



River Plan/South Reach City Council Hearing

November 4, 2020

 Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Innovation. Collaboration. Practical Solutions.



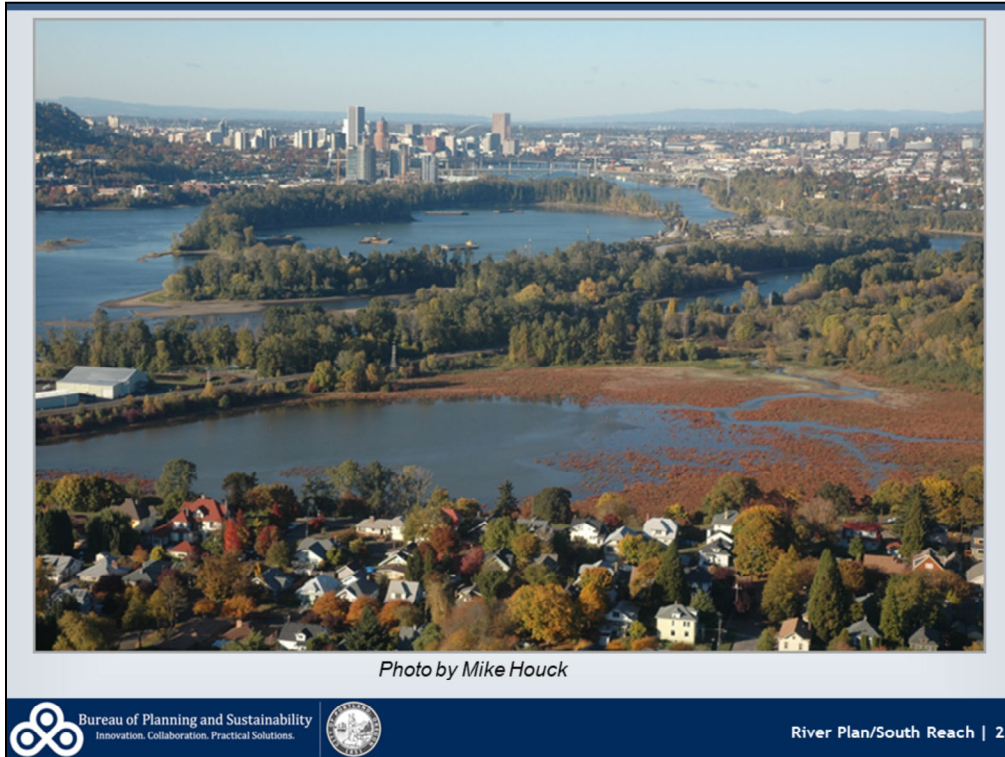


Photo by Mike Houck

Joe talks with this slide on the screen



Sallie:

- Thank you, Mayor and Commissioners, for your time and attention today and to those watching today.
- My name is Sallie Edmunds, and I am pleased to be here to brief you on the River Plan / South Reach.
- In the zoom room today with me is Jeff Caudill who along with Debbie Bischoff served as co project managers until Debbie retired this summer. (We miss you Debbie!)

Also here today are :

BPS staff: Mindy Brooks, Cassie Ballew, and Nicholas Starin

BDS: Stephanie Beckman, Morgan Steele

BES: Kaitlin Lovell

PPR: Maya Agarwal and Brett Horner

Fire: Sean Whalen
PBOT: Courtney Duke

Update to the *Willamette Greenway Plan*

- Vision (Volume 1)
- Policy framework (Volume 1)
- Updated map and zoning regulations (Volume 1)
- Implementation actions (Volume 1)
- Natural and scenic resources protection plans (Volumes 2 and 3)
- Update to *Willamette River Greenway Inventory* (Exhibit E)

The River Plan/South Reach is an update to the 1987 Willamette Greenway Plan.

It is a 20-year plan that includes: a vision, policy framework, updates to Comprehensive Plan policies and the Zoning Code and maps, and implementation actions to be completed by City and other entities/groups.

The plan also contains natural and scenic resources protection plans, which inventory and make recommendations on the protection of these important resources.

Along with the update of the plan we are also updating the Willamette River Greenway Inventory, as required By state planning goal 15.

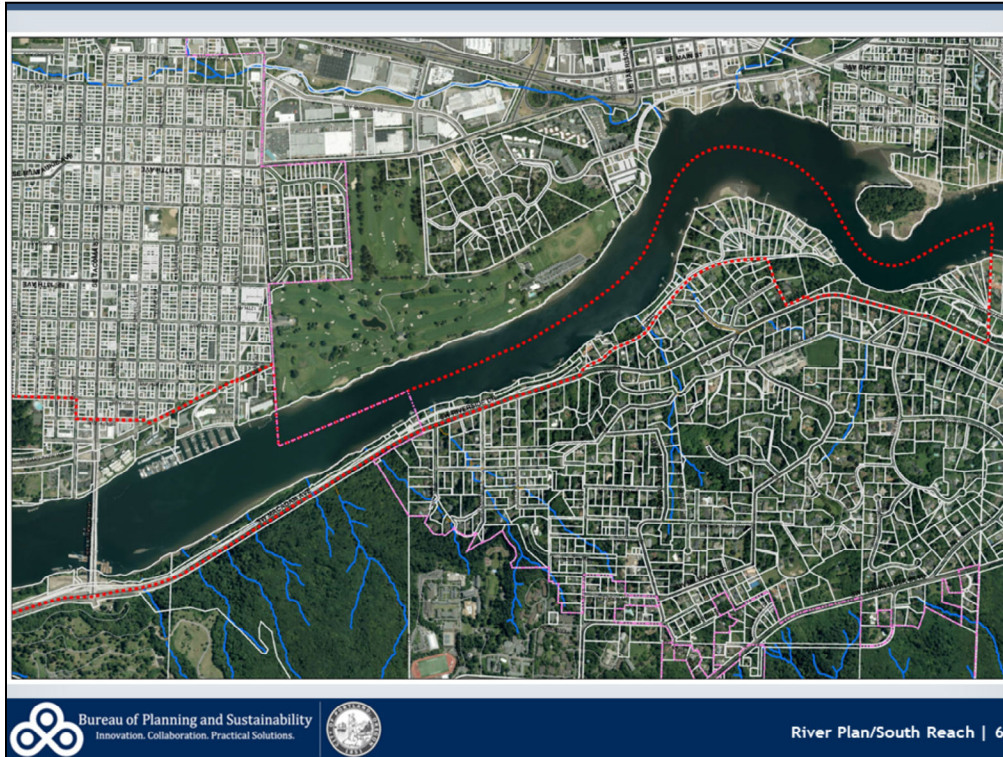


The next two maps show the South Reach project area outlined in red dotted lines.

Basically it stretches from the Ross Island Bridge to just south of the Sellwood Bridge on the east side and from South Waterfront to and including the unincorporated area of Dunthorpe/Riverdale on the west side.

NEXT SLIDE JEFF

This is one of three reaches that we are planning for. We started in the North Reach in 2010., then on to the Central Reach with CC2035 Plan in 2018. Now it is South Reach's turn.



- On this slide you can see the Riverdale / Dunthorpe area on the west side.
- As you may know the City has planning authority for unincorporated Multnomah County pockets such as this.
- After City Council makes their decision on legislative projects such as this, the Multnomah County Council holds a hearing and adopts the same plans.

Policy Guidance

State Planning Goal 15, Willamette Greenway

“To protect, conserve, enhance and maintain the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic, and recreational qualities of lands along the Willamette River as the Willamette River Greenway.”

2035 Comprehensive Plan

Policy 3.81 “Enhance the role of the Willamette River South Reach as fish and wildlife habitat, a place to recreate, and as an amenity for riverfront neighborhoods and others.”

There are a number of guiding documents that provide the framework for the River Plan/South Reach.

Two key ones are **Statewide Planning Goal 15** and **Comp Plan policy 3.81**.

- The City is required to implement plans and development regulations that meet Statewide Planning Goal 15.
- Comp Plan policy 3.81 provides specific guidance about what is unique about the South Reach and how future efforts should shape the area.

Planning Process

- Existing conditions
- Public outreach and engagement
- Willamette River Greenway Inventory at PSC - Spring 2019
- Intergovernmental Review Draft - Summer 2019
- Public Discussion Draft - Fall 2019
- Proposed Draft - Winter/Spring 2020
- Recommended Draft - Fall 2020

Here is a brief summary of our planning process—

- We started off by understanding existing conditions.
- We held numerous public events and meetings where we received comments that informed plan development.
- We produced several drafts of the River Plan/South Reach including an Intergovernmental Review Draft, which invited interested tribes and other governmental partners to review and comment on it.
- Then the drafts that are the standard part of our legislative process.
- We also took the Willamette River Greenway Inventory through the Planning and Sustainability Commission in Spring 2019 but waited to bring it to council until it could travel with the River Plan /South Reach.

Outreach and Engagement



Throughout the process, we held a variety of events and heard from many members of the public. This included people who live, work, recreate and have specific interests in the area.

Events and meetings included: a visioning event, riverfront walks and boat tours, topical meetings on natural resources, recreation and riverfront communities and open houses.

As Laura mentioned we made a special effort to conduct outreach to NW tribes who have long-standing interests in the South Reach's past, present and future, as well as the urban Native community. This included:

- Presentations at NW tribal conference, the City's Tribal Nations Summit, and at the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission.
- Discussions with representatives from Warm Springs; Umatilla Yakama Nation, and the Grand Ronde.
- Collaborated with Judy Bluehorse Skelton from PSU's Indigenous Studies Program to hold an urban native community event at the Native Center
- And as I mentioned we published an Intergovernmental Review Draft, to honor our commitment to government-to-government relations with the tribes and also to provide an opportunity for other governmental partners to review and comment

on the draft before the release of the first public Discussion Draft in October of 2019.

- These efforts provided an opportunity to share project information and gain valuable insights and recommendations from different Native American perspectives. It was very meaningful.

We also coordinated closely with Multnomah County Planning and leadership along the way.

20-YEAR VISION AND URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

One of the first products after our early outreach was development of a 20-year vision and urban design concept.

Urban Design Concept

- Habitat for fish, wildlife, native plants and people
- Safe place to walk, roll, run, paddle, swim, ride and view wildlife.
- Destination for riverfront neighborhoods and visitors

Here is the vision and the urban design concept that emerged from the planning process.

It identifies a variety of key improvements and connections for the area, such as locations for in-river habitat restoration, bicycle and pedestrian connections and boating facilities.



[Jeff starts]

We will now highlight some of the key changes contained in the plan.

As you know, the South Reach is characterized by an abundance of natural resources so watershed health and resilience was a key driver of the plan. There were 4 important objectives related to natural resource management :

- Ensure context-sensitive, climate-resilient development
- Reduce flood risk and expand floodplain habitat
- And to identify key habitat restoration locations

River Overlay Zones

- Replace Greenway overlay zones with River overlay zones
- Either River General (g*) or River Recreational (r*)
- River Environmental (e) on high- and medium-ranked resources and floodplains



An important update is the replacement of the currently-applied Greenway overlay zones with the River overlay zones. The River overlay zones are already applied in the Central City. The application of the River overlay zones will modernize zoning in the area by allowing for approval through standards or land use review and make it more consistent with other environmental zones in the city.

For all properties, either the River General or River Recreational overlay zone will be applied.

The River Recreational overlay is new and will be added to the Zoning Code as a part of this process. The River Recreational overlay zone is applied to public park sites with river-dependent and river-related uses.

The River Environmental overlay zone will be applied to the river and all land within 100 feet of it, high- and medium-ranked riparian resources, the entirety of the floodplain (both developed and undeveloped) and all Special Habitat Areas, which are areas where threatened, endangered and at-risk species (plants, wildlife and fish) have been identified.

In-River and Riverbank Protections

- Establishes a 50-foot river setback
- Updates tree removal allowances
- Expands compliance period for tree removal, mitigation and corrections to violations
- Adds standards for new and existing residential docks



There are a number of key protections proposed for the riverbank (both in water and on land):

1. A 50-foot river setback will be applied throughout the South Reach. As noted in the previous slide, a PSC amendment applied the River Environmental to all land within 100 feet of top of bank, which includes the area 50 feet landward of the river setback.
2. The proposed code removes allowances for tree removal through exemption in the river setback and requires replacement of trees 3 inches and greater elsewhere in the River Environmental overlay zone.
3. A PSC amendment expanded the required compliance periods to 3 years for tree removal, mitigation and simple corrections to violations and up to 5 years as a part of River Review. During this time, applicants are required to submit annual documentation of compliance.
4. Standards for new residential docks require the dock to be than 200 square feet or less and located outside of shallow water habitat. If there are no viable locations for the dock outside of shallow water habitat, docks in shallow water habitat can be approved as a part of River Review.

5. Standards for existing residential docks require the reduction of the dock area by at least 25 percent when 50% or more of the dock's constituent parts is replaced.

Collectively, these changes will expand and improve habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead and strengthen tree canopy and habitat connectivity with upland areas.

Floodplain Management

- Apply River Environmental to all floodplains
- Establish a new Riparian Buffer Area
- Allow future use of mitigation banks



The River Plan / South Reach is the first step in a multi-phase effort to update floodplain development regulations throughout the city. Updates are necessary because the National Marine Fisheries Service, or NMFS, issued a Biological Opinion on FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program in 2016.

The National Flood Insurance Program provides subsidized flood insurance to property owners within the 100-year floodplain (nationwide).

The Biological Opinion determine that the National Flood Insurance Program facilitates floodplain development and negatively impacts threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead species.

The plan includes a number of updates to floodplain regulations :

- As mentioned before, apply the River Environmental overlay zone to both the developed and undeveloped floodplain. In the past, environmental overlay zones have been applied only to the developed floodplain.
- Establish a riparian buffer area, where project applicants must demonstrate significant improvement in at least one floodplain functional value, such as floodplain connectivity [channel complexity, floodplain connectivity and floodplain complexity]. The riparian buffer area is land within the floodplain 170 feet from

ordinary high water and is shown in purple on the aerial photo on the slide.

- The code has been updated to allow for the future use of mitigation banks as an alternative to on-site and other off-site mitigation. This last change would allow for future applicants to purchase credits from certified mitigation banks to offset project impacts.

Additionally, these changes will further the City's efforts in implementing Comprehensive Plan and Climate Action Plan policies and actions.



Recreation was another important consideration for the plan. The South Reach is a recreation hub within the city, offering both land-based and water-based recreation opportunities. Our efforts were guided by four key objectives:

- Identify needed physical and programmatic improvements
- Increase riverfront access
- Strengthen and identify new partnerships for recreational improvements
- Inventory and protect designated scenic resources

Recreation

- Land-based
 - Trail and trail connection/access improvements
 - Limited commercial at 3 parks
 - Willamette Park plan implementation
- Water-based
 - Facility upgrades and new facilities
 - Conduct a public swimming beaches study

There are a number of recreation recommendations within the plan, some land-based and some water-based. For the most part, these recommendations are not regulatory.

The plan recommends a number of trail and access improvements, such as closing gaps in the Greenway trail, investigating the potential for developing a separate bike trail on the west side of the river to reduce conflicts, and identifying neighborhood access ways to improve bike and pedestrian access to the South Reach area.

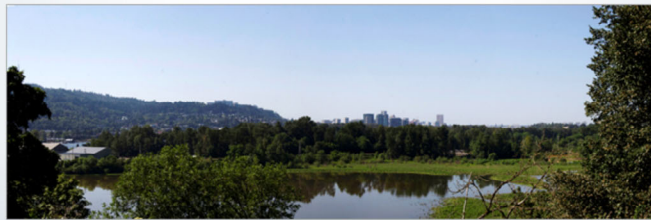
It proposes allowing a limited amount of commercial development at 3 park sites (Sellwood Riverfront Park, Willamette and at the old staff Jennings site on the west end of the Sellwood bridge) to serve recreationalists with small local businesses, such as light watercraft rentals and small cafes. [up to 1,500 sf]

It supports the continued implantation of the Willamette River redevelopment plan is also included. Phase 1 of the redevelopment plan was implemented. Phase 2, which is not funded, includes laying back the riverbank and shallow water habitat restoration, along with the establishment of a seasonal public swimming beach and addition of a dedicated non-motorized boat launch.

As you heard from the Mayor, there is considerable interest in river swimming. The plan recommends that Parks conduct a public swimming beaches study to evaluate potential swimming sites, similar to what was done for the Central City. The study could lead to identification of and hopefully funding of a public swimming beach in the SR.

Scenic Resources

- Scenic resources inventoried and evaluated
- Viewpoints and view streets added and retired
- Amenities required with development at select viewpoints
- Trees prohibited in view corridors



As mentioned earlier, Volume 2 is a scenic resources protection plan. Development of the plan involved:

- (1) an inventory of existing and proposed viewpoints, view streets and scenic corridors;
- (2) evaluation of potential conflicts, such as buildings and vegetation, within view corridors; and
- (3) recommendations for protection of scenic resources and the retirement of resources that did not meet the plan's criteria.

A collection of viewpoints were identified as benefiting from the addition of amenities, such as benches, lighting or other improvements. These viewpoints are identified in a new map in the Scenic Resource Zone chapter.

Vegetation management and removal of existing trees is allowed to preserve views. Planting of trees is prohibited in view corridors

Wakes: Regulated by OSMB

- Oregon State Marine Board:
 - Adopted new rules on October 21
 - Will consider additional rules on January 27
- City of Portland does not have authority to set boating rules.



[Sallie picks back up] - NOTES

- One of the issues that got a lot of attention at PSC last spring was wakes. You heard a bit about this from the Mayor, Director Jordan and from Commissioner Houck.
- Numerous people seemed to think that the City had the authority to establish boating rules, but it does not. Oregon State Marine Board is the agency with that purview.
- As you can see from the image on the slide, the marine board recently adopted new rule for the south reach area including:
 - extending the Holgate Channel slow no-wake zone to include the entire channel (cross hatched area)
 - Creating seasonal pass-through zones directly north and south of Ross Island as is shown in purple.
 - **pass-through zones:** are areas where boat speed is not limited, but towed watersports are restricted, and personal watercraft (jet ski) operators are prohibited from prolonged use above 5 mph.
- The marine board is also considering regulations for the area from Waverly marina to Willamette Falls:
 - Extending the adopted pass-through zones to also include the green area between the two, purple area

- Establishing slow no-wake buffers around docks and restricting wakeboarding and towing of inflatables in specific areas
- But, again, the city does not have the authority to set boating rules.



This next section is related to what you heard from Laura John in her introductory remarks.

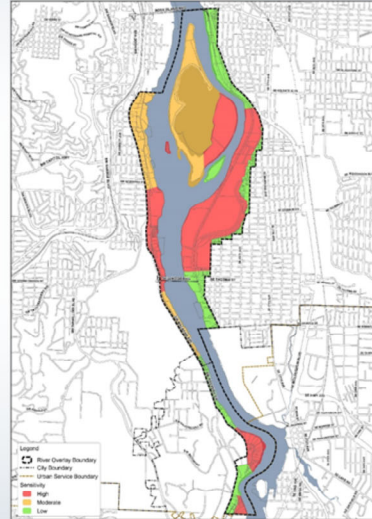
We met with Laura early and often help us brief tribal nations and connect with native people about the south reach.

This work resulted in several changes to the draft including .

- Updates to the 2035 Comprehensive Plan policies to refer to **tribal nations**
- And under policies that talk about intergovernmental coordination we have added tribal nations , recognizing them as government entities.

Archaeological Resources Protection

- High probability areas identified
- Survey required in disturbance area
- SHPO and interested tribes engaged, if resources found



Earlier in the presentation I mentioned the Tribal Summit. At a roundtable discussion with Joe Zehnder, tribal leaders encouraged the City to apply archaeological protection measures in the South Reach due to the importance of this area as a usual and accustomed place for fishing and gathering of cultural resources.

- So we hired a professional archaeologist who conducted research and developed a probability model for where resources are more likely or not to be found. It's based on a previous model that they worked on for the Superfund area in the North Reach and looked at the pre-contact landscape and topography.
- The red areas on the map on this slide are high probability areas for finding archaeological resources.
- A provision in the plan requires a survey on sites in the high probability area when a ground disturbance permit is required (200 sf or greater).
- If a professional archaeologist completes a survey and finds a cultural resource, they notify the City.

- Then the State Historic Preservation Office (or SHPO) and interested tribes are made aware of the discovery so that they can engage them in an appropriate way to address the situation.
- The details are in the code language, which is based on a similar requirement that was put in place in the Columbia South Shore Plan District in the 1990s.

Jeff, back to you!



[Jeff picks up again]

Finally, the plan specifically addressed potential improvements for nearby neighborhoods and were primarily focused on:

- Expanding access to/along riverfront
- Enhancing riverfront development and design to better
- Improve transportation facilities and services, including more frequent bus service

Riverfront Access

Improve local access to and along riverfront trails and river

- Brooklyn connection
- Greenway Trail gaps and extensions
- Boating and swimming



As you will likely hear today, the Brooklyn neighborhood in SE Portland has a long-standing desire for a safe bike/ped connection to the Springwater Corridor Trail and river. This desire was identified in the 1991 neigh plan. Although this project is in the City's Transportation System Plan, it is not funded at this time.

Most of the riverfront trail system in SR is built. However, a few gaps still exist on the eastside of the river and the plan supports making those final connections. There is also a long-range project identified to extend the westside trail to Lake Oswego that will require additional study and funding.

Access into the river can also be enhanced on both sides of the river for boating and swimming. The plan identifies a number of updates that could benefit these uses.

Development and Design

- New citywide design guidelines under development through DOZA
- River Plan/South Reach to repeal Macadam District Special Design Guidelines and apply new Macadam Character Statement with new citywide design guidelines

How new development should be designed and built to best relate to and engage the riverfront was a frequent topic for project staff and community members. There are two areas in South Reach where the Design Overlay zone is applied: in Sellwood bridgehead area and South Portland (SW Macadam area)

Project staff worked with Design Overlay Zone Amendment (referred to as DOZA) project staff to ensure that the River Pattern Area (which is identified in the Comprehensive Plan) was reflected in the citywide guidelines and that design standard amendments also related to the river.

The currently applied Macadam District Special Design Guidelines from 1985 are recommended to be repealed and replaced with the citywide design guidelines. DOZA is expected to come to City Council in the spring of 2021.

Project staff also met with community members and developed a Macadam District character statement that would be adopted with the repeal of the Macadam District Special Design Guidelines.

Both the PSC and Design Commission provided input on the character statement.

Macadam Character Statement

- Community character
- Architectural character
- Natural resources
- Scenic resources



The Macadam Character Statement, which is in Volume 1, Part 2 of the plan, addresses four important design characteristics for future development:

It provides guidance on community character, including proximity to river, how projects should best respond to topography, and development potential and uses.

Architectural character is also addressed. This section prioritizes eclectic design with tree-lined boulevard and the importance of development that connects people to the riverfront, with riverfront development providing “eyes on the trail”.

The natural resources character section recognizes the important of the riverfront for nature, including migrating and nesting birds, the importance of preserving and planting trees, and creating habitat friendly developments through native plantings and the like.

Finally, maintaining visual connections to scenic resources identified in the SRPP and preserving the view streets referenced in the Macadam Plan District are also highlighted.

AMENDMENTS THAT APPLY TO CENTRAL CITY



We also wanted to highlight some changes that are a part of the River Plan / South Reach that will affect some properties in the Central City.

Minor Updates

- **River General and River Environmental**
 - Streamlined landscaping standard
 - Limits on tree removal
 - Tree replacement ratios
 - Extended compliance period
- **Scenic Resources**
 - Central City viewpoints included in Map 480-1

As I mentioned before, the River overlay zones are already applied in the Central City. The River Plan / South Reach afforded us the opportunity to delve further into the River General and River Environmental overlay zones and make key updates related to floodplains and the riparian corridor, more generally, as we've already discussed. A few of these updates will affect Central City riverfront properties owners, including:

- Landscaping standards have been updated to reduce complexity
- Limits on tree removal in the River Environmental overlay zone will now apply. It should be noted that the application of the River Environmental was focused on the river setback in the Central City.
- River Environmental tree replacement ratios will now apply. Again, this applies to the river setback.
- The new 3-5 year compliance documentation for tree replacement, mitigation, corrections to violations and River Review will also apply.

Additionally, some small updates were made to Central City scenic resources:

- The Scenic Resource Zone chapter has been updated to require the incorporation of amenities as a part of any future development for Central City viewpoints identified in the new scenic resources Map 480-1. These are generally located in rights-of-way and on public property.
- In some cases, the viewpoints identified in the map did not have the Scenic overlay applied to them. Without the Scenic overlay, the requirements would not be triggered. In these cases, the Scenic overlay has been applied.

For all of these changes, we notified all affected Central City property owners.

Now I will hand it back over to Sallie.



[Sallie finishes it off!]

That concludes our presentation except for our presentation of the amendments.

Commissioner Hardesty, would you like us to pause there or would you like to move forward with the amendments at this time?

Amendments to the Recommended Draft

Memo to Commissioner Hardesty (10/26/20)

- River Plan / South Reach
- Willamette River Greenway Inventory

Exhibit F: Findings Report

We have a few staff amendments that we would like to bring into the process at this time. They are in two packages:

1. The memo to Commissioner Hardesty includes amendments to two documents:
 - First, amendments to the River Plan / South Reach that are necessary to increase the clarity of the regulations, reduce redundancy of the actions, and update related City documents and titles, including the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and Title 11, Trees.
 - Also, amendments to the Willamette River Greenway Inventory which was a Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) recommendation from March 2019. These amendments will bring the inventory up to date due to the adoption of Better Housing by Design and to be consistent with Recommended River Plan / South Reach.
 - We only need the Council to move and second these so that these amendments can be part of the public hearing.
2. Next, we would like to replace the Exhibit F placeholder page with a new Exhibit

F: Findings Report .

This one we would like the council to move, second and vote on.

Thank you!



Any questions?