



BARBUR CONCEPT PLAN



**SUMMARY REPORT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
FEBRUARY 2013**



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
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City of Portland, Oregon
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Barbur Concept Plan

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Executive Summary



Barbur Boulevard has a long transportation history — the former railroad route was converted to an auto boulevard in the 1920s linking downtown to other parts of the southwest. When Barbur became part of the state highway system (99W), early commercial development was tailored to the automobile and traveler services. The arrival of I-5 in the 1950s did not relieve Barbur from the role of serving regional traffic, but did reduce the level of funding and attention that a stand alone highway might otherwise receive.

Consequently, the surrounding neighborhoods struggle to get basic pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on Barbur, and the corridor lacks a cohesive sense of place and identity. Many residents feel Barbur is still stuck in the 1950s.

With Metro's SW Corridor Plan, the time is right to consider how to complete this roadway's transformation from a rail line, to a highway, and now to a civic corridor that is destination for people to live, work, play and learn.

There are a several plans already in place for the Barbur area (streetscape beautification, traffic safety and signal optimization, urban trails, bicycle networks and watershed assessments). However, due to a lack of funding these plans remain largely unfulfilled. The Barbur Concept Plan does not create a whole new plan; rather, it sets forth a strategy to leverage regional investment in high capacity transit (HCT) to achieve community aspirations for a more walkable, vibrant Barbur and guide its continued transformation.

This plan, to be adopted by City Council by resolution, will direct City staff to craft coordinated amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and capital improvement plans. Over the next two to five years, these legislative actions will need to correspond to future regional decisions related to high capacity transit and other major infrastructure investments in the southwest corridor.

The Barbur corridor is well positioned to respond to regional transit investments. There are more than 27,000 people living in 13,000 households in the corridor. An additional 21,000 households are expected by 2035. The retail market is expected to double by 2035. Barbur supports over 32,000 jobs with an additional 16,000 jobs expected over the same period. Barbur Boulevard connects a number of major institutions with a regional draw, including Portland Community College, OHSU and the Veterans Hospital, National College of Natural Medicine, Portland State University, and Lewis and Clark College. Sixty-three percent of jobs in the corridor are in the education and medicine fields, which will show a high share of transit ridership — when transit is reliable and in close proximity.

This plan identifies seven catalytic focus areas (places where there is a community appetite for change) and establishes a unifying vision. This vision takes advantage of existing strengths in each area and proposes several big ideas to correct current deficiencies and promote public and private investment.

The vision is supported by an economic analysis of what the market would support and when. *The key finding is that future high capacity transit is a necessary ingredient to the vision.* Attracting private investment will likely require a significant change to the look and feel of Barbur that only an investment in HCT can deliver. There is a broad spectrum of HCT being considered in the SW Corridor Plan, but the chosen transit system must incorporate high-quality attributes (i.e., assured reliability through dedicated travel lanes, well designed station platforms) to ensure that private investment will follow.

The ideas in this concept plan are intended to get Barbur “unstuck” from its historic roots as merely a route for cars. The vision and goals clearly state the community’s desires for Barbur as a destination rather than a major thoroughfare. The needs, opportunities and constraints section identifies the challenges but also future possibilities for the corridor. Finally, the recommendations and implementation tools chart a course to achieve the vision of Barbur as a civic corridor.

Civic Corridors

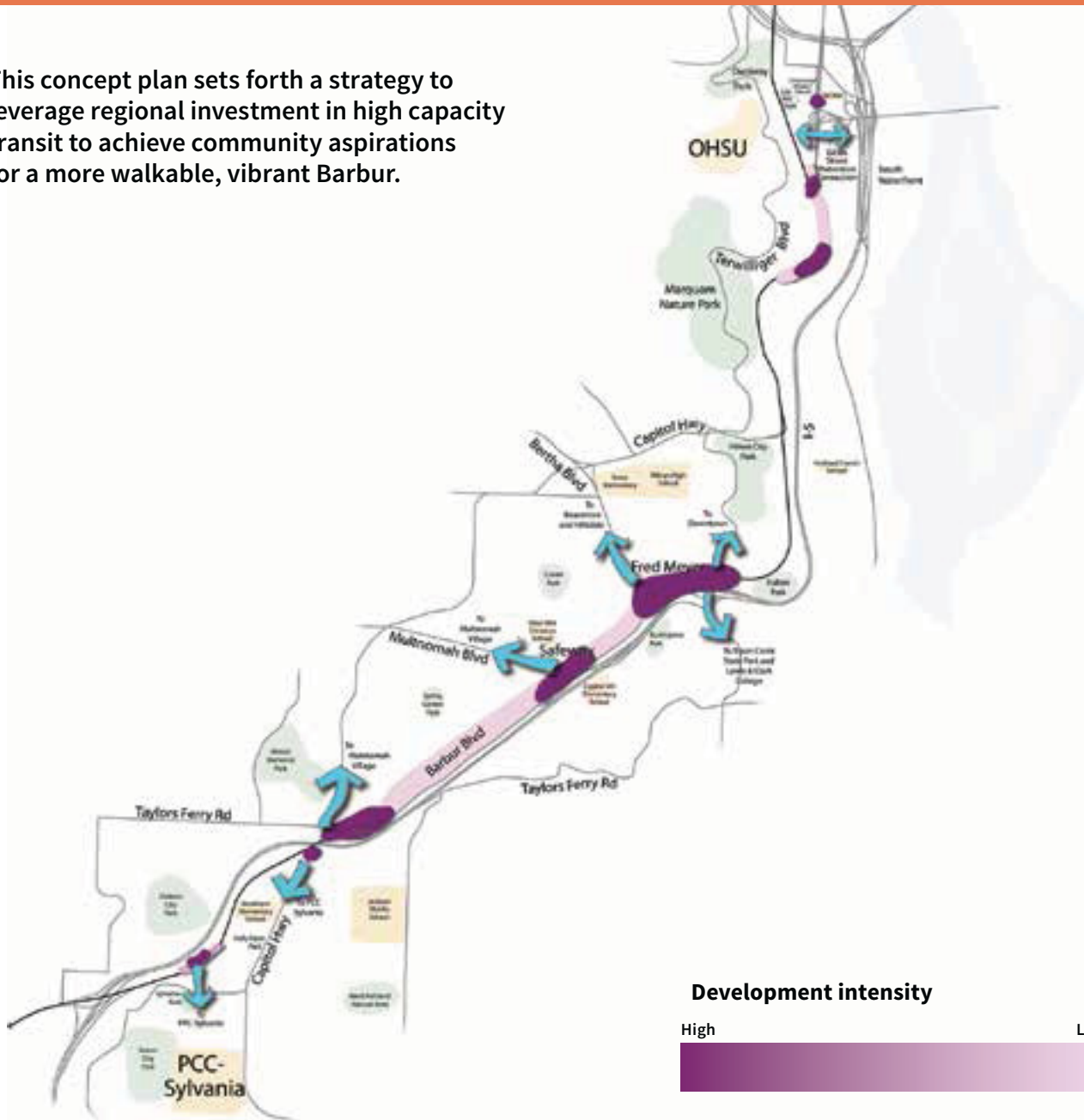


A civic corridors approach to Barbur would tie together Barbur’s transportation modes, increase greenspace and incorporate new urban design prototypes.

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Preferred scenario

This concept plan sets forth a strategy to leverage regional investment in high capacity transit to achieve community aspirations for a more walkable, vibrant Barbur.



Moderate mixed-use

Taller buildings and more storefront activity near transit.



Example of a quieter slip frontage road next to Barbur, with mixed-use buildings and on-street parking.



Example of 13th Avenue with mixed-use buildings and greater sidewalk amenities.

I. Introduction

The Barbur Concept Plan is a long-term vision for the six-mile Barbur Boulevard corridor, from Portland's Central City to the Tigard city limit.

Beginning in summer of 2011, a community working group explored alternative land use concepts for the corridor through an 18-month public process. The concept plan includes potential transportation investments, stormwater solutions and changes to City policy and zoning. Most significantly, the public process will inform regional decisions for future High Capacity Transit in the southwest corridor.

WHY PLAN FOR BARBUR

The majority of Barbur Boulevard is presently characterized by post-war auto-oriented commercial development that lacks distinct centers or a sense of place. Bike lanes, sidewalks and safe crossings are also lacking in many areas along Barbur. Other challenges include steep hillsides, sensitive natural resources and limited options for expanding the roadway. To efficiently address these challenges, all modes of moving people and goods through the corridor (cars, bikes, pedestrians, buses and freight) will need to be considered.

There are currently several plans in place for Barbur, but due to a lack of funding the plans remain largely unimplemented. Barbur was also removed in the last stages of the SW Community planning process in the 1990s leaving unfinished business in the corridor. The Barbur Concept Plan does not create a whole new plan, but sets forth a strategy to leverage regional investment in High Capacity Transit to achieve community aspirations for a more walkable, vibrant Barbur. This plan will be adopted by City Council by resolution. The resolution will direct City staff to craft coordinated amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code and capital improvement plans. That future legislative action will need to respond to future regional decisions about high capacity transit in the southwest corridor that are expected to occur in the next 2–5 years.

RELATION TO THE PORTLAND PLAN

The Portland Plan (2012) identifies goals, policies and actions that enhance equity, youth education, economic development and healthy connected communities. The proposals described in this report are consistent with and implement several Portland Plan concepts; it promotes healthy and connected neighborhoods and seeks the equitable provision of goods, services and infrastructure.

Equity

The Portland Plan defines equity as everyone having access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well being and achieve their full potential. It means that healthy communities benefit everyone and everyone should have access to basic services, decent housing and healthy food among other provisions.

Addressing gentrification and displacement

As cities grow and develop, they often experience a rise in property values and a change in demographic and economic conditions in neighborhoods. The term gentrification applies when these changes are part of a shift from lower-income to higher-income households and often when there is a change in racial and ethnic make up of a neighborhood's residents and businesses. Gentrification can be spurred by public or private investments that increase a neighborhood's attractiveness.

At the same time, improving neighborhoods is often a public goal held by current residents. Gentrification often means that the change has resulted in involuntary displacement of residents and businesses. It can occur as the result of rising property values, redevelopment of land or land clearance. Most often, lower income populations, renters and the businesses that serve them are displaced and/or separated from community and social support systems. Portland has a history of redevelopment that has displaced lower income residents and businesses which has particularly impacted communities of color.

What is High Capacity Transit?

Put simply, it is more reliable, faster and carries more people than traditional bus service.

High capacity transit (HCT) vehicles make fewer stops, travel at higher speeds, have more frequent service and carry more people than local service transit such as typical bus lines. HCT can operate in exclusive right-of-way and/or partially in non-exclusive right-of-way. HCT includes options such as light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit.

THE BARBUR CONCEPT PLAN RELATES TO AND HELPS ACHIEVE MANY OF THE PORTLAND PLAN GOALS, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS.

Goals and Objectives	Actions
4 Healthy neighborhoods	84 Align housing and transportation investments
6 Wellness	107 Transit and active transportation
15 Neighborhood business vitality	122 Neighborhood greenways
17 Access to affordable housing	124 Alternative right-of-way projects
22 Complete neighborhoods	125 Unimproved right-of-way alternatives
25 Active transportation	126 Pedestrian Facilities
27 Parks and nature in the City	127 Civic corridor design
28 Watershed health	128 Civic corridor integration
30 Quality public infrastructure	129 Sidewalk infill and pedestrian facilities

Guiding Policies

Thriving Educated Youth

T-11 Focus public investment in community infrastructure
T-15 Make it easier for students to get to school

Economic Prosperity and Affordability

P-10 Promote Innovation in public projects related to transportation and environmental services
P-18 Increase transit use, biking, walking, carpooling and telecommuting
P-37 Provide and locate housing for the disabled and elderly
P-38 Link housing to transportation in planning major transit investments
P-39 Expand access to affordable transportation options

Healthy Connected City

H-4 Consider community health impacts, equity outcomes and ecological and watershed health risks
H-9 Use investments, incentives and other policy tools to address gentrification
H-13 Prioritize placement of community services in neighborhood centers
H-16 Encourage high quality, well designed housing
H-17 Encourage senior and affordable housing as part of new mixed use development
H-18 Complete the sidewalk network, and improve bike facilities
H-20 Protect and enhance defining places and features of neighborhood centers
H-21 Design civic spaces to include public art
H-23 Invest in underserved areas
H-25 Preserve and restore habitat connections and tree canopy
H-28 Design neighborhood greenways and civic corridors
H-29 Transform transit streets into distinctive civic places that are models of ecological design



BPS is currently conducting a gentrification study that identifies risk of gentrification and displacement for Portland neighborhoods. While the study has not been finalized, a methodology for determining which areas are at risk of or currently experiencing gentrification has been developed, and includes an assessment of housing market conditions, residents' vulnerability to displacement, and recent demographic changes using tract-level data from the U.S. Census Bureau. After applying the gentrification study's methodology to the geographic area of focus under the Barbur Concept Plan, no neighborhood in the Barbur study area appears to be at immediate risk of gentrifying, nor do any appear to be experiencing significant gentrification at this time.

An analysis of the tracts in the Barbur study area does, however, reveal a high proportion of renter households, a population that may be vulnerable to displacement if investment causes changes in the area's housing market. A few tracts also show demographic changes associated with gentrification (increases in white population, homeowner households and median household income higher than Portland-wide from 2000 to 2010). Additionally, housing market trends in a few of the study area tracts suggest that median home values could rise (relative to the citywide median) in the coming decade, though this depends on several factors. In summary, while the possibility of significant gentrification and related displacement appears low for the Barbur Concept Plan area at this time, BPS will remain sensitive to residents' concerns and continue to assess gentrification risk as necessary.

LINK TO THE SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

In July 2009, Metro Council selected the southwest corridor as a priority for investment in High Capacity Transit (e.g. light rail, bus rapid transit). Planning is underway for the entire corridor from Portland's central city to Sherwood called the Southwest Corridor Plan.



Multiple jurisdictions and agencies are working together to leverage current efforts (including the Barbur Concept Plan) and to look beyond just building a transit project. The Southwest Corridor Plan will integrate affordable housing, parks, green infrastructure, economic development and public health into land use and transportation decisions.

The Southwest Corridor, including Barbur Boulevard, is poised to become the recipient of significant federal and regional transportation dollars. An investment of this magnitude has the ability to create great places that achieve our region's transportation goals while catalyzing development that fulfills the goals of the community.

The Southwest Corridor Plan will identify a narrow list of possible alternatives for High Capacity Transit in terms of where the facility will be aligned (in Barbur, along I-5) and the mode of transit (light rail, bus rapid transit). Although the Barbur Concept Plan will not make decisions about mode or alignment, it will inform those regional discussions.

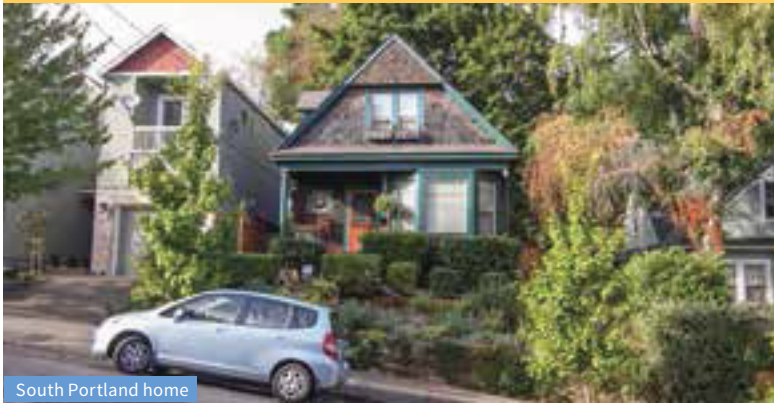
THE FOUR DISTINCT SEGMENTS OF THE BARBUR CORRIDOR

This report describes corridor wide issues, goals and a vision for Barbur. However, there are distinct differences in different sections of this 6-mile long corridor. Each of these segments has different needs, opportunities and constraints. Furthermore, each segment is discussed in terms of land use, transportation and watershed health. And finally, each segment has unique recommendations to achieve the plan's overall vision of transforming Barbur "...into a place where people want to live, work, learn and play."

FOCUS AREAS ON BARBUR

Seven focus areas were further studied as potential future transit stations. The future number and locations of transit stations will depend on the mode (light rail, bus rapid transit) and alignment (Barbur, I-5, underground) of high capacity transit. Focus areas have good connections to surrounding neighborhoods and across I-5. Most importantly, the seven areas are where public investments in infrastructure have the best opportunity to achieve the community's vision for Barbur. Further discussion of the focus areas as station areas is included in Section VII of this report. Additionally, more detailed illustrations of possible transit-supportive land use configurations are also shown.

LAIR HILL SEGMENT



South Portland home

THE WOODS SEGMENT



Vermont Viaduct

HISTORIC HIGHWAY SEGMENT



Barbur at Terwilliger

FAR SOUTHWEST SEGMENT



PCC Sylvania

II. Public Engagement Purpose and Process

Public participation was crucial in the development of the Barbur Concept Plan. At several milestones during the 18-month process, community members were invited to learn about the project and provide input through public workshops, community forums and neighborhood and business association meetings (see Appendix A for the public engagement report). Additionally, feedback on the project was solicited through several on-line surveys, and public participation at the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission and City Council meetings in early 2013. The Barbur Concept Plan was also featured in several news articles, including the Oregonian, SW Connection and the SW Portland Post.

Project initiation

Project staff initiated outreach efforts by developing a public involvement plan and project website. Early efforts included going "door to door" to businesses to talk about the Barbur Concept Plan and the larger Southwest Corridor planning effort. This was followed up by direct mailing a postcard to over 6,000 property owners within the 1/2 mile study area boundary announcing the project startup and the first public event: the neighborhood walks.

Neighborhood walks

Project staff, residents and business owners walked with Community Working Group (CWG) members to get a first hand perspective of four distinct sections of Barbur Boulevard. These walks allowed participants to offer feedback on what they would like to see improved along Portland's major southwest corridor as well as identify opportunities and constraints that should be analyzed in the plan. The walking groups explored the areas on both a weekday and weekend to experience the different levels of activity and traffic along the thoroughfare. Participants had a chance to chat with each other and staff to share their unique perspectives and ideas for possible future improvements within the corridor.

The community working group (CWG)

The 19-member CWG is representative of area stakeholders, including broad representation of the southwest residents, institutions, neighborhoods and businesses. Throughout the project, the CWG reviewed and informed project documents, products and public involvement processes. CWG members served as liaisons between their respective communities/organizations and the City. At each meeting CWG members were presented with information pertaining to the plan development, and through group discussions provided valuable guidance on draft project documents.

The technical advisory group (TAG)

The 16-member TAG is comprised of partner agency and neighborhood experts with specialized or localized knowledge of issues affecting the Barbur corridor. The TAG was solicited to preview CWG and community forum presentation and materials, and were also instrumental in providing continuity between the Barbur Concept Plan and Southwest Corridor efforts.

Community forums

Project Staff and CWG members hosted three separate community forums at various milestones in the project. Due to the length of the project study area, the forums were held at the southern, northern and central section of the Barbur corridor. The first community forum, held on December 6, 2011 at Markham Elementary School, presented initial needs, opportunities and constraints findings and allowed participants to voice their concerns and suggestions for the future of Barbur. At the second community forum, held on May 3 at the Cedarwood Waldorf School, project consultants led the event with a slideshow presentation that provided historical context for the Barbur corridor, examples of other successful corridors in the region, and then proceeded to use interactive polling to get feedback from participants. A similar series of questions was also posted online for additional input following the forum for those who were unable to attend. The final forum, held at Multnomah Arts Center on November 29, presented the draft concept plan and preliminary preferred alternative package, and allowed participants to give feedback and help refine the final product.

Project briefings

Throughout the project, staff presented updates and received input at numerous neighborhood association meetings, community events and commission briefings. In all, over 900 members of the public were present at these 36 briefings as of January 2013. Staff also provided monthly email updates to approximately 200 people who signed up for the updates.

Public hearings

Public hearings will also be held in 2013 with the Planning and Sustainability Commission for consideration and recommendation to the City Council. City Council will hold a public hearing before accepting the plan by City resolution.



Key themes expressed by community

The project team heard many great suggestions and ideas to make Barbur a better place. Additionally, the community expressed numerous concerns and examples of unmet needs. These have been incorporated into the urban design concepts and recommendations where possible. There were a number of common themes that generally emerged from the community input:

- Build and enhance facilities for traveling safely along Barbur for all travel modes.
- Build and enhance facilities for traveling safely to and across Barbur for pedestrians and people on bikes.
- Create places of interest, vitality and better architectural and site design in the corridor in key/strategic locations, while maintaining single family neighborhoods.
- Integrate watershed health improvements into all plans and recognize the Southwest Hills' unique stormwater conditions.
- Mitigate impacts and bridge the divide caused by I-5 and Barbur to reconnect neighborhoods and improve the environment.
- Mitigate noise from the freeway and enforce the prohibitions on using unmuffled engine brakes.
- Keep regional traffic on I-5 where it belongs.
- Retain sufficient capacity for moving people and goods on Barbur and other principle arterial routes to reduce neighborhood cut-through traffic.
- Recognize and address infrastructure deficiencies and construction challenges in Southwest Portland, for example expanding the drinking water system may require additional pump stations, which are costly.
- Develop strategies for parking to ensure minimal impact to nearby residential neighborhood streets. Consider both the near term and long term demand as it relates to the provision of high capacity transit.

How community engagement shaped the project

Community involvement was instrumental in shaping the concepts and recommendations forwarded in this plan. Working with the CWG helped flag objectionable or controversial ideas, and input from the community either affirmed or countered the project team's ideas. Some of the more significant changes to the plan include:

- *Shifting the focus area from Gibbs to Kelly*

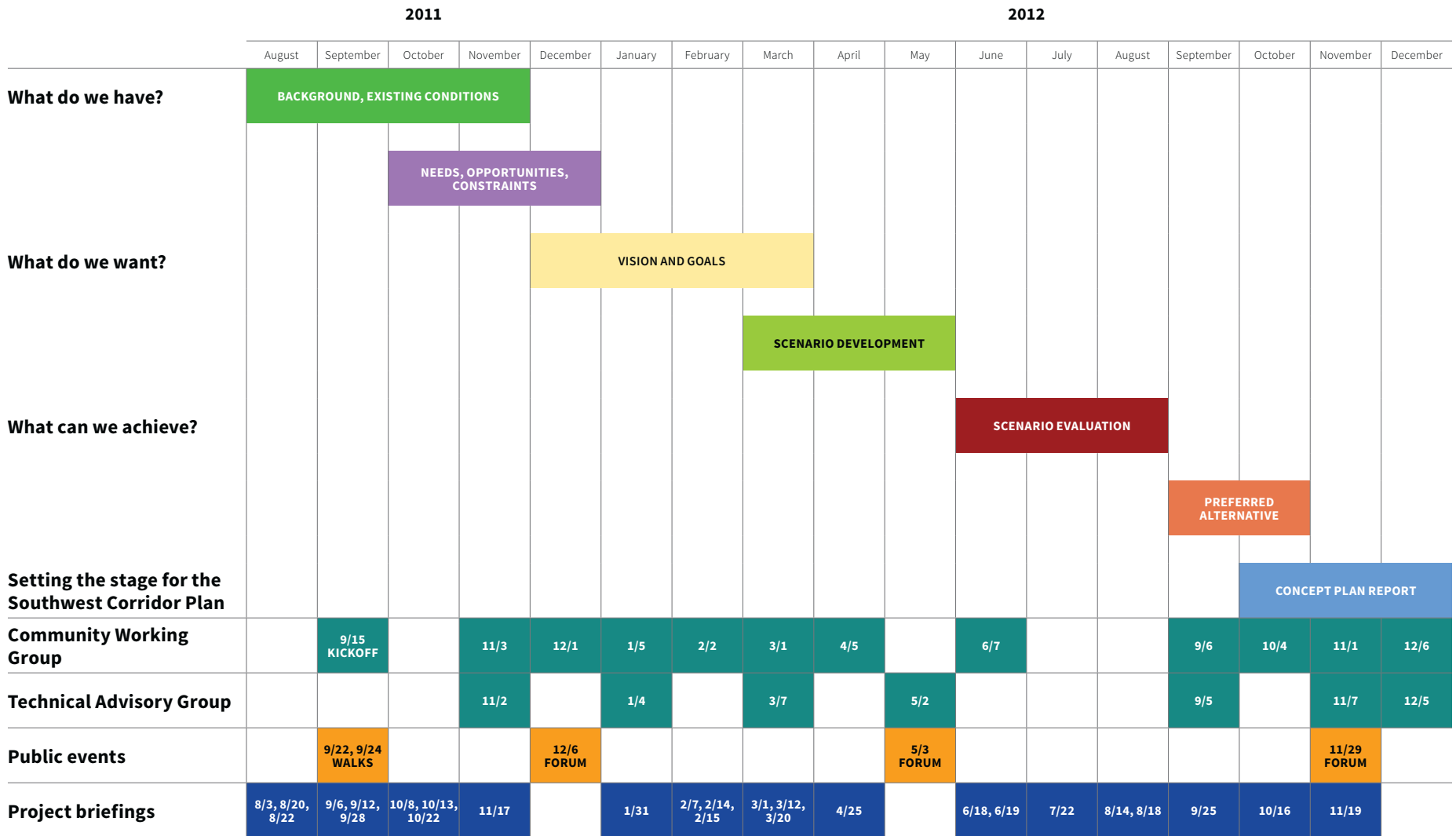
The Gibbs street alignment was seen initially as an important east-west linkage between south waterfront and OHSU on top of Marquam hill. The recently completed Gibbs pedestrian bridge strengthened this connection. However, the Gibbs and Barbur intersection borders the South Portland Historic District, and is largely characterized by single family homes. The South Portland Neighborhood Association expressed great concern with potential intensification or added development pressure that could result from a future high capacity transit station in this location. While improving the east-west connectivity remains an important objective, the project team adjusted the focus area to the north, in a broader examination of the area around Kelly/ Naito and parcels on the southern edge of the I-405 freeway.
- *Shifting the focus area from Terwilliger to SW 13th*

Initially, the project team identified the intersection at Terwilliger as the center of the focus area. However, following the neighborhood walks with the community, staff found that traffic circulation around the freeway interchange, few developable parcels and noise impacts made this a challenging location. However, by moving one block off Barbur on SW 13th, the opportunities seemed to open up. This shifted the project team's thinking and led to the design concepts shown later in this report which focus on SW 13th instead of the area around Terwilliger.
- *Selecting a medium intensity mixed use scenario*

The project team presented four levels of development intensity at the Community Forum in May ranging from incremental modest improvements to high intensity mixed use. Participants both at the open house and online survey largely favored the medium intensity mixed use scenario. There was less universal endorsement for this scenario in the Far Southwest segment of Barbur reflecting the traffic concerns around the Crossroads, and less commercial character of the stretch between Capitol Highway and Tigard. Nevertheless, the community gravitated toward the medium intensity scenario in most cases, reflecting a higher tolerance for change on Barbur, within current zoning allowances.
- *Refinement of urban design concepts, recommended improvements*

The third community forum focused on the urban design concepts for each of the seven focus areas. Small table discussions helped staff to identify some concept refinements and ensure the graphics communicated the vision effectively. Of note, intersection alignments as well as pedestrian and bicycle facilities needed to be more clearly identified. Community members also expressed the need to consider parking strategies that would accommodate the current auto-reliant land use pattern until transit and other multi-modal improvements are implemented. There was also strong support for Ian Lockwood's roadway reconfigurations around the Crossroads focus area.

PROJECT SCHEDULE AND TIMELINE



III. Existing Conditions Summary

The majority of Barbur Boulevard is presently characterized by post-war auto-oriented commercial development that lacks distinct centers or a cohesive sense of place. This is in stark contrast to the adjoining neighborhoods and other nearby destinations such as Multnomah Village and Hillsdale. The area has numerous nearby parks and open spaces (about 413 acres within the study area), but most are not directly adjacent to Barbur and connections from Barbur to these areas and adjoining neighborhoods are often not fully improved or intuitive. Sidewalks and safe crossings are lacking in many areas along Barbur. There are approximately 6 linear miles of sidewalks needed along Barbur (about 1/2 the total) and the average distance between pedestrian crossings is 1/3 mile. People on bicycles face challenges from fast-moving autos, lack of clearly defined driveways and vehicle turning locations, confusing intersections and gaps in the bike lanes at several key locations. The corridor also presents significant physical challenges including steep hillsides, sensitive natural resources and limited options for expanding the roadway. Additionally, Barbur is used occasionally by commuters as a freeway spillover when there are crashes or construction on I-5.

The following provides an overview of key existing market, land use, transportation and watershed health conditions. Additional detail and discussion can be found in the Existing Conditions Report, Appendix D.



Over half of Barbur (6 linear miles) lacks sidewalks

Market assessment

There are over 32,000 jobs located within a half mile of each side of Barbur Boulevard. With the significant presence of Oregon Health Sciences University, National College of Natural Medicine and Portland Community College, nearly 63 percent of these jobs are in the education and medical fields (Portland State University is not within the study area). Finance and other Professional Service industries comprise an additional 16 percent of the jobs in this corridor. Over 70 percent of projected employment growth will occur within these two key industries. Firms that see benefits from locating near the major institutions will also drive office demand outside of these industries. With the initial projections for job growth by 2035, there is potential demand for more than 2.4 million square feet of office space.

63% of the 32,000 jobs in the study area are in medicine or education.

The office market study area shows a relatively high concentration of knowledge based industries, specifically professional services and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate services. This can be attributed to the proximity to the Central City and nearby freeway access, while still benefitting from lease rates that are lower (\$10–\$18/s.f.) than both the citywide (\$20/s.f.) and regional (\$19/s.f.) averages. Office vacancies along Barbur are nominally higher (2%) than the citywide average, and tend to mirror city and regional trends.

Total office market statistics, second quarter 2011

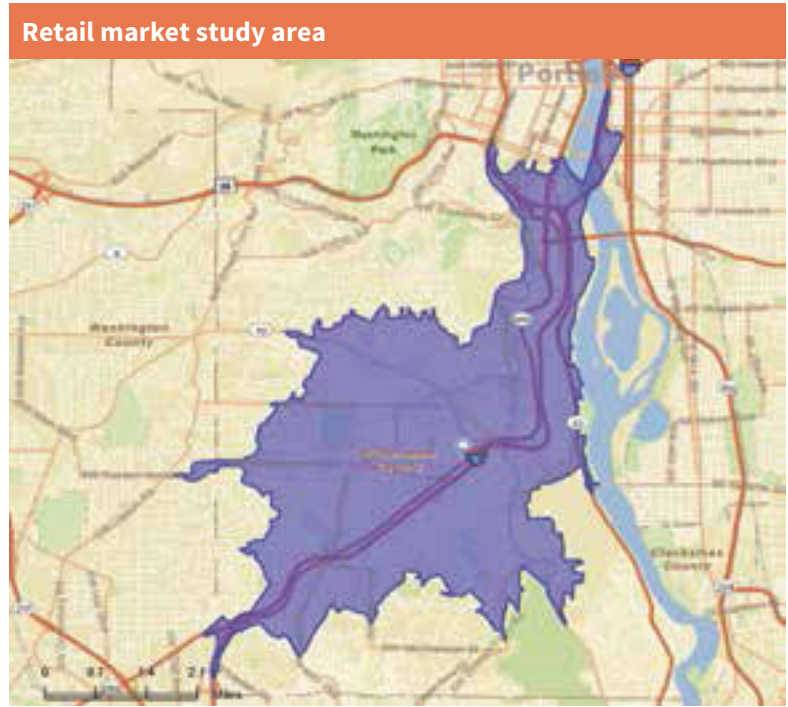
	Number of buildings	Total office SF	Percent vacant	Average lease rate
Barbur study area	214	3,748,180	10.8%	\$18.14
City of Portland	2,686	55,577,504	8.6%	\$20.03
Portland region	5,090	93,952,318	10.9%	\$19.23

Source: CoStar, 2011.

Barbur has lower lease and rental rates than other areas in Portland.

To analyze the retail market for Barbur, a larger geography was used to capture households within a 5 minute drive

time of the corridor (approximately 3–4 miles, see map at right). Retail vacancy rates in the Barbur Retail Market Area, like office vacancies, are slightly higher than vacancy rates in the city and region. In turn, retail space lease rates are lower, around \$14 per square foot compared to \$16/s.f, which reflects the overall aging retail building stock along the corridor.



Households within the market area spend over \$245 million per year on retail goods. Nearly 18,000 new households are projected to be added to the retail market area by 2035. This growth in households could generate demand for over 1.6 million square feet of new retail space in and around the Barbur market area.

Total retail market statistics, second quarter 2011

	Number of buildings	Total retail SF	Percent vacant	Average rental rate
Barbur market area	121	1,669,059	6.4%	\$14.05
City of Portland	5,371	53,734,020	4.8%	\$16.03
Portland region	9,604	113,172,701	6.0%	\$16.46

Source: CoStar, 2011.

Demographics and housing

The Lair Hill segment has the greatest amount of ethnic and racial diversity of the four segments, but is less diverse than the city or region as a whole. All four of the segments have higher median incomes and home values compared to the city as a whole. However, homes in Lair Hill and the Far Southwest are more affordable than homes in the Historic highway or Woods segments. Conversely, multi-family rental housing rents for two and three bedroom units are slightly higher in the Lair Hill area compared to other areas of the City due to the close proximity to downtown. The Woods segment commands the highest median home prices within the corridor (32 percent higher than the citywide average), as well as the highest median household income levels.

Land use and transportation

The six-mile long Barbur Concept Plan study area includes the vicinity extending 1/4 mile from either side of the boulevard, from Portland’s Central City to the Tigard city limit. Looking beyond the immediate parcels that front Barbur helps to better understand the land use relationship and transportation connections between the adjacent neighborhoods and the boulevard. The northern portion of Barbur feels like an extension of the Central City, and is more like inner city neighborhoods. Once past the Woods segment, the southern area of Barbur functions more like an extension of suburban cities. Properties on Barbur are predominantly zoned for general commercial uses and are developed with many auto-oriented uses separated by parking lots and driveways. Shopping and services are generally limited to single destination places, and convenience or drop in businesses. As such, Barbur lacks stop and stroll shopping districts.

Barbur itself is well served by transit, with frequent bus service available and several lines converging closer to downtown. However, the buses are often at or near capacity throughout the day, and due to congestion on the route, buses are frequently off-schedule. Many stop locations are not well connected to adjoining neighborhoods and neighborhood bus service is also lacking due in part to low ridership densities and the circuitous street layout.

Barbur is an orphaned highway after I-5 was completed, yet ODOT retains jurisdiction over the majority of the boulevard, beginning at its intersection with Naito. While I-5 parallels Barbur, the configuration and location of interchanges sometimes impedes hierarchical traffic flow (i.e. local vs. longer distance trips). Retaining a roadway design that prioritizes free flow vehicle movement presents a challenge in achieving the desired vision for Barbur. Speeding is a common concern expressed by the community.

Environment and watershed health

Much of the land along Barbur was developed before the City's stormwater management requirements were put into place. Therefore, most stormwater discharges directly from parking lots and streets into the combined sewer system (northern segments) or streams (southern segments). This pattern not only results in high volumes and velocity rates which degrades habitat conditions but also introduces high levels of auto-related pollutants into area waterways. For example, Stephens Creek flows under SW Barbur Blvd near the Fred Meyer and into the Willamette River, where it provides important habitat to native anadromous fish. The high concentration of existing impervious areas along Barbur and the corridor's locale between the west hills and the Willamette River make it a critical element for improving overall watershed health in southwest Portland and for the Willamette River.

Soils on Portland's West Hills are shallow, poorly draining silt-loam sitting on top of a hardpan layer that impedes percolation of groundwater. This hampers stormwater infiltration and generally requires facilities to retain stormwater onsite to alleviate peak runoff events. One advantage for development on parcels fronting some parts of Barbur, in contrast to other areas of Southwest, is that the area is generally flat which reduces landslide hazard potential, and offers greater flexibility in managing and conveying stormwater. The Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) has completed several

stormwater retrofit projects in the corridor, with additional projects under construction or in design, including a significant facility in ODOT right of way at SW 26th between Barbur and I-5.

The Barbur corridor traverses an area where streams have been fragmented over time as a result of development. Many headwater streams have also been placed in pipes. Remaining streams are commonly placed in culverts to pass under roads or other development. In some cases, particularly in the northern sections of the corridor, streams channels have been diverted entirely to the combined sewer system pipes. Streams in the corridor generally exhibit physical characteristics resulting from urbanization and altered hydrologic and hydraulic conditions such as incised channels and stream bank erosion and instability. All of these conditions not only degrade the biological productivity and water quality of streams, but also greatly impact the riparian and aquatic habitat values of the area.

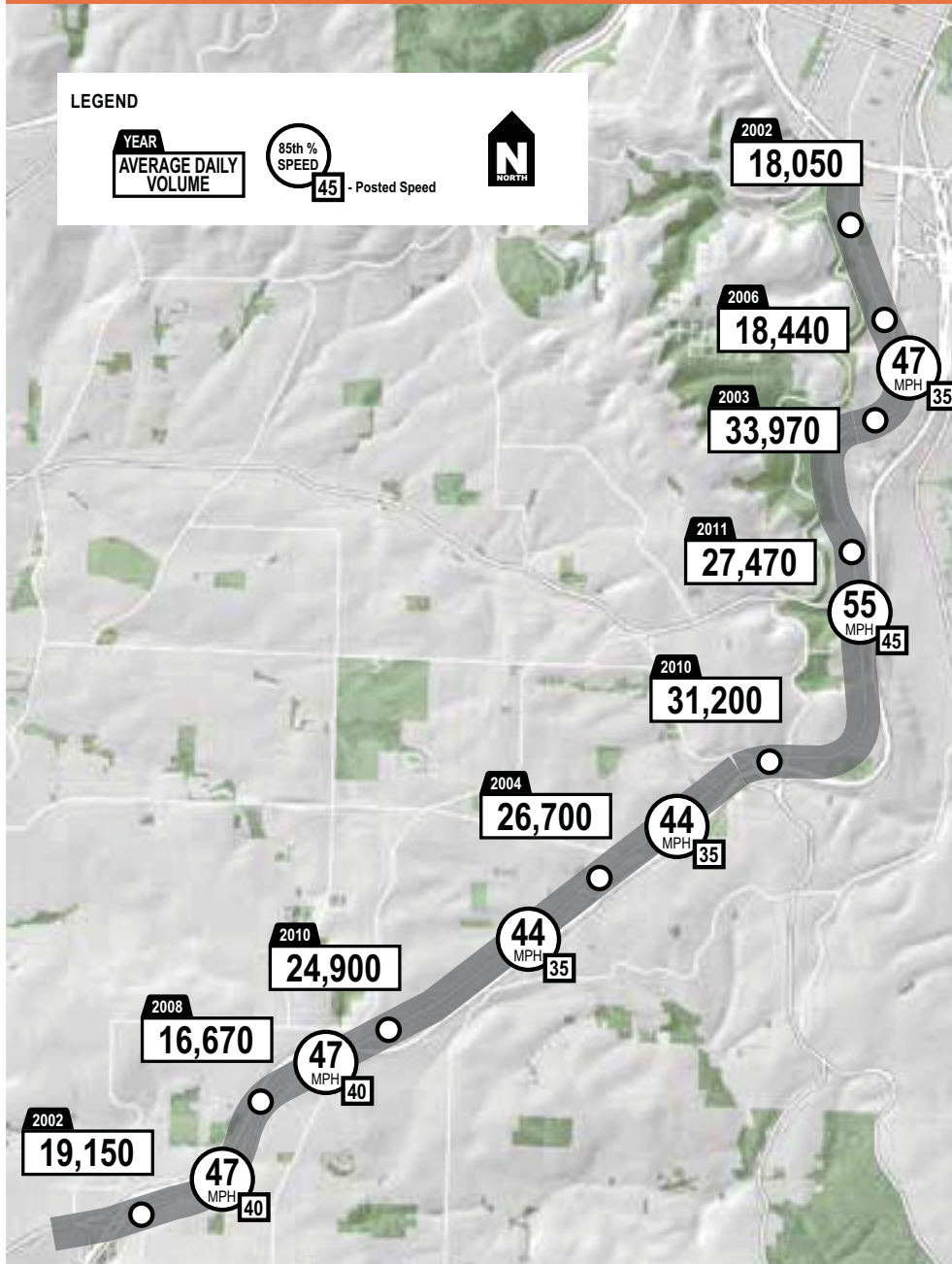
Canopy and impervious area percentages in the Barbur study area

Segment	Canopy	Impervious Area
Lair Hill	44%	48%
Woods	56%	30%
Historic Highway	30%	46%
Far Southwest	35%	39%

Tree canopy within the study area ranges from 30% in the Historic Highway segment to 56% within the Woods, well above the citywide average of 26%. Improving upon the tree canopy through the addition of street and median trees (like those near Fred Meyer) will help reduce heat island impacts, ease stormwater system demand, filter noise and other pollutants, and offer better habitat linkages down and across Barbur Boulevard.

Barbur's proximity to I-5 is disadvantaged by the ancillary effects of freeway noise and air pollution. Unmuffled exhaust braking from trucks descending from the Crossroads and into the Central City in addition to the constant din of the 130,000 vehicles that travel I-5 on average each day. These vehicles also emit air particulates from engine combustion, in addition to particulates from tire and brake wear.

Traffic and speed on Barbur



This map provides information about the relative quantity of vehicles moving on different parts of Barbur, as well as an indication of the 85th percentile speed.

The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85 percent of drivers drive at or below, while 15 percent of drivers are driving faster.

On busy streets like Barbur, when 15 percent of motorists are traveling ten miles per hour (mph) over the posted speed limit a significant speeding problem exists (i.e. 85th percentile speed greater than or equal to posted speed plus 10 mph).

IV. Needs, Opportunities and Constraints

Barbur has four distinct segments. Traveling south from downtown Portland, one experiences part of “Lair Hill” before driving through Barbur’s scenic parkway or “the Woods.” Then, emerging from the parkway, the street’s “historic highway” makes up the longest section of the street, reminding us of Barbur’s history. Finally, south of the “crossroads” at I-5, Barbur takes on a more suburban character referred to as “Far Southwest.”

While each of these segments has its own set of unique needs, opportunities and constraints, described below, a handful of areas with strong multi-modal access to nearby neighborhoods and across I-5 have the potential to be part of separate yet distinctive places along Barbur (like a “string of pearls”). Below is a summary of emerging development potential for various areas.

THE BARBUR CORRIDOR’S FOUR UNIQUE SECTIONS

LAIR HILL

Needs: Reconnected street grid; improved connections to OHSU.
Opportunities: Established neighborhood; small block grid; near OHSU and NCNM. New Gibbs pedestrian bridge should be complete early next year.
Constraints: Barbur cut off local street access; I-5 and Ross Island Bridge ramps are barriers.

THE WOODS

Needs: Connection on Slavin Road; Red Electric Trail connection under parkway.
Opportunities: Natural and territorial views; access to trails and nature parks; proximity to Johns Landing.
Constraints: Limited access to neighborhoods; lack of pedestrian and bike connections; steep slopes.

HISTORIC HIGHWAY

Needs: New southbound I-5 access; improved I-5 and Barbur crossings; focused nodes for “placemaking.” Streetscape improvements.
Opportunities: Large sites for commercial and residential development; several grocery stores.
Constraints: Lack of pedestrian/bicycle amenities; large blocks with infrequent sidewalks; I-5 as a barrier.

FAR SOUTHWEST

Needs: Connections between neighborhood streets and Barbur; connectivity to PCC-Sylvania; sidewalks and bike lanes; pedestrian I-5 overcrossing.
Opportunities: Several sites for commercial and residential development; growth of PCC-Sylvania.
Constraints: I-5 separates neighborhoods; distance from PCC campus to Barbur.

SEVEN FOCUS AREAS WITH PLACEMAKING POTENTIAL

3. SW 13TH AVENUE (TERWILLIGER)

The activity center near the Fred Meyer store benefits from being near both Hillsdale and downtown. It also has several areas just off of Barbur with strong future development opportunities: the parcels along SW 13th Ave. between Barbur and Bertha; and the A-Boys site. Over the long-term, these sites could be redeveloped as low- or medium-intensity mixed-use residential, with some walkable “Main Street” retail along SW 13th Ave.



1. KELLY

Kelly is home to OHSU, PSU and the National College of Natural Medicine. All three institutions are growing and the area provides opportunities for expansion if the transportation issues can be adequately addressed (e.g., connections to South Waterfront, Marquam Hill, and the main PSU campus). Growth in this area must be balanced with protecting the neighboring Lair Hill Historic Conservation District.

4. CAPITOL HILL



This area, near Multnomah Village, has a large stock of existing single family homes. Additionally, Safeway is in the midst of redeveloping its store, and tripling its size. Several commercial sites in close proximity have additional opportunity to expand building footprints and heights to accommodate greater variety of uses in more (walkable) configurations, including low-intensity mixed-use buildings, and “Main Street” style commercial.

This map illustrates opportunities for high walkability (dark blue) near Barbur and seven areas with great “placemaking” potential.



7. SW 53RD

With 26,000 students and ample room to expand, Portland Community College is an important destination to connect with Barbur.



6. CROSSROADS

At the confluence of I-5, Barbur, Capitol highway and Taylors Ferry, the Crossroads exhibits unique challenges. The area is anchored by several retailers, Barbur World Foods and the Transit Center. The publicly-owned transit center site, in particular, presents a major 4.8 acre redevelopment opportunity. This site could include medium-intensity mixed-use development, multifamily housing and structured parking.

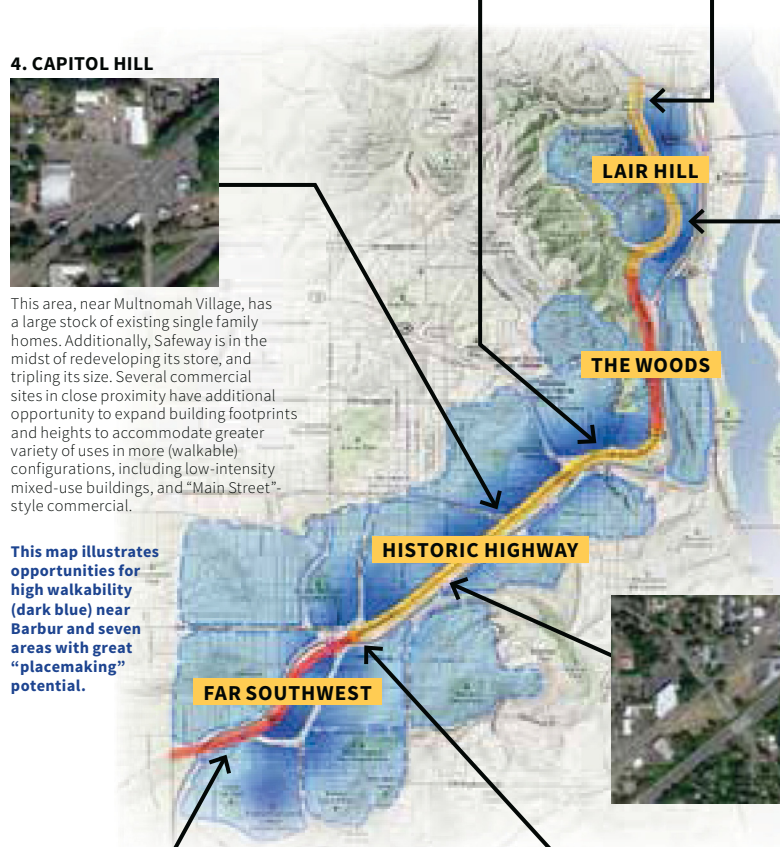
2. HAMILTON



As the oldest section of Barbur, this area has existing population density to support a mix of retailers and services; proximity to downtown, South Waterfront and OHSU; and the highest market demand along the corridor. It includes several opportunity sites that could be redeveloped in the future as mid-rise mixed-use residential, mid-rise office, or as mid-rise senior housing, within the context of the historic neighborhood.

5. SW 26TH AVENUE

The only section with below grade access under I-5 and Barbur, this quiet area has large parcels of ODOT right-of-way and is close to recent redevelopment/restoration efforts done through the Headwaters project.



BARBUR HAS MAJOR CORRIDOR-WIDE

OPPORTUNITIES:

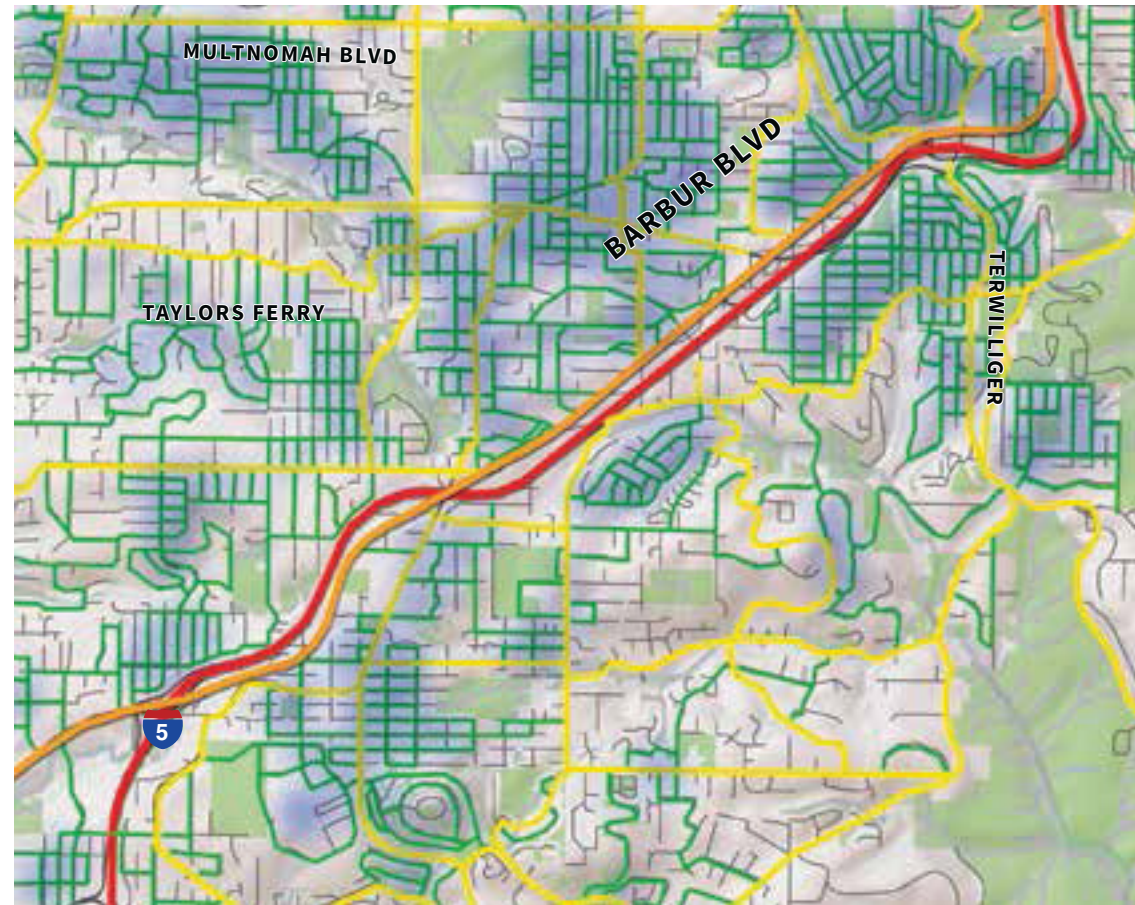
- Capitalize on the proximity to OHSU, the city’s largest employer.
- Leverage regional population growth and demand for new housing.
- Meet Portland’s needs for well-located senior housing.
- Compete for the growing population seeking a “village feel” and walkable neighborhoods.
- Partner with schools and institutions to address a lack of active recreational facilities, through shared use.
- Coordinate with the planned growth of PCC-Sylvania.
- Accommodate a portion of the city’s future office space demand.
- Improve watershed conditions through redevelopment of impervious surfaces.
- Transform Barbur into a Civic Corridor — a premier street for pedestrian safety, community pride and ecological design.

HOWEVER, CORRIDOR-WIDE **CONSTRAINTS** MUST BE ADDRESSED:

- Connections from Barbur to OHSU/PCC are not direct.
- A challenging market exists for new development, with limited ability of rents to support new construction.
- Barbur has limited urban amenities, including streetscapes with pedestrian and bicycle desirability.
- Limited crossings of both I-5 and Barbur creates a barrier for improving connections to and between the neighborhoods.
- Capacity for new transportation facilities or more intensive land uses is constrained by topography, soil types and established residential neighborhoods.
- I-5 access southbound is limited between downtown and Crossroads.

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

IS CRITICAL



- Local streets with good pedestrian connections (may lack sidewalks)
- Busy streets in need of sidewalk connections
- Minor barrier to connectivity
- Major barrier to connectivity

V. Project Vision and Goals

VISION



- **Barbur Boulevard is transformed into a place where people want to live, work, play and learn.**
- **The corridor safely moves automobiles, freight, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders and provides reliable transportation choices for all people.**
- **Businesses are investing and thriving and new locally owned and oriented businesses are opening.**
- **Housing is affordable and widely available and neighborhoods are connected to the boulevard.**
- **Landscaping, street trees and stream crossings are incorporated into the fabric of the boulevard.**
- **The history of the boulevard is celebrated and the character of the boulevard varies along its length.**

GOALS

PEOPLE AND PLACES

- Create places where people live, work, play and learn in vibrant communities where their everyday needs are easily met.
- Encourage transit-supportive housing and employment at appropriate locations.
- Improve opportunities for affordable living, considering the combined housing, transportation and utility costs for residents.
- Provide for a diverse mixture of housing and commercial uses with abundant trees, sidewalks and gathering spaces.
- Build on existing community assets to make thriving places.

MOVEMENT

- Provide for a safe, efficient and reliable transportation network for all travel modes that enhances economic vitality and quality of life for the community.
- Improve access to employment, educational and commercial centers.
- Support a wide variety of employment opportunities.
- Improve freeway access and neighborhood connectivity.
- Encourage the development of transportation facilities that support the natural environment and human health.

HEALTH

- Improve the quality of air, water and land resources.
- Restore watershed health and habitat function, and enhance the natural environment.
- Support active and healthy lifestyles.
- Improve access to healthy food.
- Improve access to trails, parks and natural areas.

EQUITY AND EFFICIENCY

- Equitably distribute the benefits and burdens of growth.
- Create a plan that is feasible, adaptable to future conditions, and capitalizes on opportunities as they arise.
- Make investments that maximize limited resources with a focus on building basic infrastructure first.
- Promote partnerships and collaboration between government, institutions, businesses and the community.
- Protect historic and cultural resources.
- Ensure that plans and improvements support an environment where people of diverse ethnic groups, religions and cultures feel welcome.



VI. Scenario development

WHAT IS SCENARIO PLANNING?

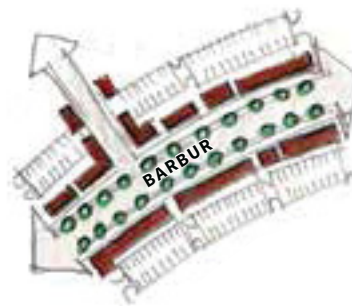
In order to test possible ideas for the focus areas and corridor, the project team used a scenario planning process. This process consists of visualizing what future conditions or events are probable, what their consequences or effects would be, and how to effectively position the community to benefit from them. To that extent the project team used the “Envision Tomorrow” tool to create development types (e.g. combinations of attached townhouse, multi-story mixed use, low rise office building) based on regionally calibrated data on development costs and real estate market factors.

From these Development Types, the project team assembled four scenarios of varying land use development intensities for the corridor with input and direction from the Community Working Group and the Technical Advisory Group. The four scenarios were characterized as:

- **The commercial corridor** — consists of largely incremental investments and light renovation of existing buildings. Some upgrades to sidewalks, added street furniture and lighting were included as owners reinvest in their existing building stock. This is similar to the level of improvements on SW Macadam.
- **Low mixed use** — reflects some parcels redeveloping to respond to higher market demand, with one to two story buildings with a ground floor retail focus, and shops or some additional housing above. For example, this is similar in character to the area around State and A streets in Lake Oswego.
- **Medium mixed use** — More significant infrastructure investments begin to occur with development impact fees and parcel improvements. Here the buildings are 4–6 stories with either office or housing above or in close proximity to retail clusters. Areas along SE Belmont are beginning to see this level of change.
- **High mixed use** — Sites are being maximized in terms of their development potential, with 8–10 story structures featuring a full complement of services and amenities on site or nearby. This is akin to certain areas of the Pearl District.

The project team also recognized that Barbur’s high volume and noisy traffic may not lend itself to a standard “main street” development pattern (e.g. buildings built and oriented to the street with shops and on street parking) in all locations. This was also seen as an impediment to people understanding how additional residential development could be accommodated on Barbur in a manner that would be a desirable place to live. Consequently, the project team developed four alternative urban design prototypes to explore other arrangements that would better satisfy the corridor vision and goals.

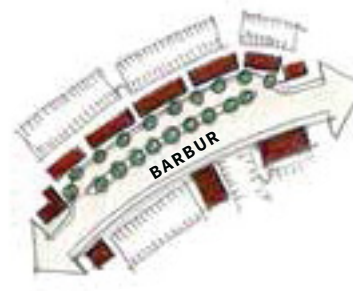
Urban design prototypes



1. Barbur as main street



2. Parallel main street



3. Separated slip lane



4. Perpendicular main street

To evaluate the scenario alternatives, the project team developed a four-step method to screen and test the various concepts:

Step 1 — Community preference

The first step of the evaluation process was to host a public forum, inviting neighbors, business owners and stakeholders to work hand in hand with the project team. During the forum, participants used large maps and colored markers to convey subjective evaluations including:

- Optimal levels of development intensity for areas along the corridor.
- Opportunity locations for new development.
- The types of infrastructure investments that would support the ideal land uses.

Additionally, participants provided input through a series of polling questions. Approximately 40 forum participants used instant polling to express preferences between the alternatives. The polling questions were both conceptual, asking about desired land uses, and visual, with photo simulations used to illustrate potential future development conditions. To reach potential participants beyond the public events, an online version of the poll was created to reach a broader audience. Nearly 200 people participated in the online poll. The results showed a strong preference for Scenario 3 — medium mixed use development.

Input received from the public forum and online poll is from motivated, self-selected participants. Therefore, the results should not be considered statistically significant, but do provide an indication of the community's desires for the future, and the accompanying appetite for change that will likely be required for these desires to come to fruition.

Which image do you like best?
Four scenarios of varying land use development intensities.



71% of forum and survey participants opted for Scenario 3 — Medium Mixed Use

Step 2 — Scenario Indicators



The project team utilized the “Envision Tomorrow” tool in the development of the four corridor-wide scenarios. The Envision Tomorrow model delivers a variety of indicators for each scenario describing potential future outcomes. Using the Development Types that were created to represent combinations of appropriately scaled buildings and accompanying urban form characteristics, the various scenarios produced outputs for

indicators such as the number of jobs, housing units and shopping and dining opportunities that would be associated with each scenario. The financial data, including costs for development and Portland-based rent and lease information was derived from similar developments within the City and region.

Step 3 — Consistency with vision and goals

The Barbur Concept Plan Vision and Goals establish a platform to support the creation of the alternative scenarios. Additionally the Vision and Goals were used to evaluate the scenarios by pairing them with evaluation criteria delivered through the Envision Tomorrow tools. Using a rating system of high, medium and low, the evaluation criteria provide an ordinal comparison of how well each of the four scenarios advances the individual and collective Vision and Goals of the Barbur Concept Plan. The development scenarios were combined with the urban design prototypes to fine tune the focus area urban design concepts (final versions illustrated in Section VIII).



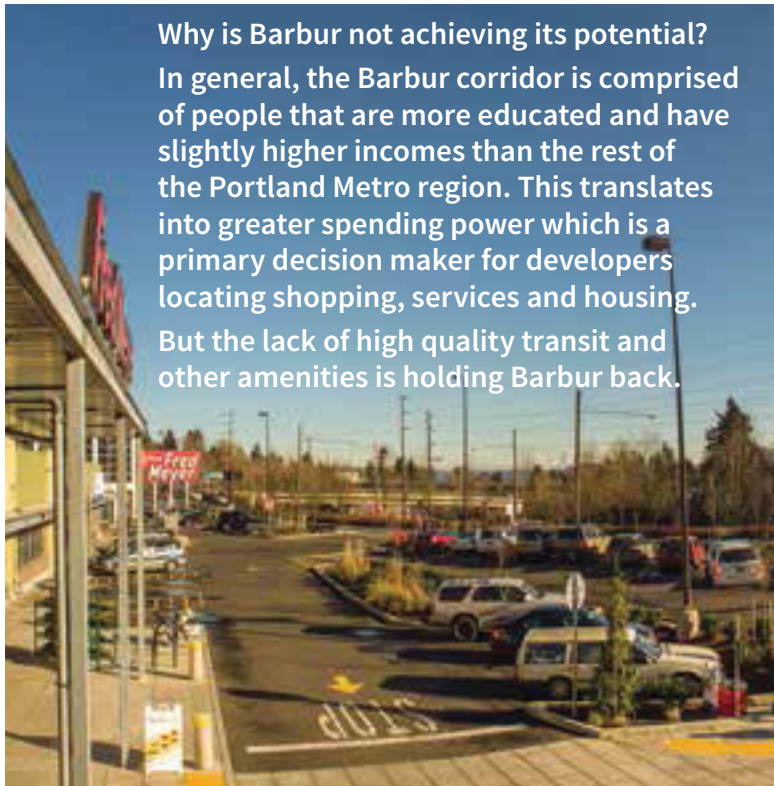
Step 4 — Market feasibility and/or ability to catalyze investment

Although the community may have an appetite for change in some areas, it is ultimately the property owners and real estate market conditions that are the primary determinants of if and when new projects are built. The consultants conducted a focus group with a mix of successful local developers to help understand current market conditions and the potential future conditions that would allow for the scenarios to be realized. The addition of certain amenities could also change market conditions. For example, street trees, full-width sidewalks, retail activity, access to trails and parks would all affect when and if the projected level of development could be supported by the market. The focus group identified future investment in high capacity transit (e.g. light rail or bus rapid transit) in the corridor as an important amenity. In their words, transit is the “game changer.” These influencing factors were analyzed to understand the interplay between regional investments in transit and infrastructure and redevelopment opportunities.

CREATING A PREFERRED SCENARIO

City staff and the consultant worked with the Community Working Group to create a preferred scenario. The preferred scenario is an assemblage of the optimal components of the four scenarios, including significant variations along the corridor (see page iv). Community Forum participants were also asked to express preferences for the scenario type for each segment. Additionally, they were asked to use maps to locate specific types of buildings in each of the seven focus areas.

Section VIII of the report illustrates some concepts that could be applied to the distinctive segments and focus areas.



WHAT INFORMS THE PREFERRED SCENARIO

Building prototypes

The building prototypes were updated to reflect lessons learned from the focus group panel and follow-up research. The most impactful changes were made in relation to parking, office potential and residential finance information.

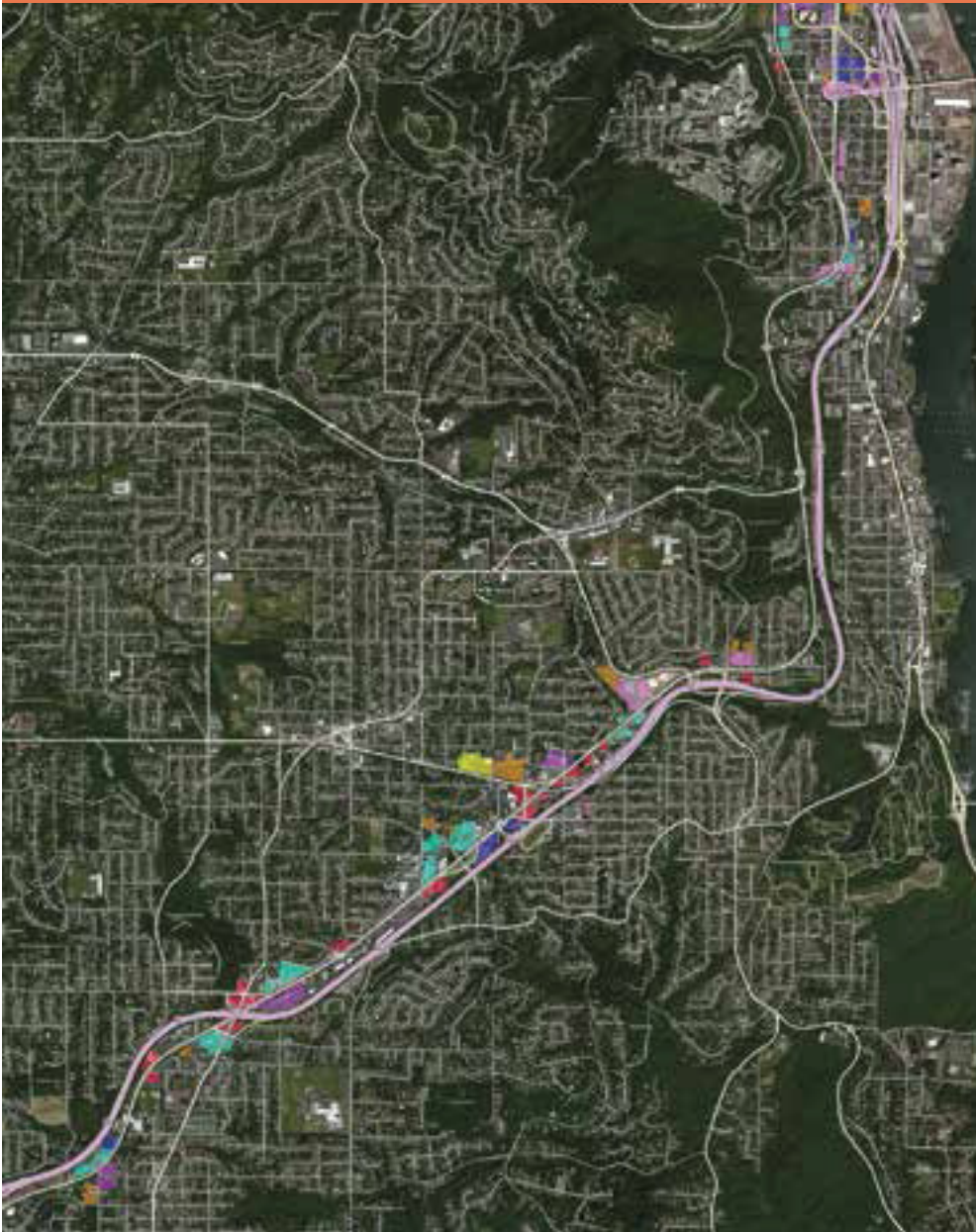
Providing the appropriate amount of parking for a building is a delicate balance. Too much parking means land and money are wasted. Not enough can make a property difficult to rent, lease or sell. While Barbur is one of two southwest corridors where there is no minimum parking required, recent development indicates that parking is still provided at higher levels than inner neighborhoods. As a result, the office prototypes parking was increased from 1.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of building space to 2 spaces per 1,000. While offices built in downtown may include zero parking, this is still less than the 3.5 spaces per 1,000 s.f. that might occur in suburban locations. Recent trends in the Portland area indicate that parking for multi-unit residential buildings may serve as an additional income stream, as they can be rented out separately from the dwelling units earning an additional \$25 to \$90 per space each month.

The research also showed that only the north end of the corridor could support the additional costs of structured or underground parking. Reliant on surface parking alone, office buildings in southern portions of the corridor would therefore be limited in scale and overall density.

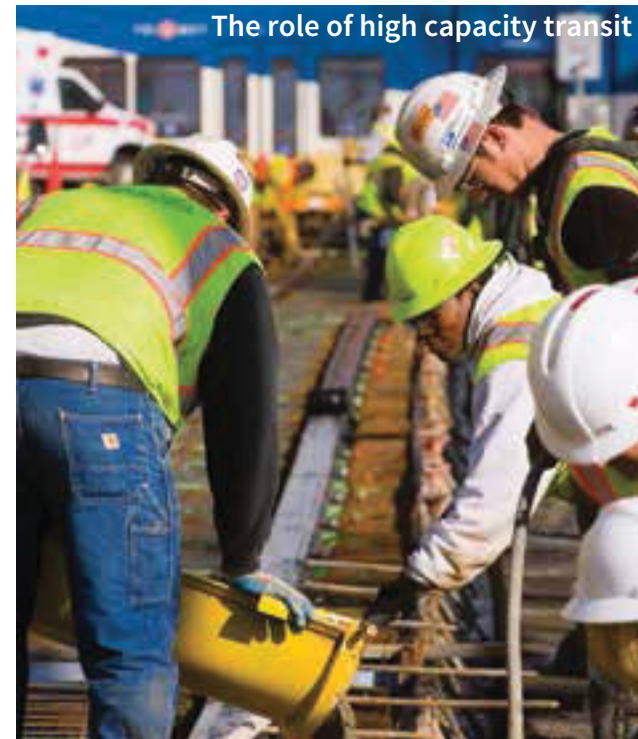
Both property and construction costs were higher than expected for residential lands. However, likely achievable rents of \$1.50 per square foot monthly for the southern portion of the corridor indicate that four-story apartment buildings are financially feasible. The northern portion of the corridor has land costs nearly triple that of the south. However, the increased demand for living in the area results in achievable rent levels of \$1.75 per s.f., a level akin to some of the more popular new buildings found throughout inner SE and NE Portland.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

GIS parcel data results



Using information from the updated building prototypes, the expert development panel and workshop results, the consultant generated a new GIS scenario. Map (left) shows the parcel specific analysis that helped to ground the concept in market reality.



The role of high capacity transit

High capacity transit has been shown to increase property values, leading to greater likelihood of private sector investment. While impacts will vary, studies have shown increases in value of over 16% for condo units near light rail. Bus Rapid Transit is a less proven technology in terms of value influence, but by applying similar attributes that light rail has (dedicated lanes, high quality design, distinctive look and reliable travel times) it too carries the potential to help facilitate redevelopment.

VII. Corridor Analysis

The issues affecting the Barbur Corridor vary as greatly as the distance it traverses. Nevertheless, there are some strengths and challenges that are common to the corridor, as described below. One of the more unique and vexing issues for Barbur is the presence of the parallel interstate freeway, replete with the benefits of business access and freight mobility, but tempered by the negative impacts of air, noise and stormwater pollutants, the additional barriers between neighborhoods on opposite sides of the freeway, and the complicated interplay between local and regional traffic and congestion. An Origin/Destination Assessment was conducted using Metro's Regional Travel Demand Model to answer questions about where users of SW Barbur Blvd are coming from and going to. The assessment found that about 20% of the vehicles will travel through the full length of Barbur Boulevard for their trip. While this issue is primarily transportation related, it exemplifies how land use and transportation issues are inexorably integrated.

There are more jobs than people living in the Barbur study area.

Effectively managing stormwater is another common thread in the corridor. The Southwest Hills slopes and soil composition mixed with the historical development pattern have created deficiencies that are expensive to retrofit. Consequently, developers try and avoid triggering the city's stormwater requirements, sometimes at the expense of providing other necessary improvements, like wider sidewalks or bike lanes.

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Barbur provides a means of connecting a number of nearby major institutions which serve as a regional draw (Portland Community College, OHSU and the Veterans Hospital, National College of Natural Medicine, Portland State University, Lewis and Clark College). However access to these institutions is not direct from Barbur, and in some cases they are not connected at all.

There are over 27,000 people living in 13,000 households in the corridor. The population is mostly white (86%) but is slowly growing more diversified. Residents in this corridor have significantly higher per capita incomes (on average) than people in the city and region as a whole. Yet there are populations living in the corridor with significantly lower incomes. This is reflected by the housing mix and rental rates for units near Barbur. Multifamily units command slightly higher rents than similar units across the City; however, nearly 35 percent of one bedroom apartments rent at considerably lower rates than comparably sized and quality units elsewhere in the city.

Barbur supports over 32,000 jobs with an additional 16,000 expected by 2035. But these jobs lack sector diversity (2/3 are in education and medicine). While this provides an opportunity to feature support and ancillary services to education and medicine industries, greater sector diversity would help ensure the area's job resiliency should economic conditions negatively impact the dominant industries. Lease and rental rates for retail space are somewhat lower than

the citywide average, reflecting the higher vacancy rates and aging building stock in the corridor. This challenges the corridor's investment potential since property owners are individually less willing to invest in their properties if the overall character and rental market in the area would not support a reasonable return on that investment.

There is currently a surplus of parking that tends to disrupt the continuity of retail and office uses, creating "dead zones" between businesses. Transitioning parking ratios from current auto-focused levels to uses supported by high capacity transit will be challenging. As seen in other parts of the city, the cost to provide parking can impede the ability for some projects to move forward. Simultaneously, lenders may be reluctant to underwrite projects that are under-parked. Provision of high capacity transit helps to bridge this apparent gap.

Speeding on Barbur is a persistent community issue for the entire corridor. As a former highway, Barbur was designed to move large quantities of traffic at relatively high speeds. Although Barbur received improvements through the years (e.g. additional pedestrian refuge crossings and intersections, and bike lanes in some locations) the design of the facility simply encourages speeding. The result is a road environment that discourages other modes of travel.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

Bringing Barbur up to modern roadway standards would require a significant investment. Nearly 6 miles of sidewalks (1/2 the total) have yet to be constructed. Street trees are largely absent, and there are several gaps in the bike network. These gaps are the result of constrained topography or road structures that were too narrow to accommodate added bike lane and/or sidewalks with the existing vehicle travel lane configuration. Correcting these gaps will be very expensive. Barbur also transects the cross streets at an angle creating many intersections with poor geometry. Furthermore, topography adds to the challenge with steep approaches on some of these side streets.

In particular, there are two areas within this corridor that have seemingly insurmountable near to medium term transportation issues: SW Kelly Avenue area and the Crossroads area. These two areas have significant traffic volumes and complicated intermingled roadway and intersection geometries that do not lend themselves to simple or inexpensive solutions. Nevertheless, untangling these transportation issues would likely offer considerable opportunities to create vibrant neighborhoods/centers by stimulating private investment, and providing housing choices and infrastructure investments.

High capacity transit would be a key piece in realizing many of the changes described in this report. In addition to the benefits realized through reconstructed public facilities in conjunction with a high capacity transit project, studies have demonstrated the real estate market responds positively with private investment to the certainty of reliable, high quality transit. Bank lending formulas have a role in that transit can influence the amount of parking they require for development, in many cases reducing the need for parking. This in turn reduces land required for parking lots and the cost to deliver development projects.

Results elsewhere have shown that high capacity transit also helps activate places by getting more “feet on the street”. This creates more demand for places to shop, dine and gather which stimulates the market to provide attractive lease space. People want to live near these places, driving demand for additional housing opportunities. From a few key catalytic site developments, property owners begin to see successful projects around them, and are encouraged to invest in upgrades to their own properties. In other words, high capacity transit helps to reassure property owners who wish to invest and improve their properties, that their investments will have a net positive return, and that others are operating with the same objectives in mind.



REALIZING THE VISION FOR THE BARBUR CORRIDOR

The ideas and concepts expressed in this report are intended to achieve, over the long term, a different future for Barbur. Previous to this effort, Barbur had not benefitted from a comprehensive land use visioning process. Consequently, a more reactive piece-meal development pattern emerged, one reliant on automobiles to get from one destination to another. However the community recognizes that Barbur has “good bones” and serves as a convenient route to nearby destinations, and has the potential to accommodate some residential and job growth while protecting nearby neighborhoods. The Community Working Group crafted a vision to help guide the future transformation of the corridor into a place where people want to live, work, play and learn (see section V). The Concept Plan seeks to achieve this vision through the following guiding principles:

Place-centered focus

By focusing redevelopment in seven distinct concentrated clusters of housing, retail and office uses, activating links to nearby open space and parks, and capitalizing on the diversity of learning institutions already in the corridor, people living on and nearby Barbur will call these their places to live, work, play and learn.

Thriving businesses

By leveraging public investments in sidewalks, bicycle facilities, roadway projects, streetscape improvements and high capacity transit service, currently underutilized sites will transform to more efficient development patterns providing for more leasable square footage, greater diversity in land uses to support local needs, increased access from adjacent neighborhoods, and more opportunities for locally owned businesses to open and prosper.

Desirable places to live

Additional, well sited and designed housing will provide more opportunities for current residents to age in place, and for students attending PCC, OHSU, Lewis and Clark and NCM to find suitable and convenient housing, while also accommodating new community members. This housing will feature measures to mitigate for noise and air pollution from nearby major transportation facilities, in addition to providing spaces to gather communally. A complete network of sidewalks, trails and bike facilities will integrate these new homes with surrounding neighborhoods and help tie the neighborhoods to the boulevard.

February 2013

“Civic corridors are major streets and transit corridors that link neighborhood centers to each other and the Central City. Civic corridors are enjoyable places to live, work and gather with bike and pedestrian facilities, large canopy trees, stormwater facilities and place-making amenities.”

The Portland Plan

Honoring the past, while looking toward the future

Barbur’s historic origins as the original Pacific Highway connecting southwest to downtown Portland should be celebrated as the corridor transforms to a thriving new place in the future. Places like the Original Pancake House, Fulton Community Center, the Capitol Hill Motel, South Portland Historic District, should be honored and structures preserved where possible. Additionally, notable icons such as the Fred Meyer sign, the plaques and ornamental pillars on the Multnomah, Vermont and Newbury viaducts should also be preserved.

The green corridor

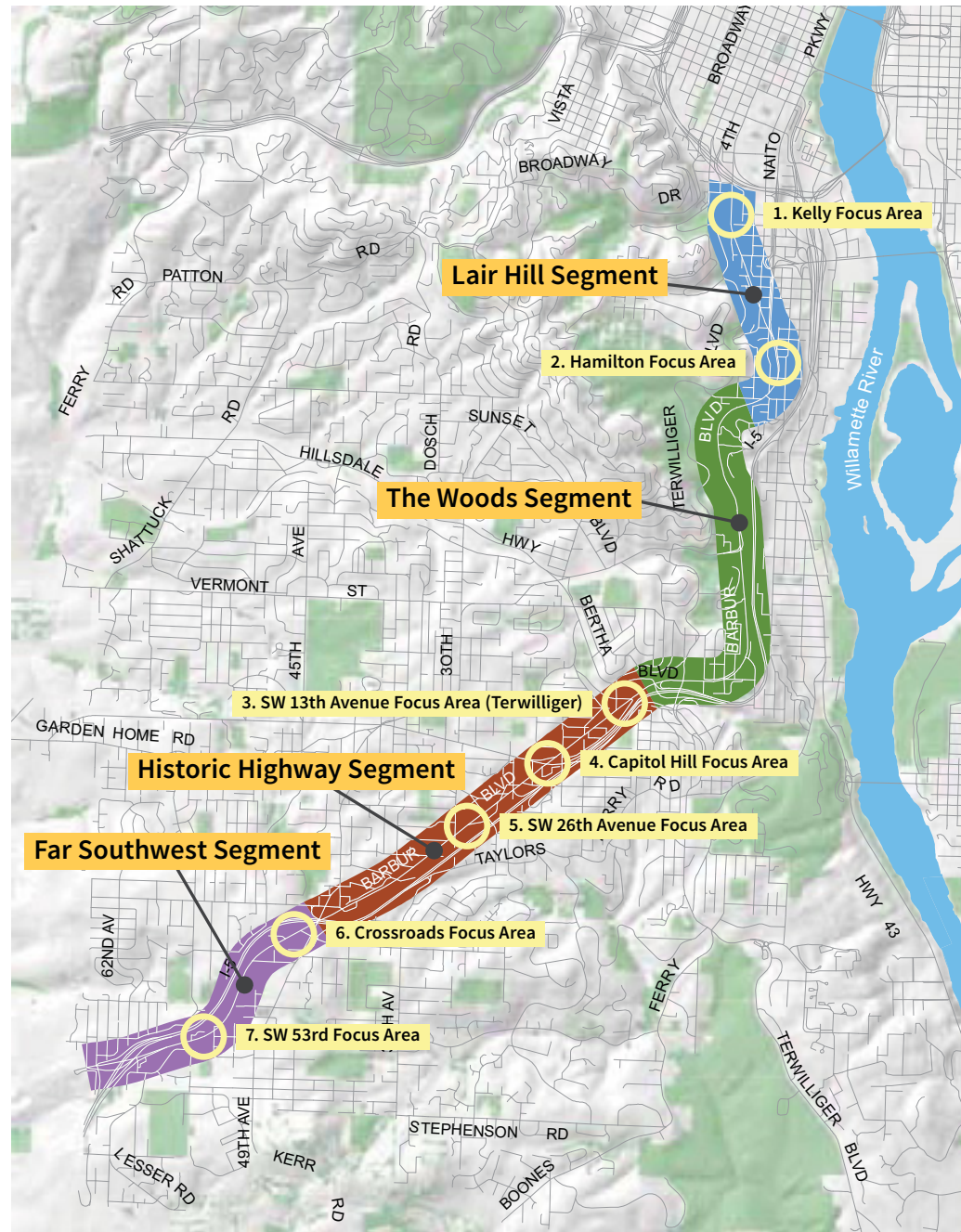
Innovative stormwater approaches will thread street trees, landscaped medians and informal gathering places into an integrated system to address runoff, pollutants and provide multiple ecosystem benefits. Where appropriate, historical stream crossings will be evaluated for possible daylighting or otherwise acknowledged through surface landscape treatments. Barbur should be a place to test innovation in arterial greenstreet construction.



Native plantings in a meandering vegetated swale could function as an urban stream to manage stormwater and treat roadway runoff.

VIII. Segment and Focus Area Analysis

The following section of the report describes the four distinct segments of Barbur running from north to south: Lair Hill, The Woods, Historic Highway and Far Southwest. Each segment description includes more geographically specific strengths and challenges, as well as transportation and watershed health characteristics. Each segment includes a watershed map showing the typical distance a person can travel on foot in 5, 10 and 15 minute increments from the center of each focus area (represented by a green dot on the map). The seven Focus Areas; Kelly, Hamilton, SW 13th Avenue, Capitol Hill, SW 26th Avenue, Crossroads and SW 53rd Avenue, are also described and analyzed below, grouped by each related segment.



LAIR HILL SEGMENT

The Lair Hill segment of Barbur (generally between I-405 and SW Seymour Street) is comprised of predominantly multi-family housing west of Barbur, neighborhoods of older and historic single-family homes to the east, with a small commercial center around SW Hamilton and a classic city street grid. The area is directly adjacent to the Central City and South Waterfront but cut off from both by major interstate freeways. The South Portland Historic District serves to protect the historic character of that northern 19th century neighborhood. There is a higher level of existing amenities including two developed parks, two community gardens, a nearly complete sidewalk network, and small but successful commercial core. Oregon Health Sciences University (the city's largest employer) is nearby flanking both sides of the neighborhood, but is only accessible through circuitous routes, or pathways. However, the recently completed Darlene Hooley pedestrian bridge now connects Lair Hill neighborhood to South Waterfront and the river. The National College of Natural Medicine is also in the northern end of this segment.

TRANSPORTATION

The major transportation challenges in this segment are addressing traffic safety and circulation for all travel modes. The average daily traffic (ADT) along the Lair Hill segment ranges from 18,000–34,000 vehicles. The portion north of the Naito intersection carries less than 18,500 vehicles per day, on average. The area around the intersection with Hamilton has the highest volume of motor vehicle traffic, (i.e. 34,000 ADT), in the entire length of Barbur.

Speed data obtained for the Lair Hill segment of Barbur shows that speeding is an issue (see map on p.12). Speeding is most severe in the portion south of Naito to the Capitol Highway turnoff, where the 85th percentile is 12 mph over the posted limit.

The largest percentage of southbound traffic (37%) diverts off Barbur onto Capitol Highway after passing Lair Hill. Around 40% of northbound trips originate from Capitol Hwy. A majority of this traffic continues north into downtown on Naito Pkwy, as opposed to using Barbur.

The hilly topography and freeways disrupt street connectivity and funnel traffic onto the few north-south routes, which are pinched

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into a narrow space. Walking in the area remains a viable option with the existing street grid network and mostly complete sidewalk network.

WATERSHED HEALTH

The Lair Hill segment is within the Willamette Watershed. Stormwater in this segment is managed through the combined sewer system. Peak rain events can overwhelm system capacity, leading to untreated discharges into the river. Close to downtown and the river, the eastern side of the corridor has had a long history of land uses. Most of the streams on the east side of Barbur have been altered or channeled into pipes. A different story can be told of the west side of Barbur where topography has historically slowed the pace of development and thereby the manipulation of the hydrological system.

Similar to the Woods segment, the location of forested areas west of and near Barbur (e.g. Terwilliger Parkway and Marquam Nature Park) help ameliorate water quality and watershed health in this segment. Still, invasive plants such as English ivy threaten the integrity and long-term viability of these natural areas. To leverage these healthier upper watershed areas, invasive species management and downstream watershed health improvements should continue to be prioritized via upgrades to stormwater detention and treatment facilities in emerging and future redevelopment sites — both private and public.



Note how I-5, I-405 and Ross Island ramp facilities as well as the topographical barrier of Marquam Hill shorten the distance walkers can travel in a given amount of time and divide the neighborhood.

1. Kelly Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Located centrally between PSU, OHSU and NCNM, the Kelly area is well situated to become an integral part of an emerging education hub. The area lacks some amenities like a grocery store and a solid retail core, but has two notable parks (Lair Hill and Duniway), the new Darlene Hooley Pedestrian Bridge at Gibbs Street which connects to South Waterfront, and classic quiet walkable Portland neighborhood streets. Currently however, both Barbur and Naito Parkway are barriers to east-west connectivity, and the Ross Island Bridge ramps break up the neighborhood cohesiveness and bring heavy amounts of traffic through the area. The proximity to downtown is curtailed by the I 405 freeway gulch, and I-5 isolates the area from South Waterfront. The Ross Island Bridge ramps also occupy nearly four city blocks of potential redevelopment area. The South Portland Circulation Study also identified potential additional developable land with a reduced SW Naito cross section. Reconfiguring these ramps and Naito traffic would come at considerable expense, but could also spur significant investment and help reshape and reconnect the neighborhoods.

The community expressed a strong preference for prioritizing Naito as the spine of this area as opposed to Barbur, which acts more like an edge in this section of the corridor. There is an underutilized full block parcel at SW Porter (terminus of the Naito pedestrian overcrossing) between Naito and 1st that is split zoned (CS/R2), which adds complexity for redevelopment options. NCNM also expressed a desire to revisit the zoning within its campus master plan area. If the Ross Island ramps were to be reconfigured, zoning on these properties may also need to be reconsidered. This land is currently zoned R1 and R2 (low and medium density multi dwelling residential), and not necessarily appropriate given its proximity to a major transportation link (including potential HCT).

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

Redevelopment and movement within this area is hampered by vexing transportation issues, including over 24 north-south lanes situated in the third of a mile space between I-5 and Barbur, the braided Ross Island Bridge ramps with over 70,000 vehicles per day, and congestion around the I 405 ramps. Several past planning

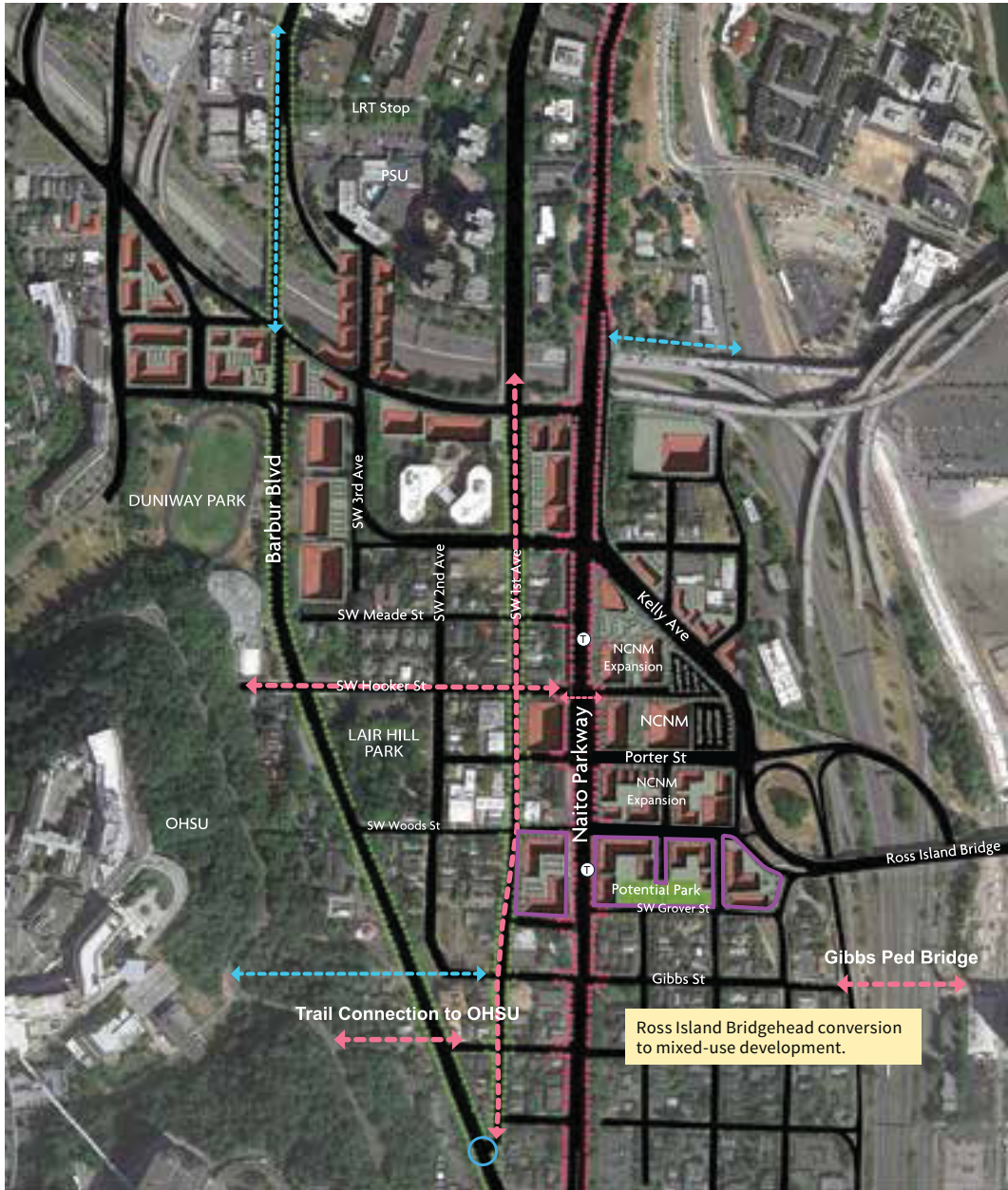
efforts have resulted in road reconfiguration concepts, but with considerable price tags. This expense could be offset somewhat by freeing up developable property from surplus rights of way. Congestion also prevents some parcels in the Kelly Area from attaining their CX planned zoning designation (currently zoned CO2). Establishing the Central City as a Multimodal Area will provide greater flexibility in addressing the transportation issues, and could lead to these parcels being rezoned to match the Comprehensive Plan designation.

Locating a high capacity transit station in this area has been noted as essential by the community should a HCT alignment go through the Kelly Area. Dedicated HCT lanes would represent an unacceptable barrier to east-west connections across Naito and through the neighborhood unless the design were permeable allowing for numerous pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle crossings. A station here could provide improved access, increased amenities and a stronger link to downtown in compensation for the assumed impacts from potential additional transportation infrastructure barriers, and noise and vibration. There is a question of phasing investment in this focus area. If the Ross Island Bridge ramps are reconfigured, a station near this newly freed up developable land could catalyze transit oriented mixed use development. However, if the timing were such that HCT preceded the ramp reconfiguration, then the station might be better located near NCNM to support that campus' growth and stimulate redevelopment of parcels to the west and further north.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

Barbur was seen as a secondary street in this focus area, with more attention to SW Naito. Therefore, not much change is foreseen along Barbur, except to the far north, where improved connections across I-405 and close proximity to transit may lead to some underutilized parcels redeveloping. Some way-finding improvements would reinforce the link between Naito, Lair Hill and Duniway parks, and the trails leading west to OHSU. Pedestrian and bicycle street improvements, safer connections across I 405, and integration of more stormwater management swales and street trees would also help solidify Barbur's multi-modal multi-purposed function.

1. Kelly Focus Area



Long-term concept for a freeway cap, creating an additional direct connection to PSU/Downtown. Photo: Expressway cap, Columbus, OH



Darlene Hooley pedestrian bridge at Gibbs Street.



Future vision for the National College of Natural Medicine. Courtesy: NCNM master plan

- Existing trails and priority pedestrian connections
- Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections
- Potential new blocks
- Potential redevelopment/adaptive reuse
- Potential HCT station
- Priority intersection improvement

2. Hamilton Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Hamilton affords some of the best views of Mount Hood and the Willamette River in the corridor, with topography to maximize availability of those views even with new development. There are a number of professional offices on and near Corbett Avenue, and a Swan Market for convenience needs. There are a number of higher intensity residential condominium units in the area. While Corbett is a busy linkage between Barbur and Johns Landing, the two lane cross section with large mature street trees makes this a fairly comfortable pedestrian experience.

Barbur has a 7 lane cross section in this stretch, and is quite formidable to cross for bikes and pedestrians. The signalized crossing at Hamilton provides a crossing point, but the nearest adjacent crossings (pedestrian refuges) are each about 1/2 mile in either direction.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

Hamilton is well positioned in terms of capacity for place making and increased development as there are few major road infrastructure investments required for this area. On street parking can be scarce at times due to the few number of side streets. This could be exacerbated as existing surface parking lots are developed with buildings.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

Barbur will primarily function as throughput for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and vehicles heading to or from downtown Portland. However, by orienting buildings along Barbur toward the street, with parking located behind where it's practicable to do so, the pedestrian experience will be much improved. The preservation of historic structures is important with the focus of activity in this area largely along the parallel main street — SW Corbett — and on Hamilton to a lesser degree. To that end, the intersection at Hamilton should be made more prominent and designated as an entry to the main street area through appropriate architecture, open space and art. Moderating traffic speeds through appropriate street design treatments should also improve the walkability on Hamilton between Barbur and Corbett.



Neighborhood-scale residential infill

2. Hamilton Focus Area



Existing trails and priority pedestrian connections

Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections

Potential redevelopment/ adaptive reuse



Attractive pedestrian realm on Corbett.



Even with its limitations, bicyclists use Barbur.



Stormwater facility on Sandy Blvd.



Opportunities exist for stormwater plazas in areas of excess right-of-way.

THE WOODS SEGMENT

From Hamilton, the corridor rapidly transitions to largely wooded and steep areas of single family housing and open space. There are no centers of commercial activity in this stretch. This section of Barbur feels remote, with few structures visible directly from the road. The Woods did not receive much attention in terms of catalyzing change or establishing potential station areas. This is in part due to the existing tranquil nature of the surrounding area, and in part to carry forward the 1934 Planning Commission's hard fought battle to retain this area free from commercial development and advertising, as a scenic entrance to the Central City.

Although opportunities for mixed use intensification lie elsewhere in the corridor, this is not to say that this segment is lacking in needs. This area has the two aging viaduct bridges with no bike lanes or sidewalks. While the area has plentiful tree canopy, invasive species (primarily English ivy) threaten the long term viability of these trees and ultimately impact the area's ability to withstand landslides.

TRANSPORTATION

This segment through largely wooded open space has few intersections or driveways resulting in mostly uninterrupted traffic flow though the central stretch of the segment. Average motor vehicle volumes are estimated at approximately 30,000 trips per day.

Similar to the Lair Hill segment, speeding is a problem through the Woods segment with 85th percentile speeds estimated at 10 mph above the posted speed limit. This can be attributed, in part, to the absence of signalized intersections between SW Hamilton to SW Miles streets (1.7 miles) and the presence of multiple travel lanes that allow for motorists to pass in both directions.

Findings on the origins and destinations through this segment were based on trips passing a point halfway between Capitol Hwy and Terwilliger Blvd. Thirty-five percent of southbound trips crossing this point come from the Ross Island Bridge. The southbound trips diminish as traffic turns onto cross streets, most notably Multnomah Blvd (13%) and Terwilliger Blvd (18%), with roughly 15% continuing all the way to the I-5 interchange at Tigard. Approximately 56% of the northbound traffic is headed for the Ross Island Bridge.

Despite the modest grades and presence of bike lanes in much of this segment, the motor vehicle speeds, missing bike lanes on the two viaducts and turning conflicts at the Capitol Highway turnoff make conditions unattractive for those who might consider bicycling. People on bicycles would benefit from greater buffering or separation from the travel lanes, as evidenced by several stretches where bike lane striping has been worn away by errant vehicle tires. In addition to improved bicycle accommodations on the Vermont and Newberry viaducts, pedestrians need either a completed sidewalk network or a parallel accessible pathway.

Recognizing the costs associated with complete replacement of the viaducts structures or the addition of parallel bridge structures to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, the community identified an interim low-cost solution. By reducing the number of northbound travel lanes from two to one across the viaducts (beginning just north of the signal at SW Miles street), and from three to two (where Capitol highway merges into Barbur) to roughly the 4900 block of Barbur (Rasmussen Apartments), the current 3-foot wide raised shoulder on the bridges could be expanded to 8 feet in both directions, and a continuous buffered bike lane could likewise be provided.



Capitol Hwy and Barbur, 1932

WATERSHED HEALTH

This segment is in the Willamette Watershed. The substantial vegetated cover that still exists in the area, even as second growth, strongly influences the segment's physical and hydrological character. As elsewhere, areas of natural terrain and dense vegetation near the corridor, like George Himes Park, continue to contribute greatly to the health of the watershed and to moderate impacts from stormwater runoff on downstream areas.

The Woods segment is part of the Westside Wildlife Corridor, an area that has been identified by City and Metro inventories as an important forested corridor connecting Forest Park to Tryon Creek State Natural Area to the south. The forest and woodlands provide food and shelter for a variety of birds, mammals and other species.

While the area has plentiful tree canopy, invasive species (primarily English ivy) threaten the long term viability of these trees and ultimately impact the areas' ability to filter stormwater and withstand landslides. Removal of invasive plant species and revegetation is critical to ensure that the habitat and natural functions of the forested areas will be a part of the vital future for Barbur.

Furthermore, while large areas of the segment's forested slopes are protected as open space, there remain a number of parcels (many with Barbur frontage) that could face additional development pressure as land values in the area continue to rise.



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VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS SEGMENT

Traffic on Barbur has been calmed to match the pastoral setting through design treatments similar to those seen on SW Terwilliger Parkway (decorative street lamps, parallel walking/jogging path and buffered bike lanes). Medians have been constructed where possible and planted with native vegetation to collect and clean stormwater. Small viewpoints and resting places have been provided to make this corridor both functional for commuters and enjoyable for recreational users.



Trolley Trail. Image: courtesy of Metro

HISTORIC HIGHWAY SEGMENT

The Historic Highway segment of Barbur (generally between Terwilliger and the Capitol Highway/Taylor's Ferry intersection) is home to the SW 13th, Capitol Hill and SW 26th Focus Areas. The character of this area transitions rapidly from the Woods segment to a long stretch of retail and office development, trees are largely relegated to areas off of Barbur, and the topography begins to level out.

The most predominant uses along this area are office, personal services (hair salons, nails, vets, banks, insurance agents, accountants, etc) and retail, followed by restaurants, apartments, auto oriented uses (mechanics, tire and oil centers, body shops) and a few hotels. The area between I-5 and Barbur has some potential for office space development, as noise and air quality can be more easily mitigated in a closed building environment than with residential uses. Taller buildings could also help shield Barbur from some of the freeway noise. However, market rents in this area do not seem to support higher levels of office development without significant additional amenities. In this segment's focus areas there are opportunities for capitalizing on mountain views, and siting residential and retail uses on quieter side or parallel commercial streets.

TRANSPORTATION

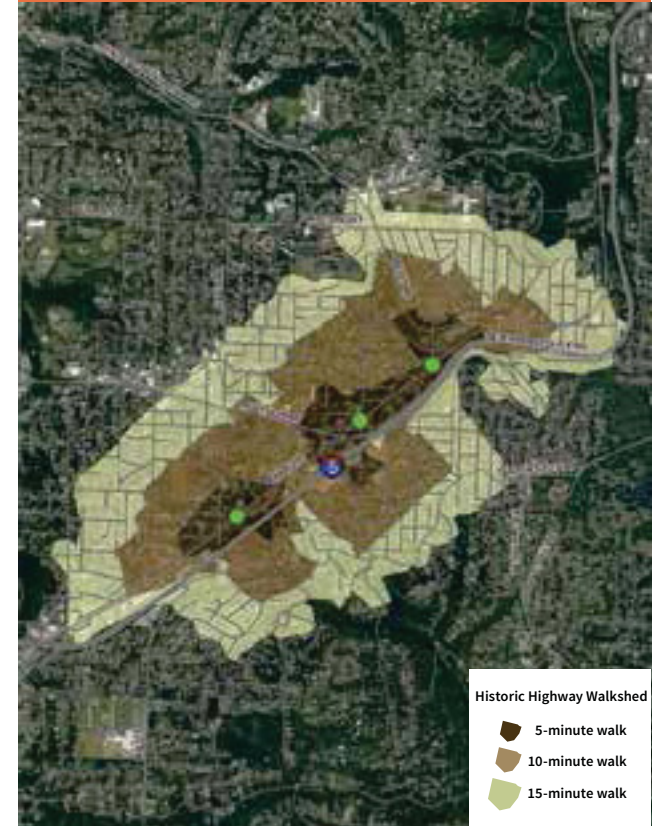
This section of Barbur between SW Terwilliger and the Crossroads is mostly straight, varying in width from 4 to 7 travel lanes. Traffic volumes in this strip commercial area are highest on the northern portion of the segment near SW Bertha. The average daily volumes in the segment range from 24,900 to 31,200 trips per day. The posted speed limit is 35 mph north of SW Spring Garden, where the 85th percentile speeds were measured at 44 mph, or 9 mph over the posted speed. The speed limit in the south portion of the Historic Highway is 40 mph with 85th percentile speeds of 47 mph.

At the point just north of the Capitol/I-5 interchange, approximately 17% of southbound trips come from Taylor's Ferry Rd/Spring Garden, which includes some trips originating from the Sellwood Bridge. Forty-one percent of the southbound trips take the ramp onto I-5 south. Northbound traffic disperses at multiple points to the north

with only a small fraction (4%) of the trips originating in this part of the corridor continuing along Barbur Blvd north of SW Naito.

Steep topography and limited street connectivity hinder access to Barbur from adjacent neighborhoods in several places. Still, the relatively flat grade along Barbur makes walking and biking more attractive and offers the potential to draw a larger number of people. There are three I-5 crossings, but of those, two do not have adequate pedestrian and/or bike facilities connecting Barbur to the adjoining neighborhoods. Additionally several freeway ramps route traffic to or from Barbur through neighborhood streets. Sidewalks exist in a piece-meal fashion along the boulevard, often stranding walkers at dead end barriers, or requiring navigation on dirt/gravel road shoulders. While there are bike lanes on most of Barbur in this segment, there are some critical gaps and deficiencies. Poorly defined driveways, skewed intersection geometries, motorists turning right into parking lots and the continuous center left turn lane pose conflicts for bicyclists and motorists alike.

Walkshed map



WATERSHED HEALTH

The majority of this segment lies within the Tryon Creek watershed, with a small section in the north being in the Willamette watershed. A portion of Stevens Creek is piped beneath Fred Meyers and Barbur. Stevens Creek at its confluence with the Willamette River serves as an important refuge for migrating juvenile salmon. Much of the existing area considered for redevelopment by the Concept Plan is already largely developed with structures or impervious surfaces. As such, redevelopment and land use intensification offers opportunities for investment in updated stormwater management facilities that will improve water quality. Of note, redevelopment in this area will not necessarily reduce existing tree canopy as many commercial sites lack tree cover. Consequently there are opportunities to increase tree canopy and understory vegetation, thereby adding watershed health benefits. Furthermore, existing Bureau of Environmental Service plans identify a number of higher impact projects in this area, both from a watershed health and a stormwater system investment perspective. In this segment those range from improving stream corridor vegetation cover to introducing new facilities to filter major roadway runoff. Private and public investments in this segment would contribute to these improvements and leverage other citywide investments to further the southwest's contribution to a healthy citywide environment for both people and wildlife.

Mitigating the impacts of stormwater runoff before it reaches Stephens Creek is very important in this segment. There are challenges to incorporating sufficiently sized facilities due to small parcel sizes in areas east of Barbur as well as the stream and habitat fragmentation created by the large transportation infrastructure facilities in the area. Continued development and assessment of new tools will be needed to address these challenges.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS SEGMENT

Barbur will see its greatest transformation in this segment from a “forgotten highway” to a street expressing civic pride with a complete sidewalk network, comfortable bike facilities, improved intersections, consolidated and well defined business access and street trees. A native-landscaped median with a meandering swale will help to address the area's stormwater retention and treatment needs. Buildings will be oriented toward the street, either directly on the street with weather protection for pedestrians, or set back with generous landscape or plaza treatments between the building and the street. Parking is accommodated but is made less visible through landscape screening or placement behind the buildings. This segment includes design treatments (e.g., pavement materials, street lighting, art) that differentiate it from other areas of Barbur.



The current feel of a continuous strip mall will begin to transform into distinct shopping districts at each of the focus areas. By capitalizing on the success of the Barbur Shops and Fred Meyer, and extending that success further south, a contiguous cluster of retail shopping has begun to take form. Prominent buildings on Barbur mark the entrance to the SW 13th main street promenade. Capitol Hill continues to transform with the addition of a new Safeway store, and improved street connectivity. Finally, a parallel main street will begin to take form off SW 26th spurred in part by the momentum from the Headwaters project and the addition of a new freeway interchange.

3. SW 13th Avenue Focus Area (Terwilliger)

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The activity centered near the Burlingame Fred Meyer store benefits from being near both Hillsdale and downtown. Nearby there are also several areas just off of Barbur with long-term capacity for redevelopment: the parcels along SW 13th Avenue between Barbur and Bertha; and the A-Boy site. There are some steep embankments in and around this area that pose some potential landslide hazard.

Potential challenges include the nature of some of the ownerships in this focus area. While not true in every case, out-of-state investors are generally more difficult to inspire to make changes to their sites. This is especially the case when current development is bringing in reasonable returns on the land value. Since these owners do not see, first hand, the net benefits from an area's improvements, they are typically last to jump in with substantial reinvestment. Conversely, these owners are often better positioned to make these levels of investments. Substantial public investment could help accelerate this private-side investment, but partnerships and expectations should be formalized to maximize the value of both public and private assets.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

This area has basic infrastructure in place with landscaped medians, sidewalks and bike lanes that were constructed as part of the Terwilliger Bridge project in the 1990s. Additional modest improvements to realize the Bike 2030 concept for bike boulevards on both 13th and Custer will be needed. Additionally, signaling the intersection at Barbur and 13th will provide improved vehicle, bike and pedestrian access to the new main street area, as well as help moderate traffic speeds on Barbur through this area. The real game changing catalyst to this area would be the provision of high capacity transit. As noted above, out of state property owners in this area will need to see large scale returns (beyond the immediate benefits afforded to the community) for redeveloping their sites to be effectively motivated.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

In this focus area, the main street “turns the corner” and follows SW 13th. The short stretch of SW 13th is considerably quieter than parcels fronting Barbur and offers the opportunity to create a walkable “Main Street” with retail and multifamily units. New development caters to the pedestrian realm with street oriented storefronts and tuck under or rear loaded parking.

Stephens creek natural area provides a passive open space park within walking distance of multifamily development. Daylighting portions of Stephens creek with redevelopment of adjacent parcels creates an attractive feature for residents and extends habitat connections.

On the south side of 13th, steep topography allows for somewhat taller (4–6 story) buildings without impacting pre-existing views, and additionally could deflect noise from I-5 and Barbur. Across Barbur, the new signal and increased access and activity are spurring redevelopment along the Multnomah Frontage road. This frontage road also serves to connect the 13th Avenue focus area to the Capitol Hill focus area with a less busy and more walkable alternative route.

3. SW 13th Avenue Focus Area (Terwilliger)






Daylighted stream between housing.

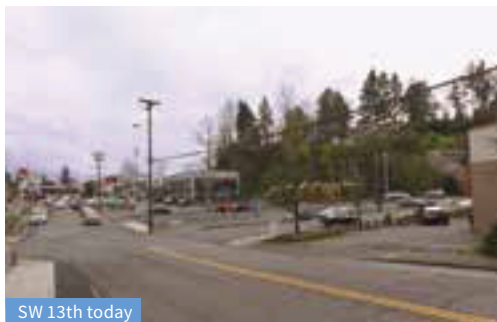


Street-oriented businesses.

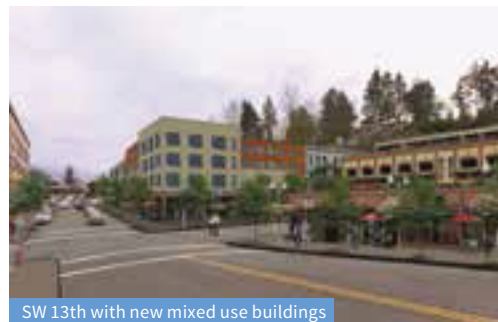


Functional and attractive stormwater enhancement.

-  Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections
-  Potential redevelopment/adaptive reuse
-  Priority intersection improvement



SW 13th today



SW 13th with new mixed use buildings

4. Capitol Hill Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

This focus area is located between Burlingame and Multnomah Village, has several schools in the immediate vicinity, and is anchored by a Safeway store. Capitol Hill is beginning to show signs of market change. New rowhouses were built across the freeway. Safeway is rebuilding which will triple its former size and will likely change the character of the entire area. Another advantage is that there are large parcels in the area with potential for redevelopment (e.g. Century Link, Barbur Rentals). One notable site for long-term redevelopment is the Jerome Sears site. This city-owned site is intended to hold emergency vehicles and machinery to respond in the case of a major disaster. If this site were to be redeveloped in the future, a replacement staging area serving the west side would be necessary. A possible candidate could be the 2.5 acre vacant right of way encircled by the I-5 north on-ramp at Spring Garden.

Some particular challenges to pedestrian and bicycle safety in this area arise from antiquated roadway design. The narrow bridge over Multnomah Boulevard precludes bike lanes and standard sidewalks. The “offramp” from Barbur to Multnomah Boulevard is a holdover from early railroad alignments. There are also topographic challenges for redeveloping parcels approaching Spring Garden and 19th Avenues, as the ground slopes precipitously away from Barbur. Addressing this grade is complicated further by the small parcels on the south side of Barbur. These parcels could see benefits from an improved signalized intersection at 13th (See SW 13th Avenue Focus Area) which would connect to the remnant of Multnomah Boulevard and provide access to the rear of those parcels, but effective redevelopment will likely require consolidation of some of those parcels, with coordinated and strategic right of way vacations of angled stub streets. On the north side, there are similar topographic issues, but the sites on this side appear large enough to adequately address grading challenges.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

The concept includes the extension of several new local roads to create new block frontages, and extend a grid network of streets in multi-dwelling zones to improve connectivity. In addition to the costs for constructing the streets, new right of way dedications will be required. Stormwater facilities will also need to be constructed to address the addition of these impervious areas, but this may be an opportunity for the City to design neighborhood scale facilities to support on-site stormwater management as conceived by the recent draft Stephens Creek Stormwater System Plan.

The community is focused on addressing immediate safety concerns in this area (adding crossings, sidewalks and bike lanes). These smaller projects are likely to be funded in the near term, but more significant gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network remain unaddressed on Barbur (namely between Evans and 24th).

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

Barbur has been improved with full-width sidewalks and bike lanes. This short stretch of Barbur functions as a main street, anchored by Safeway and flanked by office, retail and residential uses. Traffic accesses Multnomah Boulevard via new and improved connections, with traffic calming designs. The grocery store serves nearby housing for families, where children can safely walk to the three nearby schools. Students and seniors also are taking advantage of readily accessible high capacity transit to connect to classes at PCC and PSU, make medical visits to OHSU, or venture downtown for entertainment. New buildings between Barbur and I-5 take advantage of views, and also serve to deflect freeway noise.

The Multnomah Frontage road provides a quiet and safe alternate route to connect both Capitol Hill and SW 13th Ave focus areas. Eventually, this area begins to fill in with businesses oriented to Barbur to strengthen the main street character with tuck under parking accessed from the frontage road.

4. Capitol Hill Focus Area



Existing trails and priority pedestrian connections

Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections

Potential redevelopment/ adaptive reuse



Rendering of new Safeway store.



Prominent corners signal entry to focus area.



Opportunities for varied housing types.

5. SW 26th Avenue Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

SW 26th runs beneath both Barbur and I-5, providing a convenient linkage to neighborhoods on both the north and south. Stormwater facilities are in the final stages of design for portions of the undeveloped right of way between I-5 and Barbur, and sidewalks have recently been constructed along part of 26th avenue. The Headwaters housing project at SW 30th demonstrates excellent site design by integrating and restoring Tryon Creek. While there are not many vacant parcels around this focus area, there are some large surface parking lots that could be developed and a number of older buildings that could be rehabilitated in the area. Some properties fronting Barbur with some redevelopment potential sit below Barbur and may not be readily visible. Also, intersection and street configurations present circulation challenges.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED:

Creating a parallel main street along SW 30th, Dolph and Spring Garden Roads will require incremental street improvements including on street parking, sidewalks and street trees, which would generally occur as parcels redevelop. However, intersections at SW 26th and Spring Garden as well as Spring Garden and Barbur should be reconfigured to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety. Like the recently revamped intersection in front of the Headwaters project at SW 30th and Dolph, excess right of way could be converted for stormwater management, park, or plaza uses. Particular attention will need to be spent at the gateway points on Barbur, to invite people to stop and shop rather than just pass through.

An additional I-5 southbound onramp is a significant transportation investment this plan contemplates being constructed near this focus area. The new split interchange would provide options for vehicles that currently travel to the Crossroads and improve circulation and access in both this focus area as well as the Crossroads.



VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

Barbur is improved with bicycle, pedestrian and other streetscape improvements while important historic structures are preserved (Pancake House, Capitol Hill Motel). However, the main street in this focus area is activated as a parallel main street off of Barbur. Parcels across SW 30th evolve to retail shopping and upstairs office. North of 26th avenue, additional and infill residential development offers multiple housing type options. The area between Barbur and I-5 has begun to transition as a hub for office and retail service development with improved I-5 access.

By capitalizing on the Headwaters project, and extending the principles of integrating stormwater and site design used there, stream connectivity is improved as parcels redevelop in the area.

5. SW 26th Avenue Focus Area



-  Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections
-  Potential redevelopment/adaptive reuse



Greenstreets and improved crossings.



The Headwaters housing development.



Stormwater infiltration facilities in excess rights of way.



Stormwater improvement, Barbur Transit Center



Stormwater improvement, Barbur Transit Center



Intersection of Barbur, I-5 and Capitol Highway



Existing Taylors Ferry frontage



Taylors Ferry slip road scenario 1



Taylors Ferry slip road alternate scenario 1



Taylors Ferry slip road scenario 2



Taylors Ferry slip road alternate scenario 2



Taylors Ferry slip road scenario 3



Taylors Ferry slip road alternate scenario 3



Taylors Ferry slip road scenario 4



Taylors Ferry slip road alternate scenario 4

FAR SOUTHWEST SEGMENT

The Far Southwest segment of Barbur (between the Capitol Highway/Taylor's Ferry intersection and the City limits) is home to the Crossroads and PCC Focus Areas. Here, Barbur crosses I-5 and runs parallel on the south side. Because of the cross-sloping topography in this stretch, businesses are less visible, either sitting up above Barbur or being down below. Consequently, there are fewer retail services, and more office and residential uses. This stretch also distinguishes itself from the Historic Highway with more tree canopy and almost a complete lack of sidewalks. There are no opportunities to cross I-5 between the Crossroads and the interchange at Tigard, over a mile away. There are bike lanes for most of Barbur with the exception of the I-5 bridges, but because of vehicle speeds, combined with horizontal and vertical curves, biking is less comfortable. The market in this area is challenged by impeded access from neighborhoods opposite I-5, connections to Barbur from the adjoining neighborhood, and competition from Tigard big box stores a little further to the south.

TRANSPORTATION

The southern most segment of the Barbur Corridor includes the Crossroads area and links Portland to destinations and communities beyond the city limits. Average daily traffic volumes through this segment range from 16,670 to 19,150 trips per day. The posted speed is 40 mph and 15 percent of motorists travel 47 mph or faster, i.e. more than 7 miles per hour above the speed limit.

The four mile distance between I-5 southbound on-ramps (from Ross Island to Capitol Highway), contributes to congestion in the Crossroads. At the point just south of Capitol/I-5 interchange, approximately 20% of trips come from downtown, while only 12% of the northbound trips are destined for downtown.

WATERSHED HEALTH

This is the hilliest segment of Barbur, on the slopes of Mt. Sylvania. The northern half of this segment traverses the Tryon Creek watershed while the southern half is located in the Fanno Creek watershed. This segment tends to have less development than the Historic highway and Lair Hill segments, with the most extensive impervious areas concentrated along Barbur and Capitol highway.

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However, as one moves away from the major transportation routes, several densely forested natural areas (i.e. Woods Memorial Park and West Portland Park Natural Area) lends portions of the segment a more rural feel.

Compared to the rest of the corridor, there has been somewhat less development. Streams are still fragmented by roads and other development as elsewhere, and, some headwater streams have also been channelized or piped, though perhaps to a lesser degree.

While development has altered the habitat and hydrology in the watersheds, there remain opportunities to protect and restore natural watershed functions and minimize the impact of new and redevelopment. Watershed health improvements should continue to be prioritized via upgrades to stormwater detention and treatment facilities in emerging and future redevelopment sites — both private and public. Challenges posed by the topography and native soil condition point to continued need for innovative and holistic approaches.



Like the Historic Highway segment, there are significant opportunities to draw from the adjoining neighborhoods, if the proper pedestrian infrastructure were in place. Note the barrier created by I-5 between Barbur and the Ashcreek and Crestwood neighborhoods.

6. Crossroads Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The Crossroads (also known as the West Portland Town Center) is where several major roads (Barbur, Capitol, Taylors Ferry and I-5) intersect. In addition to the significant traffic volumes that move through, the configuration of intersections, freeway ramp locations, and the lack of other southbound I-5 on ramp alternatives to the area severely throttle movement through this area. The Barbur Transit center's 368 spaces are frequently parked to capacity. But this site is also one of the largest underdeveloped parcels along Barbur, and is publicly owned (by ODOT and leased to TriMet). It is also well situated with good views to the northeast, and is linked by one of the few pedestrian connections across I-5.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

There is no way to solve the transportation circulation in the Crossroads one intersection at a time. The proximity and intertwined nature of the intersections and freeway ramps will require a separate extensive study. Some work has already been completed (West Portland Town Center Study, 1997), with additional needs identified in PBOT's 2012 High Crash Corridor Study. In November 2012, Metro invited Ian Lockwood — a traffic engineer from AECOM recognized for his work on Smart Growth, context-sensitive design, historic preservation and traffic calming — to examine the Crossroads. After conducting a walk audit, Mr. Lockwood and his team provided some concepts that may begin to untangle the network of roads that converge at the Crossroads. One recommendation is the addition of (or replacement with) a new southbound on ramp located somewhere around the vicinity of SW 26th Avenue. By having an alternative southbound on ramp between downtown and the Crossroads, southbound Barbur traffic may be partially alleviated at the Crossroads. By offloading some of this regional traffic, Mr. Lockwood's various concepts for a series of roundabouts at the Crossroads appear viable for current and projected traffic demands, though additional study of the neighborhood road network is still necessary.

Implementing these concepts would be very expensive; however, potential growth at the Crossroads has been arrested in large part by the traffic congestion. The community, while generally supportive of more intense land use in this designated town center, has been reticent to support much development in an area where the street network is at or near capacity and the bike and pedestrian connections are lacking from the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Barbur Transit Center could serve as a key catalytic site, but based on current parking demand, redevelopment of this site will likely be incumbent on providing structured parking to serve transit users. Depending on the final road reconfiguration, other key catalytic sites or redevelopment opportunities are likely to occur. But the real catalyst here will be resolving the congestion issues and improving the street design to better accommodate all users.

Improvements to Capitol Highway, as envisioned in the Capitol Highway refinement plan, will also need to be realized so that pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby neighborhoods, as well as stormwater improvements can be accomplished.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

The old Taylors Ferry Road right of way that parallels Barbur across from the transit center has been transformed into a slip lane main street with on street parking, street trees and buildings that are built up to the street. The grade has been lowered for a portion of the lane to allow turning movement to and from Barbur. This slip lane operates at a much lower design speed, providing a buffering feature between busy Barbur Boulevard and the mixed use developments fronting the slip lane.

The congested intersections of the Crossroads are redesigned to improve traffic flow, but also with improved pedestrian and bike safety. The ideas generated during the November 2012 walk audit are refined into a long term solution that accommodates transit, cars and bikes in a pedestrian oriented district.

6. Crossroads Focus Area



- Existing trails and priority pedestrian connections
- Potential future trails or priority pedestrian connections
- Potential redevelopment/adaptive reuse
- Priority intersection improvement



Low-profile, higher density housing options can be provided in a variety of arrangements.



Crossroads street and roundabout configuration concepts

7. SW 53rd Focus Area

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

This stretch of Barbur is somewhat isolated from other retail centers, and competes with the larger big box retail in nearby Tigard. As such, the market for retail uses is pretty limited. However, there is still a need for housing and services catering to PCC Sylvania students with the campus located less than a 1/3 of a mile away (between a 5 and 10 minute walk with). Additionally, convenience goods serving the immediate neighborhood have some location advantage. While PCC is close, SW 53rd is not designed to encourage bicycles (portions are gravel) or pedestrians (the terminus is not connected to the campus circulation system), but it is a more direct connection than Capitol Highway and has much lower traffic volumes. The alignment and proximity of intersections connecting Barbur and Pomona is tricky for vehicles using 53rd which is a safety concern for pedestrians and bicycles.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT OR INVESTMENT REQUIRED

Some minor intersection improvements (like a small roundabout or right-angle realignment of 53rd at its nexus with Barbur) would benefit the connection from Barbur to Pomona and reduce potential conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians using SW 53rd. The Bike Plan 2030 should also be updated to incorporate SW 53rd as a bicycle boulevard to reflect its neighborhood greenway status. There is an existing signal but crossing improvements are still needed. In fact, with the traffic patterns accessing Pomona, it could be argued that a crosswalk should serve access to the south side of 53rd not the north as is presently the case.

VISION FOR BARBUR IN THIS FOCUS AREA

Barbur is primarily unchanged in this focus area, except for pedestrian and bicycle improvements which are commonly needed in this section of the corridor. With the available right of way and limited access interruptions, buffered bike lanes and sidewalks could be provided. Redevelopment will be primarily concentrated around the intersection with SW 53rd with student and immediate neighborhood-serving businesses (e.g., copy center, café/coffee shop, books, insurance agents). Access to sites on the north side of Barbur should continue to utilize existing right of way, so that the buildings can be oriented towards Barbur with parking placed behind.

The importance of this focus area is its connection with the PCC campus and potential for additional housing on the campus to accommodate students, as well as leasing opportunities as a potential revenue stream for the campus. Vehicle access to the campus will primarily continue to be served by Capitol Highway and Lesser Road, but improved pedestrian and bike connections to Barbur (and additionally from Haines along Lesser Road) can position this node for a future High Capacity Transit station area serving this major growing institution.

7. SW 53rd Focus Area



Small corner retail and neighborhood serving service establishments.



Improved pedestrian and bike connections to PCC.

Existing trails and priority pedestrian connections



Potential redevelopment/adaptive reuse

IX. Draft Recommendations

Achieving the overall vision of “transforming Barbur in to a destination” will require a long-term and coordinated effort between the city, partner agencies and the community. The following recommendations focus on two major approaches: first, fix the safety problems that exist today; and second, look for opportunities to catalyze development through investments in transit, parks, trails, stormwater, pedestrian and bicycle access and other infrastructure.

- **Establish safe and comfortable conditions for active transportation.**

Complete pedestrian and bicycle connections and access to transit throughout the corridor. Prioritize active transportation improvements on Barbur, which serves as the flat, direct route to many key destinations and extend this network into the neighborhoods to connect them to transit and other key places. Continue efforts to secure grant funding for safety and active transportation projects (e.g. sidewalk infill, pedestrian crossings and trails such as the Red Electric Trail).

- **Improve safety through access (driveway) management.**

Reduce conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists by consolidating or relocating driveways, and adding center medians.

- **Continue partnerships to manage stormwater.**

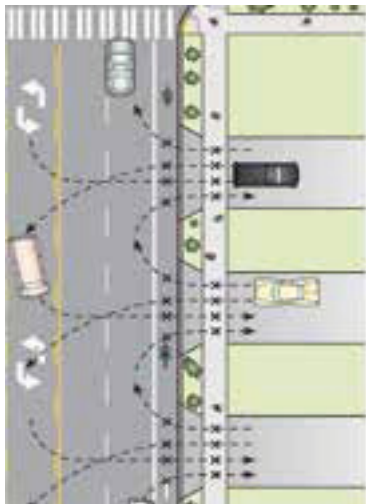
Construct stormwater retention facilities in the public right-of-way (e.g. linear facilities along I-5, urban plazas). Continue efforts to remove invasive species and address other watershed health needs.

- **Update the City’s Transportation System Plan (TSP).**

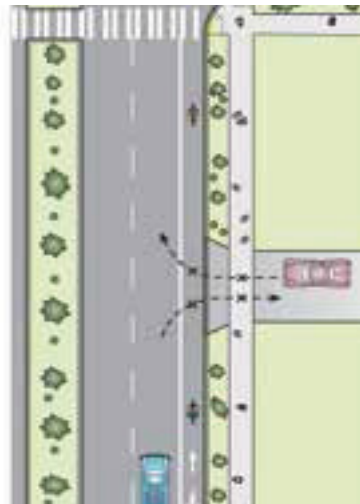
As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, incorporate new street connections identified in the Barbur Concept Plan and projects included in the SW Corridor Plan shared investment strategy.

- **Distinguish Barbur as a “Civic Corridor.”**

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, consider Barbur for designation as a “civic corridor”. These are major streets and transit corridors that are likely locations for new development. They should have special design standards focused on improving the street as place to live, work and gather with bike and pedestrian facilities, additional tree canopy, stormwater facilities and other amenities.



Uncontrolled accesses create eight potential conflict points at every driveway
Image: courtesy ODOT



A raised median and consolidating driveways reduce conflict points



Stormwater plaza on Sandy at 21st

- **Evaluate and pursue concepts generated from the Crossroads walk audit.**

Further develop the most promising ideas generated by Ian Lockwood as the result of the Crossroads Town Center walk audit, including reconfiguring the street system and intersections in the Crossroad area in addition to lane conversions on Capitol Hwy (Barbur to PCC) and Barbur (the Woods Segment) to improve multimodal conditions.

- **Reconsider the Town Center designation for the West Portland Town Center.**

The Crossroads, which is the area at the confluence of I-5, Barbur, Capitol Hwy and Taylor's Ferry, was originally designated a Town Center by Metro in 1995. However, the Crossroads has not achieved the potential envisioned by its designation as a town center. A "regional main street" or other designation may be more appropriate given the area's transportation, topographic and other physical constraints.

- **Pursue policy and zoning changes to achieve the project goals.**

- Explore new or existing tools in future transit station areas to achieve the mixture and intensity of development and street infrastructure improvements supportive of a high capacity transit investment (e.g. Main Street Overlay, Design Overlay).
- Rezone from residential to commercial the small remnant parcels created when I-5 was constructed to make their zoning consistent with the vision for the corridor.
- Rezone parcels north of Kelly from CO2 to CX so they conform to the Comprehensive Plan designation as part of a future Central City Multimodal Area (MMA) process.
- Update the Bicycle Plan for 2030 to designate SW 53rd as a bicycle boulevard.

- **Make Comprehensive Map changes.**

- Update Transit Stop locations along Barbur after decisions for future High Capacity Transit are finalized (Southwest Transit — Map 6.41.2).
- Consider creating pedestrian districts for the focus areas (Comprehensive Plan Policy 6.8.A).
- Update Street Design classifications for sections of Barbur to reflect desired character for each segment and focus area. Currently Barbur is classified as either a Regional Main Street or a Regional Corridor (Southwest Street Design — Map 6.41.7).
- Amend map designations if ODOT vacates right-of-way near reconfigured Ross Island ramps.

- **Repeal building setback requirements from 1951.**

At the time of annexation, a setback provision was applied to a small segment of Barbur (only 1-1/4 of 6 miles total). The ordinances (#95283 and #96496) conflict with current goals that reduce setbacks to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment on transit streets.

- **Consider transfer of Barbur from State to City ownership.**

In order to achieve the land use vision outlined in this plan, consider city ownership of Barbur. This will require additional ongoing funding for maintenance, operations and capital improvements which the City does not currently have.

- **Advocate for noise mitigation in the corridor.**

The community repeatedly expressed concern over the noise levels generated by I-5, Barbur and other transportation facilities. Advocate for noise mitigation (e.g. sound walls) as part of the federal process for any major transportation project.

▪ **Apply the vision and concepts in this plan to help evaluate right of way vacation requests.**

There are a number of small remnant rights of way between Barbur and I-5 that may continue to serve as important access consolidation points, or could be utilized for stormwater, plaza or other public uses.

▪ **Create a brand for Barbur and the larger SW Corridor.**

The SW Corridor Plan identified education as a possible unifying theme in the larger corridor with PSU, OHSU, PCC and George Fox similar to the Cleveland Health Line in Ohio.

▪ **Coordinate with the planned growth of PCC-Sylvania.**

As decisions about high capacity transit mode and alignment are made, coordinate with Portland Community College to ensure new building construction and site circulation maximize accessibility to the transit system.

▪ **Apply wider range of development tools to redevelopment projects in the Barbur Corridor.**

- Local Improvement Districts (LIDs). In an LID owners agree to assess themselves for a range of public improvements that could include: streets and sidewalks, open space and parking structures.
- Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). Used to fund programs rather than provide capital. BIDs raise funds through assessments on properties and business in a willing BID.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is a method of using future gains in taxes to subsidize current improvements.
- Dedicated Systems Development Charges (SDCs). Via an agreement with the city, it may be possible to retain certain SDCs from new development within the Barbur Corridor Area to help pay for open space and transportation improvements.
- Metro Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) grants. Metro's TOD program provides grants of up to \$750,000 for eligible transit-oriented projects.
- Homebuyer Opportunity Limited Tax Exemption (HOLTE). This tool encourages the construction of affordable housing by offering a ten year property tax exemption on the structural improvements (house).
- HUD Section 108. Enables funds to be borrowed by the city and passed through as loans to eligible private or non-profit developments economic development projects.
- 501c3 Revenue Bonds. These bonds are tax-exempt bonds used by non-profits for non-profit ventures that are able to support debt service from income derived from a project through its rents.
- Affordable housing bonds. These tax-exempt bonds are often used to help cover the costs of affordable housing projects (whether owned by or for non-profits). These projects usually have at least 20% of their units set aside for lower income households.
- Historic Tax Credits (HTCs). These credits can effectively cover up to 20% of the eligible rehab costs for historic buildings that are approved by the National Parks Agency.

Conclusion

This concept plan sets forth a land use strategy to leverage regional investment in High Capacity Transit to achieve community aspirations for a more walkable, vibrant Barbur. It is important for the city and residents to continue to play an active role in the regional SW Corridor Plan process and subsequent phases of identifying future investments in High Capacity Transit and other infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

The Planning and Sustainability Commission will hold a public hearing on the Barbur Concept Plan in early 2013 and make a formal recommendation to the Portland City Council to accept the plan by resolution. City Council will hold a public hearing shortly thereafter to resolve to pursue the plan's recommendations and direct City staff to actively participate in future stages of Metro's SW Corridor planning process for potential future high capacity transit.

