined below points to the need for multiple funding tools to support redevelopment, as no one funding tool will be able to pay for all of the costs. It also means that development will need to be phased and done in partnership with private developers.

As part of the framework planning process, the team explored a variety of possible funding tools (detailed in Appendix D).

TABLE 6-3. COST ESTIMATES

| | PHASE 1 | | PHASE 2 | | TOTAL: LOW | TOTAL: HIGH |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| | Low | High | Low | High | | |
| Site Preparation | \$300,000 | \$400,000 | \$200,000 | \$300,000 | \$500,000 | \$700,000 |
| Utilities | \$1,100,000 | \$1,600,000 | \$700,000 | \$1,200,000 | \$1,800,000 | \$2,800,000 |
| Open Space | \$800,000 | \$1,400,000 | \$4,700,000 | \$7,700,000 | \$5,500,000 | \$9,100,000 |
| Roads | \$1,400,000 | \$1,600,000 | \$800,000 | \$900,000 | \$2,200,000 | \$2,500,000 |
| Bank Enhancement | \$400,000 | \$500,000 | \$400,000 | \$500,000 | \$800,000 | \$1,000,000 |
| Off-site Roads | \$0 | \$0 | \$700,000 | \$3,600,000 | \$700,000 | \$3,600,000 |
| Habitat/Riparian Enhancements | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Site Remediation | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Ped/Bike Connections to Site | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Development Incentives | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Known Costs Total | \$4,000,000 | \$5,500,000 | \$7,500,000 | \$14,200,000 | \$11,500,000 | \$19,700,000 |

6.3 ACTION 3: FUND NECESSARY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

RECOMMENDED FUNDING TOOLS

The Veneer Property currently has no utilities or transportation infrastructure. The City is exploring several possible funding sources to pay for the investments identified in the Framework Plan. The City is exploring the following funding source possibilities:

- **Urban Renewal.** This tool will likely be fundamental to the ability for the city to realize the Framework Plan vision in the near term, given the scope of the infrastructure improvements needed and the need to attract a development partner with targeted incentives. The City has not yet fully explored the feasibility of urban renewal in this area.
- **Grants.** There are several transportation and open-space grants that could help to fund key pieces of the infrastructure needed to support development on the Veneer Property.
- **Public-Private Partnership.** As part of a DDA and master plan, the City will negotiate the funding of individual components of the site plan with its development partner. These improvements could use tools such as a Local Improvement District to levy assessments on surrounding property owners that benefit from that improvement.
- **Tipping Fees from Lagoon Repurposing.** The City is evaluating the feasibility of repurposing its existing wastewater lagoon as an interim, confined disposal facility that would accept fill. Income generated through fee collection could be applied to public improvements on the Waterfront properties.

Appendix D provides detailed information on these possible funding tools.

6.4 PROJECTS

Table 6-4 provides a summary of the project sheet compiled in Appendix A. These projects are intended to guide the City to and through the redevelopment of the waterfront, and include both general programs as well as phase-specific projects. These are the next steps for the City and the St. Helens community to take to achieve the future they began envisioning with the SDAT in 2014.

Phasing Assumptions

- Short-term: 0-5 years, set the site up for development
- Development Phase 1: 5-10 years, north of The Strand
- Development Phase 2: 10+ years, south of The Strand

Cost Assumptions

- Low: Under \$200,000
- Med: \$201,000 - \$1,000,000
- High: \$1,000,000+

TABLE 6-4. PROJECT SHEET SUMMARY

| | SHORT NAME | DESCRIPTION | PHASING | PARTNERS | TOTAL COST |
|-------------------------|---|--|------------|---|--------------|
| PROGRAMS | | | | | |
| A1 | Site marketing | Develop a marketing plan for site and Framework Plan to attract developers and investment. | Short-term | City | TBD |
| A2 | Funding toolkit | Develop a toolkit to enable the City to 1) be receptive to development opportunities and 2) create ongoing relationships with Developers. | Short-term | City, TBD | TBD |
| A3 | Entitlements | Dedicate the ROW for local street improvements, plat parcels based on greenway location. Develop a mixed-use/special zone for the Waterfront to implement development standards established in the Plan. | Short-term | City | Low |
| A4 | Branding and Main Street Organization Support | Create and or support new main street activities in partnership with local community groups to attract residents and visitors to downtown. | Short-term | City, Chamber, SHEDCO/Main St. Program, Travel Oregon | TBD |
| A5 | URA Creation | Adopt an urban renewal area to generate tax increment revenue to pay for area improvement projects. | Short-term | City, SHEDCO, etc. | TBD |
| A6 | Expand storefront improvement program | Enhance the existing historic façade improvement program to create feeling of “investment” in area. | Short-term | City, SHEDCO, State Historic Preservation Office | TBD |
| A7 | Repurpose Wastewater Lagoon | Turn lagoon into landfill to receive fill material from various sources to create new upland waterfront land for development and revenue generation. | Long-term | Multiple | \$30-\$40M |
| A8 | Public Parking Management Strategy | The City will develop a parking management strategy that outlines policies and programs that result in more efficient use of parking resources. | P1 | City | Low |
| PHASE 1 PROJECTS | | | | | |
| B1 | Site Preparation | Grading, embankment and compaction, and erosion control on the entire site. | P1, P2 | City, private developers | \$500-\$700K |
| B2 | Site Remediation | Address localized hot spots on the site in coordination with development. | P1, P2 | City, Boise Cascade | TBD |

6.4 PROJECTS

TABLE 6-4. PROJECT SHEET SUMMARY (CONT.)

| | SHORT NAME | DESCRIPTION | PHASING | PARTNERS | TOTAL COST |
|-------------------------|--|--|---------|--|---------------------------------------|
| PHASE 1 PROJECTS | | | | | |
| B3 | Sanitary Sewer Structure | Install phased sewer facilities to service new development, including force mains, gravity sewer lines, and two pump stations. | P1, P2 | City, private developers | \$450-\$600K |
| B4 | Stormwater Infrastructure | Install stormwater facilities in phases, including pipes and bioretention facilities. | P1, P2 | City, private developers | \$300-600K |
| B5 | Water Distribution Infrastructure | Install pipes and fire hydrants to service new development. | P1, P2 | City, private developers | \$300-\$600K |
| B6 | Franchise Utility Infrastructure | Install underground electrical power, gas, and communications utilities in coordination with new development | P1, P2 | TBD | \$600K-\$1M |
| B7 | Columbia View Park Expansion | Design and construct new 1.3 acre park as an extension of existing Columbia View Park. | P1, P2 | City, Trust for Public Land, etc. | \$840K - \$1.4M |
| B8 | South 1st and the Strand | Construct South 1st Street and The Strand in phases, including sidewalks, intersections, bike lanes. | P1, P2 | City | P1: \$1.4-\$1.6M; P2: \$800-\$910K |
| PHASE 2 PROJECTS | | | | | |
| C1 | Bank Enhancement | Grading, planting, and reinforcement of bank as needed to prevent erosion, restore habitat, support greenway trail and water access and create visual interest along waterfront. | ST, P1 | City, DSL, ODFW, Bonneville Foundation? | Medium to High |
| C2 | Riparian Corridor Enhancement | Create nearshore habitat in shallow offshore areas to create salmon habitat and support potential beach and other river access. | P2 | City, ODFW, DSL | Medium to High |
| C3 | Waterfront Greenway Trail / Park Design | Install greenway trail south of Columbia View, including design, associated furnishings, interpretation and connections to new neighborhood. | P2 | City, private developers, | \$4-\$7 M |
| C4 | Improve Bluff Habitat | Plant and restore the east edge of Nob Hill, as well as base of entire bluff, including any portions of Veneer site to be added to Nature Park. | P2 | City, Friends of Nob Hill Nature Park (check) | TBD |
| C5 | Tualatin Street Plaza | Design public plaza at intersection of Tualatin Street and the Strand. Consider future pier from this location in design. | P2 | City | \$500K-\$700K |
| C6 | Habitat Enhancement/ Public Access | Restore natural area between White Paper Lagoon and Multnomah Channel. Explore options for public access in natural area. | P2 | City, County, Scappoose Bay Watershed | Medium |
| C7 | Marina | Construct a marina on the south end of the Veneer Property, near the entrance to Frogmore Slough. The marina would be privately developed, owned and operated, but at least partly open to the public and available for public use and access. | P2 | Private developer and operator, Department of State Lands, Oregon Marine Board | \$500K-\$1M |

6.4 PROJECTS

TABLE 6-4. PROJECT SHEET SUMMARY (CONT.)

| | SHORT NAME | DESCRIPTION | PHASING | PARTNERS | TOTAL COST |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------|--|---------------|
| TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS | | | | | |
| D1 | Improve trail connection to Nob Hill Nature Park from south of site | Explore alternatives for connecting waterfront greenway to existing trail connections to Nob Hill Nature Park; improve existing trail if necessary. | Short-term | City, Friends of Nob Hill Nature Park, OPHI | Low |
| D2 | Trail connection over restored/renovated trestle to south | Extend trail from downtown to south of the site, providing access to natural areas along Multnomah Channel. | P2 | City, County, City of Portland via Lagoon project? | Medium |
| D3 | Realign and improve Tualatin Street stairway | Widen, rebuild and align existing staircase to new east-west ROW on Veneer site. Install signage/lighting. Tie to 1st St. construction. | TBD | City Partners: Friends and Neighbors of River View | Low to Medium |
| D4 | Wayfinding Improvements | Help people find downtown retail and existing business district. Attract people on Hwy 30 to St. Helens downtown. Integrate corridor master planning effort and other efforts. | Short-term | City, SHEDCO, Main St program | TBD |
| D5 | Old Portland/Gable Improvements | Improve the intersection to better accommodate traffic coming to the Veneer site. | P2 | City | \$250K-\$1.7M |
| D6 | Old Portland/Plymouth | Improve the intersection to better accommodate traffic and serve as a gateway to the site. | P2 | City | \$320K-\$1.8M |
| D7 | Old Portland/Millard | Reconstruct intersection to better accommodate large vehicles. | Short-term or P1 | City | \$60-70K |
| D8 | Plymouth | Improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety along Plymouth Street. | TBD | City | \$100K-\$300K |
| D9 | Plymouth/6th | Install a signage to increase safety. | TBD | City | \$2,000 |