

# Appendix

Appendices are available in a separate document upon request to the City of Astoria, Community Development Department.



# Community forum summaries

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

**Community Forum**  
**Wednesday, April 9, 6:30 – 9 pm**  
Red Building Loft, 20 Basin Street

## **SUMMARY**

This document summarizes the first community forum conducted for the Astoria Riverfront Vision project. It is a summary of the results of that workshop and will be considered along with a variety of other information in crafting a vision for the riverfront. It should be considered as an important source of information about community opinions and desires but will be supplemented by and integrated with other types of feedback and data.

On Wednesday, April 9, 2008, approximately 230 people participated in a community forum to discuss the future of Astoria's riverfront. The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing development with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history.

Matt Hastie of Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC explained that the purpose of the vision is to guide future use, preservation and development of private and public lands adjacent and close to the Columbia River.

Paul Benoit, Astoria City Manager, provided participants with a history of the Astoria Riverfront. He was followed by Paul Pawlowski of SERA Architects and Matt Hastie who presented preliminary riverfront conditions, opportunities and constraints. That information was gathered through initial meetings with city staff and a site tour with the project Steering Committee.

After the presentations, 20 groups of six to ten people were asked a series of questions:

1. What is the most important issue facing the riverfront?
2. What areas along the riverfront should receive the most focus in this project?
3. Identify your favorite example of good riverfront development.
4. Where are the most important points for access to the riverfront from adjacent neighborhoods?
5. Where do you spend time on the riverfront?
6. In addition to the questions we discussed tonight, are there any other issues that are particularly important to address in the riverfront vision?

Through this process, a number of priorities were identified.

### **Physical and Visual Access**

Public views and access to the riverfront were identified as most important to those in attendance. While some residents would like to see an end to further development along the riverfront, the majority accept the idea of more development as long as public access (physical and visual) is maintained in some capacity. There is a strong desire to work with private land owners to provide public access to their properties. Development codes are often mentioned as a way to maintain access to the riverfront, but others believe the city and its residents should consider purchasing riverfront properties to obtain public control.

### **Development**

Concerns about riverfront development are not limited to public access and views. Residents who attended the Forum also wanted to ensure that new development fits in with the existing character of Astoria. For some people, this could mean rehabilitating existing structures rather than tearing them down. Design review was mentioned as a tool to shape development. Private property rights and over-regulation were mentioned less often, but are important considerations nonetheless, as is the cost and practicality of rehabilitating certain types of structures.

### **Land Use**

It was identified that Astorians are proud of their “working riverfront” and take pride in the mix of residential, commercial, industrial and open spaces uses. They want the riverfront to remain authentic and resist it becoming too “touristy.” Some meeting participants warn against allowing the riverfront to become primarily residential as that could affect access by the broader public. It was noted that residents want to see the riverfront remain economically viable in terms of its ability to provide jobs and its ability to attract visitors.

### **Museum/train station to Pier 39**

Many of those in attendance wanted to see the western portion of the riverfront as designated for industry and more intensive development and the riverfront’s eastern portion for open spaces and views. The area between the Columbia River Maritime Museum and Pier 39 appears to be an important area of focus.

### **Downtown**

Another area of focus should be the connections between downtown and the riverfront. Many people at the Forum felt there should be a synergy between these two areas enhanced by signage and landscaping. Visitors and residents alike should be comfortable going back and forth between the open spaces and beauty of the riverfront and the retail opportunities of downtown. Some people would like to see downtown spaces better utilized before new development takes place on the riverfront.

The following is a synopsis of comments recorded at each of the 20 group discussions and taken from forms completed after the forum. Bulleted statements are individual comments presented as they were written or recorded at the forum. Some clarification with addresses or corrected names has been added. They should not be viewed as representing the consensus of all participants or conclusions drawn by the project team.

## **1. WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FACING THE RIVERFRONT?**

### **Views**

At least one person in 14 of the 20 groups identified preserving visual access to the river as the most important issue facing the riverfront. There was concern raised that the height and amount of development may block existing views and there is some disappointment that recent development has already done so in certain locations. Participants vary in their opinions on the type of views that should be maintained. Some residents would be satisfied if view corridors remain intact, while others want to preserve panoramic views of the river.

- Can't see water from trolley between 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Preserve view corridors
- Panoramic views
- Long distance views – Tongue Point to Megler Bridge
- Don't lose views, they have economic value

### **Access/open spaces**

Physical access to the riverfront was mentioned as the most important issue in eight groups. Many of those in attendance stated they do not want to lose their ability to connect to the river, however this varies in interpretation. In some cases, this concern is due to fear that expensive, gated developments will fill up the riverfront. They would like to see public access required as part of new private developments along the river. Other meeting participants would like to see more public control over the riverfront to protect existing open spaces and provide new ones. For many, this issue boils down to a tension between private property rights and public benefit.

- Maintain physical access to riverfront
- Limit expensive condos
- No gated developments
- Increase public control
- Keep city property as open space
- Investigate cost of purchasing riverfront for public, bond to purchase
- Maintain and extend Riverwalk
- Private vs. public
- Connect open spaces with river

### **Development**

Seven groups discussed the potential for development to affect visual and physical access to the river. Some participants are concerned about overdevelopment and variances that have been issued for increased building heights. They would like to see development grouped or concentrated in specific areas in order to maintain existing views. About the same number of groups discussed development in terms of how it can best fit into the community. A number of participants would like to see existing buildings reused rather than torn down. They want strong codes and design review to ensure that new development complements existing architectural character. Some people want to see proposed uses that are economically viable to ensure that the buildings will be maintained well into the future. A smaller number of meeting participants stated concerns about overregulation as a threat to property rights and development.

- Don't overdevelop
- Don't build too tall
- Good, quality, planned development; building design; architectural character; fit into community
- Economically viable
- Development take advantage of river
- Code: no variances, consistency, design review
- Variety, balance development

- Preserve existing buildings
- No new condos for wealthy
- Group development
- Maintain open space east of museum
- Public benefit vs. private
- Respect property rights
- Don't over-regulate

### **Mix of uses/economic viability**

Many meeting participants expressed a desire to see a variety of uses along the riverfront and stated they are proud of the “working riverfront” and take pride in the mix of residential, commercial, industrial and open spaces uses. Some participants warn against allowing the riverfront to become primarily residential. They believe that the riverfront is economically vital, both in terms of its ability to attract tourists and its ability to provide jobs. They want the riverfront to remain authentic and resist it becoming too “touristy.”

- River as recreation destination
- Viable, economic development
- New development should bring higher wage jobs
- Don't replace employment with residential
- Mix of residences and businesses
- Keep what exists
- Balance uses; diversity
- Working riverfront, including arts, economic development
- Real community, not touristy
- Keep history, authentic, but evolve with change

### **Protect river/natural areas**

A small number of groups prioritized the protection and health of the river and want to see natural areas along the riverfront restored. Many participants enjoy watching nature and would like to see non-native vegetation replaced with native species.

- Astoria is a river town and should have connections to the river that aren't paved
- Preserve and protect river/natural areas (health)
- Account for environmental issues (natural areas)
- Protect natural beauty

### **Other comments**

- Public restrooms along Riverwalk
- Clean, attractive appearance
- Safety
  - Bikes along Riverwalk
  - Nighttime, more lighting
- Possible addition of LNG pipeline, effect on development, vision, tankers
- Relocate highway and create a bypass
- Create a consistent, understandable plan

## **2. WHAT AREAS ALONG THE RIVERFRONT SHOULD RECEIVE THE MOST FOCUS IN THIS PROJECT?**

### **Museum/train station to Pier 39**

At least one person in nearly every group mentioned some variation of the area between the Columbia River Maritime Museum or old train depot and Pier 39. The majority of participants want the open spaces that currently exist along this stretch of the riverfront maintained. Several participants mentioned places they would like to see improved, such as the area surrounding the City shops and the old train station. An equal number of participants identified this area as a focus, but did not specify what they would like to see take place.

- Do not issue height variances
- Maintain open spaces; keep undeveloped
- Slow condos
- City shops 30<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>
- Train station area is scary

### **Downtown**

A number of meeting participants want efforts and energy focused on the downtown area extending out to the river. As mentioned earlier, many of those in attendance stated they are proud of the working riverfront. They would like to see new development and improvements take place in this area, including the clean up of derelict properties.

- Real, working riverfront
- Downtown to Maritime Museum
- New development should be in downtown area
- Existing buildings between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>
- Beeline Roofing and other junky areas

### **Cannery Pier Hotel to 17<sup>th</sup>**

Many of those who identified from 17<sup>th</sup> Street to the west end had specific properties in mind. Others would like to strengthen connections between the Riverwalk and downtown to ensure the viability of both.

- Focus development from Maritime Museum to Cannery Pier Hotel
- Red Lion is run down
- 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets in front of Fisher Brothers
- 3<sup>rd</sup> to Astoria Warehousing for view corridor example
- Downtown core, 5<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> views and use

### **East and west ends**

There was a concern expressed among those in attendance about the gateways to Astoria on the east and west ends. Several people mentioned the condition of various Port properties as well as boarded up houses that can be seen when entering or exiting the city. A smaller number of residents want to see the Alderbrook natural areas and lagoons preserved.

- Concern about east/west ends/gateways
- Port properties
- Why isn't west side of port included?
- Alderbrook and lagoons natural areas

## **Public access, public lands/area north of railroad tracks**

### **North of tracks**

Some participants also want the focus of this project to be on areas of public access to the river. This area consists of the land between the railroad tracks and the river. Publicly-owned lands are seen as having the greatest potential to maintain public access.

- Public access points
- Riverfront access
- Focus development to south
- Publicly-owned lands

### **Other areas/types of areas**

- View corridors
- Whole riverfront
- Dairygold area
- Tongue Point facilities
- Those with dilapidated structures
- Identify the areas with the most need
- Preserve views and open areas along entire riverfront
- Development opportunities; pilings
- Undeveloped areas
- Condo development
- Working Port
- Historic sites

## **3. IDENTIFY YOUR FAVORITE EXAMPLE OF GOOD RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Pier 39**

A number of people are fond of Pier 39 as it was mentioned in 12 groups. They like it for its diversity of uses, its authentic feel, that it provides jobs, and the fact that the developers “took something old and made it new.”

- Pier 39
  - Adaptive reuse
- Cannery at 39<sup>th</sup>
- Pier 39 brew pub, office
- Public access
- Not perfect is good
- Jobs
- Diverse uses; mixed use; working riverfront
- “Real” place

### **Cannery Pier Hotel/Red Building Loft at Basin Street**

Participants enjoy the Cannery Pier Hotel and nearby Red Building Loft because of their historic character and attractive appearance. These buildings were mentioned in 12 of the 20 groups.

- Cannery Pier Hotel
  - Well-planned – safe and accessible
  - Create people places
  - Great architecture
- Red Building at Basin Street



### **No. 10 6<sup>th</sup> Street**

At least one person in 10 of the 20 groups identified No. 10 6<sup>th</sup> Street as a favorite example of development. Those who listed it enjoy the view it provides and several people said that “you feel like you can almost touch the ships.” Participants seem to feel that this area is a “people place.”

- 6<sup>th</sup> Street Pier/viewing platform
- Fishing
- Proximity to ships

### **Maritime Museum**

The Maritime Museum was mentioned in eight groups, is well-liked and a major access point for the riverfront. People enjoy the public plaza and appreciate the availability of parking.

- Museum and plaza
  - Attractive
  - Public access
  - Parking

### **Shoreland area**

Participants in at least seven groups identified the Riverwalk and trolley as their favorite examples of development. Astoria’s working riverfront also was mentioned.

- Riverwalk
- Trolley
- Working riverfront
- Development south of Riverwalk

### **River Pilot station**

The River Pilot station was mentioned in four groups. People like the refurbished buildings and dock.

- Refurbished dock

### **Mill Pond**

Some people responded that they like that the Mill Pond development as it is not too tall and fits in with the character of the community.

- Not too tall; open
- Historic precedent
- Park area

### **East and West Mooring Basins**

Several meeting participants stated their fondness for the East and West Mooring Basins, particularly for their public access and boat watching. Other reasons cited include the west basin’s working riverfront feel and the ability to view sea lions near the east basin.

- East Mooring Basin
  - Public access

### **14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Streets**

14<sup>th</sup> Street was mentioned in four groups.

- Englund project is good
- Balance of development and open space
- 16<sup>th</sup> Street Park
  - Open; views
- 14<sup>th</sup> Street and other parks

### **Other developments**

- Train station
- “Park” at train station
- Docks on 12<sup>th</sup>
- Open spaces
- Bumble Bee
- Alderbrook station; art gallery
- Wet Dog at 11th Street
- Sardine factory at 9th Street
- Port Angeles walkway
- Fishhawk Fisheries at 4th Street
- Builders Supply at 18th Street and Dr. Park’s building at 21st Street
- Brick warehouse at 3rd & 4th Streets
- Maritime Memorial area
- Greenway from 14<sup>th</sup> to Safeway
- Fishing near 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>
- Astoria Warehousing near Columbia Avenue
- Industrial wastelands and trestles
- Boiler behind Stephanie’s Cabin near 2nd Street
- Hanthorne Cannery / Pier 39
- Holiday Inn Express at Columbia Avenue

## **4. WHERE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS FOR ACCESS TO THE RIVERFRONT FROM ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS?**

### **Downtown (6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Streets)**

Nearly every group either directly or indirectly identified a need for access and connections between downtown and the riverfront. Nearly every street between 6<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets was mentioned at least once. Many comments cited access to retail as the reason to build strong connections.

- 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Sunday market across Hwy 30
- Commercial Street
- 4<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Downtown needs access for retail
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park
- Downtown streets open to riverfront
- Easy access and public parking at 14<sup>th</sup> Street
- Englund Marine at 15th Street to Maritime Museum

### **West end/Port/Uniontown**

Nearly every group mentioned connections between the west end of the riverfront and Uniontown as important as well. Participants provided a number of reasons to focus on connections in this area, including a current lack of parking, the availability of parking, poor existing connections, and access to the Port and Maritime Memorial.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> and Marine
- Pier 1 for cruise ships
- Uniontown charm
  - Parking
  - Maritime Memorial
- Great access at Uniontown

- Port Area
  - Great parking
- West Mooring Basin
- Hamburg
- Portway
- Need new parking lot like Maritime Museum on west end
- Basin Street area near Port
  - Redevelop for pedestrian and bicycle access
- Bay to Basin
- Roundabout on Smith point
- Difficult connections from Uniontown to 8<sup>th</sup>
- From McDonalds at 7th Street

### **Maritime Museum/17<sup>th</sup>**

Approximately 12 groups see the Columbia River Maritime Museum (CRMM) as a major gathering place along the riverfront and would like to see the connections to adjacent neighborhoods made stronger and safer. The museum is very accessible and is a convenient place for people to park.

- Over Hwy 30 at 17<sup>th</sup>
- Keep access to open spaces from Museum across 17<sup>th</sup>
- Museum is best access point if driving, parking and safety
- CRMM to USCG
- 17<sup>th</sup> Street has easy parking, visible from highway
- Parking, access
- Access to downtown
- Stoplight needed at museum

### **37<sup>th</sup> Street/East Mooring Basin**

People in eight groups identified a need for better crossings at 36<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Streets. This is an important connection for people trying to access the East Mooring Basin and boat ramp.

- 36<sup>th</sup>/37<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Difficult to access boat ramp
- East Mooring Basin
- 36<sup>th</sup> Street is important Hwy 30 crossing from Uppertown
- Need light at 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- Uppertown

### **Access/parking**

Easier access to the riverfront across Hwy 30 and parking were often cited as important issues.

- Railroad station near CRMM good place for vehicles
- Every street has access to river
- Continuous access; public space; public right-of-way
- Street access for view corridors
- Access; no private development
- Pedestrian access vs. parking
- More access from neighborhoods
- Availability of parking to get to river
- Pedestrian, traffic bridges
- Sky bridge
- At all streets across Hwy 30
- Safe, pedestrian-friendly crosswalks

- Protect public access
- Public parking
- Safeway trolley stop/lot
- Crossings at Safeway and Comfort Suites
- Trolley stops access and parking

### **Wayfinding/landscaping**

A number of participants would like to see wayfinding signage and kiosks as well as interpretive signs.

- Need more kiosks like at 17<sup>th</sup>
- Wayfinding for visitors
- Signage to and from riverfront
- Consistent signage, landscaping to riverfront
- Access points should be attractive

### **Other comments**

- All streets
- Alderbrook
- Dairygold/train station area
- Marine Drive by hospital
- Bad intersection by City Lumber
- Home Bakery area at 29th Street is hard to cross
- 14<sup>th</sup> to Safeway is tough to access
- Trails for bikes and walking
- Open spaces
- Remove Hwy 30
- No lights
- Recognize public transportation district
- Marina
- Places with traffic lights
- Access for small boats

## **5. WHERE DO YOU SPEND TIME ON THE RIVERFRONT?**

### **Maritime Museum to East Mooring Basin/Pier 39 to Alderbrook**

People in every group spend time in the area from the Columbia River Maritime Museum to the East Mooring Basin and Pier 39 and on to Alderbrook. The most popular places to spend time are at the museum, Pier 39 and the East Mooring Basin. Others enjoy the natural beauty of Alderbrook.

- Maritime Museum to Pier 39 to Alderbrook
  - Open space
  - Easy parking
  - Views
- East Mooring Basin
  - Sea lions
  - Boats
- Pier 39
  - Coffee
- Lagoon
- 45th to 37th
- Alderbrook

- Inviting
- Natural
- Good views
- Park near Safeway
- Old train station east to Coffee Girl
- 24<sup>th</sup> Street
- Condos to Maritime Museum
- Riverwalk from Police station (30th Street) to Safeway (33rd Street)

### **Downtown to Safeway**

Nearly as many people and groups specified the area between downtown and Safeway as their favorite portion of the riverfront. This geographic area overlaps with the previous area, probably due to the readily available parking at Safeway and the Maritime Museum. The working riverfront was mentioned often as were parks, such as No. 10 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Riverwalk from 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Streets
  - Safe
- Englund Marine
  - Marine activities
- From Old Englund Marine east because you're on the water
- Between train station and Old Englund Marine
- 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> Street – Safeway
  - Active; people
- Maritime Museum to Safeway
- Safeway to downtown
- Mill Pond east
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> near fish processing
- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets (wildlife)
- 5<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Maritime Museum to Bornstein at 7th Street
- Downtown between 14<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Bornstein's at 7th Street
- #10 6<sup>th</sup> Street
- 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>

### **Maritime Museum**

The Maritime Museum itself is a popular tourist attraction and gathering place for local residents.

- Maritime Museum
  - Accessible
  - People
  - Interesting
  - Gift shop
- Museum and nearby open spaces
- Maritime Plaza

### **West end**

Like the riverfront area adjacent to downtown, some of those in attendance appreciated the west end for its working riverfront character, including boats and fish processing.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Street
- Maritime Memorial
- New Englund Marine Building
- Port docks to bridge

- Easy access
- Memorial Park and Port
  - Walking
  - Views of ships
- Pier 1
  - Smell of fish blood
- Pier 2
- Pier 3
- Under bridge
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Cannery Cafe
- Port Marina
- Beach by Holiday Inn at Columbia Avenue to 14<sup>th</sup> Street

### **Greater Riverwalk**

People in several groups enjoy what the Riverwalk has to offer in its entirety.

- Riverwalk – wonderful access, different environments (9)
- 6th Street to trestle at 42nd
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street to near Safeway
  - Variety
  - Markers
- Port to Pier 39

### **Other places**

- Old buildings in touch with history
- Ship Inn at 2nd Street
- Fish come in for processing
- Downtown area to lookout
- 29<sup>th</sup> to Uniontown
- Cannery Café at 6th Street
- Wet Dog at 11th Street
- American Can Company (aka Astoria Warehousing)
- Columbia House at 3rd Street
- Fishhawk Fisheries office at 4th Street
- Riverwalk for bikes except 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>
- Restaurants on water
  - Coffee Girl at Pier 39
  - Baked Alaska at Docks on 12th
- Brewery
- Ship Inn
- Behind Astoria Warehousing
- East of bridge – west is too industrial
- Piling fields, history
- Pilings
- Boat access area
- At open views
- Trolley
- Like deserted decrepit area

## **6. IN ADDITION TO THE QUESTIONS WE DISCUSSED TONIGHT, ARE THERE ANY OTHER ISSUES THAT ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS IN THE RIVERFRONT VISION?**

These comments, in particular, consist of comments gathered during group discussions and on comment cards submitted by those in attendance. Many of these comments could have been placed in a number of the following, arbitrary categories.

### **Views/heights/development**

The most popular and controversial issue along the riverfront concerns development. A majority of the community wants to see physical and visual access to the river maintained. Some people want to see development grouped to retain open spaces. Others do not want to see any more residential development. Still others want to ensure that new development fits in with the character of the community.

- Bad Development = Columbia House at 3rd Street, condos
- Allowing too many tall condo units for housing – second home owners
- Place condos strategically
- Develop vacant/underutilized property away from river instead of riverfront
- Don't let private development block public views
- Cluster tall areas together and have less dense nodes
  - Reduces traffic and parking needs
- New construction between Port and 17<sup>th</sup>; no height restrictions
- Discontinue development over the river
- Step building heights up from water back toward slope
- Limit residential building
- Comfort Inn wrecked views of bridge
- Riverfront buildings exceed zoned heights
- Keep heights down
- No development between 17<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> on riverfront
- No amount of development will block views due to public ownership and cost of development
- Creative reuse
- Build something tall adjacent to City Lumber
- Adaptive reuse
- Private development with public access
- See ships while driving down hill
- View from hillsides and neighborhoods protected

### **Zoning/design/height/code/planning**

Directly related to concerns about development is residents' desire to control that development through development codes and design review. Building height and aesthetics are of particular concern.

- Design review
- Enforceable codes/zoning/restrictions to carry out vision
- Historic preservation
- Transparent process for development review
- Extend design review to Youngs Bay
- Height and zoning plan
- No variances
- Can't legislate good taste
- Zoning to separate uses
- Height variances in downtown; not at edges

- Variances should be hard to get
- Specific examples for design review
- Need new architecture with design
- Rigid codes and regulations and laws aren't necessary
- Use best examples from other places
- Comprehensive plan
- Murase Plan has a block by block plan
- Keep development to land side as buffer

### **Process/implementation**

Another popular subset of comments is in regard to the success of this project. Some who responded regarding this issue want to ensure that the process is open and involves as many people as possible. They do not want any one group to receive any special treatment. There is some concern that the plan will not be implemented. Included in these comments are questions about whether the citizens of Astoria would be willing to purchase property along the riverfront. Other participants would like to see the south slope included in the study area.

- Concern about cost to keep riverfront project up and going and onward
- Clearly written planning documents
- Continue process/public input
- Public business transparency
- No special treatment for "good old boys"
- Open community process
- Defining stakeholders
- What is common vision?
- Consult property owners
- Listen/weigh view points
- Implement study
- Cost of public improvements
- Should the City assess taxpayers to acquire property on riverfront?
- Outline process for public purchase of private land and identify available lands
- Does the City want downtown residents?
- Riverfront plan has to be integrated with vision for downtown and hillside development
- Get word out to community
- Keep citizen engagement and ownership of the process
- Civility between new-comers and old-timers is challenge
- Be clear about what is done with information gathered at public meetings; who will develop plan? Will it include building design review, zone changes, etc.?
- Include Port in discussion
- Include North Tongue Point
- Include Youngs Bay/south slope
- Process has no realistic idea of what property owners want or government entities can afford
- Need zoning, codes, design, etc. for implementation
- Plan at 20,000 feet
- Comprehensive approach
- Study area should include Youngs Bay
  - Focus some development on south, not just north



### **Protect history/natural areas**

A number of comments were received from participants who want to protect areas and buildings that are unique to Astoria. This includes natural areas and wildlife habitat as well as historic buildings, such as the Red Building.

- Preserve what exists on riverfront
- Restore Big Red (Royal Nebeker's Red Net Shed Building at 31st Street), something public, respect past
- Honor history and character
- Rehab buildings; creative reuse
- New acknowledge existing
- Public river boardwalk from 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Street
- Keep riverfront habitat
- Address erosion along Museum
- Treat storm water
- Remove non-native vegetation
- Quiet, natural areas
- Eco-friendly development methods
- Restore indigenous vegetation
- Preserve historic buildings
- Environmental concerns
- Improve biological health of river
- Historical heritage
- Protect natural beauty
- Historic area – keep within scope and feel
- Should have historic review for riverfront
- Produce clear guidelines and evaluation criteria for historic landmarks commission and property review
- River is historic landmark
- Native plant garden with signage

### **Maintenance/upkeep/safety**

Another popular topic concerns maintenance of properties along the riverfront. In some cases, the need for maintenance is due to appearance. In others, it is due to safety. Of greatest concern are lighting along the Riverwalk, upgrading the Riverwalk surfaces, installing trash cans and restrooms, and cleaning up derelict properties.

- Maintenance
- Improve trolley right of way, fix surfaces (Bornstein's at 7th Street)
- Complete Riverwalk, plants
- Okay to extend; need to maintain
- Maintenance, slippery when wet, planks, moss
- Security of riverfront/lighting
- Lighting
- Safety, lowest lighting
- Port property at 39<sup>th</sup>
- Past 39th is scary
- Need lighting at Museum
- Technology to make Hwy 30 crossings safer
- Hwy 30 Relocation/Bypass
  - Barrier
  - Noisy

- Pollution
- Lighting along riverfront
- Clean up area near point
- Trail along river is dangerous for bicycles
- Need trash cans
- Restrooms along Riverwalk

### **Public spaces/physical access**

Along with access and ownership of properties adjacent to the river, other comments received dealt with trying to get more public gathering places such as parks and a bandstand.

- More public venues on City property
- Public walking access - Column, greater downtown, and Riverwalk
- Ensure public access around private development
- Connect to open space and public facilities, band stand
- Public ownership of riverfront
- Access to riverfront for Astorians
- More parks and public spaces adjacent to river
- Community gathering place
- River Park with bandstand

### **Balance/Variety/Working Riverfront**

Many people would like to see a variety of residential, commercial and industrial uses along the riverfront as well as open spaces. The desire is for balance and diversity.

- Balance open space and development
- Variety, not just condos
- Diverse, working riverfront
- Emphasize industry and commerce over condos
- Economically viable; pay for themselves
- Work with private sector
- Encourage working riverfront
- What structures/businesses north of tracks can support/maintain themselves?
- Limit residential development along riverfront
- Library on the water
- Need a fishing pier
- No more condos/housing
- Working Port
- Fish processing, off loading where can

### **Affordable housing**

Affordable housing was often mentioned in addition to with a variety of uses along the riverfront.

- Affordable housing in underutilized space
- Density and income levels supported by housing, affordable
- Affordable housing
- Senior housing

### **Other frequently mentioned comments**

- Continuous view of river rather than view corridors
- Take a stand against LNG
- Avoid future development
- More interpretive signage/wayfinding

- Feel of Astoria, real, simple boardwalk, authentic
- Not like Seaside
- Community gardens (behind City Lumber)
- Temporary/permanent public art
- Parking near open spaces
- Traffic, parking and impacts

### **Other comments**

- Keep Astoria for Astorians
- More little shops on water
- Do not like Astoria Warehousing, McDonald's golden arches (need sign restrictions), low white buildings eyesore, Comfort Suite, State office bldg at 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>
- Deep water port
- No more Columbia House
- Improve CSO outtakes
- Changing demographics, #1 retirement area, walk to healthcare and downtown
- Remember the Bayside
- East end transport = complete greenway loop from 14<sup>th</sup> to 34<sup>th</sup>
- Riverwalk loop from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>
- Implement heavy fines/community service for vandalism on Riverwalk
- Windbreaks/refuges from weather along Riverwalk
- Need development that leads to full-time jobs
- Good aesthetics and economics
- Consider view of city from the water
- Pedestrian/bike friendly transportation system throughout city
- Rising sea levels
- Decaying infrastructure piers
- Green building techniques; green roofs
- Extend east to Port and west to Fort Adams and traffic circle
- Riverfront speaks to buildings on hill
- Showcase and clean up area from railroad station at 20th Street to the west - Shawa building
- Low lighting at Columbia House at 3rd Street
- Brambles – no development, derelict, greenway corridor
- Bad example = 16<sup>th</sup> Street
- Riverwalk length
- Cruise ships
- Congestion on Marine Drive

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Community Forum Wednesday, June 25, 5:30 – 8:30 pm

Astoria Middle School

### SUMMARY

This document summarizes the second community forum conducted for the Astoria Riverfront Vision project. It is a summary of the results of that workshop and will be considered along with a variety of other information in crafting a vision for the riverfront. It should be considered as an important source of information about community opinions and desires but will be supplemented by and integrated with other types of feedback and data.

On Wednesday, June 25, 2008, approximately 72 people participated in a community forum to discuss the future of Astoria's riverfront. The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing development with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history.

The community forum used an open house format, in which participants had the opportunity to comment on multiple topics through a variety of activities. Participants were encouraged to arrive at any time and stay as long as they were able. Activities included:

- **Automated presentation.** A PowerPoint ran continuously, providing information about the project to date.
- **Land Use 101.** City staff described existing planning requirements and processes, such as variances, conditional use permits, etc.
- **Opportunities and constraints Map.** Participants reviewed a large map of the riverfront and used sticky notes to make comments on opportunities and constraints.
- **Building scale.** Participants used legos to show desired heights, sizes and shapes for two prototypical (generic) sites along the riverfront. This exercise was tied to existing requirements (e.g., height, setback, lot coverage or others) and/or other ideas about how to allow for a certain level of development while addressing concerns about views and other issues (e.g., narrow building profiles, step-backs, etc.)
- **Existing conditions maps.** Participants used sticky notes to provide comments on maps showing existing conditions regarding land ownership, land use, and historic, natural and community resources. Green and red dots were used to identify places people liked and those that need improvement.

- **Vision principles.** Participants used green and red dots to vote on draft Riverfront principles. Sticky notes were used to provide comments and/or additions.
- **Development design.** Participants reviewed photos of various examples of waterfront structures, parks, paths and open spaces from a number of locations. The public was invited to bring in photos of development from other places. Participants showed their design preferences by voting photos with green and red dots.

The following observations were made from a summary of comments at the five stations where citizen feedback was provided. A more detailed summary of comments from each station will be made available when completed.

### **Opportunities and constraints map**

- Maintain physical and visual access to the riverfront
- Improve pedestrian safety across Hwy 30 using streetscaping/landscaping, traffic calming techniques and pedestrian bridges
- Extend the Riverwalk to the east and west
- Rehabilitate historic buildings for new uses
- There are differing opinions regarding what type of development should take place along the riverfront in terms of jobs versus residential versus parks and open spaces.

### **Building scale**

- Vary structure height and massing to provide views, air, light, and public access through the sites
- Cluster buildings and use “towers” or concentrated massing to free up ground space for public common areas and to create better site lines to the river
- Create public open space and connections to northern edge (river’s edge) of the site
- Use glass as a building material to provide visual access through building foyers
- Orient retail spaces to the RiverWalk and edges of the site
- Frustration with the number of required parking spaces, particularly with its downtown context

### **Existing conditions maps**

Participants like:

- Area between Basin Street and the Astoria-Megler Bridge
- Mooring basin near Portway Street at western edge of study area
- Riverfront at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street
- Riverfront between 37th and 39th streets
- On Pier 39
- Western edge of the Alderbrook lagoon
- Parcels zoned for commercial uses between 31<sup>st</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for commercial use west of 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- “Big Red” and rehabilitation of historic buildings

Participants don’t like:

- Condominiums east of 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- Condominiums along the riverfront between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for industrial use between Washington and 1<sup>st</sup> streets

- Parcels zoned for commercial use between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for commercial use between 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> streets

### **Vision principles**

Participants unanimously support:

- Promote physical and visual access to the river.
- Protect the health of the river and adjacent natural areas.
- Enhance the Riverwalk.

A large majority of participants support:

- Encourage a mix of uses that supports Astoria's "working waterfront" and the city's economy.
- Support new development that respects Astoria's historical character.

### **Development design**

#### Structures

- Small scale (one to two stories)
- Similar to existing infrastructure (Cannery Pier Hotel, "Big Red," etc.)
- Pedestrian-friendly ground floors

#### Paths, parks and open spaces

- Paths made of stone or wood
- Landscaping along paths (trees, grass)
- Lighting and benches
- Natural areas

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Community Open House Thursday, November 20, 5:30 – 8:30 pm Columbia River Maritime Museum

This document summarizes the third community forum conducted for the Astoria Riverfront Vision project. It is a summary of the results of the forum and will be considered along with a variety of other information in revising the preliminary Astoria Riverfront Vision Plan.

On Thursday, November 20, 2008, approximately 100 people participated in a community forum to review work completed as a part of the first phase of the Riverfront Vision Plan.

The community forum used an open house format, supplemented by a presentation of the draft Astoria Riverfront Vision Plan and question and answer session. Participants had the opportunity to view maps and comment on the following elements of the draft Vision Plan:

- **Vision principles**
- **Natural features**, including public views and spaces, amenities, parks and open spaces and the Riverwalk Trail.
- **Land use**, including building design and character, a variety of land uses, and physical and visual access to the river.
- **Transportation and public improvements**, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, streetscape improvements, and traffic circulation improvements.

### Comments on Vision Elements

The following observations were made from responses given at open house stations as well as comments made during the question and answer period and on comment forms. A complete compilation of comments and results follows.

When asked about improvements to Natural Spaces, open house participants cited the creation of a riverfront greenspace in the Civic Greenway Area and more intimate public plazas and open spaces in the Urban Core and Bridge Vista Areas as most important. Landscaping along river's edge and extending the river trail to west and east are seen as less important.

At the Land Use station, participants indicated that design guidelines and changes to building height and massing are the most important potential approaches to implement. Amending the City's zoning to change the uses allowed in certain areas and establishing a parking district are less important. When asked to rank more specific land use changes, historic guidelines near the Uniontown neighborhood, design guidelines in the Urban Core and extending the River Trail over the water in public rights of way, received the most votes. Making changes from tourist commercial to another commercial zoning designation and establishing a parking district received the least votes.

Open house participants generally felt that making pedestrian improvements across Highway 30 is the most important of proposed Transportation improvements. Less important are improvements to the river trail, streetscapes and vehicular circulation. When asked to rank more specific transportation changes, making bicycle and pedestrian improvements on Highway 30 received the most votes. Connecting the railroad trestle to the Alderbrook neighborhood with bridge at 45<sup>th</sup> Street, streetscape improvements on Commercial Street and making pedestrian improvements across Highway 30 at 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Streets also were deemed important. Improving the pedestrian crossing at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and extending a local street between 29<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Streets received the least votes.

**Open House Participant Comments**

Issues identified by participants during a question and answer session and on open house comment forms included the following. A compilation of all comments is included in this summary.

- Concern in the public process, specifically about its openness and perceived disconnect between process results and vision plan recommendations; publicize steering committees and make them more accessible to the community.
- Concern on planning for new development along the waterfront, especially residential development; preserve what is there, including views and ecology.
- Enact a moratorium on overwater development and height variances until vision process is complete.
- Improve pedestrian safety along River Trail; incorporate art.
- Community is anxious for vision process to get to specifics; specific interest in building height and design regulations and enforcing existing development codes.
- Good public outreach process and balance of interests; support the four zones.
- Need to analyze how to pay for proposed improvements.
- Create a dog park and restrooms.
- Create a map that illustrates developments that are approved, but not yet built.

**Natural Features**

<b>Rank the relative importance of the following open space improvements (1 = least important; 5 = most important).</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
Develop a new riverfront greenspace in the Civic Greenway area.	2	1	1	3	24
Create intimate plazas and open spaces, while preserving views of the riverfront in the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas.	4	1	2	13	18
Incorporate landscaping and other restoration along the river's edge within Civic and Neighborhood Greenway areas.	5	1	9	2	6
Extend the River Trail to the west.	4	9	10	3	6
Extend the River trail to the east.	4	5	3	8	8

**Land Use**

<b>Rank the relative importance of the following <u>types</u> of land use changes (1 = least important; 4 = most important).</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
Use of a downtown parking district or other means to better manage supply and use of parking.	10	3	6	2



Design guidelines or standards to guide architectural character of future development.	0	5	4	21
Amendments in zoning map or ordinance to change types of uses currently allowed in certain areas.	5	6	6	6
Changes in requirements related to building height, massing or placement.	2	5	8	11

<b>Rank the relative importance of the following <u>specific</u> land use changes (top three).</b>	<b># of Dots</b>
Downtown parking district or other means to better manage parking supply and use.	3
Historic design guidelines near Uniontown in Bridge Vista area.	19
Design guidelines for new construction in the Urban Core area.	24
Design standards or guidelines for new construction or renovations in the Neighborhood Greenway area.	12
Changes from tourist commercial to different commercial zoning in Bridge Vista and Urban Core areas.	0
Zoning change from commercial to residential or mixed use east of Mill Pond to expand/create a new/expanded neighborhood.	5
River Trail extended over the water along public rights-of-way through use of piers or boardwalks as development occurs within Urban Core.	21
Variations in height and massing to widen view corridors along public rights-of-way.	13
Enhanced or protected views over Alderbrook neighborhood through vegetation management.	6

### Transportation and Public Improvements

<b>Rank the relative importance of the following <u>types</u> of transportation improvements (1 = least important; 4 = most important).</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
Improvements to the River Trail.	3	3	8	13
Pedestrian crossing or other safety improvements along Highway 30.	1	5	3	20
Streetscape or other road design improvements along Highway 30, Marine Drive or Commercial Street.	3	9	9	5
Vehicular traffic circulation improvements between Marine Drive and the Columbia River (e.g., new local streets, access improvements, etc.).	11	6	1	5

<b>Rank the importance of the following <u>specific</u> transportation improvements. (top three)</b>	<b># of Dots</b>
Use signs to encourage bicycle traffic along the River Trail.	5
Make bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Highway 30.	20

Improve pedestrian crossing at Portway Avenue.	5
Improve pedestrian crossing at 6 <sup>th</sup> Street.	12
Improve pedestrian safety on 8 <sup>th</sup> Street between Marine and Commercial.	9
Improve pedestrian crossing at 16 <sup>th</sup> and/ or 17 <sup>th</sup> Streets.	10
Improve pedestrian crossing at 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street.	0
Make streetscape improvements to Commercial Street between 8 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> streets.	9
Extend local street between 29 <sup>th</sup> and 32 <sup>nd</sup> Streets.	0
Improve pedestrian crossing at 37 <sup>th</sup> Street.	5
Connect trestle to Alderbrook neighborhood with bridge near 45 <sup>th</sup> Street.	12

### Presentation Question & Answer

Following is a summary of the question and answer period which followed the presentation. Similar questions and answers have been grouped for brevity. Responses from city staff, consultants and steering committee members are shown in *italics*.

- It seems like our comments are being funneled into charts and boxes. It feels like there is inertia to create a certain process and results. We don't want anything done except to enhance the River Trail. Existing codes aren't enforced. We don't want to create green spaces, we want to protect existing green spaces. *The City's role is not that of a developer, but to regulate development. Much of the riverfront zoning was established in the 1970s, including some industrial zoning. One goal for this process is to revisit those zoning designations and develop a comprehensive approach so the City has more consistency and control over riverfront development.*
- People are anxious about this process and not trusting of the City. Steering committee meetings should be open to the public and advertised. We need to know more about the thinking that went into the concepts. We want to see how previous comments were translated into the draft vision. *The City will publish notice for all future steering committee meetings and hold meetings in spaces that can accommodate a larger number of attendees. Complete records of comments from past forums will be made available.* The City has selected steering committee members to represent the variety of interests found in the community. We should be giving steering committee members our thoughts and comments to incorporate into the Vision.
- People do not want residential development along the riverfront. There seems to be a disconnect between the survey results and the Vision Plan recommendations. *The results of the surveys have not yet been incorporated into the draft Vision Plan. The next step in this process is to find out precisely what some of the survey results mean. Are people concerned about height? Are people concerned about design? The community identified affordable/ workforce housing as an important issue. There is an opportunity to create more affordable housing along the riverfront.* Many of us do not want residential development along the riverfront regardless of type, size or design. We think there is enough there already and we don't like what we've seen.
- There are a large number of leasing opportunities along the riverfront. Why can't we implement a moratorium on overwater development during this process? Can we implement a moratorium on height variances as well? *Moratoriums are complicated and have to meet specific criteria according to state law. Variances are not allowed unless they meet specific criteria established in the City's code.*
- There are a number of pedestrian hazards along the River Trail. There needs to be better signage to improve pedestrian safety. Also, the bypass concept has not been explored in the draft Vision. *The City will investigate installing signs in pedestrian/vehicle conflict areas.*

- The draft plan speaks in very general terms. People are anxious to get to the “meat” of the public comments. *The City has made a concerted effort in Phase 1 to conduct an open and transparent outreach process using a variety of methods, focused on listening to the array of different comments and opinions found in the community. There are valid concerns including a desire for the City to control riverfront development and concerns about private property rights. The framework developed as part of Phase 1 is an attempt to find common ground. We will be delving deeper in Phase 2 and getting to more specifics, including recommendations on zoning, building height and building design among other measures to implement the vision. It is critical for the community to stay involved in Phase 2.*

## Comment Forms

- I don't see any indications for zoning regulations/changes. The biggest problem with any plan is the refusal (out of cowardice or greed?) to provide uniform zoning restrictions which prevents sensible height and development restrictions from being put in place. Englund is friends with the right people so reasonable height restrictions are waved. The sad truth is, the Riverfront will look like San Diego, it will no longer be unique and accessible, and that will be the fault of cronyism and cowardice.
- The Astoria Riverfront Vision Plan does not take into account that most Astorians do not want any development over the river – especially condos or other tall buildings. I hope the second phase of the vision plan will reflect this majority view point.
- The vision plan is presented in a way that makes development on the riverfront seem inevitable. This whole process was started because people don't want that. Do whatever you can to leave the waterfront undeveloped.
- Regarding Phase I – I commend all of the team for your efforts and your repeated attempts to reach out to the community with your plan, as it develops. No one will agree with everything, but generally, I am pleased with the results of Phase I. Regarding Phase II – will it be possible to generate an educated guess/prediction of what the impacts will be from new residential development? In particular, what fraction of the units will be primary residences? What positive economic stimulus will come to our community? What new demands will be generated on public resources for infrastructure, etc? Regarding beyond – implementation issues concern me most. I see the Vision Plan as a reasonable attempt at a compromise largely because it includes many alluring new improvements (e.g. landscaping, pier extensions, trail extensions, adding public paths circumnavigating buildings on the river), but where will the resources come from to pay for those alluring factors? And how much of these plans/code changes will be effectively subverted by state laws (e.g. props 37/49)? And when the mayor and city council provide variances, extensions and reversals of staff or HLC recommendations and decisions, why do we believe any vision plan will be truly implemented? I have raised these concerns before and I look forward to your reply.
- Yes, most important priority is to prevent any further view obstructing and other out-of-charter waterfront development. The most-least important sticker/box activity doesn't provide for this, which should be the highest priority in order to preserve the essential character of the waterfront, preserve ecology, and make sure visitors continue to experience this unique site. There is plenty of development opportunity in the underutilized, neglected downtown core.
- First, do not harm. “Greenspaces” don't need development where they already exist – e.g. east of Maritime Museum. Simply leave it alone. Enforcement of current building codes first – otherwise what's the point of creating new codes/designs that will only be granted waivers? The difference between condos and VD: you can get rid of VD. The presentation is impressive and clearly a lot of good work – now stop.
- I'd love to see trees on Highway 30 to hide Randy Stemper's metal building complex at 39<sup>th</sup>. Let's build on rain as an asset – with destinations that are more fun in the rain such as a rain park – with

sculpture and other features (a mini-waterfall, a fountain). Incorporate art and sculpture, buildings, etc that use wind and solar energy. Restoring trust in this process is essential – especially since this process was delayed until after a number of large out-of-state projects were ok'd using waivers, the good-old-boy networks, etc.

- Please less emphasis on development of specific spaces, most areas need to be left alone. Moratorium on riverfront development until a better design review process is in place. Moratorium on riverfront development until more buildings and spaces are higher density downtown. Reversal of variances allowing development on riverfront.
- Of the four options, “new” access to the river, number 4 is the only one which holds promise of a stroll along the river. This could be built into zoning ordinances such that only by including such access would variances be granted.
- What about a dog area? Warrenton has a very popular area. I have seen many dogs on riverfront and think a dog park would be a better use of land – they don't care about views.
- Make landscaping improvements “green” – no lawns, use native plants to make maintenance easier. Restroom(s) along the Riverwalk. Can we have benches and seating areas that use natural materials rather than requiring that all benches be the same?
- Address setbacks on Riverwalk. Use historic building design and character. Less residential development.
- It's nice to see such thoughtful planning. I like the 4 zones and the consideration given to each. I agree the zoning regulations need to be revised to conform to the visioning results and then adhered to.
- Please listen to the people! We care.
- I am most impressed with the thought in creating the visuals. However, it seems to be another way too distract the concern from the over building of the waterfront. With the building permits that have been approved and the current construction completed or in progress the damage is complete. Having a member of one of the families building on the waterfront is not a comforting thought that this process is not another tool to ram a builder's dreams to build more of the prison like buildings recently completed.
- I would like to see a draft vision plan with all “approved future developments” indicated. (Those approved by HLC and the Planning Commission, but not yet built.)
- No development of any kind on the waterfront! The city and/or county, etc., should purchase the riverfront property and keep it as open, public space for all to enjoy the beautiful river and views. I read recently about a city on the eastern seaboard that had the foresight to do this very thing. The essence of Astoria is access to, and view of, the river. This is why the majority of the residents moved here. This is the essence and fundamental character of our beautiful city. It should not be destroyed by development. And, the projects that have been recently built, and those currently under construction, are ugly, unsightly and exhibit only the greedy desire for dollars with no thought to preservation of Astoria's unique beauty.

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Neighborhood and Civic Greenways Open House Saturday, May 30, 1 – 4 pm

Pier 39 Meeting Room

### SUMMARY

On Saturday, May 30, 2009 approximately 40 people attended an open house to discuss the future of Astoria's riverfront. The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing development with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history. The focus of this open house was the Civic Greenway and Neighborhood Greenway areas extending from the Maritime Museum to Alderbrook. The open house was the first of three that will be held in regards to recommendations for specific areas of the riverfront. Open houses for the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas will be held on June 18 and June 22 respectively.

Attendees of the open house had the opportunity to view several displays and record their comments. The displays sought feedback on several recommendations related to:

- Overwater leasing and development
- Residential development – location, scale and character of development
- Upland development building height and mass
- Park and open space ideas and concepts

This document summarizes comments made on each of these topics. A complete list of comments is attached. The results of the open house will be considered along with a variety of other information in crafting a vision for the riverfront. It is an important source of information about community opinions and desires but will be supplemented by and integrated with other types of feedback and data.

### Land Use and Design

#### Location of future overwater development

- No development; no development near Alderbrook (9)
- Minimize development to preserve views; keep development small (5)
- Development should not detract from historic character; ensure good design (2)
- Viewing platforms on piers would be great (2)
- Development would be an asset
- Enhance and reuse existing waterfront buildings for maritime uses
- Like dock for canoe/kayak access

Type and character of land uses/on-land residential development

- Keep heights low (10)
- Ensure historic design (5)
- Require setbacks (5)
- Include ample parking and streets (2)
- Support residential use (2)
- Do not agree with residential development
- Do not want any mixed-use development
- Ensure housing is affordable

Scale of development

- Keep heights low; maintain views (10)
- Require setbacks (4)
- Minimize development (3)
- Ensure historic design (2)
- Low density (2)
- Maintain views

**Open Spaces and Trails**

Features/concepts for potential city park/open space near the old Depot

- Open space; maintain views; no development/structures (12)
- Keep natural/as-is (5)
- Picnic areas/benches (3)
- Amphitheater (2)
- Library and eating venues with viewing area (2)
- No development, structures (2)
- No sport fields on this site (2)
- Access for canoes/kayaks
- Covered pavilion
- Indoor walking trail/atrium
- Do not shelter/encourage transients
- No boat launch
- No parking
- Use for music, festivals, etc.
- Use for open space and recreational uses

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Greenway	10	0	
Biking/walking/jogging	9	0	
Hiking/biking/walking	8	0	- Indoor walking trail/atrium
Fishing	8	0	
Open lawn area	8	1	
Nature park	7	0	- More natural, less developed park
Performance/amphitheater	8	2	- Does not need to be on the riverfront - Use downtown old Safeway lot instead
Boating/canoeing	7	0	

Interpretive feature	6	0	- If tasteful, yes
Formal garden landscape	6	7	- Not here; keep the river edge natural - Beautiful
River access/boat launch	5	2	- Concern for amount of room the boat launch takes up - No boat launch
Picnicking	3	0	
Community garden	3	3	- Upkeep?
Open lawn areas	2	0	
Birding	2	0	
Dog park	2	2	- Enclosed dog park
Basketball courts	2	4	
Frisbee golf	2	4	
Playground	2	5	
Volleyball	2	10	- Does not need to be on the riverfront (2) - Not needed in this location - Yes; we need open activity spaces
Historic interpretation/reuse	1	2	- Does not need to be on the riverfront
Soccer fields	1	6	- Not enough space
Community gathering	1	6	- Safety concern with high school drinking, homeless sleeping; too much money
Horse shoes	0	4	- Not here
Tennis courts	0	4	
Skateboarding	0	5	
Baseball/softball fields	0	6	- No sports fields by the river - Keep riverfront natural; use other spaces for sports activities
Bocce courts	0	7	- Does not need to be on the riverfront

#### Concepts for proposed extensions of the River Trail

- Like the extension to Tongue Point (7)
- Maintain rustic look of existing trail (6)
- Like the connection at 45th Street (3)
- Access for pedestrians and bicycles (2)
- Low level lights; solar powered (2)
- Bridge on 45th is not needed
- Don't eliminate using tracks for trains in the future
- Have trash and recycling available
- Existing trails near Alderbrook Lagoon are fine
- Protect views, don't enhance them
- Replace wood walkways on trestles
- Rest areas
- Safety concerns

#### Transportation Improvements

- Extend trolley to Alderbrook/Tongue Point (4)
- Like safe pedestrian crossings and bike lanes (2)
- Concerned about boat launch in proposed open space

- Do not put a bridge at 45th Street
- Enhance access to Riverwalk from Marine Drive
- Focus commercial and tourist activities downtown
- Like new street between 29th and 32nd
- Traffic concerns about extending proposed open space to Mill Pond
- Train to Portland would be great

### **Other Issues**

- Keep these areas open to preserve views (5)
- No condos or hotels (2)
- Thank you for providing this forum
- Provide incentives for green buildings
- Limit development (2)
- Require parking for new development
- Make truck travel difficult on Hwy 30 to increase support for a bypass
- Small parks, gardens and picnic areas
- Water access
- Must be financially sustainable
- No new parking areas
- Design review guidelines with specific height, setback, massing and materials regulations (5)
- Glad I came; very interesting

## **Comment Compilation**

### **Land Use and Development**

#### ***Do you have any comments regarding the potential overwater development pattern?***

- No buildings
- Viewing platforms on piers would be great
- No buildings
- Viewing platforms or pier
- Minimize – preserve views
- We should avoid overwater development. Any of this type of project should be like Pier 39 or the Cannery Pier Hotel, in an existing “footprint”
- Any overwater development has to enhance not detract from the history or flavor of historic Astoria. No Disney lands or malls.
- Hope it will not be happening in east Alderbrook i.e. over Alderbrook lagoon
- Please do not build out into water blocking views. Please keep houses/buildings small, affordable and aesthetically cohesive. Please consider an “indoor” walking area – out of the elements = for our aging population.
- Limit overwater development especially by gateway project to Alderbrook to protect water views and vistas to Washington shore.
- Limit overwater development that would obscure waters views from Gateway to Alderwood.



- Don't allow.
- The "red building" off 31<sup>st</sup> does not perpetuate any "classic history" of the town. It is a "nature-junked" structure that due to negligence had no insurance and should be torn down.
- Not in favor of any additional overwater development with the possible exception of a dock for canoe/kayak access.
- Continue to enhance, reuse existing waterfront buildings however, use should be maritime related. The downtown – 7<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Street might be an exception. There could be residential or tourist related.
- Yes – it would be a real asset and addition to what we already have now.
- Yes – don't do it.
- Important that maritime uses don't block views.
- Absolutely no overwater development in Alderbrook. Do not walk anymore overwater development.
- I don't want any over the water development in Alderbrook. Not even docks or piers that only open the door to boat traffic.
- The Alderbrook Lagoon has become, with no help from us, a wildlife sanctuary. Let's help it now by zoning out the possibility of overwater development.

***Do you have any comments regarding the proposed on-land residential development?***

- Low height and historical design houses
- Set back from trail 25 feet
- Looks good – keep them historically designed and low. Need at least 25 ft set back from trail
- I don't agree. Why not use this to develop a grand, bold riverfront park more in the tradition of Olmstead.
- Affordable housing where the city shops are within the 28 feet height would be good
- No mixed use – don't want a beautiful river view on one side and 50% off all glassware on the other side.
- No Holiday Inn Express stuff, please.
- Be sure to include enough parking and wide enough streets. Reduce density.
- Be aware of parking and street access – example: skinny streets of Mill Pond should not be used for through traffic.
- Build way back from Riverwalk.
- No – as long as it remains out of the water and south of the Riverwalk. A boat marine could be acceptable (or launch).
- Keep all development south of the Riverwalk, low level and develop an architectural review process to keep development appropriate to the area.
- Need to be specific guidelines/rules for height, size, setbacks, materials and styles. Existing, new condos are too tall, large, too close to the Riverwalk. They are also ugly, unimaginative and cluttered.
- It looks like it would be a pleasant neighborhood and it would or should have a 28 ft limit. It would be nice to get rid of some of the public rickety buildings.
- Is more really needed? If we do, let's limit it, decide where, keep them small (bungalows) and use design review criteria so that we have good design.
- Concerned regarding potential for development that crowds the Riverwalk on the south side. Should not trade for heights above a stated maximum.

- No higher than two stories.
- No condos. The two that are at 39<sup>th</sup> Street are mostly empty anyhow so I see no financial advantage to building more that will only stand empty.
- Small scale residential ok

***Do you have any comments regarding the scale of development in relation to the River Trail or the riverfront?***

- Height restrictions and set back restrictions
- Height restrictions – no variances
- The river trail extension would be great.
- I like the bridge at 45<sup>th</sup>
- I love the old historic look of the railway; don't want the old look tampered with. At the same time, would enjoy a walkway torn over this one.
- Keep small and maintain as much of a view of river as possible
- Bungalow style, one story – at most two story. Maintain our views. The Riverwalk is great. Extension is great but not over Alderbrook Lagoon.
- Leave it as natural as possible. The charm of Astoria is its low key atmosphere.
- The natural look is well served in this area – development should be low definition not high density.
- Do not allow much development and keep height low.
- Would be in favor of things that can be managed largely through volunteerism and structured with the limited funds of Astoria in mind. Dog-accessible areas should be isolated.
- Keep development minimal – enhance river edge with native plants and view points.
- Set the buildings back far enough so that they do not cast shadows on Riverwalk. 30 feet is maximum height to top of ridge. Leave lots of room between medium or small buildings. No long walls of buildings – with perhaps exception of downtown area 7<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>.
- No – nothing negative, but hope the activity and games would not be a big factor.
- Yes – set limits on height – keep low and set back from tracks so Astorians and tourists don't have to walk in the buildings' shade. And – design review on all development.
- We should not support or encourage dense, tall development on the south side of the Riverwalk. The new condos east of Mill Pond village are an example of unfortunate development.
- Less development is better.
- I like the plan for the river walk both on the trestle and the one on the south side which ends in the park.
- As small as possible.
- For people arriving in Astoria from the east, the views of the river have been seriously degraded in the last 10-15 years. Now people have to ask "Where is the river?" Don't diminish what is unique about our city.
- It isn't a large area so should be used for nature related activities. There is no reason why soccer fields etc need to take up this space on the river. Also, money to maintain this area will be difficult to get.
- Enforce height limits; no variances
- No height bonuses

- Need 25' setback from trail
- Establish architectural review process to assure appropriate styles of buildings

## **Open Space and Trails**

### ***What activities and concepts would you like to see in a potential new open space in the Civic Greenway Area?***

- Rest and picnic areas with benches
- Amphitheater would be wonderful
- Sport field should be elsewhere
- Grassy picnic areas along river bank
- Amphitheater would be wonderful
- Sports field should be elsewhere – don't need a river view
- Not enough emphasis on open and recreational uses for riverfront. Development takes away from park and recreation. This is a great opportunity to think bold.
- Maybe something like Portland's Tom McCall Park for music, festivals, etc
- No areas that would shelter or encourage transients. Love green open space but not excited about big new structures.
- Indoor walking trail/atrium or something for the aged and for everyone else during inclement weather.
- Covered pavilion to protect from rain. We already have plenty of unused parks in Astoria. Perhaps library could be sited there with viewing areas to read in and some commercial eating venues.
- Pass library with covered pavilion and courtyard for eating, resting or enjoying the river view.
- It's fine now.
- Pedestrian connection on 20<sup>th</sup> Street is great. New street between 29 and 32 is great. 37<sup>th</sup> intersection improvement is great.
- View and access to river priority. Benches, park space – possibly water access for canoes/kayaks if parking elsewhere.
- Not much – leave open, relatively wild.
- Nothing – we love it the way it is.
- Open, clean, some landscaping, grass mowed.
- City park should land become available.
- Leave it natural like it is. Improving the Riverwalk is fine but walking and biking is enough. We don't need activities and more concrete.
- It's nice to have a part of town free from "concrete" and open to quiet walks free from "planned" activities.

### ***What concepts would you like to see used for a new extension of the River Trail along the railroad trestle to the Alderbrook neighborhood and Tongue Point?***

- River trail would be great to Alderbrook area and Tongue Point. Only thing I worry about is if the train came back for public safety.
- Trail through Alderbrook is good – possible problem if train comes back. 45<sup>th</sup> Street is very necessary.
- Recreation and parks
- Soccer, playground or softball, volleyball

- I like the proposal
- Don't eliminate possibility of using tracks in future, make the walkway very rustic, so as not to distract from current look.
- Need to replace wood walkways and trestles ASAP
- Maintain the style/feel of the present trail. Please have recycling available for trash; solar lights.
- Natural asphalt trail like we have west of Alderbrook.
- Continue asphalt trail through natural vegetation setting.
- Take trail to Tongue Point
- Access for pedestrians and bicycles with view areas and rest areas.
- Improve it enough to make it safe. A bridge on 45<sup>th</sup> Street is not needed. The appeal of this part of the waterfront is that it is quiet and relatively little traveled. Increased traffic diminishes this. The Riverwalk needs a variety of experiences. Do not do "one size fits all" in respect to access.
- Keep pretty what you have now. Not to clutter walkway or destroy any of the green ways you see as you walk.
- Extending the river trail along the trestle in the weathered wood style is good but no aluminum. No trail through Alderbrook Lagoon. The dirt trails are fine there.
- Just continue the paving all the way to the old Hammond Mill site to make it easier for bikes and dog walkers.
- Like the connection at 45<sup>th</sup>
- Safety and maintenance concern about trail on trestle
- Low level lighting (knee high) full length
- No more light pollution please
- 45<sup>th</sup> bridge would need to be longer; shoreline on map is incorrect
- Protect views, don't enhance them
- Yes to extension to Tongue Point
- Would love to see trail continued next to tracks all the way to Tongue Point
- Yes, extend Riverwalk
- Replace wood walkways on trestles ASAP

## **Transportation**

### ***Do you have any comments regarding proposed transportation improvements?***

- Extend trolley to travel to Tongue Point – tourists and passengers probably would enjoy the scenery
- Concerned about boat launch – do not want trucks and boat trailers crossing the Riverwalk.
- Extend trolley to Alderbrook/Tongue Point
- Parkland, recreation
- Like more, safe pedestrian crossings and bike lanes
- Trolley is fine. A train to Portland would be better.
- Do not extend Mill Pond or Log Bronc to Safeway as they are not wide enough and would create too much traffic through residential areas. Have ingress and egress from Marine Drive or Leif Erickson.

- Concern re: extension of Log Bronc through Mill Pond residential area – skinny streets not wide enough for through traffic. Use of Hwy 30 more practical. Adequate guest or residence parking difficult problem.
- Yes to pedestrian connection at 20<sup>th</sup> Street from south side of Marine Drive and to new street between 29<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup>. Also enhance access to Riverwalk from 37<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Focus commercial and tourist activities in downtown to promote vibrant, walkable city.
- No.
- Extending the trolley to Alderbrook is a good idea.
- Don't put a bridge at 45<sup>th</sup> Street. There is a very "un-rustic" aluminum bridge recently constructed at about 40<sup>th</sup> Street at the west end of the lagoon. It is garish and doesn't blend with the landscape.
- Extend "special" trolley service to east Alderbrook Lagoon/Tongue Point for special occasions (4<sup>th</sup> of July, one evening per week, etc) charge "special" fare (\$3?)

## **Other Comments**

### ***Are there any other comments you would like to make?***

- Keep the area open so every person and tourist or residence can enjoy the views
- Keep the area open so everyone can see and enjoy our beautiful river. No tall condos or hotels.
- We should be able to see the river from Marine Drive.
- The lack of waterfront condos/development is a part of what makes Astoria special. Why would we want to look like everyone else?
- I hate the idea of height bonuses. Just because someone plants a lawn and a few bushes doesn't mean they should be rewarded with anything. If they get to build, they just conform to height requirements and public spaces. Why in the world would we give them a choice?
- Thank you very much for providing this forum. Your staff members were very helpful.
- Developers should consider or have some incentive to build "green" buildings (using wind energy, etc) looking forward to the future and energy costs – Astoria can lead the way on this.
- Limit development – have city buy up leases to create open space. Make sure new residences have at least 2 parking spaces on each site.
- Limit development – especially high density projects.
- The trucking industry has a larger lobby in Salem than does Astoria. Let's keep erecting lights on 30 – the tougher we make it to truck through town, the more and faster they will back a bypass.
- Small parks, gardens, picnic areas, water access are positive as long as they are sustainable (financially) and do not interfere with the open, serene feeling of the natural world of the river edge and do not require parking lots.
- Design review guidelines are needed throughout waterfront all zones need specific height, set backs, size, materials, etc. If zoning is too loose, it leaves too much leeway to city staff (it's not fair to them) or local politics (it's not fair to general population). Lack of firm rules also not fair to developers – they really do want to know expectations from the beginning and they want to protect their investments, too.
- I'm glad I came – it's very interesting.

- Let's get on with the meat. You've dilly-dallied way too long. In the "civic" area and west – have much how high, good design (design review).
- Create building height restrictions where there are none and enforce all building height restrictions and allow no variances.
- Astoria is in danger of losing its best feature – its old fashioned home town feeling. Prison-like condos, storage-type metal buildings and height which obscure the river view are already changing the atmosphere for the worse.

## Additional Comments Received After the Open House

Of course, I'm in favor of a park/open space in the "Civic Greenway" area. As you know, I'd like to see the whole Riverwalk area be a park, so any proposed park/open space is OK with me. As you also know, as far as what it may look like (i.e. "recreational opportunities"), I favor a natural area, with lots of trees and native plants, and a hiking/biking trail that could supplement the main Riverwalk trail. I don't see this area as big enough for sports fields, and I don't think that's a good use for this area. All of the "opportunities" that involve hardscape or non-natural landscaping (i.e. grass) I don't favor. No boat ramps, etc. Just a nice park with trees that would be an escape from the rest of the developed Riverwalk area.

The most obvious and glaring error in the maps is the residential development map. After all the comments you've received about this, it is still there!! I think it's obvious that the majority (the vast majority) of Astorians don't want any more residential development near the water. Even the kind listed in the map ("new urban" development similar to the Mill Pond housing stock). What our town desperately needs is more parkland, PUBLIC land, where people can gather, play, enjoy. If this requires eminent domain, or land swaps, so be it. If it's public land already, like the public works shops, then let's restore the land to a natural area and make it a park. So, to sum up, I recommend we change the zoning in this area to natural/conservation/open space.

The over-the-water development maps are equally scary. The visioning clearly brought out the majority's opinion that the greenway areas should be devoid of over-the-water development, much as they are today. Zoning should be changed in these areas to natural/conservation/open space if it isn't already.

I agree that landscaping north of the Riverwalk should be improved, using more native plants, but a plan should be developed to maintain this area, and also to enhance the environmental and wildlife aspects of it. It should function as a good riparian zone -- basically a wetland preserve.

With regard to building heights on land between the Riverwalk and Highway 30, I don't agree with the scenarios presented. This is essentially the scenarios presented for buildings in the downtown area. Zoning in this area should be as much natural/conservation/open space as possible, with any other land given to public space of some sort. Developments such as we've seen recently should be prohibited by zoning. Building heights, if even applicable, should be one-story to preserve views of the river, and of the hills from the Riverwalk. No exceptions.

I'm not exactly sure where the Riverwalk bridge is in the remaining map. There's no caption indicating where this is. If it's in Alderbrook, I support an alternative walking route there. It looks like trolley tracks exist on this bridge, but I wouldn't support the trolley out there, since it would interfere with walking and biking.

It's obvious I don't share the vision of whomever it was that put these maps together. However, I believe my vision is closer to the majority of Astorians', and that's what this process is supposed to be about. I hope the final product reflects the vision of the majority of Astorians.

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Urban Core and Bridge Vista Open Houses June 18 and 22, 6 – 8 pm

### SUMMARY

On Thursday, June 18 and Monday, June 22, 2009, approximately 40 people attended two open houses to discuss the future of Astoria's riverfront. The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing development with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history. These open houses focused on the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas extending from the Maritime Museum to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the Port of Astoria respectively. The open houses were the second and third of three meetings for the public to review recommendations for specific areas of the riverfront.

Attendees of the open houses had the opportunity to view several displays and record their comments. The displays sought feedback on several recommendations related to:

- Upland and overwater land use and development
  - Overwater leasing
  - Building height and mass
  - Design Standards and Review
- Park and open space ideas and concepts

This document summarizes comments made on each of these topics. A complete list of comments is attached. The results of the open house will be considered along with a variety of other information in crafting a vision for the riverfront. It is an important source of information about community opinions and desires but will be supplemented by and integrated with other types of feedback and data.

### Land Use and Design

#### Overwater development

- New development no taller than existing old buildings (3)
- Stretches of open riverfront more valuable than viewpoints (3)
- Overwater development farther out is better (e.g., Pier 39 and Cannery Pier Hotel) (2)
- Are some properties which have buildings covering part but not all of the property only partially released?
- Could the city try to lease parcels still open?



- How would changes to city zoning affect the state’s leasing process?
- Incorporate public art
- Preserve waterfront views
- Restrict overwater development
- Residential overwater development drains residential capacity/opportunities downtown
- Trade some extra height for views between buildings

Building height, mass and design

- Discourage (or prevent) overwater development (2)
- Maximize visibility and access to water (2)
- Setback plaza and trail within new development (2)
- Accentuate view corridor streets with streetscape improvements
- Develop program for routine replacement of pilings
- Don’t like covered walkway/arcade
- Encourage on-land development south of River Trail
- Englund / Regatta building seating example (1940s)
- Keep old buildings with character
- Keep public corridors to river open
- Keep riverfront area between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets open
- Prefer breaks in building mass
- Preserve views from River Trail
- Preserve views from Marine Drive
- No buildings south of River Trail taller than 25-30 feet
- Original pilings are great scenery
- Status quo is not acceptable
- Step back buildings inland at river edge
- 3 story max – 2+1 setback

Design and location of riverfront development (1 = most important; 5 = least important)

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Setbacks – setting new buildings back a certain distance from the River Trail or other public right-of-way.	4				
Stepbacks for upper stories – step the upper stories of new buildings back a certain distance from the ground floor facade.		3			
Access through buildings – create a passageway or other opening or break in the front and back faces of new buildings to allow people to see through the site to the river or other adjacent buildings.	1	2	1		
Other variations in building heights/façades – changes in height, inclusion of courtyards or other strategies.	3				

Do you have any comments regarding these strategies?

Setbacks:

- Like piers that overhang the river
- No shadows on River Trail
- Vary building height and mass to avoid blocking in the River Trail

Stepbacks: No comments

Access through site:

- At least 100-foot wide passage way
- Access to river through or alongside buildings

Other variations:

- Extend 6<sup>th</sup> Street view tower beyond planned new development

Do you have any other comments regarding the design and location of new development?

- Develop connection between downtown and riverfront at 12<sup>th</sup> Street (2)
- Allow public to have their say and point of view
- Don't allow taller buildings than what exists
- Maintain and develop visual and physical access to the river
- Preserve views from Marine Drive
- Preferred option is to allow access through site

Do you believe it is important to require some design standards or design review process for new development?

- Create an architectural review process and guidelines
- Limited design review
- Create design standards
- Require design standards for building faces along River Trail

### **Open Space and Trails**

What features and concepts would you like to see in potential new public parks plazas, and pier extensions?

- Develop viewing platforms/overwater access/piers (9)
- Variety of open spaces (5)
- Access to water (2)
- Broad views preferred to corridor views (2)
- Hanging baskets, planters, benches, lights along River Trail and selected downtown streets (2)
- Keep to the overall historic design of Astoria (2)
- Natural/rustic look (2)
- Planters/hanging baskets (2)
- Public art (2)
- Benches
- Group seating
- Lighting
- Maximize open space; limit development
- Parks
- Preserve existing structures
- Riverwalk not River Trail
- Use safe materials and consider maintenance



Great idea  
Like fishing docks  
Wooden piers blend well, support ambiance



Ground greenery



Open space is good; overlooking the river is better  
Nix the Manhattan skyline



Like durable hardscape  
Need open areas to allow light



Don't like solid buildings



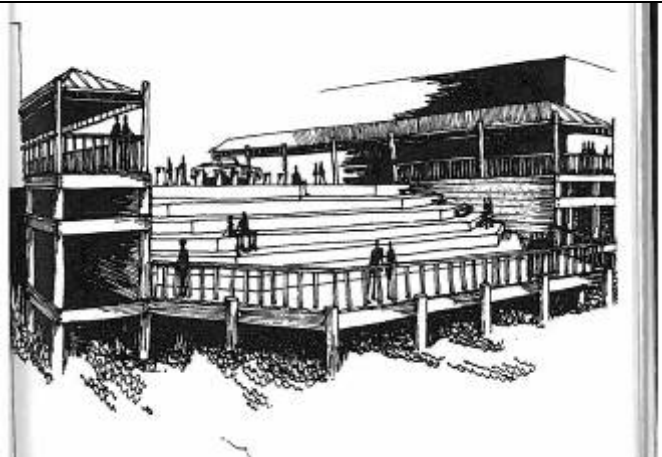
Too modern  
Too much concrete



OK for small areas



Pretty for some areas  
River overhang locations



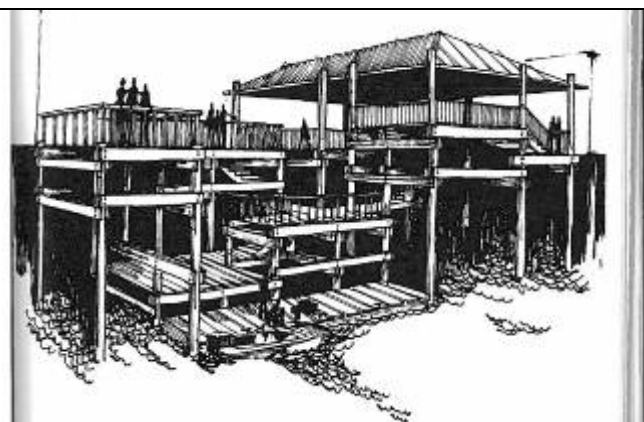
Like dock seating for various water activities (2)  
Like the steps (2)  
Nice



Like beaches  
Nice



Does not have enough river overhang  
Places for groups to sit; benches



Nice vision; like the water access (3)  
No more structures that mimic the canneries



Nice  
Not so good  
Use local plants to promote color

Use various riverfront ideas



Like the combination of wood walks, stone, concrete, rough materials

What concepts would you like to see used for River Trail extensions over the water should development occur?

- Extend public access piers beyond overwater development
- Safety concern if River Trail and trolley extend to Tongue Point
  - Paving railroad ties causes rotting
  - Washout

### **Transportation**

Do you have any comments regarding proposed transportation improvements?

- Support pedestrian overpasses on Marine Drive
- Develop attractive west entrance to Maritime Memorial.

### **Other Comments**

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

- Develop overlooks beyond overwater development
- Develop parks, piers and River Trail
- Develop riverfront boardwalk around new development
- Implement architectural review process
- Implement incentives for development under current height restrictions
- Limit building heights to 30 feet South of River Trail
- New riverfront commercial development detracts from existing downtown businesses
- No overwater development between 17<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- Preserve expansive views along River Trail
- Preserve river access
- Small riverfront open areas do not compensate for viewshed impacts
- Street front commercial does not compensate for expansive river and bridge views
- Trade some building heights for less building mass

# Comment Compilation

## Land Use and Design

### Overwater development

- Providing a viewpoint at the end of a pier isn't as valuable as keeping a long stretch of the Riverwalk open (2).
- Are properties with buildings that aren't completely leased or only partially released?
- Could the city try to lease parcels still open?
- How would changes to city zoning affect the state's leasing process?
- Incorporate public art in this area (e.g., metal cut-outs of prominent ships attached to pilings).
- Overwater development is better when farther out (e.g., Pier 39 and Cannery Pier Hotel).
- New development should be not taller than present old buildings along waterfront.
- No overwater development higher than the present buildings.
- Residential overwater development leads to shift in residential capacity/opportunities from downtown to Riverfront.
- Restrict buildings out over the water. Need to preserve the waterfront views for all Astorians and visitors/tourists for generations to come, lest we lose the absolute character/charm of Astoria forever.
- Want to see more views/breaks in development overwater than just over street rights-of-way. Would be ok to trade some extra height for more views/spaces between buildings
- Some design review important, but none can be as bad as too much. Too much review leads to too much uniformity. None allows for poor quality development.
- No overwater development higher than the present buildings. No overwater development between 17<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Streets. Area between waterfront and highway, no buildings higher than 25-30 feet.
- The social, cultural and commerce center of Astoria's urban core has become 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Commercial Street with four blocks in each of four directions. North on the shoreline, lies a valuable visual access to our Columbia Bay, between 12<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. By whatever means, there are two water leases here that should be acquired by the City for the future construction of a public pier that joins with the downtown center south and stretches north to the edge of the ship channel. This would ultimately have a greater effect in exhibiting/promoting our seaport-town image than would the creation of a dozen cannery look-alikes or pier-based shops. It would benefit any other downtown development. Being as wide as it could be deep, the pier could be, in fact, a waterfront park with (much like Wet Dog) the backs of existing buildings turned into small mercantile shops to face it.

### Building height, mass and design

- Accentuate view corridor streets with streetscape improvements – paving, trees, etc. – as connectors from inland parking areas to river
- All possible visibility and access to water is so important for residents and visitors.
- Canvas – how to use it?
- City should have design standards along riverfront. Views of buildings should be as attractive as views to water. Better design will attract more use of River Trail by families.

Side of building facing river trail should be treated as building front, not neglected backyard.

- Develop program for routine replacement of pilings.
- Discourage (or prevent) overwater development. Encourage on-land development south of Riverwalk.
- Don't like covered walkway/arcade.
- Englund / Regatta building seating example (1940s).
- Hanging baskets/potted plants along Riverwalk and selected downtown streets. Flowers. Drip systems and maintenance.
- Keep as much open space as possible on the river side of the Riverwalk. More than view corridors. Extend Riverwalk outward of buildings.
- Keep this area open (center of town), ties to 12th Street corridor (between 11th and 12th).
- Like idea of Riverwalk extension to water (piers).
- Like setback plaza and trail within new development.
- No buildings on river – keep shore open.
- No development higher than present old buildings along waterfront
- Really like where plan is going. Make sure to keep public corridors to river open. This is not critical.
- Setbacks and breaks in building mass.
- Special planters, city logo, plants, lights, benches?
- Status quo is not acceptable – need to do something.
- Step back buildings inland at river edge.
- The old buildings have more character than facsimile old buildings no matter how nice they look. When gone, they are gone. Original pilings in the water are great scenery. Leave views from walk but also from Marine Drive.
- 3 story max – 2+1 setback

Design and location of riverfront development (1 = most important; 5 = least important)

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Setbacks – setting new buildings back a certain distance from the River Trail or other public right-of-way.	5				
Stepbacks for upper stories – step the upper stories of new buildings back a certain distance from the ground floor facade.		3			1
Access through buildings – create a passageway or other opening or break in the front and back faces of new buildings to allow people to see through the site to the river or other adjacent buildings.	1	2	1		1
Other variations in building heights/façades – changes in height, inclusion of courtyards or other strategies.	3				1

Do you have any comments regarding these strategies?

Setbacks:

- No shadows on Riverwalk.
- I like at least some river overhangs.
- Varied to avoid blocking in the Riverwalk.

Stepbacks:

No comments.

Access through site:

- Keep access to river public, through or along side buildings.
- Should be at least 100-foot wide passage way.

Other variations:

- Extend 6<sup>th</sup> Street view tower beyond planned new development.

Do you have any other comments regarding the design and location of new development?

- Don't allow taller buildings than what is here.
- Maintain and develop river access, visual and physical. Develop connection between downtown and riverfront \*12th St).
- Since I moved here in 2001, about half of the river I could see from Marine Drive is blocked and that is Astoria's tragedy.
- The lesser of the evils is to allow access through the site.
- Yes, to allow public to have their say and point of view.
- Without becoming Victorian, Queen Ann, or Craftsman replications, new development could still borrow older architectural forms and combine them with the newer. Our local planning commissions have failed to take advantage of this possibility and, as a result, our newer buildings are tasteless and bear no relationship to our marketable history. Wells Fargo is a fifties-horror; the new hospital addition looks like a WWII blimp hanger; the new college building will look like Houston's industrial parks – having as its design team, a firm without one project listed in the AIA's *Educational Facilities Directory* – their choice of "Outstanding Learning Environments."

Do you believe it is important to require some design standards or design review process for new development?

- Create an architectural review process and guidelines.
- Yes, to allow public to have their say and point of view.

### **Open Space and Trails**

What features and concepts would you like to see in potential new public parks plazas, and pier extensions?

- Keep to the overall historic design of Astoria (2)
- Public dock between 11th and 12th to bring people to the water in conjunction with downtown core (2).
- Vary the design of paths/spaces by area – don't have to match (3)
- Bring people to the water.
- Group seating.
- I like the variety and rustic look.
- I want Riverwalk not River Trail.
- Keep safety in mind (materials) and maintenance.
- Large salmon sculpture.
- Lighting with hanging baskets.
- Like benches; as much open space as possible – nothing between water and Riverwalk – limited buildings.



- Like docks for events, tourists.
- Long views up river and down to bridge rather than tunnel vision just across the river.
- People visiting area like the present open area of the waterfront. They come to view the river activities, not the back side of buildings.
- Places like 6th Street Pier and viewing platform are great. Parks, good, overhangs where you can walk over the water to keep the character. Places to fish from piers such as 6th Street. 14th Street Pier is great.
- Preserve what remains – don't let new development destroy Astoria's essential waterfront characteristics – even if it's old and decrepit looking, that is Astoria's essence.
- Public art, ship silhouette (steel plate).
- Public space – dock, park at foot of 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Simple forms that look natural.
- Variety of open spaces. Access to water.
- Use pots and planters for greenery.
- Benches, picnic tables, history-reference plaques



Great idea  
 Yes to fishing docks  
 Wooden piers blend well, support ambiance



Ground greenery



Open space is good; overlooking the river is better  
 Nix the Manhattan skyline



Like durable hardscape  
 Need open areas to allow light



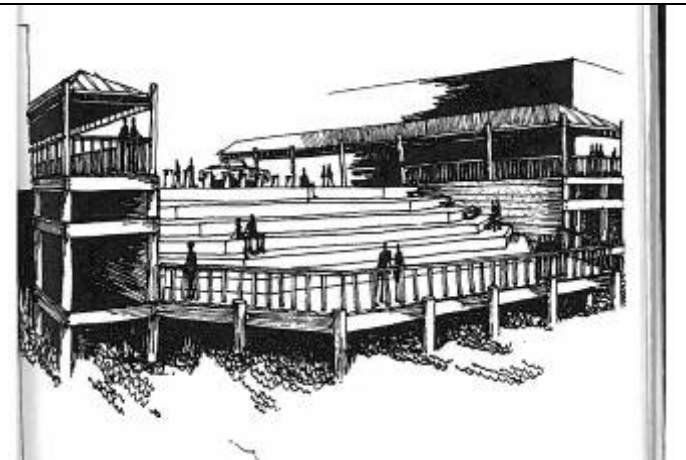
Don't like solid buildings  
OK for small areas



Too modern  
Too much concrete






Pretty for some areas  
River overhang locations



Like dock seating for a variety of water activities  
(2)  
Like the steps (2)  
Nice





<p>Like beaches Nice</p>	<p>Does not have enough river overhang Places for groups to sit; benches</p>
 <p>Nice vision; like the water access (2) Access to water I think we've reached the limit on riverfront buildings that mimic or pay homage to the canneries</p>	 <p>I like most of the riverfront ideas varied Nice Not so good Use local plants to promote color</p>
 <p>I like the combination of wood walks, stone, concrete, rough materials</p>	

What concepts would you like to see used for River Trail extensions over the water should development occur?

- Be sure new development allows for public access via Riverwalk extended outboard of buildings.
- Allowing the River Trail to follow railroad to Tongue Point is creating a public safety problem and paving railroad ties would cause a rotting problem and washout problem.
- Keep aquatic zone buildings out of the considerations – keep them out of the water. Get rid of the junk pilings. One diving crew with hydraulic saws could clean-up our waterfront in two weeks.

**Transportation**

Do you have any comments regarding proposed transportation improvements?

- Pedestrian overpass on Marine Drive.

- Procure property on the west side of Bay Street so we can develop an attractive entrance to the Maritime Memorial.

### **Other Comments**

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

- Attract people to river with small parks, piers, Riverwalk with extensive river views. Control development style with architectural review process.
- By incentivising taller buildings at the riverfront in exchange for some street-level “open space” elbow room, etc. the public trades 2-3 blocks width of view. A few square feet of riverfront green area does not adequately compensate for impact to view shed. How about incentives for development below current height restrictions, not more. Raise the bar, don't lower it.
- No overwater development between 17<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Street. Area between waterfront and highway, no buildings higher than 25-30 feet.
- Once it's gone, one may not get it back. I hope Astoria can preserve the river access as so many places in the US have not – it will keep us unique and keep people enchanted.
- Requiring commercial will likely disadvantage existing businesses on Commercial and Exchange
- The current public amenity is X amount of linear Riverwalk with expansive views of river.
- What is proposed is X-80% of expansive view because 80% of the “public” pier has no expansive view, just commercial.
- Will loop be allowed on the piers? Proposed view of river – you can't see the river until you get out to the end. Street front commercial does not compensate for expansive river and bridge views. Riverwalk: view of river and bridge.

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## **Astoria Community Forum Summary Wednesday, August 26, 2009**

On Wednesday, August 26, 2009 approximately 40 people attended the community forum to discuss the future of Astoria's riverfront. The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing future change with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history. To facilitate and organize the vision, the project team developed a four-area concept that recognizes the traditional makeup of the area and some distinct differences between subareas within the riverfront planning area. The four areas include the Bride Vista, Urban Core, Civic Greenway and Neighborhood Greenway areas.

The community forum was the final public meeting before the draft Riverfront Vision Plan goes to the Planning Commission and City Council for further review and adoption. Forum participants had the opportunity to view a series of displays and record their comments. The displays sought feedback on several recommendations related to:

- Natural features
- Land use and urban design
- Transportation and other public improvements
- Implementation measures

This document summarizes comments made on each of these topics. The results of the community forum will be considered along with a variety of other information in revising the draft Vision Plan.

### **General Comments**

- Work to implement the Riverfront Vision Plan quickly, including zone changes and code amendments. (3)
- Set a height limit and don't allow variances or bonuses. (2)
- Continue the River Trail to the south side along Youngs Bay.
- Continue to deal with the derelict buildings to clean up the downtown.
- Create design review standards to include with expanded historic review for all new waterfront buildings.
- Do not include financial issues as a hardship in granting variances.
- Do not allow wind turbines along the riverfront.
- Incorporate historic review along the river.

- No more condominiums.
- Secure more of the leaseable DSL land than currently available to public entities to preserve the Civic Greenway and Neighborhood Greenway areas.
- Work on aquatic zone uses that are reasonable to do.

## **Bridge Vista**

### General Comments

- Bring back passenger train service to/from Portland – for the bicentennial.
- Concentrate development in the Bridge Vista zone. Get rid of edge/subrural feel here (i.e., seedy motels, parking lots, empty lots, more parking lots, concrete).
- Create parks, green areas, open spaces wherever possible.
- Height/location restrictions should be an integral part of this plan – without something substantive or concrete coming out of this process it will be ineffective in achieving its stated purpose – providing a plan/vision for the riverfront. Otherwise it is simply a box checking exercise.

### Land Use and Urban Design

- Define “gateway.”
- Every tourist town on the coast puts up these tacky murals; we don’t need more murals.
- What is a “node?” Use a different term and generally use simpler language.

### Building amenities and height bonuses

- Keep development south of River Trail.

### Transportation Opportunities

- Why consider realignment of River Trail and trolley (#6)?

## **Urban Core**

### General Comments

- Amend the code to facilitate the plan and community desires.
- Be sure public access piers extend beyond new/potential development (e.g. 5th Street condominium construction blocks view from 6th Street Pier).
- Keep the views.
- Keep working waterfront idea; prevent more condominiums.
- Look at inconsistencies in zoning – overwater zoning should reflect urban core character. If we are looking for residential/commercial and tourist-related urban core, then why have Aquatic zoning over the water?
- Plan for area along 202 (Youngs Bay).
- Portion of breakwater washing out under railroad track during winter storms.
- Strengthen criteria to minimize height variances.
- Too much potential for overwater development that is not water-dependent.

### Land Use and Urban Design

- The area from 11th to 12th Streets is the last chance for central downtown to connect to the riverfront.
- Yes to outboard extensions between 11th and 12th Streets.

### Building amenities and height bonuses

- Keep development south of the River Trail.

## **Civic Greenway**

### General Comments

- Small playground; nautical theme. (2)
- Bathrooms in train station.
- Limit development on the riverfront to footprint of existing structures and/or historical record of once existent structures.
- More green space and park like areas (like Eugene's Willamette riverfront).
- Need affordable workforce housing.
- Revitalize train station.
- Use thoughtful design review to prevent all buildings from looking exactly the same and allow for contemporary architecture that honors the historic without just mimicking it.

## **Neighborhood Greenway**

### General Comments

- Public art. (2)
  - Public art would do what exactly?
- Extend riverfront path around Smith Point along Young's Bay to Tide Point.
- No wind turbines in Alderbrook.
  - Why no wind turbines in Alderbrook?

## **Implementation**

### General Comments

- Extend Riverwalk around point to include south slope residents and to encourage safer walking and bicycling for all.
- Forge ahead with implementation of the Riverfront Vision Plan – do not let it be another plan on the shelf.
- More stringent height limits without bonuses.



## Leasing issues summary



# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Astoria Riverfront Leasing Issues Summary

**Question:** *What is the Astoria Quitclaim Act and where does it apply.*

**Answer:** The Astoria Quitclaim act is a law passed by the State Legislature in 1969 that allowed Clatsop County to transfer title to private property owners for certain areas within City limits of Astoria that were created (i.e., filled) before May 28 1963 and within the city limits on June 13, 1969. The act only applies to land that was filled by artificial means at this time and to improvements on such land. The act and ability to transfer title did not apply to wharves, docks, piers, marinas, bridges, quays or other structures protruding above the high water mark or to land that was submersible or submerged (under water) as of May 28, 1963.

**Question:** *Who owns the land under the water?*

**Answer:** Any land that was submerged or submersible (under water) on May 28, 1963 continues to be owned by the State of Oregon and managed by the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL). Private property owners who have improvements (i.e. docks, structures) in these areas may own the improvements but do not own the land.

**Question:** *Who has the ability to use the land over the water?*

**Answer:** Anyone can apply for a lease to use land over the water out to the bulkhead line, pier line or channel. However when someone applies for a lease, DSL is required to offer the submerged taxlot holder, or a person/entity having the legislative right through the Astoria Quitclaim Act, the “first right of refusal” to lease the property for the same purpose. In some cases, there is a different “wharf right” associated with the parcel and the upland owner does not have first right of refusal. In either case, tax assessor data should specify the property owner with first right of refusal. If person/entity having the legislative right chooses not to apply for a lease, DSL must offer the opportunity to lease the land through a competitive bidding process.

**Question:** *How does DSL determine what can be done with land over the water?*

**Answer:** Use of over-water areas has to be compatible with local Comprehensive Plans and zoning ordinances. As part of any leasing process, DSL reviews the proposed use for compliance with local regulations. DSL also must consider Public Trust principles in reviewing leasing decision for submerged and submersible lands. These include the principle that the general public has a right to fully enjoy these resources for a wide variety of public uses including commerce, navigation, fishing, and recreation. If multiple leasing applications are submitted, DSL determines which application is preferable and may consider factors other than revenue since these are trust lands.

**Question:** *Do other community members have any say in how property is leased?*

**Answer:** In reviewing leases, DSL provides notice to public agencies and adjacent property owners within 200 feet and considers their comments along with other leasing criteria.

**Question:** *Are leases for an indefinite period of time?*

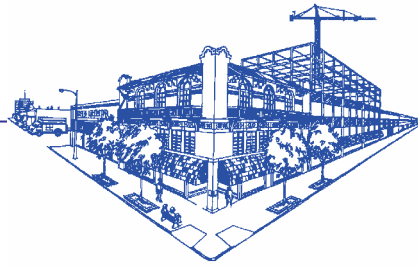
**Answer:** No. Leases are for a specified period of time and must be renewed consistent with local and statewide regulations, including compatibility with local land use requirements.



# Condo/market assessment memo

# E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC

Economic and Development Services



## MEMORANDUM

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To: Matt Hastie, Cogan Owens Cogan  
From: Eric Hovee  
Subject: Condominium Market Potentials for Astoria Riverfront  
Date: July 3, 2008

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As part of the Astoria Riverfront Visioning process, two questions have been raised as topics for discussion from an economic market feasibility perspective:

- What is the long-term market potential for condominium development along the Columbia River riverfront in Astoria?
- To what extent can market demand for ground floor commercial (especially retail) be expected to fill ground floor space of mixed use development projects along the riverfront?

The first question is the primary topic addressed by this overview assessment. The answer to this question also likely shapes market based options for addressing the second question.

Topics covered by this review of market potentials are organized to include:

Approach to Riverfront Condo Market Assessment  
Review of Current Market  
Strengths & Weaknesses of Riverfront Condo Development  
Riverfront Residential Demand Scenarios  
Shaping Riverfront Residential Potentials  
Ground Floor Commercial with Mixed Use  
Summary Observations

Supplemental data tables are attached as an appendix to this memorandum.

## APPROACH TO RIVERFRONT CONDO MARKET ASSESSMENT

This review of Astoria riverfront condominium potentials involves both quantitative and qualitative assessments. While quantitative information (regarding such items as condo pricing and number of units built or sold) provides a useful indicator, dependence on current and historical trend data alone does not tell the whole story.

This is especially the case in the current market environment which has changed dramatically in less than a year's time both locally and globally. It is also true for Astoria, which was only just starting to experience surging demand with condo development before the real estate market downturn.

Consequently, a qualitative as well as quantitative approach is taken with this market review. Our goal is to look beyond the current real estate market to the fundamentals of demand that can be reasonably expected to drive local, regional and even global residential demand for the next 10-20 years. And this review is intended to look beyond the conditions that have characterized the Astoria and Clatsop County economy over the last 20-30 years – to better address both demonstrated and as yet emerging opportunities just over the horizon.

Resulting key steps involved with this market review of condominium potentials for Astoria's riverfront have included:<sup>1</sup>

- Background review of recent trends in the Astoria residential market (together with contacts involving a selected sampling of property owners and developers active in the Astoria market) – focused on condo development and including comparisons to the experience of other selected coastal communities.<sup>2</sup>
- Qualitative assessment based on this firm's experience with emerging condominium and mixed use development – both in the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere in the U.S.

## REVIEW OF CURRENT MARKET

As background information for this review, E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC has compiled pertinent statistical data describing demographic and economic trends within the Astoria and Clatsop County areas together with supplemental information as readily available regarding residential and condo development. Detailed data tables are provided as an appendix to this memorandum. What follows are findings most pertinent to this assessment of condominium potentials for the Astoria Riverfront

### *Astoria Population & Demographics:*

- The population of Astoria has been relatively flat since 1970 – in the range of 10,000 residents while population county-wide has increased by about 31% county-wide. This means that demand for *net added* housing in Astoria is now largely dependent on smaller households or non-permanent (i.e. seasonal or vacation) residential use.

- However, with stronger local economic growth than has been the case for some time, there now appears to be greater opportunity for net population growth in Astoria as well as county-wide in the years ahead. For example, Clatsop County Department of Community Development projections indicate that in-city population could increase by as much as 18% (or by more than 1,780 residents) between 2007 and 2020.
- As might be expected, average household size in Astoria is now relatively low at about 2.23 residents per unit – below comparable figures for the entire county and state of Oregon. However, after a long period of decline nationally, household size is now projected to remain more stable in the years ahead – due to factors including in-migration and increased cost of housing (forcing more doubling up and residential sharing).
- At just under \$41,700 per household as of 2007, median income in Astoria is 9% below Clatsop County and 19% below the statewide comparable figure. However, the national demographics firm ESRI projects that median incomes may increase by about 18% over the five years from 2007-2012.
- With a median age of 38.6 years, average age of population in Astoria is younger than the rest of the county, but older than for the typical resident statewide. While most areas of the state are expected to experience an increase in median age over the next several years, ESRI projects that Astoria's population may actually trend to a slightly younger resident. This would suggest opportunities for more housing geared to younger adults and families in the years ahead.
- Compared to the rest of the state, Astoria and Clatsop County are less diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. Relatively high proportions of Astoria residents tend to have some college training. The proportion with a bachelor's degree or better is above that of the entire county but below comparable proportions statewide. Trends toward higher levels of education are often aligned with interest of adults ranging from young professionals to empty nesters for more urban, attached residential options.

### *Economic Trends:*

- Job information is most readily available on a county-wide basis – which coincides with typical *commute sheds* of workers in the Astoria area. After a considerable period of time of declining and relatively stagnant employment, a solid pattern of job growth has been experienced in recent years. Employment county-wide has increased at an annual rate of 1.5% per year from 2001-2006.
- As of 2006, there are an estimated 16,560 jobs in Clatsop County paying an average annual wage of about \$29,400.
- Job growth has occurred across most but not all sectors in recent years, but especially for construction. The sectors that have experienced some loss in employment are wholesale trade and government. If continued, this across-the-board pattern of job growth (extending beyond the lower paid retail service sectors) bodes well for overall housing demand and likely interest in greater diversity of housing product for the years ahead.
- Finally, it is noted that sources of income in Clatsop County are less tilted toward wage and salary income than is the case statewide. In contrast, relatively high proportions of income come from proprietors (small business owners) and transfer payments (as with

retirees). Investment income has declined as a proportion of the total income mix both county- and state-wide.

### ***Residential Development:***

- Building permit data indicates that approximately 37 residential units per year (of all types) have been permitted in Astoria over the 2003-2007 time period – at a relatively steady pace each year. Astoria accounts for about 14% of all residential units permitted county-wide.
- Multi-family developments (of 5+ units) account for over one-third (38%) of total residential construction permitted. However, the pace of development is more uneven (with all units permitted in 2005 and 2006). If averaged over the full five year period, the normalized rate of production appears to be about 14 units per year. Astoria accounts for almost half (49%) of all multi-family constructed county-wide.<sup>3</sup>
- Data has been compiled from the Real Estate Multiple Listing Service covering more than 130 *attached housing* units on the market for sale in Astoria and neighboring communities as of May 2008 – including townhomes and condominiums. The *typical* condo or other attached unit on the market is relatively generously sized at two bedrooms and two baths with more than 1,200 square feet of living area and built in 2004.
- Median asking price is \$392,500 (or \$320 per square foot). Average asking price is somewhat lower (at \$363,200 per unit or \$297 per square foot).
- Seaside continues to dominate the Clatsop County market – accounting for more than 80% of attached housing listings on the market – but with the lowest average price of all the communities for which listings are indicated.
- In Astoria, the typical unit is somewhat smaller in terms of bedrooms but generously sized in terms of total square footage. Average asking price is \$366,500 or just under \$300 per square foot, with the typical unit having been built very recently (in 2005).
- Finally, some comparison of asking prices as of May 2008 has been made with pricing for similar units about 3-1/2 years earlier (in December 2004). On a per square foot basis, per square foot asking prices are up by anywhere from 80% to more than 130% above conditions four years earlier. While the market is now softer than just one year ago, this longer trend indicates continued strong interest in attached housing product compared to what has been experienced historically in Clatsop County as well as throughout Oregon.

This review suggests that market conditions are moving into place to support continued if not accelerated development of varied attached housing products in the Astoria market. While the pace of development has been relatively modest and somewhat episodic to date (due in part to project sizing that may require longer absorption), attached housing product nonetheless already appears to be accounting for well over 1/3 of housing development in Astoria.

Condo units are priced at rates supportive of new construction for low-mid rise (wood or steel frame) product, perhaps less well so for more urban (concrete) construction. For Astoria, recent developments have occurred *in lumps* of 30-40 units each. However, anticipated pricing for

condo units built over the water can be expected to be higher than what Astoria has experienced to date – potentially requiring sales pricing in the range of \$400 - \$500+ per square foot.<sup>4</sup>

***Current Astoria Development Activity.*** Information from the City of Astoria regarding additional attached homeownership housing developments in Astoria indicates a total of 212 condominium and townhome housing units currently under construction or with zoning approvals complete or pending. If all of these units are built as currently proposed, the added residential inventory would exceed the combined number of single-family, plex and multi-family units that were permitted for construction in Astoria from 2003-2007.

This project listing includes 186 condo units (involving five projects) and 26 townhomes (two projects). Three of the proposed projects (totaling 89 condo units) are planned for riverfront locations.

### **Possible Astoria Condominium & Townhouse Projects**

#### *Under Construction:*

- S 42 7th Street - Chester Trabucco - 4 condos above commercial
- S 39th & Abbey Lane - Urban Pacific - three buildings with 93 condo units; first building complete; second building under construction; third building approved but no building permit yet
- O 1133 Franklin - Dave Freeman - conversion of 11 multi-family apartments into 6 townhouses
- S Foot of 29th Van Horn property - Adam Dion - 20 Townhouses - infrastructure complete, buildings under construction; final subdivision plat to APC 4-22-09

#### *Zoning Approvals Complete - No Building Permit:*

- W 10 Columbia - 15 condos plus 5 time share
- W 1 - 6th Street - 30 condos; to start decking/piling this winter 2008-2009

#### *Proposed Projects with Zoning Applications Pending - No Building Permit:*

- W 101 15th Englund Marine site - 44 condos in planning stage with architect; Measure 37, conditional use and variance pending decision following LUBA remand

W - Indicates riverfront location

S - Indicates shoreland location

O – Other

Source: City of Astoria, April 2008.

Not all of the projects identified will necessarily go to construction in the near future – due both to permitting issues (in some cases) and the current slowdown in the residential market. However, this listing indicates that, despite the current housing mortgage market crisis, the long-term fundamentals for urban housing multi-family housing look extremely promising. If

anything, it would not be surprising to see attached product in Astoria move up toward 50% or more of new in-town residential construction as the housing mortgage market recovers in the years ahead.

This transition toward more urban multi-family development appears especially promising. High-amenity communities are being discovered not just as good places for a second home or retirement, but as desired environs for younger residents (both native and newcomer) to plant roots and prosper. While multi-family development has been considered as primarily a rental market in years past, attached housing product in the future can be expected to offer an increased array of home ownership options.

## STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF RIVERFRONT CONDO DEVELOPMENT

Based on our understanding of condominium and mixed use development throughout the Pacific Northwest plus the prior review of current Astoria area market data, we would offer the following summary assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the Astoria riverfront for condo development. This listing notes strengths and weaknesses assessment from both national/global and local/regional perspectives.

### Summary Strengths & Weaknesses of Astoria Riverfront for Condo Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>National/Global Perspective:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong demographic fundamentals – aging baby boomers <i>plus</i> footloose quality of life migrants (including lone eagles)<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depth of current real estate downturn – impacting the condo market with potential lasting changes to financing availability</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proven ability of condos to support higher per square foot pricing than other urban uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater volatility of condo real estate – especially in emerging markets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appeal of riverfront locations – supporting more aggressive sales pricing &amp; absorption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for urban services in small town locations – including health care for aging boomers</li> </ul>
<i>Local/Regional Perspective:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to build out over the water – an uncommon Oregon riverfront opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher cost of developing on/over the water &amp; on constrained sites – requiring top-of-market residential pricing<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A different coastal experience – sheltered from direct ocean-front weather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long-term property maintenance issues – requiring owner association funding for reserves</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking convenience of revitalized downtown – with dining &amp; shops <i>plus</i> nearby medical &amp; community college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflicting expectations of diverse owners – residents/newcomers, older/younger, permanent/short term, working riverfront</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authentic small town, historic lifestyle – in Oregon’s first city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Question of <i>community fit</i> for new residents – both short &amp; long-term</li> </ul>

Source: E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC.



While the economic *crystal ball* is perhaps more murky now than just a couple of years ago, our assessment is that the demographic fundamentals in favor of urban living remain strong – and will likely gather added impetus over the next decade. Market demand coupled with political pressures will overcome both short and longer term effects of credit tightening – although underwriting standards can be expected to be more rigorous than was the case just 1-3 years ago.

Demand increasingly will spill over from major metro areas to smaller communities offering substantial amenity value. This is increasingly the case in the Pacific Northwest which offers the combination of national urban mixed use pacesetters in Portland and Seattle with desirable smaller market yet increasingly sophisticated and even urbane small town venues – such as Ashland, Bend, Walla Walla, Wenatchee, and Astoria.

Places committed to authenticity and sustainability will fare the best – in terms of market interest, pace of absorption and pricing. Integrating old and new in a manner that is socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable poses perhaps the greatest challenge – especially in a community with the rich historic and scenic resources of Astoria.

## RIVERFRONT RESIDENTIAL DEMAND SCENARIOS

Because urban scale (including riverfront) residential began to generate strong interest in Astoria just as the national housing market was peaking, it is challenging at this time to reliably predict future riverfront residential demand (or absorption) over the next 10-20 years. Major variables affecting riverfront residential demand will include rapidity and extent of housing and mortgage market recovery, continued economic prosperity of the Pacific Northwest, and Astoria's perception as a high amenity residential/mixed use community versus other alternative locations regionally.

***Alternative Scenarios.*** Three alternative riverfront housing demand scenarios are identified for purposes of comparison and discussion:

- *Baseline demand* (supporting less than 10 added riverfront residential units per year) – assuming continued county-wide total housing production averaging less than 300 units per year combined together with maintenance of existing capture rates by Astoria of the county-wide housing market and recently indicated multi-family and riverfront capture of the in-town total residential market. With this relatively modest level of demand, residential developers will essentially be choosing between relatively up-scale townhome type projects with construction timed to actual sales or larger (20-40 unit) condo projects accompanied by the resulting expectation of potentially long (2-4 year) periods of time to sell-out each multi-family project.
- *Mid-level demand* (supporting in the range of 15-20 riverfront units per year) – also assuming stable county-wide housing demand but an increased market share for multi-family and riverfront residential in Astoria. With this higher level of Astoria-focused demand, absorption periods could run in the range of 1-2 years for per riverfront condo project (assuming one major project actively on the market at a time).
- *Strong demand* (with absorption ramping up to 40-50+ units per year) – predicated on increased county-wide housing demand and substantially increased capture by Astoria of

the county-wide permanent and seasonal home market combined with multi-family coming to represent the dominant form of new construction in Astoria and riverfront development the #1 location for new multi-family in-town residential product. With this level of demand, the Astoria riverfront conceivably could support 1-2 new riverfront projects per year, with each project selling out in a time frame of about 18 months or less. This absorption scenario assumes not only strong regional and local demand but active City and community support for riverfront residential development (as further outlined in later sections of this memorandum).

***Density of Development.*** Depending in part on the level of market demand experienced, three different types of residential product can be envisioned as reasonable options for Astoria riverfront development:

- *Townhomes* – of 2-3 stories including garage parking at densities of between 12-18 units per acre (assuming that ground floor commercial retail use is not directly required). Units would need to be priced at top of the market, especially if built over the water. Project financial feasibility for extensive over-water development will prove challenging.
- *Low-Rise Townhomes or Condo Flats*– with 2-3 stories of residential over some component of ground floor commercial use and at least a partial level of structured parking – to accommodate residential demand and a portion of commercial retail need. Resulting residential density would be in the range of about 30 units per acre. From a financial feasibility perspective, this development type allows cost of building over the water to be spread over more units and also satisfy a mid-demand scenario. However, it is uncertain whether the unit count would prove adequate to assure feasibility for more complex riverfront sites; the retail requirement may also dampen feasibility at non-prime locations.
- *Mid-Rise Condos* – with about four stories of residential over ground floor commercial and parking levels, achieving densities in the range of 60 units per acre. This development type does the best job of covering the over-water development costs, but would only be viable in a strong market environment with active City and community support – including determination of locations appropriate for higher building heights.

## SHAPING RIVERFRONT RESIDENTIAL POTENTIALS

The market opportunity for condominium development along Astoria's riverfront can be shaped by local public policy and planning in a variety of ways. Some approaches could serve to incent and others to slow or limit development. Yet other approaches might not impact the market in terms of number of units supported, but could affect the character of the resulting development:

- ***Design guidelines that assure public access and view corridors including through key rights-of-way or street corridors.*** This could have the effect of limiting height of construction or length of single building developments – with fewer units per structure. Design guidelines may, in some cases, also serve to limit development feasibility. If the guidelines calling for uniformity of design were applied across the full length of the riverfront corridor, the result could also be a less interesting and less marketable riverfront residential area.

- ***Design guidelines offering a baseline allowed scale of development but with bonus provisions to increase density at targeted locations in exchange for public amenities.*** Examples of amenities for which added height or density might be allowed include special provision for public access or view corridor protection, construction and/or management of public open space or riverfront amenities, provision of a full complement of ground floor commercial space, affordable housing development, and limitation of on-site parking.

While these provisions can generally be expected to increase cost of development, they may also provide opportunity for improved project feasibility and greater marketing appeal – with more diversity of residential product. Added height may be required in some cases for project feasibility, as a means of spreading the high cost of building over the water across more residential units.

Highest density of riverfront development may be most appropriate closest to downtown – complementing the already built environment. From a public perspective, diversity in scale of development can yield a more interesting riverfront, albeit requiring conscious planning decisions about which portions of the riverfront are most suitable for varied types and scales of development.

- ***Encouragement of diversity of housing product – in terms of types of units provided, historic and contemporary design character.*** In addition to condos, other housing product types to encourage include 2-3 level townhomes, lofts, live/work units, and for rent apartments (ranging from luxury market rate to consideration of subsidized/affordable). Greater range of product mix can serve to reduce developer risk of overbuilding to any one market segment. A more diverse residential mix also may offer opportunity for more existing Astoria residents to live on the riverfront.

For Astoria, a particular challenge may be to determine the degree to which design for new development should reinforce or contrast with the community’s already in-place historic building fabric. The ability to offer contemporary design that emulates but adapts historic themes (often in bold or non-traditional ways) can serve to generate added market interest – as has been demonstrated in urban areas from Europe to the U.S. For sale residential will be important to generate the per square foot value necessary to support rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse.

- ***Assuring compatibility of residential development when in proximity to public or industrial uses.*** The Astoria riverfront contains a high proportion of publicly owned land and industrial use (or vacant land) – especially to the west and east of the downtown portion of the riverfront. Special design considerations may be appropriate to assure compatibility of these uses when adjoining residential is developed, especially in situations where retaining a working riverfront remains an important public policy priority for the Astoria community.
- ***Reduction of on-site parking need via public riverfront trolley and shared parking opportunities.*** In any urban development project, reducing the amount of costly structured parking required can improve financial feasibility – so long as minimum thresholds needed for market acceptability are met. There is the potential to target trolley service not only to visitors but to riverfront residents – if trolley service can be operated at headways and with stops convenient to new residential locations.

This combination of residential and visitor use may serve to improve trolley patronage and offer a more lively mix of day and evening activity. Encouragement of shared parking – as between retail, office and residential – can also make it more possible to reduce the dedicated residential requirement to, say, one space per unit, while allowing evening / weekend use of commercial parking spaces for added residential and guest parking.

- ***Concurrent priority on downtown core as well as riverfront residential.***

Introducing more housing (in the form of building renovation and new construction) into the existing downtown core will help to further broaden Astoria's appeal as a place to live, not just visit, and to maintain a healthy level of competition between the downtown and riverfront.

Achieving financial feasibility for downtown residential development is also challenging, though opportunities are likely greatest if there is a mix of market rate and affordable housing provided. Downtown retail and service businesses can benefit from introduction of more residential directly in the core – from the perspectives of added year-round business patronage, day and night activity, and interaction between riverfront and downtown residential neighborhoods.

- ***Offering flexibility for ground floor use of residential development.*** For project financial feasibility, it always makes sense to incorporate commercial retail and/or service space if market demand can be demonstrated. This is especially true when commercial uses are paying rents supporting higher construction costs at ground level than what residential may support and helping create the mixed use *buzz* that draws buyers to a condo project. The reverse is also the case. Requiring commercial use at fringe locations where there is no demonstrated market can dampen overall project feasibility or result in unused ground floor space. Financing of mixed use is also often challenging, especially for developers or lenders with little mixed use experience. Optional approaches to this question of ground floor activity are further considered in the section that now follows.

## GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL WITH MIXED USE

As noted at the outset, a second topic for market input is the question of the extent to which ground floor commercial should be required mixed use residential (as with housing above commercial space). Ground floor retail is often viewed as important to the urban riverfront mix, bringing added economic vitality and better assuring broader public access to the riverfront area. However, requirements for exclusive ground floor retail use can prove counterproductive – sometimes generating unintended consequences.

Three observations are noted as potentially pertinent to this discussion for Astoria's riverfront:

- ***Ground floor commercial use is best situated at locations where clear market demand can be demonstrated.*** Retail space demand can be expected to be strongest for sites within easy walking distance of the downtown core and also for potential major destination locations with highly visible locations and capacity for abundant parking. As one moves along the riverfront away from the downtown core,

retail demand is likely to be more spotty – with best opportunities at corner locations and at sites readily accessible via major street corridors with views to the water.

- ***Prescription of 100% ground floor designation for retail space with mixed use development can yield unintended consequences – even in very urban settings.*** In situations where residential project feasibility is already questionable, the requirement for ground floor retail may cause a project not to proceed to construction. Even when construction occurs, the developer may look for ways to minimize the cost impact of having to build for retail at a site where demand is questionable.

Issues with ground floor retail in a residential development range from retail/residential conflicts as with concerns ranging from noise at late hours to persistent odor (especially with some restaurants).<sup>7</sup> Vertical separation also can increase project cost – whether to provide the added ceiling heights at ground level retail use or to meet code requirements as for fire safety.

Neighborhoods close to downtown Seattle such as Queen Anne that were required to provide retail with early phase mixed use developments experienced the situation of strong condo demand (above ground) but difficulty filling the ground floor space at less than prime locations. The result was a combination of high vacancies and subpar uses at ground floor ranging from unfinished retail space to temporary offices to storage.

Portland’s Pearl District has more recently encountered similar issues as high rise residential development proceeds north toward the Fremont Bridge and away from existing retail *hot spots* near Hoyt and Couch Streets. Project developers have experienced lower rental rates and more difficulty filling retail spaces – with the resulting recommendation to target other active ground uses at subprime retail locations.

- ***A broader range of options are available to achieve the goals of mixed use vitality a well used riverfront.*** Examples of other uses to consider at less intense retail locations include ground floor office, townhomes, live/work space, community or public uses, and/or provision of retail in an adjoining stand-alone commercial building rather than directly on-site. Where there is the opportunity for long-term transition to retail as the market strengthens, it may also make sense to design the space with future retail in mind, for example, by providing for higher floor to ceiling heights at the ground level.

Bottom line, a flexible approach to ground floor commercial use with mixed use riverfront projects is strongly suggested for consideration. Projects most likely to proceed to construction and prove sustainable over time are those that respond to demonstrated and always changing market demand while also respecting broad public planning guidelines rather than overly prescriptive regulatory requirements.

## SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

In summary, the following three observations are offered for consideration as part of the Riverfront visioning process:

- Like other high amenity smaller communities in the Pacific Northwest, Astoria is proving to be increasingly desirable as a place for urban residential development – including rapidly expanding interest in the riverfront. While there is a bit of a current market lull today, even more robust opportunities may be presented in the years ahead as the market rebounds.
- Costs of developing on the riverfront are relatively high – requiring pricing to a more upper end clientele and thereby reducing absorption below what would otherwise occur. Higher price points also likely reduce opportunities to attract local buyers, meaning that a greater proportion of units will be purchased by second home owners and new residents to Astoria.
- Key factors affecting development feasibility can include costs of piling, preservation and adaptive reuse, parking, height of development allowed, and ground floor retail requirements. These are all factors that the City of Astoria can influence to some degree – consistent with the adopted Riverfront Vision and subsequent implementation.

E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC appreciates the opportunity to provide this review on behalf of the City of Astoria and welcomes questions regarding any aspect of this market assessment report.

## APPENDIX. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Figure 1. Population Trends & Forecast (1970-2020)

Year	Astoria	Clatsop County	State of Oregon
1970	10,244	28,473	2,091,385
1980	9,998	32,489	2,633,105
1990	10,069	33,301	2,842,321
2000	9,813	35,630	3,421,399
2007	10,045	37,440	3,745,455
2010	10,649	38,376	3,843,900
2015	11,205	40,018	4,095,708
2020	11,826	41,788	4,359,258

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1970-2000), Portland State University Population Center (2007), and Office of Economic Analysis for the Clatsop County Department of Community Development (2010-2020).

Figure 2. Demographic Trends (2007-2012)

	City of Astoria	Clatsop County	State of Oregon
Households (HH)			
2007	4,298	15,432	1,461,068
2012	4,367	15,952	1,560,770
Average Household Size			
2007	2.23	2.33	2.51
2012	2.22	2.32	2.51
Median HH Income			
2007	\$41,694	\$45,804	\$51,735
2012	\$49,050	\$53,188	\$60,975
Median Median Age			
2007	38.6	42.6	37.8
2012	38.3	44.1	38.7

Source: ESRI.

Figure 3. Population by Race & Ethnicity (2007)

2007 Population by Race/Ethnicity	City of Astoria	Clatsop County	State of Oregon
Total	9,901	37,028	3,752,734
White Alone	89.1%	91.9%	84.4%
Black Alone	0.8%	0.6%	1.7%
American Indian Alone	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%
Asian or Pacific Islander Alone	2.7%	1.7%	3.9%
Some Other Race Alone	3.5%	2.2%	5.5%
Two or More Races	2.8%	2.5%	3.3%
Hispanic Origin	8.1%	6.1%	10.5%

Source: ESRI.

**Figure 4. Population 25+ by Educational Attainment (2000)**

2000 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment	City of Astoria	Clatsop County	State of Oregon
Total	6,641	24,069	2,250,998
Less than 9th Grade	4.1%	3.6%	5.0%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	10.2%	10.9%	9.9%
High School Graduate	26.1%	29.0%	26.3%
Some College, No Degree	28.8%	30.1%	27.1%
Associate Degree	9.1%	7.3%	6.6%
Bachelor's Degree	14.1%	12.6%	16.4%
Master's/Prof/Doctorate Degree	7.6%	6.5%	8.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI.

**Figure 5. Clatsop County Employment Trends (2001-06)**

Industry	2001			2006			Avg Ann % Chg 2001-06		
	Firms	Jobs	Avg Wage	Firms	Jobs	Avg Wage	Firms	Jobs	Avg Wage
Total All Ownerships	1,457	15,338	\$25,333	1,583	16,556	\$29,394	1.7%	1.5%	3.0%
Natural Resources & Mining	80	463	\$30,584	65	460	\$36,450	-4.1%	-0.1%	3.6%
Construction	160	698	\$28,809	184	1,005	\$35,418	2.8%	7.6%	4.2%
Manufacturing	62	2,124	\$43,692	61	2,121	\$51,745	-0.3%	0.0%	3.4%
Wholesale Trade	32	173	\$30,248	36	137	\$41,725	2.4%	-4.6%	6.6%
Retail Trade	256	2,169	\$19,913	274	2,469	\$23,074	1.4%	2.6%	3.0%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	55	325	\$38,356	49	328	\$46,133	-2.3%	0.2%	3.8%
Information	23	177	\$27,013	22	176	\$28,698	-0.9%	-0.1%	1.2%
Finance & Insurance	43	248	\$29,401	44	275	\$36,954	0.5%	2.1%	4.7%
Real Estate Rental & Leasing	60	191	\$17,336	59	213	\$18,856	-0.3%	2.2%	1.7%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Svcs	61	(c)	(c)	79	(c)	(c)	5.3%	(c)	(c)
Management of Companies	2	(c)	(c)	2	(c)	(c)	0.0%	(c)	(c)
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt & Remediation Svcs	50	308	\$12,060	60	421	\$27,627	3.7%	6.5%	18.0%
Education	9	51	\$18,143	13	80	\$15,675	7.6%	9.4%	-2.9%
Health & Social Assistance	111	1,581	\$27,600	120	1,714	\$33,319	1.6%	1.6%	3.8%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	26	243	\$18,067	28	259	\$18,656	1.5%	1.3%	0.6%
Accommodations & Food Services	217	3,046	\$12,679	245	3,368	\$14,769	2.5%	2.0%	3.1%
Other Services	140	609	\$13,697	153	656	\$16,253	1.8%	1.5%	3.5%
Private Non-Classified	7	3	\$4,182	2	(c)	(c)	-22.2%	(c)	(c)
Total All Government	65	2,683	\$29,508	91	2,586	\$32,663	7.0%	-0.7%	2.1%
Federal Government	15	178	\$41,123	17	176	\$49,831	2.5%	-0.2%	3.9%
State Government	19	409	\$34,164	25	422	\$30,840	5.6%	0.6%	-2.0%
Local Government	31	2,096	\$27,613	49	1,987	\$31,546	9.6%	-1.1%	2.7%

Source: Oregon Employment Department.



**Figure 6. Sources of Personal Income in Clatsop County & State of Oregon (1996-2006)**

Income Type	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<i>Clatsop County</i>											
Wage & salary income	42%	41%	41%	42%	42%	42%	40%	40%	42%	42%	42%
Supplements to wages & salaries	10%	9%	9%	10%	9%	10%	11%	13%	11%	11%	11%
Proprietors income	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%
Investment income	24%	24%	24%	23%	24%	22%	21%	20%	19%	18%	19%
Transfer payments	17%	17%	17%	18%	17%	19%	19%	18%	19%	19%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Per Capita Personal Income	\$20,769	\$21,648	\$22,590	\$23,340	\$24,214	\$24,560	\$26,027	\$27,167	\$27,178	\$28,155	\$29,571
<i>State of Oregon</i>											
Wage & salary income	46%	47%	47%	48%	48%	48%	46%	46%	47%	47%	47%
Supplements to wages & salaries	10%	10%	10%	11%	10%	10%	12%	13%	12%	11%	11%
Proprietors income	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Investment income	23%	22%	23%	21%	21%	20%	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%
Transfer payments	14%	14%	13%	14%	13%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Per Capita Personal Income	\$23,398	\$24,469	\$25,542	\$26,480	\$28,097	\$28,518	\$28,931	\$29,565	\$30,621	\$31,599	\$33,299

Source: *Regional Economic Accounts*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

**Figure 7. New Privately-Owned Residential Building Permits in Astoria (2003-07)**

Year	Description	Building Type				Total
		Single-Family	2 Family	3 & 4 Family	5+ Family	
2003	Buildings	25	0	0	0	25
	Units	25	0	0	0	25
	Construction cost	\$4,032,227	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,032,227
2004	Buildings	14	0	0	0	14
	Units	14	0	0	0	14
	Construction cost	\$2,924,801	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,924,801
2005	Buildings	26	0	0	1	27
	Units	26	0	0	41	67
	Construction cost	\$5,534,741	\$0	\$0	\$2,686,000	\$8,220,741
2006	Buildings	27	0	0	1	28
	Units	27	0	0	30	57
	Construction cost	\$6,572,864	\$0	\$0	\$4,651,612	\$11,224,476
2007	Buildings	21	1	0	0	22
	Units	21	2	0	0	23
	Construction cost	\$5,128,506	\$320,243	\$0	\$0	\$5,448,749
Total 2003-2007	Buildings	113	1	0	2	116
	Units	113	2	0	71	186
	Construction cost	\$24,193,139	\$320,243	\$0	\$7,337,612	\$31,850,994
Avg Annual 2003-07	Buildings	23	0	0	0	23
	Units	23	0	0	14	37
	Construction cost	\$4,838,628	\$64,049	\$0	\$1,467,522	\$6,370,199
% of Total 2003-07	Buildings	97.4%	0.9%	0.0%	1.7%	100.0%
	Units	60.8%	1.1%	0.0%	38.2%	100.0%
	Construction cost	76.0%	1.0%	0.0%	23.0%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Figure 8. New Privately-Owned Residential Building Permits in Clatsop County (2003-07)**

Year	Description	Building Type				Total
		Single-Family	2 Family	3 & 4 Family	5+ Family	
2003	Buildings	202	4	2	0	208
	Units	202	8	8	0	218
	Construction cost	\$34,709,847	\$912,992	\$516,749	\$0	\$36,139,588
2004	Buildings	205	2	8	2	217
	Units	205	4	32	19	260
	Construction cost	\$48,660,567	\$233,000	\$3,259,508	\$2,789,720	\$54,942,795
2005	Buildings	227	2	2	1	232
	Units	227	4	8	41	280
	Construction cost	\$52,166,772	\$527,833	\$782,200	\$2,686,000	\$56,162,805
2006	Buildings	240	4	4	3	251
	Units	240	8	16	84	348
	Construction cost	\$64,042,458	\$1,164,375	\$1,312,088	\$25,564,612	\$92,083,533
2007	Buildings	214	1	0	0	215
	Units	214	2	0	0	216
	Construction cost	\$60,617,400	\$320,243	\$0	\$0	\$60,937,643
Total 2003-2007	Buildings	1,088	13	16	6	1,123
	Units	1,088	26	64	144	1,322
	Construction cost	\$260,197,044	\$3,158,443	\$5,870,545	\$31,040,332	\$300,266,364
Avg Annual 2003-07	Buildings	218	3	3	1	225
	Units	218	5	13	29	264
	Construction cost	\$52,039,409	\$631,689	\$1,174,109	\$6,208,066	\$60,053,273
% of Total 2003-07	Buildings	96.9%	1.2%	1.4%	0.5%	100.0%
	Units	82.3%	2.0%	4.8%	10.9%	100.0%
	Construction cost	86.7%	1.1%	2.0%	10.3%	100.0%

Note: Clatsop County data includes all of the cities in the county and the unincorporated area.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Figure 9. Summary of Attached Housing Units Listed For Sale (May 2008)**

	Bedrooms	Baths	SF	Pricing	Price/SF	Year Built
Median (all)	2.0	2.0	1,216	\$392,500	\$320	2004
Average (all)	2.1	1.6	1,208	\$363,216	\$297	1999
Averages by City:						
Astoria	1.5	1.5	1,278	\$366,500	\$299	2005
Cannon Beach	2.2	1.8	1,138	\$404,917	\$350	1994
Gearhart	1.9	1.9	1,061	\$393,773	\$374	1974
Seaside	2.1	1.6	1,231	\$358,986	\$283	2002
Averages by Year Built:						
Built pre-2000	1.8	1.7	959	\$354,023	\$384	1974
Built post-2000	2.1	1.6	1,275	\$365,691	\$274	2006
Averages by Property Type:						
Condo	2.0	1.6	1,137	\$351,393	\$303	1998
Townhouse	2.8	2.1	1,922	\$481,442	\$245	2005

Source: Real Estate Multiple Listing Service web site.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 10. Sample Condo Pricing for Comparable Units (2004 & 2008)

Type	Bedrooms	Baths	2004			2008			Year Built	City
			SF	Pricing	Price/SF	SF	Pricing	Price/SF		
Condo	1	1	627	\$152,900	\$244	627	\$275,000	\$439	1972	Gearhart
Condo	1	1	625	\$149,500	\$239	628	\$275,001	\$438	1973	Gearhart
Condo	Studio	1	600	\$95,000	\$158	250	\$110,000	\$440	1940	Seaside
Condo	2	2	1,120	\$250,000	\$223	1,200	\$549,500	\$458	1998	Seaside
Condo	2	2	1,120	\$220,000	\$196	1,200	\$549,500	\$458	1998	Seaside

Source: Broker data from phone contacts and web site review (December 2004) and Real Estate Multiple Listing Service web site (May 2008).

## END NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Information for this review has been obtained from sources generally deemed to be reliable. However, E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC does not guarantee the accuracy of information from third party sources. All data is subject to change without notice.  
  
The observations and findings provided with this report are those of the authors. They should not be construed as representing the opinion of any other party without prior express approval, whether in whole or in part.
- <sup>2</sup> Representative riverfront-related property owner and developer contacts were made as part of this overview assessment with Andrew Bornstein, Floyd Holcomb, and Chester Trabucco.
- <sup>3</sup> However, the reported average per unit permit value of multi-family constructed outside Astoria is almost double that of in-city construction.
- <sup>4</sup> Pricing information is based on representative contacts with Astoria area riverfront development interests and is consistent with pricing for high rise, urban condo development experience for concrete structures in the Portland and Seattle metro areas.
- <sup>5</sup> One property owner and developer contacted for this assessment noted that the buyers for riverfront condo units include local residents looking to or downsize and/or retire, second home purchasers and retirees coming from Portland, Seattle and San Francisco – including a component of dual income, no kid (DINK) buyers.
- <sup>6</sup> One source familiar with riverfront development indicated that cost of piling (before residential unit construction) are essentially equivalent to the full cost of development for a recently completed condo development just off the water. Another source stated that cost can be as much as \$150-\$200 per square foot of added over-water site area created.
- <sup>7</sup> Research by the economic consulting firm Johnson Gardner has found that some urban retail amenities – such as specialty groceries, cinemas, bookshops, wine shops and coffee shops have a positive impact on home pricing. Restaurants have a slightly positive effect. Proximity to other retail uses – such as music shop, bar, bistro or spa – can have a negative effect on nearby residential values. As cited by the article by Jerry Johnson, “Valuation of Urban Amenities,” PSU Center for Real Estate, *Quarterly & Urban Development Journal*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2008.
- <sup>8</sup> Studios are designated as 0.5 bedrooms for purposes of calculating average bedroom size.

This review of condominium market potentials for the Astoria riverfront has been prepared for Cogan Owens Cogan and the City of Astoria by the economic and development consulting firm *E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC*. Since 1984, E. D. Hovee has conducted real estate market and feasibility assessments together with economic impact analysis and strategic business planning for public agency, private and non-profit clients – primarily in the Pacific Northwest states of Oregon and Washington.

E. D. Hovee has been actively involved in the assessment of market opportunities for waterfront residential and commercial development in communities including Portland, Eugene, Hood River, Stevenson, Vancouver, Kirkland, Anacortes, Mount Vernon and Wenatchee. Outside the Pacific Northwest, the firm has conducted similar assessments in cities as diverse as Santa Cruz (California), Hannibal and St. Joseph (Missouri), and Fort Pierre (South Dakota).

This market review has been prepared by Eric Hovee (Principal) and Andrea Logue (Research Coordinator).



## **Parking plan outline**

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## PARKING DISTRICT APPROACH

The following information outlines steps needed to create a parking management district for Astoria's urban core area or any other portion of the study area. Parking management districts are areas in which parking supply and rates are regulated to accommodate necessary parking, promote alternative modes of transportation, encourage attractive pedestrian-friendly urban design, preserve open space and improve air and water quality. Parking supply management strategies and pricing policies are designed to work together to enhance a community's economic development, attractiveness, convenience and quality of life.

### **Step 1: Define the Problem**

Engage stakeholders in a process to define the problem and establish a set of parking management goals, objectives and evaluation criteria. Stakeholders should include elected officials, business owners and residents among others.

### **Step 2: Assess the Situation**

*Conduct a parking inventory.* The inventory will identify the existing supply of parking in detail. It includes detailed counting and mapping of public, private, on-street and off-street parking spaces. This could be conducted in large part by community volunteers and staff with targeted assistance from consultants, if needed. There are a couple of guidebooks that could be used for this effort *Parking Management Made Easy: A guide to Taming the Downtown Parking Beast and Main Street* and *when a highway runs through it: A Handbook for Oregon Communities*.

*Assess parking demand.* An assessment of parking demand refers to the amount of parking that would be used at a particular time, place and price. Parking demand is affected by factors such as trip rates, mode split, duration and geographic location of land uses within the study area. There are usually daily, weekly and annual demand cycles. An adequate parking supply provides sufficient parking in a particular place at a particular time. The demand analysis should address both existing and future projected conditions based on development or redevelopment potential.

*Analyze the results of the inventory and demand assessment.* If the occupancy rate of all parking spaces is more than 85 percent, parking congestion is likely to occur. This should be done on a block-by-block basis as well.

### **Step 3: Review and Refine Parking Management Strategies**

Management strategies can be refined to strengthen the system. Review and refine strategies to meet the local vision, goals and objectives identified in the first task. Strategies can be required through local zoning ordinances or voluntary measures implemented in partnership with developers on a project-by-project basis. Zoning ordinances should reflect local demand and circumstances, including proximity to transit, surrounding land uses, demographics and prospective users. Parking management strategies are most effective when efforts to control supply are implemented concurrently with efforts to reduce demand. Consider a wide array of strategies, including:

### Parking Supply Strategies

- Reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements
- Establishing parking maximums and area-wide parking caps
- Requiring or encouraging shared parking
- Investing in transit or other alternative modes of transportation
- “Unbundling” parking requirements from specific sites or uses
- Implementing pricing strategies

### Parking Demand Strategies

The following factors should be considered when developing parking management strategies:

- Policies may create unintended spillover problems.
- Consider the incremental costs and benefits of policies, including costs to consumers, businesses, neighbors and the environment.
- Evaluate policies in terms of overall transportation and land use objectives.
- Consider who pays for the strategy and who benefits.

Specific issues in the Riverfront area to consider also would include:

- Site-specific parking needs for different types of businesses or residential development
- Opportunities to establish one or more centralized parking areas within a parking District
- Management procedures to ensure adequate parking to meet both daily needs and special events
- Relative cost savings for land owners and other community benefits associated with reducing minimum parking requirements and/or unbundling parking and associated uses

### **Step 4: Educate the Public**

Educate business owners and employees about the value of on-street retail-oriented parking to ensure that they are not using valuable parking spaces. Also educate community members about how the new requirements and policies are consistent with the objectives identified at the outset of the project as well as other community goals and policies.



# Stakeholder interview summary



# *Astoria* RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## **Summary of Stakeholder Interviews**

### **SUMMARY**

**May 6, 2008**

#### **BACKGROUND AND PROCESS**

The City of Astoria is working with the community to establish a sustainable riverfront vision that ensures equitable riverfront growth by balancing development with the desire to preserve Astoria's quality-of-life and connection to its unique history. This document summarizes stakeholder group interviews conducted as part of that project in March and April 2008. Matt Hastie and Steve Faust of Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC conducted interviews with ten groups organized by Astoria City staff. The groups included people who represent a wide range of interests, including riverfront property owners and developers, residents of adjacent neighborhoods, local business people, representatives of environmental, historic preservation and other groups. A list of participants is included at the end of this summary.

Each interview lasted for approximately an hour and covered the following topics:

- Most important issues facing the riverfront
- Areas along the riverfront that should receive the most focus
- Favorite example of good riverfront development
- Most important points for access to the riverfront from adjacent neighborhoods
- Where people spend time along the riverfront
- Other important issues to address

Results of these interviews will be considered along with a variety of other information in crafting a vision for the riverfront. This report should be considered as an important source of information about community opinions and desires but will be supplemented by and integrated with other types of feedback and data.

#### **OVERALL RESULTS**

Key recurring themes and issues identified in the interviews included the following:

- **Important issues** identified most frequently included the size and height of new buildings, maintaining public access (physical and visual) to the riverfront, access to adjacent neighborhoods, maintaining the authentic identity of the area (i.e., the “working riverfront”), parking issues, and the need to balance public goals with private property rights and investments.
- **Key areas for focus** most frequently cited included publicly owned properties, the Red Lion site, the Maritime Museum and plaza, potential future clusters of commercial development, and the idea of focusing urban uses to the west of the Maritime Museum and more open or natural areas to the east of it.
- **Good examples of existing development** most frequently cited include the Cannery Pier Hotel, Pilot House at 14th Street, Riverwalk, Red Building at Basin Street, Docks at 12<sup>th</sup>, Mill Pond and Pier 39.
- **Key access points** identified most frequently were 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- **Places people spend time most often** cited are Pier 39, the Riverwalk both to the east and west of the Maritime Museum and plaza, Maritime Memorial, and 6<sup>th</sup> Street viewpoint.

A wide variety of additional comments were provided related to other important issues to consider during the process. Following is a more detailed summary of responses to each question. Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of groups that discussed each issue.

## DETAILED SUMMARY

### 1. *What is the most important issue facing the riverfront?*

- Concern about heights of new buildings; public views (7), including the following types of views and perspectives:
  - Views from highway
  - Views along the riverfront
  - Views from roads leading downhill towards the riverfront and hillside neighborhoods
  - How allowed building height affects the ability to develop sites economically
  - Views are part of the town’s history
- Public access to river (7), including visual and physical access and the following comments:
  - Integrate public access with private development (2)
  - Create as many public spaces as possible
  - Destroy pile beds to prevent future development
  - Prohibit any more in-water construction
  - Encourage condos away from riverfront
  - Have development step-down toward the river
  - Retain historical two-story scale of riverfront
  - Don’t allow the Riverwalk to become disconnected from the river
- Accessibility (6), including the following issues:
  - Connection between downtown to the riverfront (4)
    - Signage to and from riverfront (4)
    - Plantings
    - Pavement treatments at intersections
    - Loop Riverwalk through downtown; connect future riverfront residents to downtown businesses to strengthen downtown economy (3)
    - Retain and enhance previous investments in the Riverwalk which has become a very important community asset

- Maintaining an authentic, working riverfront (7), including the following comments:
  - Variety of uses (4)
  - Not touristy (“We Ain’t Quaint”)
  - No bollards or other treatments
  - Support economic development and creation of jobs in the area
  - Maintain gritty edges
  - Allow for and encourage river-dependent uses; don’t overbuild housing and retail uses
  - Retain and support the eclectic, unique, variety of businesses and activities, including those that represent what’s left of the working riverfront (e.g., Pier 39, River and Bar Pilots, Fishhawk Fisheries, East Mooring Basin, 14<sup>th</sup> Street businesses, Port facilities and fueling dock)
  - Identify the right mix of uses
- Balance community values and visions with the property rights and investments of property owners (4), including the following issues:
  - Apply regulations consistently
  - Recognize high cost of development in riverfront area and provide support or incentives for development that responds to city goals; city should partner with developers and property owners rather than be adversaries
  - Use residential development on riverfront to provide market to support downtown businesses
  - Department of State Lands (DSL) lease procedures are adversely impacting riverfront property owners and City and represent change in traditional leasing policies
  - Balance preservation with thoughtful development
- Lack of parking (4), including the following specific issues or observations:
  - Lacking especially for motorhomes and other large vehicles
  - Tourists often use private parking spaces
  - Two-hour parking helped, but City converted to monthly parking (City-owned property adjacent to trolley line)
  - Cannon Beach is a good example with public parking lots and signage
  - Do not want multi-level parking
  - Inadequate parking in some places (e.g., 14<sup>th</sup> Street on-street parking) but too much required for new developments – inconsistent requirements among different parts of the city and makes it difficult to develop economically
  - Need an overall parking management plan for the whole city, including the riverfront area
- Coordinate land use with transportation

**2. What areas along the riverfront should receive the most focus in this project?**

- City-owned properties as opportunities for public or civic uses or amenities (2)
  - Focus on city-owned properties to meet public needs instead of private properties
  - Area near Maritime Museum, city yards and others
- Red Lion site (2)
- Provide continuity
  - Locational kiosks/walking tour maps (2)
  - Art (2)
  - Rain park (2)
  - Fitness stops
  - Interpretive signs

- Commercial clusters which could be developed near downtown and at or near Pier 39 (2)
- Plans for Maritime Museum and adjacent area should be incorporated into the vision (2)
- More intensive urban areas (i.e., west of Maritime Museum) vs. more open areas (i.e., east of Museum) (2); consider as a way to organize uses along the riverfront and prioritize where development of specific types of uses or improvements might occur
- Key viewsheds, viewpoints and iconic images (e.g., bridge, Astor column, etc.)
- Need to finish the Riverwalk from 11th Street west
  - Repair planks
- Conditions in some areas make over-water development less feasible (e.g., lack of existing pilings, hydrological conditions and depth of water)
- Activate both sides of the Riverwalk in upland areas
- Extent of study area should include Port property at west end of riverfront
- Consider development of marina in future

### **3. *Identify your favorite example of good riverfront development.***

- Cannery Pier Hotel (4)
- Pilot House at 14th Street (3)
- Riverwalk (2)
- Red Building at Basin Street (2)
- Docks at 12<sup>th</sup> (2)
- Mill Pond (2)
- Pier 39 (2)
- Reuse of old buildings
- Maritime Museum
- Mural on back of Sears
- Pier 1
- Murase Waterfront Plan – encouraged space between buildings
- Trolley
- Astoria Warehousing
- Gillnet boat at 17th Street
- Alderbrook Lagoon
- East Mooring Basin
- Bornstein project at Pier 2
- Riverfront development in other communities (e.g., Savannah, GA, Stevestown, BC, Portland, OR and Scandinavian countries)
- Maintain unique variety of buildings/development
- Architectural symmetry important
- Consider design review to maintain high quality of development

**4. What are the most important points for access to the riverfront from adjacent neighborhoods?**

- 10<sup>th</sup> Street (3)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Street (4)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Street (3)
- 14<sup>th</sup> Street (2)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Street
- All roads/public rights-of-way that provide access to riverfront
- Trolley stops
- Maritime Museum
- Safeway
- Maritime Memorial
- Red Lion area
- Sunset Empire Transportation Hub
- Cannery Pier Hotel
- Improve safety of Riverwalk
- Paying for increased public access will be a challenge
- Need to better utilize side streets for access and parking

**5. Where do you spend time along the riverfront?**

- Bumble Bee Factory (3)
- Riverwalk to east of Maritime Museum (2)
- Riverwalk to west of Maritime Museum (2)
- Maritime Memorial (2)
- Maritime Museum and plaza (2)
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street viewpoint (2) (and points west)
- Megler Bridge
- East Mooring Basin (including sea lions)
- East of 39<sup>th</sup> Street (very open, peaceful character)
- Boatyard at west end of riverfront
- Old Bornstein's at 7th Street area (due to history of use)
- Safeway site
- Beaches (near Museum and Holiday Inn)
- Cannery Cafe

**6. Are there any other issues that are particularly important to address in the riverfront vision?**

- Abandoned buildings are an eyesore (3)
- Some buildings need cleaning and upkeep (3)
  - Small business loans

- Code enforcement
- Old Texaco; Union Oil dock at 1st Street; Red Lion (3); NW Natural Gas; Railroad station;
- Public process is important (3)
  - Transparent
  - Parameters
  - Need to see results
  - Educate about in-water leases; pile beds
  - Articulate process and outcomes
- Don't need more retail spaces; competes with downtown (3)
  - Don't become Warrenton – Wal-Mart; Home Depot (2)
  - Truncate downtown to create a smaller, but stronger commercial district
  - Requirement for ground floor retail unnecessary and counterproductive in many parts of riverfront; create retail clusters instead
- Recognize changing nature of riverfront (3); don't freeze in time
- Partner with business and property owners in this study and in future riverfront use and development (2); provide more active role in planning process given that they will be most directly impacted by study results
- Consider positive impacts of development over time (2)
  - Good development draws people to riverfront
  - More residential development will strengthen adjacent downtown businesses
- Riverwalk needs lighting for safety
- A public dock adjacent to downtown could bring in boaters/tourists
- Riverfront needs public restrooms
- Kid-friendly parks/activities along Riverwalk
- Don't lose historic icons
- LNG terminals will change landscape of riverfront
  - Tanker traffic; armed gun boats
- Sunday Market along 12<sup>th</sup> to riverfront as covered mall
  - Boardwalk from 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Review other studies
  - Safeway study (Crandall Arambula)
  - AVA/artists
  - Retail space survey
- More attention to architecture of new buildings
- Maintain natural resource base; remove non-native plants
- Entire city should be included in study area; how one end of city affects the other
- Study area should include Port properties at west end
- Concentrate development in already-developed areas
- Quality development
- Protect public asset
  - Building code is easy to exploit
  - Re-write code
  - Transferable development rights
  - Design review and guidelines

- Riverfront for different demographics
- Would public purchase riverfront properties to preserve them? Consider public purchase if the City wants land used for a different purpose than what zoning allows.
- Encourage development south of railroad tracks
- Holiday Inn Express has more welcoming feel than condos (doesn't feel like you are looking into someone's living room)
- Area in front of Holiday Inn feels hemmed in
- Fire, life and safety issues affect economics of development
- Warrenton "pull" factor will continue to weaken downtown businesses until the City makes it easier to develop new buildings and re-use existing buildings downtown
- Use City investments in public facilities and improvements to leverage private investment downtown and along the riverfront
- Need to understand status of trolley line rail access; City just has easement and property owners have ability to regain control and use of right-of-way
- Points where shorelines jogs or curves create opportunities to see River and bridge; pay particular attention to proposed development in those locations
- Given slow population growth, fears about a wall of development along riverfront would not be realized for a very long time
- Denser development in riverfront area will reduce need for developable land elsewhere
- More development in downtown would have more significant impact on hillside views than development over the water
- Create flexible parking requirements in riverfront area
- Need to recruit the right mix of retailers to Astoria
- Need community-wide visioning process
- Astoria suffers from lack of air service
- Establish fees to help pay for public improvements for development that exceeds requirements
- The Trolley line is a great asset for visitors and residents
- Limit number of variances which can be approved in riverfront area
- Consider use of form-based codes in riverfront area to provide more flexibility related to allowed types of uses
- Uniqueness in area important to overall quality of life
- Opportunity for National Heritage Area designation which could present opportunities; don't do things that would jeopardize that designation
- Avoid building something that competes with the largest existing building in Astoria
- Create interpretive opportunities to provide information about shipping activities
- Review LUBA decision related to constraints on approval of certain types of development in historic areas
- Water-dependent uses – kayak, boat, cruise ships, water trail
- Highway location – reroute/bypass?



# Steering Committee Meeting summaries



**Astoria Waterfront Vision  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Saturday, March 29  
MEETING SUMMARY**

Steering Committee Members: Dave Pollard, Al Tollefson, Steve Fick, Erinie Atkinson, Mark Cary, Blair Henningsgaard,.

City Staff: Paul Benoit, City Manager; Brett Estes, Community Development Director; Rosemary Johnson, Planner; Sherri Williams, Assistant

Consultants: Matt Hastie and Steve Faust, Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC; Paul Pawlowski, SERA Architects; Jim Figurski, GreenWorks PC

Brett Estes thanked the steering committee members for volunteering their time and gave an overview of the public involvement process including public forums and stakeholder interviews.

There were some questions about ownership of properties over the water. City staff and the consultant team will meet with a representative of the Department of State Lands, as needed to clarify ownership issues and create an updated land ownership map.

There was a question about the availability of population projections. Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC recently completed a buildable lands inventory for the City of Astoria that includes the most recent population projections. City staff can make those documents available to committee members if they would like.

Matt Hastie described the upcoming public forum in greater detail. The first part of the forum will consist of a PowerPoint presentation that provides a history of the waterfront, begins to summarize existing conditions and lists opportunities and constraints. During the second portion of the forum, participants will discuss opportunities and constraints in small groups. Steering Committee members may be needed to help facilitate group discussions. The consultants will produce a guide to help facilitators.

The rest of the Steering Committee meeting was dedicated to a site tour by trolley and boat. The purpose of this site tour is to begin to identify opportunities and constraints. The list generated during the site tour will be supplemented by comments stakeholder interviews and the community forum.

Each Steering Committee member was given several maps of the waterfront study area and a digital camera to take photos. The consultant team brought additional maps and took notes throughout the tour. The tour began on the western edge of the study area near Pier 1 and terminated at Pier 39.

## **Opportunities and Constraints**

- The Port was awarded a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation to examine pedestrian circulation. The study looked at connections from the Maritime Museum to the Red Building and Cannery Pier Hotel, west around the bulkhead and through Port property to Pier 3. The study is in its beginning stages. HLB and Otak have started a public involvement process. The timeframe for construction is summer of 2009.
- An Urban Renewal District was created in 2002. Crandall Arambula is working with the Port on a Transportation Improvement Plan for the area.
- The lease for the Red Lion lease expires in 5 years providing the Port and the City with a potential opportunity for redevelopment.
- Condominiums have been approved on the old cannery site east of Holiday Inn Express.
- The Port is looking at a parking plan for the area. There are not enough spaces and they are not well marked. The City and Port tenants say there are not enough spaces at the Port end of the waterfront.
- Port parking is leased to the Red Lion Hotel and the East Mooring Basin.
  - The Red Building has enough parking by code. The property to the east is used for overflow parking and a future lawn/event space.
  - The esplanade deck has a public easement. No construction can exceed four feet between the Red Building and the Maritime Memorial.
  - There are plans for the Port/URD to create a new street on either side of the railroad tracks in this general area. The City owns the 500-foot railroad track right-of-way ("rail-banked") from Smith Point to Tongue Point.
- There are two vacant parcels under private ownership with access from Marine Drive.
- The only direct access to the Columbia River in this area is the beach near the Maritime Memorial.

### Columbia Street Stop

- A condominium project (WNAO) is proposed on pilings. This parcel is zoned for commercial use. The proposed three-story, 45-foot tall building would have transient lodging on the first floor with residential above. Access from Columbia Street is an issue.
- Taller buildings often block the Riverwalk from sunlight.
- Astoria Canning located near city drainage is used for warehousing and sits on 4-6 acres. Zoning in this area allows for commercial uses with residential above and a 45-foot height limit.
- The Columbia House property is vacant. Ownership is in dispute.

### 6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Streets

- Pedestrians share space with the trolley
- The Bornstein plant moved to the Port property. Condos are proposed for the site, but permits were withdrawn to allow the vision process to take place first.
- #10 6<sup>th</sup> Street has a city park viewpoint through a public/private partnership and maintenance agreement.
- The Blue building holds state offices and is privately owned.

- Pedestrian connections are needed across the highway in this area.
- Bornstein historic building = 4 condos.
- Fish processing plant where public can watch processing happen is considered both an economic resource and an attraction for residents and visitors.
- A new Chinese park is in development at 10<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Buildings between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets contain dental and attorney offices.
- DSL owns over-water properties. Upland property owners have a first right of refusal from DSL to develop and lease the areas over the water.
- Pier 11 – red building renovations include a day spa.
- The dock on 12<sup>th</sup> is about 10 years old and an early public/private partnership example.
- Significant pedestrian activity occurs between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets: Astoria Ferry, Elliot Hotel, Safeway and downtown are all close by. The Sunday Market is located in on 12<sup>th</sup> Street in the spring and summer months.
- The River Pilots building is near 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Building entrances are within the trolley right of way. The River Pilots access the river at 14<sup>th</sup> Street. The building includes spaces leased to a restaurant, offices, a coffee shop. This area lacks strong connections to downtown.
- The Old Englund Marine Supply is located at 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The site is proposed for condominiums (45 units) with a building height of 35 to 45 feet. The decision to approve the development is under review at LUBA.

### Maritime Museum

- The wayfinding element looking west from museum (“polask”) is an example of something that could be replicated in other areas of the waterfront. It was proposed as part of a larger wayfinding system in the Astoria Waterfront Study (Murase Plan).
- People Places Park (city park) is located just west of museum and south of trolley tracks.
- Shoreline ballast rocks comprise the “Chinese Wall.”
- In the 1920s, a fire destroyed much of the area; the new city was built over the old. The unique construction has led to potential historic designations; purple glass squares allow light into tunnels below the streets formed by “chair walls.”
- This area includes the moorage for the US Coast Guard, transport and tour boats.
- The Riverwalk needs more lighting east of museum.
- Nearby attractions south of the highway include: Aquatic Center, Heritage Museum, Astor Keys Theater.
- Gateway urban design area goes from 16<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- The Maritime Museum owns the old train station.
- The City owns property between the train station and Mill Pond.
- City Lumber plans to expand its operations in this area.

### Mill Pond

- The development includes single-family homes senior housing, planned multi-family housing with commercial ground floor. Some are second homes; others are primary homes. The City adopted a new zoning district in this area to conform to the proposed character of the development, not vice-versa.
- Townhomes orient to street, are alley loaded and those on the edges face the Riverwalk.
- The Netshed building houses local artists; the 3rd floor saw significant damage in the recent (December, 2007) storm.

### 30<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> Streets

- City public works shops offer redevelopment opportunities; the combined fire and police department also located nearby.
- The private property to the east has been sold for condo development. It is slowly being cleaned up.
- Safeway and the East End Mooring Basin are located in this area. Other uses include the small customs house, Comfort Suites and parking for mooring basin, baseball field and a school.
- Connections to the Uppertown Neighborhood are relatively poor.
- The trailer parking site is being redeveloped and a hotel is proposed. Developers of that site are pursuing height variance from 28 to 48 feet.
- Existing condominiums are 55 feet in a zone with a 45-foot height limit (based on a variance). The existing building is the first of a proposed three phases. The second phase (more condos) is under construction. This project ignited concerns about scale, style, and design review.
- Pedestrian improvements on the Riverwalk are planned west of Pier 39
- The lagoon is used for mitigation and fish habitat.

### Shore Bank Enterprise Cascadia Presentation

- Shorebank Enterprise Cascadia is a nonprofit; capital resource for Astoria
- Shorebank has provided capital for several projects in Astoria, including Mill Pond, Uniontown Café, Pier 39 and many others
- Shorebank also has been instrumental in helping the City secure a potential grant from the Ford Foundation (the city is currently a finalist in the application process). The application is for \$125,000 over three years for GIS software to aid the community in visualizing change. The project will help the community understand how neighborhoods, waterfront and downtown may change physically and socially. “Human Development Overlay District (HDOD.)” Some key community themes include:
  - “Keep Astoria for Astorians.”
  - “Save the best of Astoria for the most of Astoria.”
  - “Combine old and new economies.”
  - “A place you can still fall down and get hurt.”

### Consultant team observations included:

- Design review can work in an area like this.

- We could think about the future scale of development by visualizing the “ghost volumes” of past development.
- In some areas along the Riverwalk, structure for protection from the elements would be beneficial.
- Publicly-owned pieces of property provide opportunities.
- Investigate ODOT/Port plans related to circulation improvements.
- There is the potential for additional wayfinding elements (e.g., polosk at Maritime Museum).
- The waterfront includes many interesting places, but they are disconnected and provide poor connections to downtown in some areas.
- There are a number of possible imminent development projects on the pile fields.
- Permitting processes impose constraints in some areas.
- The visual relationship to the water through the north/south streets is important.
- There are issues with sunlight and shade along the waterfront that could be exacerbated by additional development.
- How to keep Riverwalk authentic for residents is a big issue and important to the community.
- The idea of a working waterfront is important.
- Astoria is genuine and beautiful; it is on the cusp of being discovered.
- The size and scope on the river is critical.
- The challenge is how to generate change with positive plan.

Steering committee discussion included:

- Maintaining the working waterfront is very important.
- Agree with the need for better connectivity.
- Concerned about isolating waterfront due to more development.
- Maintain access to the Riverwalk for pedestrians.
- Need to enforce the development code/zoning ordinance (e.g., allow for fewer variances).
- Don’t want the Riverwalk to be a carnival or too touristy.
- Keep it for the people of Astoria, but still “user-friendly.”
- The area is disconnected from the water in some areas; don’t make this situation worse.
- Consider clustering, back-stepping, land banking to address issues associated with development/heights.
- Think about special nooks along the waterfront.
- Create small spaces for small groups of people to enjoy.
- Don’t want the Riverwalk to become a barrier to the waterfront.
- Need restrooms.
- Keep it rough around the edges.

**Astoria Riverfront Vision  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, May 20th  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Participants**

*Steering Committee Members:* Ernie Atkinson, Mark Cary, Michelle Dieffenback, Steve Fick, Elizabeth Grant, Blair Henningsgaard, Kurt Englund, Dave Pollard, Al Tollefson,

*City Staff:* Paul Benoit, Brett Estes, Rosemary Johnson

*Consultants:* Matt Hastie, Cogan Owens Cogan

**Introductions and Status Report**

Brett Estes welcomed committee members, including new member Kurt Englund who has replaced former City Councilor Joyce Compere (who recently moved). Matt Hastie gave a brief status report, noting that city staff and the consulting team have accomplished the following activities to date:

- Initiated the project, including refining the scope of work and budget
- Conducted the first Steering Committee meeting, including a tour of the project area by trolley, foot and boat
- Collected and reviewed background materials, report and planning documents (an ongoing task)
- Conducted the first Community Forum at the Red Building on April 9
- Conducted a series of stakeholder group interviews
- Begun summarizing existing conditions in maps and memos, including land use, land ownership, community resources, zoning requirements and other topics

**Community Forum Summary**

Matt summarized results of the community forum and stakeholder group interviews. He reviewed general observations from the meetings included in summaries prepared for both activities. Those summaries are available on the City's Web site and/or by request from City staff. Matt asked Steering Committee members for their reactions or comments, which including the following:

- People really like the interactive nature of the meeting. It is important for everyone to have a chance to participate. If you conduct small group discussions at future meetings, make sure you give someone at every table a chance to speak during the small group report.
- A group of riverfront property owners convened a meeting after the forum and asked Steve Fick to relay some of their comments and concerns to the Steering Committee. They include the following:

- Some owners (e.g., Poplin & Bornstien) identified wish list of desired changes in city requirements for development at their sites or others along the riverfront such as higher buildings, ability for more residential use and lower parking requirements.
- Some owners are satisfied with what they have in terms of development potential or requirements.
- Liability issues are important to a number of property owners, as are safety issues (e.g., at the Astoria Warehouse) associated with potential conflicts between the trolley and pedestrians with forklifts, or other activities essential to their businesses. There also are concerns about theft, vandalism, fire, etc. as more people use the area.
- George Brough sees the opportunity for a park to on the north side of his property.
- Some property owners do not have any plans for over-water development (e.g., at the Maritime Museum).
- Some property owners (e.g., Steve) are still considering their options and don't have any specific plans for improvements but may be interested in additional development in the future.
- Generally, there is a mix of different desires and plans in terms of additional future development.
- The property owners want to continue to be involved in the project and have the opportunity chance to communicate their concerns to the committee.
- There is a significant expense associated with demolition of existing buildings (e.g. Bornsteins).
- There are differences in what type and extent of development is feasible at different locations based on piling location, depth of water and bedrock, etc. Some areas over the water may be less feasible or much more costly to develop than others.
- The property owners' conversation raises many valid issues and points to some of the reasons people are concerned about this process and issues associated with development along the riverfront.
- There is concern by some community members that the city won't enforce its own codes. There is a perception that they will grant any variance or adjustment that is proposed. Appreciate open approach, danger of stakeholder system. Be careful about how information from different activities is weighed.
- When thinking about changes to development requirements, don't expect property owners to give something up without compensation. It is important to respect the investment that property owners have made.
- Most people were pleased with the way the forum went. The acoustics during the comments could have been better. One of the questions people asked was whether there will be plan in place before too many decisions are made about development proposals. That would be an important question to be able to answer.
- We are not seeing enough support for the commercial fishing industry by the city and other decision-makers and groups in the area.
- More residential development in the riverfront could help increase opportunities for economic development in both the riverfront and downtown areas.

- Continued support for maritime-related uses is important (e.g., the bar and river pilots, maritime museum and fishing-related businesses).
- Variances could be an important tool in meeting community objectives related to development, view protection and other issues.

## **Vision Principles**

Matt reviewed a draft set of Vision Principles prepared by the consulting team and staff and based primarily on results of the community forum and stakeholder group interviews. He noted that they are an initial attempt to synthesize key issues and principles voiced by the community and form the foundation of the Riverfront Vision to be created during this project. They will be available for review and comment by community members via the City Web site, the next community forum and other venues. Comments and suggested changes and additions from committee members included the following:

- This is a good, comprehensive list. It represents a good start. It is general in nature but helps frame the issues.
- Expand the “working waterfront” principle to talk about generally supporting and enhancing the city’s economy.
- Include references to safety and maintenance issues associated with the riverfront.
- Clarify direction related to the more specific ideas as you receive more public comment.

## **Existing Conditions Draft Maps and Report**

Matt noted that the consulting team and staff are working on a draft set of maps that describe existing conditions in the riverfront area related to land use, land ownership and community, natural and historic resources. The maps are being prepared by the consultants with staff and Steering Committee input. Because there was not adequate time to review the maps at the meeting, Matt suggested that maps be made available to the committee members for review via e-mail or in person with staff before the forum and subsequently updated as needed. Comments and questions included the following:

- There are unresolved issues associated with ownership for a number of parcels in the area, particularly associated with overwater areas. It is important that the city doesn’t endorse the state’s position on those ownership issues if we don’t necessarily agree with them. We should either note where there are unresolved issues or include some sort of disclaimer on the map about this issue.
- Have you talked about whether or how to build a 3-D model of the Riverfront that could be used to show allowable building heights in different zones or for other purposes?  
Response: We have talked about doing some 3-D modeling for specific sites to show impacts of development on different types of views. We don’t have the resources to build a model like that for all the existing buildings on the riverfront but haven’t talked about whether we could do it for different zoning districts.
- Is there any logic to the pattern of height restrictions along the riverfront?
- There was some logic to them at some point. They are related to different zoning designations and the types of uses that are appropriate within those zoning districts. Over time, there have been a variety of zone changes in this area. The zoning requirements



have carried the height requirements along with them. As a result, there isn't any specific logic to the overall pattern we have today.

## Community Forum #2 Agenda and Approach

Matt reviewed a proposed draft agenda and approach for the next community forum. It will be an open house with stations related to the following:

- **Automated presentation(s)** that will run continuously and provide information about the project to date.
- **Opportunities and constraints map** that people can draw and/or place post-it notes on.
- **Building scale** exercise that allows people to show desired shapes and sizes of buildings for one or more proto-typical (generic) sites along the Riverfront using lego building blocks.
- **Photo Boards** with different types of development or other improvements to generate ideas and determine preferences. Participants will be invited to bring in photos of development or planning documents they have seen and like in other places.
- **Land Use 101** describing existing planning requirements and processes.
- **Existing conditions maps** related to land ownership, land use, and historic, natural and community resources.
- **Vision principles** with an explanation of how we drafted them and a way for people to indicate their agreement with them and/or comments or additions.

Steering Committee generally supported the agenda and proposed exercises. Additional comments and suggestions included the following:

- Give people the opportunity to see the presentation shown at the first community forum.
- Place the big Opportunities and Constraints Map over tables instead of on the floor (as originally discussed).
- Give Steering Committee members more information about the stations and an opportunity to identify the ones they would like to help staff.
- Be sure and notify people well in advance about the opportunity to bring their own photos.

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Steering Committee – Meeting #3

Thursday, July 10, 2008

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Shorebank Offices, Pier 39

Conference Room

### SUMMARY

#### Status Report

Matt Hastie, project planning consultant, reviewed the tasks that have been completed to date, including:

- Two steering committee meetings
- Two public forums
- Existing conditions maps
- Opportunities and constraints map
- Draft Riverfront Vision Principles

The next steps in the process are for the consultant team to work with the Steering Committee to develop several elements of the vision in greater depth and gather additional feedback from the community. The current schedule calls for the Steering Committee to meet again in August and September before the third community forum.

#### Community Forum Results

Matt Hastie gave a summary of the results at each station and asked Steering Committee members to add any observations they made during the forum. The focus was on common themes, areas of agreement or disagreement, and how results relate to a future riverfront vision. Overall, Steering Committee members felt the forum was successful. Approximately 75 people attended and stayed for most of the forum. It was good to see many informal discussions take place.

#### Opportunities and Constraints

Some common themes came out of the opportunities and constraints map, including:

- Maintain physical and visual access to the riverfront

- Improve pedestrian safety across Hwy 30 using streetscaping/landscaping, traffic calming techniques and pedestrian bridges
- Extend the Riverwalk to the east and west
- Rehabilitate historic buildings for new uses
- There are differing opinions regarding what type of development should take place along the riverfront in terms of jobs versus residential versus parks and open spaces.

### Building Mass

The building mass station was well-attended. People typically stayed for approximately 30 minutes and completed both activities. The vast majority of people laid out the required parking first and then tried to organize the building around the parking, but soon removed the parking entirely to create the development form they wanted and tried to fit the parking in later. Some people felt constrained by the shape of the Legos. Common themes include:

- Vary height and massing to provide views, air, light, and public access through the sites
- Cluster buildings and use “towers” or concentrated massing to free up ground space for public common areas and to create better site lines to the river
- Create public open space and connections to northern edge (river’s edge) of the site
- Use glass as a building material to provide visual access through building foyers
- Orient retail spaces to the RiverWalk and edges of the site
- Frustration with the number of required parking spaces, particularly with its downtown context

Steering Committee members commented that participants found it difficult to meet all the requirements of the activity in the space provided and often asked to use less than the required number of Legos or requested variances. The exercise forced them to think about innovative ways to design sites given regulations.

### Development Design

Of the photos depicting waterfront structures, participants prefer small scale buildings (one to two stories), that are similar to existing structures (Cannery Pier Hotel, “Big Red,” etc.) and feature pedestrian-friendly ground floors. Of the photos depicting paths, parks and open spaces, participants prefer paths made of stone or wood, landscaping along paths (trees, grass), amenities such as lighting and benches and natural areas.

Steering Committee members questioned what conclusions can be drawn from this exercise. The consultants responded that a number of observations can be made based on the results of this exercise. The consultants will add some of these observations to the meeting summary. Steering Committee members recommended that the exercise be repeated at a future public forum with new photos that hone in on what we’ve learned so far.

### Existing Conditions

Participants at this station identified several areas that they liked, including:

- Basin Street to the Astoria-Megler Bridge
- Mooring basin near Portway Street

- Riverfront at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street
- Riverfront between 37th and 39th streets
- On Pier 39
- Western edge of the Alderbrook lagoon
- Parcels zoned for commercial uses between 31<sup>st</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for commercial use west of 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- “Big Red” and rehabilitation of historic buildings

Participants did not like:

- Condominiums east of 39<sup>th</sup> Street
- Condominiums along the riverfront between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for industrial use between Washington and 1<sup>st</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for commercial use between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> streets
- Parcels zoned for commercial use between 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> streets

Steering Committee members commented that people had strong opinions at this station. People did not like buildings with excessive heights or inappropriate design. For instance, participants do not like the condominiums east of 39<sup>th</sup> Street because of the design. A lot of time was spent explaining existing uses to people. Participants were most interested in public properties along the waterfront.

#### Vision Principles

A large majority of participants support all of the vision principles, including three that received unanimous support. It is believed that two principles did not receive unanimous support because they mention “a mix of uses” and “new development” and some residents are against any new development along the riverfront. Steering committee members would like to see the vision principles become more specific as they process moves along.

#### Land Use 101

Rosemary Johnson said that she received many questions about measures 37 and 49. She also had a number of conversations regarding Department of State Lands ownership along the riverfront. Many people were surprised to learn about the system of “first right of refusal” and that the parcels can be leased to a second party. Another popular topic was why and how the city grants variances. Many people see variances as a rubber stamp and are now more aware of the variance process and recognize that it is part of the city’s development code. Participants would like to see more criteria or stricter criteria for variances. There should be fewer variances and they should be more difficult to obtain. Participants also showed interest in the idea of height bonuses.

### **Proposed Committee Process for Meetings #3 to 5**

#### Steering Committee Meetings

Matt Hastie presented meeting topics for the current meeting and the next two Steering Committee meetings. The idea is to discuss one of three elements of the vision at each of these meetings. The topic for this meeting is natural areas and open spaces. The topic in August

would be land use and urban design. In September, the Steering Committee would discuss transportation, infrastructure and public improvements.

Meeting #3 = Natural resources and open spaces

Meeting #4 = Land use and urban design

Meeting #5 = transportation, infrastructure, public improvements

The Steering Committee agreed with this scope of work and would like to include opportunities for broader public input over the next few months.

### Public Outreach

Matt Hastie presented a number of possible public outreach activities to consider implementing over the next few months.

- The **City's web site** already contains a page for this project. We could post meeting materials and summaries and maps for review and comment by the broader public. The site could provide a link to community survey (if developed) and/or provide other opportunities to comment on work products or the project in general.
- A **public event** where Steering Committee members can hear what people are talking about regarding the vision process. Steering committee members commented that it is important to get feedback somehow from the community before the next forum since it is not scheduled until after September. The Steering Committee could present the work completed to date and take comments. They also could raise the level of awareness through radio discussion programs and articles/editorials in the paper or business journals. Topics could include what makes a "working waterfront."
- A third option would be to host **smaller events**, such as barbeque or coffee gatherings at people's homes. Steering Committee members could host them or the general public could volunteer to host. Smaller meetings were successful in the initial stages of this process and with land owners. This may be a way to allow more families with children to attend.
- Another opportunity would be to set up **community displays** in various locations around the city, such as the library, Coffee Girl, City Hall, etc. The displays could be paired with a project summary and questionnaire.
- A **survey** could be distributed through direct mail or made available at several locations throughout the city. In addition, the survey could be made available online through the City's web site. Steering Committee members inquired about the possibility of a scientifically accurate survey. Matt Hastie informed the Committee that this may be possible, but reminded them that scientific surveys come at a significant cost.

The Steering Committee decided to use multiple approaches to public involvement. The main effort will be to set up displays at various locations in the City and make a survey available at the same sites. The consultant team will attempt to develop an online survey as well. In addition, the Committee will make efforts to raise public awareness through the media, both radio and newspaper. Committee members could host small events if they are able.

### **Economic Market Feasibility Report**

Matt Hastie gave a brief overview of the Economic Market Feasibility Report from E. D. Hovee, focusing on the summary observations:

- Continued interest along the riverfront should be expected.
- Due to high costs of development along the riverfront, new residential development will attract an upper end clientele including second home owners and new residents.
- The City of Astoria can influence a number of key factors affecting development feasibility, including costs of piling, preservation and adaptive reuse, parking, height of development allowed, and ground floor retail requirements.

Steering Committee members commented that the perception that Astoria is a retirement community is inaccurate. Trends show that Astoria has a younger, more educated population than perceived. The Committee also commented on the possibility of encouraging more residential development in and around downtown as opposed to on the riverfront. The information in this report will help inform future discussions.

### **Vision Elements – Natural Resources and Open Space**

Jim Figurski of GreenWorks presented a map that highlights potential sites for open spaces or parks, key scenic viewpoints and possible landscaping treatments along the riverfront or other areas. The map's intent is to acknowledge the distributed character of Astoria's waterfront and take advantage of it. The concept consists of four zones from west to east:

1. Bridge Vista Zone – maintains an open vista along the waters' edge and has a focus on scale and "bigness."
2. Urban Core Zone – a relatively dense area that seeks opportunities for private spaces/nooks and crannies and physical access to the river. The zone includes managed views and corridors and incorporates elements such as benches and lighting.
3. Civic Greenway Zone – is an open area adjacent to residential neighborhoods, parks and schools. The zone should be an appropriate location for a civic waterfront park.
4. Neighborhood Greenway Zone – acts as a linear park to highlight the river's natural edge.

In the long-term, specific zoning designations and development code provisions could be tailored to each zone to guide future development. The City would define the character of each zone and determine what to promote and maintain, focusing on the relationship to the river.

The Steering Committee liked that the zones seem to come out of the existing character of the riverfront naturally. The zone near downtown is the urban core zone. The civic greenway zone has the most public land. The zones not only exist along the riverfront, but tie back into the neighborhoods. The Committee also felt that the zones and approach respond well to what a lot of community members have said they want to see along the riverfront so far during this process. It balances a number of viewpoints and provides for a mix of uses and environments.

The Committee decided that this map should be displayed at various locations for public comment once some revisions are made. The maps will be accompanied by a survey. 11x17 maps with narrative on the back should be available for residents to take home. The materials will be made available online as well. It will be important to note that this map is incomplete without the other elements, which will be produced in the coming months.

**Next Steps**

- The consultants will revise the public forum summary and the City will post it on the project web site.
- Consultants will work with City staff to refine the map and narrative.
- Consultants will produce a schedule of broader public outreach activities.
- City staff will organize a public awareness effort in coordination with the displays.

The committee's next meeting will take place sometime during the second half of August and will focus on land use and urban design.

**Adjourn**

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Steering Committee – Meeting #4

Wednesday, August 27, 2008

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Baked Alaska, Discovery Room

### SUMMARY

#### Outreach Results

Brett Estes and Rosemary Johnson reviewed the outreach done to date and presented the schedule for upcoming outreach activities related to the natural features and open spaces work products. The Natural Features map was put on display at the City of Astoria Service Fair on Thursday, August 21. People were generally interested in the “four-area” concept and had more questions than comments. The comments that people did have were generally positive.

The natural features and open spaces work products, including a map, map description and survey will be available in several locations throughout the City. There will be two phases to the roll-out of the natural features materials. Staff and steering committee members will host a “meet and greet” at each location. Phase 1 displays/presentations include:

1. Astoria Library, 9/10, 5-7pm
2. Fultano's, 9/4, 5-7pm
3. Fort George Brewery, 9/8, 5-7pm
4. Coffee Girl, 9/6, 1-3pm
5. Englund Marine, 9/13, 10am-noon

Phase 2 displays will take place at the Senior Center, Columbia Coffee and other locations. Other possible locations include the schools, River Pilots building, Maritime Museum and Astoria Builders Supply. The survey will be available online for people who are unable to visit the displays. The City will coordinate a media release in coordination with this outreach effort, including articles and ads on the radio and in the newspaper.

These materials also were presented to the City Council. The Council had positive feedback and, in particular, like the way the concept breaks up the waterfront into manageable zones that each have a unique character.



## **Vision Elements – Land Use and Alternatives**

The second in a series of three vision elements to present to the public will relate to land use alternatives, including:

- Distribution and intensity of land uses
- Building heights, form and design
- Parking and other site design issues

Allison Wildman of SERA presented draft land use materials. Four maps were developed to correspond to each area in the “four-area” concept developed and introduced in the Natural Features map. The following is a summary of suggestions incorporated in the maps along with comments from steering committee members in response to these recommendations.

Comments listed below in italics are from Committee members unable to make the August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### Bridge Vista Area

- Some support for expanding the historic district design overlay to accentuate the historic node and create a gateway for the urban core. The district should also apply to any future development on parcels over the water.
- Work with property owners and local artists to create a series of murals on the blank walls of buildings. Strong support for this concept.
- Change zoning from tourist commercial (C-2) which stipulates that all uses have to be oriented to visitors, to a more general commercial zone that would allow for a wider variety of mixed-uses and enhance the “working riverfront.” It’s important to look at zone changes along the entire riverfront to determine their collective impact.
- *Add list of bullets describing the built environment similar to the format used in Natural Resources and Open Space map.*

### Urban Core

- Continue the change zoning from tourist commercial (C-2) which stipulates that all uses have to be oriented to visitors, to a more general commercial zone into the eastern portion of this area from the Bridge Vista Area.
- ODOT is considering improvements along Marine and Commercial between 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- Enhance 12<sup>th</sup> Street public realm to formalize the Sunday Market. The Sunday Market may move, so signage and wayfinding elements are more important than creating a festival street with permanent streetscape improvements to draw people from downtown across Highway 30 to the riverfront and vice-versa. The view of the river and treatment of the RiverWalk Trail and river’s edge may do more to draw people there than improvements to 12<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Key views from the hills are found at 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets. These would be good locations for River Trail extensions and viewpoints. A viewpoint won’t work at 4<sup>th</sup> Street. They also would be good places for providing larger setbacks from the public right-of-way for new structures and/or stepping back the height of any new buildings on either side of these corridors.
- Establish an “urban core parking district” where parking is managed comprehensively as a district instead of by individual site.

- In conjunction with establishing a parking district, significantly reduce or possibly eliminate on-site parking requirements for areas over the water to encourage a pedestrian-oriented edge. There was general support for this as long as it can be done while continuing to meet parking needs overall and in specific subareas.
- *The area noted for gateway and pedestrian crossing improvements at 8<sup>th</sup> and Marine should include the block of 8<sup>th</sup> to the intersection of Commercial.*
- *Add list of bullets describing the built environment similar to the format used in Natural Resources and Open Space map.*

Allison presented four concepts for new riverfront development and access to the river:

1. Status quo – current development code does not require public access to the Columbia River when riverfront properties are developed or redeveloped.
2. Access through middle of site – in exchange for a height or density bonus, the developer dedicates an easement through the middle of the site to help break up the massing of the development.
3. Viewpoints – developer and City share the costs of a half-street improvement on both sides of the new development. The boardwalk/pier is extended beyond the new development to provide visual access points along the waterfront. If new development occurs on both sides of the public right-of-way, it becomes a wider boardwalk/pier.
4. River Trail extension – in exchange for a height or density bonus, the developer dedicates an easement and constructs a River Trail extension on the waterfront edge of the property.

Funding mechanisms such as system development charges (SDCs) would be needed for the City to contribute its portion of public improvements. Astoria is the largest city in the State without SDCs. *Issues such as funding and density bonus trade-offs should be discussed in bullets associated with this page.*

Steering committee members like concepts #3 and #4 the best. There is some concern about maintenance agreements, liability issues and these arrangements being a “license to encroach” for the city.

### Civic Greenway

- Rezone parcels along the riverfront to open space/conservation zone to create a new riverfront civic park. Consider adjacent properties for future park expansion. It is important to make clear that the City has no intention of closing or relocating existing businesses. Steering committee strongly supports the park idea. Staff and committee members noted a concern with extension of the park onto adjacent areas that are currently privately owned in the short term but noted that it may be appropriate to note this as a long term goal if the owners decide to change the property’s use.
- Change height limits from “none” to 45 feet or less. Consider larger E-W setbacks and form-based code.
- Relocate city maintenance yards. This may be possible in the shorter term. Police and fire facilities will take more time or may remain and be important community facilities for the area.
- Develop new public streets and zoning from general commercial to medium or high density residential between 30<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> streets to create a neighborhood link between

the proposed riverfront civic park and Safeway. One new public street will be created as part of a new townhome development. This site may be an opportunity for affordable/workforce housing through public/private partnerships.

- The City received a grant from ODOT to make improvements at 37<sup>th</sup> Street and Highway 30 and coordinate with Geno's Pizza drive-through. There are some issues with variances for building heights in this area.
- *Change Astor School Park to Columbia Ballfield*
- *Delete the note to change height from none to no higher than Red Building. This idea should be included in future conversations when a more comprehensive look at building heights is addressed.*
- *Note that the area currently zoned marine industrial could be considered as a possible area to be rezoned.*
- *Add list of bullets describing the built environment similar to the format used in Natural Resources and Open Space map.*

### Neighborhood Greenway

- Rehabilitate and enhance the river's edge and riparian edge along Alderbrook Lagoon with native plants. Provide periodic resting/viewing points.
- Rehabilitate railroad trestles and extend River Trail over Alderbrook Lagoon. Parks Department has a grant to improve a portion of the trestle.
- Develop a natural, unprogrammed Alderbrook Lagoon park and trail system. The City purchased an easement for this trail up to 45<sup>th</sup> Street where there is an informal kayak/canoe launch.
- Majority of lands adjacent to lagoon are city-owned and/or protected by zoning.
- *Add a comment on Highway 30 west of Crest Motel stating that views over Alderbrook should be enhanced and protected.*
- *Add list of bullets describing the built environment similar to the format used in Natural Resources and Open Space map.*

### General Comments

- Steering committee members were interested in further exploring "form-based zoning," which stipulates the form (mass, height, etc.) of a building rather than its use.
- The steering committee has not yet had a discussion about "how to make property owners whole" if outcomes restrict their property rights.
- Consultant team will work with the City to create a map that shows 1) who has leases along the riverfront; 2) who has rights of first refusal for future leases over the water along the riverfront. DSL owns all submerged lands, but shoreland property owners have first right-of-refusal to lease the submerged lands.
- Changes to north side of Marine Drive should be mirrored on the south side.

### **Parking District**

The consultant team outlined the process for creating a parking district. Matt Hastie described the basic steps in the process which include:

1. Determine parking issues/problems
2. Inventory the current supply of parking spaces
3. Determine the current and future demand for parking spaces
4. Develop strategies to manage parking space availability to meet goals

## 5. Inform the public of changes in parking management methodology

Oftentimes, what citizens perceive parking problem to be much more significant than they actually are. Another consideration is whether or not a parking structure is appropriate and whether or not citizens would be willing to be taxed for such a facility. Parking structures are very costly and typically one of the last options to consider, particularly in smaller communities. Another option may be to developers a fee to help pay for a future parking structure in lieu of providing on-site parking.

### **Next Steps**

- Consultant will revise the Land Use maps based on steering committee and City Council feedback
- Natural features maps and work products will go out to the public
- Focus of the next steering committee meeting will be transportation and other public improvements. The meeting will be scheduled for the first week of October. Sherri will poll steering committee members for dates that work best.
- Outreach will be conducted to youth through the school district and to home schoolers.

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Steering Committee – Meeting #5

Wednesday, October 1, 2008

1:00 – 3:30 pm

Englund Marine, Second Floor Conference Room  
95 Hamburg Avenue

### SUMMARY

#### Outreach Results Update

Brett Estes reviewed the outreach done to date on the Natural Features map. Over the past month, an estimated 200 to 250 people viewed the maps and associated materials. The Sunday Market was the most popular location for people to view the maps. A total of 89 surveys were completed with 68 completed on site and 21 completed online. Of the many and diverse comments received at the various viewing locations, the comments heard most frequently include:

- Concerns about the impacts of pedestrians on the Alderbrook Neighborhood
- The River Trail is the heart and soul of community
- Need clarity regarding underwater ownership/leasing
- Where should the eastern edge of the urban core be?
- Ensure that property owners and lease holders are notified of the vision process

Steering Committee members shared the comments they heard at their viewing location:

- People like the four areas; balanced approach with some development and some preservation
- At the Sunday Market, we heard from locals, regional residents (Warrenton), people visiting from Portland and tourists from outside of Oregon
- Riverfront development should support the health of downtown; character must be discussed
- Cruise hosts noted that people on cruise ships comment on our Scandinavian character
- Don't ruin the River Trail
- Underwater and upland leases; takings
- Like the four zones; concerned about density in the urban core and possibly in the Bridge Vista area (descriptions of each area were added to the maps in order to respond to concerns about what "urban" refers to); major issues haven't been addressed; balance between open space and development
- Piers used along Rivertrail are dangerous for bicycles, especially those with skinny tires

- Views; development with lower heights; view of the river from the River Trail; fair compromise to have open space in the greenway and more development in the urban core

Rosemary Johnson provided an update on outreach to Astoria's youth. COC and the City developed a list of recommended activities for different age groups. The school superintendent has passed this information on to school principals. The high school will definitely participate. The superintendent and Rosemary will follow up with each of the principals by mail/email.

### **Vision Elements – Transportation –**

Theresa Carr of CH2M HILL introduced herself and presented draft materials regarding transportation and other public improvements. Four maps were developed to correspond to each area of the "four-area" concept. The purpose of these maps and recommendations is to improve access to and within the riverfront area for all modes of transportation. The recommendations come from a number of previous transportation planning efforts:

- Uniontown Plan
- Gateway Plan
- Transportation System Plan
- ODOT Commercial/Marine Transportation Improvement Plan
- Port Master Plan

The following is a summary of comments from Steering Committee members in response to the transportation recommendations.

#### Bridge Vista

- (#1) The Port has a grant from ODOT for transportation improvements, but funds are limited
- (#1) Include a picnic area and restrooms along with parking at Pier 3; people currently use Englund's parking lot to access the River Trail
- (#1) New road from Pier 3 to Young's Bay Bridge traffic circle seems like an odd concept; the current Port of Astoria Master Plan calls for trucks to use Portway and cars to use the new "grand entrance for cars; new Port director is in the process of reviewing previous planning efforts
- (#10) Biking/walking along Marine or Commercial is not as nice as along the River Trail; place more emphasis on directing pedestrian and bike traffic to the River Trail with signage; consider commuter versus recreational cyclists
- (#11) Same comments as #10; without warehouses, visual connection to river could be strong

#### Urban Core

- (#3) Look at how people cross at 8th and Commercial; the block between the courthouse and post office buildings gets a lot of pedestrian traffic
- (#4) Vistas should be developed in coordination with private property owners; opportunities to incorporate pieces of the boardwalk should be explored over time
- (#5) A task force assisting ODOT with replacing downtown traffic signals determined that curb extensions are not consistent with Astoria's historic character; trees are not an option due to the hollow sidewalks; people do not want sidewalks cluttered with planters

and furniture that impede the movement of pedestrians and block storefronts; canvas awnings help protect merchandise from the sun and customers from the rain

- (#6) East/west treatments should be the same as north/south treatments; there should be more focus on the east and west ends of Highway 30 where it is harder to cross
- (#7) Encourage pedestrians to cross at 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets

#### Civic Greenway

- (#2) This isn't a high-traffic area, but may be if a riverfront greenway is developed in the future; this is a vehicle hazard due to bottlenecks caused by the traffic light near Safeway

#### Neighborhood Greenway

- (#2) There could be a bridge connecting the trestle to the Alderbrook Neighborhood near 45<sup>th</sup> Street; neighborhood residents suggested a "pedestrian cul-de-sac;" signage for bicyclists could help pedestrians navigate their way

Steering Committee stated that a toolkit of ways to aid pedestrian crossings and improve traffic flow would be useful

#### Priorities

- Focus on the River Trail; direct bike and pedestrian traffic to trail
- Piers/viewpoints out on the river; amend land use regulations to create trade-offs for private property owners in the urban core
- Pedestrian access on the east and west ends of town

#### **Next Steps**

The next step in the outreach process will be to display the land use maps in locations around the city for public feedback. A schedule for Steering Committee member participation will be developed soon.

Consultants will make changes to transportation maps based on Steering Committee comments. These maps will be put on display along with a survey following the land use maps. The consultants will put together a draft vision document. There will be one more public forum in Phase I at which the draft vision document will be developed. The Steering Committee will review this document by email or at a city staff led meeting in early November.

In Phase II, the consultants will include more details on the vision and implementation and other issues such as:

- Building height
- Land uses
- Form-based code tools

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## **Steering Committee – Meeting #7**

**Friday, March 13, 2009**

**2:00 – 5:00 pm**

**Columbia River Maritime Museum, Kern Room**

1792 Marine Drive

## **SUMMARY**

Brett Estes introduced the Steering Committee and thanked them and members of the general public for attending. He reviewed the work that was accomplished in Phase 1 of the Riverfront Vision Process and explained that the purpose of Phase 2 is to refine the Phase 1 recommendations.

### **Phase 2 Overview**

Matt Hastie reviewed the Phase 2 scope of work. The following refinements will be made to the draft Riverfront Vision Plan during Phase 2:

- Narrative description of the vision
- Land use maps, illustrations and zoning recommendations
- Implementation and funding strategies
- Policy recommendations

Additional activities during Phase 2 include:

- Three Steering Committee meetings
- Community meetings
- Public outreach, including meeting flyers, media contact, updated website content and a questionnaire
- Adoption process

Brett Estes introduced the concept of electing a chairperson for the Steering Committee. Generally, committee members are not opposed to the idea of having a chairperson, but feel that they do not need a spokesperson and the consultants/staff do a fine job of facilitating the meetings. The topic was tabled until committee members determine the need for a chair. It may be revisited at the next committee meeting.

### **Vision Elements – Resolved and Unresolved Issues**

Dave Pollard asked how the outcomes of the November public forum have been incorporated into the draft Plan and will inform Phase 2. Matt Hastie explained that revisions were made to the draft Plan to reflect comments received at the November forum and questionnaire responses. Additionally, those



comments are reflected in the themes of the “Astoria Riverfront Vision Elements that Require Resolution” memorandum.

### **Vision Statements**

The Steering Committee agreed that the following vision statements received strong community support and are therefore resolved:

#### Promote physical and visual access to the river.

- Maintain current areas of open space and create new open space areas
- Provide for public access to the river within private developments
- Retain public ownership of key sites along the riverfront
- Protect viewsheds along the river, including corridors and panoramas from key viewpoints
- Use alternative development forms (e.g., clustered development, narrower, taller profiles) to preserve views

#### Encourage a mix of uses that supports Astoria’s “working riverfront” and the city’s economy.

- Maintain the authentic feel of the riverfront
- Prioritize siting of water-related businesses along the river
- Limit development in areas with most significant impacts on open space, view or other resources

#### Support new development that respects Astoria’s historical character.

- Enhance or refine development codes to achieve vision principles
- Implement design review, design standards or other tools to guide the appearance of new development
- Devote resources to rehabilitating old structures

#### Protect the health of the river and adjacent natural areas.

- Protect natural areas for wildlife viewing
- Replace invasive plants with native species
- Incorporate natural elements in the design of future public and private improvements

#### Enhance the Riverwalk.

- Maintain, repair, extend and enhance the River Trail
- Provide better pedestrian connections between the downtown and the riverfront
- Create amenities such as shelters, lighting and public restrooms in targeted locations
- Address safety issues associated with mix of autos, pedestrians, trolley and other activities
- Ensure long-term maintenance of public improvements

Several vision statements have not received strong support in earlier Phase 1 surveys. Further discussion will be needed to determine what specifically people object to about the statements and why and refine or remove the statements accordingly. These include:

- Allow for some residential development along the riverfront
- Concentrate development to support downtown and other commercial areas
- Promote uses that both provide jobs and attract visitors
- Ensure adequate parking opportunities along and adjacent to the riverfront

The Steering Committee discussed the opposition to residential development. Some people are opposed to any residential development. Other people have concerns about the amount of residential development. Still others have concerns about building size and design. Phase 2 is designed to explore people’s opposition and concerns on all the above mentioned statements and subsequently refine them so the final Plan has broad support.

### **Overall Four Zone Vision Concept**

The Steering Committee agreed that people generally support the four-area concept, including the general goals and most of the specific improvements identified in each area. The following specific issues remain unresolved:

- Location and amount of potential future overwater development
- Amount, location and character of future residential development
- Height and intensity of development, particularly in the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas
- Urban design or architectural character of future development

### **Overwater Development**

Overwater development in the Neighborhood Greenway may be a non-issue. A Plan recommendation could be developed which states the City should codify this. Overwater development is unlikely for a much of the Civic Greenway area as many of the upland properties are publicly owned. Again, the Steering Committee may develop Plan recommendations need to enact policies to create “blueways” in this area. Steering Committee members agreed that the areas in need of more discussion are the Bridge Vista and Urban Core areas as well as a small portion of the Civic Greenway. The steering committee discussed possible approaches for various areas along the riverfront:

- restricting development outright
- enacting criteria that allow for some development such as public walkways and docks
- allowing for a higher level of development but restricting the amount, size and location of it
- establishing development guidelines and incentives that allow for creativity and flexibility

### **Future Residential Development**

The Steering Committee restated the points made earlier. Also mentioned was the fact that there may be opportunities to develop workforce housing along the river and that the City’s recently completed Housing Needs Analysis assumes development of some housing along the riverfront, particularly more affordable units. This was identified by many as a community priority.

### **Building Height and Mass**

Steering Committee members agreed that this issue needs to be addressed in more detail in a comprehensive manner. It will be important to balance the public good with private property rights and consider a structure that allows flexibility and creativity.

### **Building Character**

There are a variety of opinions about how to define Astoria’s design character and about how prescriptive the City should be in developing design standards to achieve that character. The Steering Committee will explore possible tools in addition to design review can be used to achieve design goals and discuss which features should be encouraged or discouraged.

### **Community Process for Addressing Unresolved Issues**

Matt Hastie presented two possible approaches for public involvement in Phase 2. The idea would be to get broader participation in addition to the “usual suspects” that have attended every meeting. One approach would be to host an all day workshop on a Saturday with breakout sessions for each issue. A second option would be to hold multiple events over a two to three week period. Matt asked if committee members had any other suggestions.

Kurt Englund suggested having four smaller meetings – one for each of the four zones. The meetings could be marketed for that area and the meeting location could serve as an ongoing location for public comment. Committee members agreed that this would allow for smaller, more focused discussions that would create more energy and ownership of the outcomes.

Committee members recommended reaching out to each area with targeted materials and specific questions. Possible outreach tools include water bills, the newspaper and radio interviews. Water bills include a very limited amount of space but could include the city's Web site and possibly meeting dates and times.

## **Next Steps**

The Phase 2 schedule shows a public forum before the next Steering Committee meeting. However, in light of the discussion at this meeting, the committee will need to meet and discuss unresolved issues before the next public forum. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on one of three possible dates: April 9, April 14 or April 21.

## **Receipt of Public Comment on Items Discussed by Committee**

Members of the public in attendance made the following remarks:

- A clean, manicured and well-designed riverfront can bring money to Astoria from tourism. Other cities such as Key West, Florida have been very successful in this regard.
- Concern that development along the riverfront will present conflicts with activities at the Port of Astoria and related train activity. Does not want to see development on the water, tall buildings or residential development. Views of the river should be preserved.
- The Astoria bypass has public support and should be pursued by the City with ODOT. More attention should be paid to the relationship between riverfront development and the effects of natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis and storm surges.
- This process and proposed product is too detailed and not visionary enough to be considered a vision for the riverfront. There would be more participation from the community if more conceptualization and visualization was involved.

## **Adjourn**

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Steering Committee – Meeting #8

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Columbia River Maritime Museum, Kern Room

1792 Marine Drive

## SUMMARY

### Vision Elements – Recommended Approach to Unresolved Issues

This meeting of the steering committee is a continuation of the last meeting to address unresolved issues. The steering committee discussed the level of detail that should be included in this vision. Steering committee members agreed that the public expects the vision to address the unresolved issues that have been identified, but that recommendations regarding specific implementation measures should be left to subsequent reviews of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code.

Unresolved issues which were under discussion included:

- **overwater development**
- **residential development**
- **height and intensity of future upland development**

### Neighborhood Greenway and Civic Greenway

#### Overwater Leasing and Development

Matt Hastie reviewed possible recommendations regarding overwater leasing and development outlined in the agenda. The committee agreed that areas with a significant amount of publicly leased or leasable properties will not see intensive overwater development in the foreseeable future. These areas include most of the Neighborhood Greenway and substantial portions of the Civic Greenway. The committee also agreed that several types of improvements should be allowed in these areas, such as piers, docks, marinas and repairs or renovations to existing structures. The committee did not recommend a specific proposal to allow new structures that met certain criteria because a proposal would be too specific and better left for a subsequent review of applicable Comprehensive Plan and Development Code provisions. Likewise, the committee determined that a decision regarding mechanisms to address overwater development, through the creation of a new overwater zoning district (blueway zoning district), should be addressed through a subsequent Comprehensive Plan and Development Code review. The vision plan would serve as a guide for those subsequent reviews.

#### Future Residential Development

The draft vision identified a potential change in zoning for a portion of the Civic Greenway to allow for a residential neighborhood east of the Mill Pond, much of which is publicly owned. Results from earlier

surveys stated respondents are not in favor of new residential development. The committee believes that some people may not want any upland residential development while others have concerns regarding issues such as scale, orientation and design. Steering committee members agreed that form and appearance are most important. Images of lower density residential units were discussed and the committee recommended keeping the new residential neighborhood in the plan. In order to clarify the issues committee members stated they wanted the images included in the plan to help clarify what was envisioned. It was noted that there may be opportunities for development of workforce housing in this area, especially on the City-owned property. It was agreed that residential structures should be aesthetically pleasing and maintain public access to the river.

#### Building Height and Mass

Building height and mass in these areas should protect openness of the Riverwalk. Zoning changes should be made in areas along the riverfront with no height limits. The committee agreed that some flexibility in building heights could be permitted in exchange for additional setbacks from the Riverwalk or public access to the river as long as ultimate height limits are established.

### **Urban Core**

#### Overwater Leasing and Development

The committee reviewed several documents including a study of views of the river from the hillsides. The study showed that there are few existing buildings in Astoria's urban core that disrupt views of the river from hillside locations, particularly along the right-of-way corridor. Potential new developments built to a maximum height allowable (45') would not substantially impact the region-wide views from the hillside. The study did not examine how new development would affect views from the Riverwalk.

A letter from the City Attorney states that changes in regulations for submerged and submersible land will not be impacted by Measure 49. Overwater lessees have no Measure 49 rights since they do not own the land. Furthermore, there are relatively few overwater properties in the urban core that are not currently developed to some degree and therefore there are limited opportunities for new development in this area.

The steering committee examined several alternatives for addressing the scale of development on overwater parcels. Committee members agreed that the City should allow for some overwater development in this area, but limit its height and overall mass. Tradeoffs in height could be made for developments that allow public views and access to the river and step back from the Riverwalk. View corridors should be protected. Development in the Urban Core should be subject to design review or design standards.

#### Future Residential Development

Many areas along the riverfront currently allow for residential development as part of mixed-use buildings. As with overwater development, committee members believe that specific uses within buildings are less important than issues such as maintaining consistency with the riverfront character through building design, building heights and massing, and protecting public views and access to the river.

#### Building Height and Mass

Building height and mass in these areas should be addressed to protect openness of the Riverwalk. The historic character of the area should be protected through the utilization of certain construction materials, using setbacks to keep an open Riverwalk and allow for public access to the river, encouraging a variety of building sizes and scales that are pedestrian-friendly. The committee agreed that some flexibility in building heights could be permitted in exchange for these considerations as long as ultimate

height restrictions are put in place. Docks and other facilities to allow public access to the river should be encouraged at the ends of various public rights-of-way.

### **Bridge Vista**

The Bridge Vista area has expansive views including those of the Megler Bridge. This area also contains more parcels available for overwater development than the Urban Core. The Riverfront Vision describes this area as Astoria's "working riverfront" and as having strong connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Committee members agreed that this area should have height and massing provisions similar to those in the Urban Core, but uses here should be primarily water-related (marine uses). Structures also should fit in with the areas historic character.

### **Community Meeting Process and Next Steps**

At the previous steering committee meeting, the idea of having four smaller meetings – one for each of the four zones – was suggested. The meetings could be marketed for that area and the meeting location could serve as an ongoing location for public comment. Committee members agreed that this would allow for smaller, more focused discussions that would create more energy and ownership of the outcomes. It was proposed that the Neighborhood Greenway and Civic Greenway Areas be combined into one meeting and the steering committee agreed.

Once agendas and meeting materials are produced for these meetings, the steering committee can review them by email or city staff can facilitate a committee meeting for those who are able to attend. Publicity efforts including a newspaper article, press release and flyers will coincide with the meetings.

Once the series of meetings is complete, the consultants will revise the draft Riverfront Vision Plan based on public comments. A public forum will be held for the revised draft Plan to be reviewed by the public one last time.

### **Receipt of Public Comment on Items Discussed by Committee**

Members of the public in attendance made the following remarks:

- It would be good if the steering committee had an overall vision statement for the riverfront in addition to statements for each area.
- At some point, the City Council will be looking to city staff for direction in regards to new codes to address building heights.
- Rosemary Johnson was asked to define historic districts and historic buildings/structures.

### **Adjourn**

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## **Steering Committee – Meeting #9 Tuesday, June 9, 2009 1:00 – 3:00 pm**

**Columbia River Maritime Museum, Kern Room**  
1792 Marine Drive

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Recap/Status Report**

Steve Faust gave a brief summary of results from the Civic Greenway and Neighborhood Greenway open house. Approximately 40 people attended the open house, which was held on Saturday, May 30 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Pier 39. Participants generally favor developing an open green space around the Depot and support the proposed River Trail improvements and extensions. Most participants do not object to residential development in the area between Mill Pond and Safeway as long as heights are limited and it is stepped back from the River Trail and subject by design guidelines. They do not want to see overwater development in these areas.

Steering committee members who attended reported on their conversations with open house attendees. They generally confirmed Steve's summary and also noted that people want to see open spaces and broad vistas in these areas, not tall buildings over the water. Upland development on both sides of the River Trail should be set back. Some participants also say they have concerns about their voices being heard.

The next two open houses are scheduled for June 18 at Pier 11 for the Urban Core and June 22 at Holiday in Express for the Bridge Vista. Both open houses are from 6 to 8 p.m. and steering committee members are encouraged to attend. There will be another steering committee meeting sometime in July following the open houses and before the final community forum expected to be in late July or early August.

There was a question about when the plan would be implemented in terms of revised zoning and code amendments. The first step is to finalize the plan and get it adopted. Hopefully that will take place this fall. Once the plan is adopted, the City can begin working on implementation. Revising City codes is complicated, takes time and involves a public process. The City is trying to complete the Vision Plan process as soon as possible so implementation can begin. It is important to honor the public process because public comments make the final product better.

#### **Vision Elements – Additional Discussion of Issues in Bridge Vista and Urban Core Areas**

There is concern from some steering committee members that these issues were not discussed in enough depth and detail. These issues are important to the public to resolve.

## Urban Form

Matt Hastie presented a variety of options for addressing views and heights in relation to development in this area and asked the steering committee if they support any one approach more or less than the others.

- Setbacks from the River Trail and public rights-of-way
- Step-backs above a certain building height or number of stories (from the northern face of buildings facing the River Trail or rights-of-way perpendicular to the river)
- Openings in buildings that allow for views of the River
- Trade-offs between building height and building footprint size or percentage

### *Steering Committee Comments on Setbacks*

- Helps allow sunlight and “feel” in terms of height
- This technique is preferred on the south side of the River Trail
- Do not increase shade on River Trail
- Open vistas to north and development to the south
- Limit heights and use setbacks
- Discourage overwater development on public lands
- Both sides of the River Trail are critical
- Trading height for width is good
- Still must have maximum heights
- Keep a personal scale to buildings along the River Trail
- Do not create a tunnel effect
- Flexibility allows for diversity and variety and enhanced character
- Development out farther over the water (Cannery Pier Hotel) should be treated differently than up against the River Trail
- Building treatments on north/south streets are important too; especially main intersecting streets
- Maintain a variety of views, not just corridors to the north; keep diagonal and panoramic views

### *Steering Committee Comments on Stepbacks*

- Just as valid as setbacks and should be in the toolbox
- Good for south side of River Trail and side streets
- Does more than just allow sunlight; allows for broad views along river
- Provides a feeling of open space
- Helps soften building line
- There are a variety of creative ways to implement these approaches (e.g., incentives, transfer of development rights)
- Beyond just using stepbacks, it is important to vary the façade of the building both vertically and horizontally

### *Steering Committee Comments on Openings/Corridors*

- Less desirable than other options; better on the north side than the south side
- Less important; must be used in a way where public space and views are felt and perceived
- Breaking up building mass is important
- Not as realistic a solution

Passageways are the least effective/important in terms of sunlight. Stepbacks and setbacks are more important tools. The City should look for ways to prevent larger-scale development on overwater parcels under City control. Fishing piers and docks are preferred on these lands. Development should be encouraged to the south of the River Trail. The majority of the steering committee agreed that the City should explore opportunities to work with existing property owners or lease-holders to obtain overwater leases for specific remaining open properties in the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas.



## Character of public open spaces, courtyards or plazas

Steering committee members discussed the types of open spaces they prefer in the Urban Core and Bridge Vista areas and considered the following questions:

- Do they prefer hardscape or vegetation or some type of balance?
- What types of amenities are particularly desirable, e.g., seating, viewing platforms and lighting?
- Is more wayfinding or other signage desirable?

Comments included the following:

- There aren't too many opportunities for vegetation in the urban core
- Should be considered as part of private development
- Opportunities are along street rights-of-way
- City should approach land owners to assume leases
- Cost for the City may be too high
- City should encourage private owners to pursue different types of development
- Like the River Trail, the acquisition of leases/properties could take place over time
- Need to consider long-term maintenance
- Prefer paths through green vegetation
- Broad views and greenscapes
- As much vegetation as possible
- Historic maritime character rather than crisp, clean modern look
- Use planters and pots for greenery, but not too much
- Incorporate places to stop and rest; benches
- Restrooms are desired
- Differing opinions on whether or not lighting is desirable
- Incorporate public art, but not at every intersection
- Limited signage is ok but should focus primarily on things within the Riverfront area and maybe just a few important nearby landmarks outside the area (i.e., across Highway 30). Signage design should be simple and not obtrusive.

## Community Meetings & Next Steps

Urban Core open house is on Thursday, June 18 from 6 to 8pm at Pier 11. Bridge Vista open house is Monday, June 22 from 6 to 8 pm at Holiday Inn Express. Modest changes reflecting comments received will be made to the display materials used for this steering committee meeting in preparation for the open houses. Following these open houses, the consultants will build on the Phase I draft plan document and include strategies and actions for implementation. There will be one more meeting of the steering committee before a final community forum in late July or early August.

## Public Input

Members of the public in attendance made the following remarks:

- Do not want more large buildings blocking views along the riverfront. Design review is important.
- Concerned about development on south side of River Trail. Do not block views from River Trail to hill and forest backdrop and beautiful architecture.
- The Department of State Lands will not lease overwater lands for uses that conflict with public policy. The City should revise its comprehensive plan and code to maintain sweeping, open vistas.
- Examine costs before leasing lands for public open space. Explore creative solutions for funding these efforts, such as a surcharge on condominiums.

- How close will buildings be to each other? Is it possible to determine block by block? Is the steering committee considering what is best for the people who live here or what is best for the city council or what is best for property owners and developers?
- Don't forget that this vision doesn't have to solve every problem.
- Work with property owners south of River Trail so hillside views are not blocked.
- Opportunities for development exist in the Bridge Vista area.

## **Adjourn**

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Steering Committee – Meeting #10

Friday, July 24, 2009

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Cannery Pier Hotel, Conference Room

10 Basin Street

## SUMMARY

### ***Recap/Status Report***

Brett Estes announced that this will be the final meeting of the Task Force. The final Community Forum will take place in August before the Riverfront Vision Plan goes to Planning Commission and City Council for adoption.

### ***Vision Elements***

The second phase of the riverfront visioning process was designed to address a number of high-profile unresolved issues identified in the first phase. Three Steering Committee meetings were held to discuss these issues, make recommendations and design meetings to obtain public feedback. Three open houses were conducted for the public to comment on Steering Committee recommendations in all four vision areas. The Steering Committee discussed the results of community meetings and potential refinements to Plan recommendations based on public comments.

### **Overwater Development**

Staff did not propose any changes to the overwater development element of the Riverfront Vision Plan. The Steering Committee discussed public comments and agreed on several minor changes to the language in this vision element. Specific changes are summarized below:

#### *Bridge Vista*

- ~~If development is to occur, promote new uses that are consistent with Astoria's "working waterfront." the urban character of the area through a dense level of development.~~
- If dense development is appropriate, promote the urban character of the area through a dense level of development.

#### *Urban Core*

- ~~If development is to occur, promote new uses that are consistent with Astoria's "working waterfront." the urban character of the area through a dense level of development.~~
- Consider working with property owners, including those with existing leases to retain some maximize open areas over the water.

### **Future Upland Residential Development**

Staff proposed further defining guidelines for residential development including height, design, setbacks and open spaces. The Steering Committee agreed.

## **Building Height, Mass and Character**

Staff did not propose any changes to the building height, mass and character element of the Riverfront Vision Plan. The Steering Committee discussed the level of detail that is desirable in the Riverfront Vision Plan. Members agree that, at a minimum, recommendations should be clear in their meaning. The Steering Committee discussed tradeoffs in height versus mass and the different discussions members had with citizens. Members agree that height restrictions are needed where there are none. The Steering Committee recommended one minor change to the language in this element:

- Trading building height for width (mass) ~~is~~may be desirable in some instances.

## Transportation and open space improvements

The Steering Committee reviewed the phasing of needed transportation and other improvements and suggested refinements to updated descriptions of transportation and open space elements. Some members asked about the phasing of transportation improvements and the meaning of short, medium and long-term time periods. Phasing was identified based on the ease of implementation and time periods were assigned to each time period: short-term is 1-2 years; medium-term is 2-5 years; long-term is 5 or more years. Some of the short-term projects are already underway, such as pedestrian improvements at 37<sup>th</sup> Street and the River Trail extension. Several funding sources were absent from the table of potential funding sources and will be added.

## Implementation strategies

The Steering Committee reviewed strategies for funding and implementation as well as possible Comprehensive Plan and Development Code changes which could be implemented through subsequent processes. It was noted that the City will be updating its Transportation System Plan (TSP) and that Vision Plan concepts will be incorporated into the TSP. There was a discussion about what level of detail is appropriate for this plan and next steps for implementation. Once the plan is approved, the City will need to initiate a process to revise and update development codes.

## ***Vision Plan Organization***

Steering Committee members agreed with the preferred alternative for organizing the updated Vision Plan. There was a request to add drawings from the schools. There also was a request to separate the Natural Features map into a single map for each area.

## ***Community Forum***

The Steering Committee agreed to host the final Community Forum on August 26. As with the community workshops, there will be a number of stations for people to visit with details on various sections of the plan. The stations will include:

- Overview/process/principles
- Bridge Vista (natural features, land use, transportation)
- Urban Core (natural features, land use, transportation)
- Civic Greenway (natural features, land use, transportation)
- Neighborhood Greenway (natural features, land use, transportation)
- Implementation

Forum participants will be able to provide comments through talking to staff and Steering Committee members, writing on sticky notes, and completing a comment form. The project PowerPoint will be running continuously for people to view. Paper copies will be available for viewing at the meeting as well as at City Hall and the Library. CDs will be available for people to take home.

## ***Public Comments***

Members of the public in attendance made the following remarks:

- Thanks to the Steering Committee for their work. I admire the ongoing process and opportunities to comment. After the Community Forum, people will still be able to comment at Planning Commission and City Council meetings.
- What about the cost to implement this plan? Where will the money come from? There is no money for maintenance and streetscapes.
- Bicycle paths cut down on street width which makes Marine Drive too narrow. Bike lanes will not be possible in hillside areas. Studies have been done regarding how to alleviate problems near 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenues.
- There is a good example of a public walkway in Kirkland, Washington that goes between and in front of buildings.
- Tall, skinny buildings can fit along the riverfront and provide more open space.
- There is a need for a police presence along the riverfront to address problems with vagrants, drugs and off-leash dogs. There also should be signs to alert bicyclists that pedestrians share the path.
- The vision principles should make a stronger commitment, such as a position statement in order to avoid misinterpretations. There also needs to be assurances that property given to the City will not be sold for profit at a later date.
- There should be a presentation of the Vision Plan at the Community Forum. Someone needs to walk through the Plan point by point. People need that opportunity to ask questions and voice comments and concerns.
- I have attended many meetings and want to thank everyone for a good job. Improvements are needed at 17<sup>th</sup> Street to provide safe pedestrian access across Marine Drive. Possibly a pedestrian walkway over Marine Drive.

## ***Adjourn***



# Survey summaries

# Astoria WATERFRONT VISION PLAN

## Natural Features Survey – Summary of Results

### General Questions

**1. What is the most important issue facing the future of the waterfront?**

- Maintaining physical and visual access
- Thoughtful planning to prevent overdevelopment on the riverfront
- Encouraging economic development to create jobs
- Making improvements to attract tourists while maintaining the working riverfront character

**2. Please rate your agreement with the following principals and statements on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree.**

Principles and implementing actions	1, strongly disagree	2	3	4	5, strongly agree
<b>1. Promote physical and visual access to the river</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>90.3%</b>
• Maintain current areas of open space and create new open space areas	2.3%	1.2%	7.0%	10.5%	79.1%
• Provide for public access to the river within private developments	5.7%	5.7%	10.2%	9.1%	69.3%
• Retain public ownership of key sites along the waterfront	2.3%	0.0%	2.3%	6.8%	88.6%
• Protect view sheds along the river, including corridors and panoramas from key viewpoints	2.3%	1.1%	2.3%	12.6%	81.6%
• Use alternative development forms (e.g., clustered development, narrower, taller profiles) to preserve views	16.7%	7.1%	13.1%	14.3%	48.8%
<b>2. Encourage a mix of uses that respects and supports Astoria’s working waterfront and the city’s economy</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>	<b>64.8%</b>
• Maintain the authentic feel of the waterfront	0.0%	4.8%	13.1%	15.5%	66.7%
• Prioritize siting of water-related businesses along the river	4.6%	0.0%	19.5%	23.0%	52.9%
• Allow for some residential development along the waterfront	43.5%	18.8%	17.6%	8.2%	11.8%
• Concentrate development to support downtown and other commercial areas	11.8%	9.4%	23.5%	22.4%	32.9%
• Limit development in areas with most significant impacts on open space, view or other resources	3.5%	1.2%	8.1%	8.1%	79.1%

• Promote uses that both provide jobs and attract visitors	4.5%	10.1%	20.2%	25.8%	39.3%
<b>3. Support new development that respects Astoria's historical character.</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>67.9%</b>
• Enhance or refine development codes to achieve vision principles	3.4%	0.0%	10.3%	13.8%	72.4%
• Implement design review, design standards or other tools to guide the appearance of new development	1.1%	0.0%	9.2%	13.8%	75.9%
• Devote resources to rehabilitating old structures	4.6%	3.4%	8.0%	12.6%	71.3%
<b>4. Protect the health of the river and adjacent natural areas.</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>87.9%</b>
• Protect natural areas for wildlife viewing	2.3%	1.1%	10.2%	8.0%	78.4%
• Replace invasive plants with native species	2.3%	1.2%	16.3%	14.0%	66.3%
• Incorporate natural elements in the design of future public and private improvements	3.5%	0.0%	9.3%	12.8%	74.4%
<b>5. Enhance the Riverwalk.</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>72.7%</b>
• Maintain, repair, extend and enhance the Riverwalk	3.4%	1.1%	5.7%	9.1%	80.7%
• Provide better pedestrian connections between the downtown and the riverfront	3.4%	3.4%	20.7%	12.6%	59.8%
• Create amenities such as shelters, lighting and public restrooms in targeted locations	7.9%	5.6%	15.7%	19.1%	51.7%
• Ensure adequate parking opportunities along and adjacent to the waterfront	12.5%	8.0%	25.0%	18.2%	36.4%
• Address safety issues associated with mix of autos, pedestrians, trolley and other activities	3.6%	4.8%	20.2%	21.4%	50.0%
• Ensure long-term maintenance of public improvements	1.1%	0.0%	3.4%	18.4%	77.0%

### **Natural Features Questions**

#### **3. Do you support the four-zone approach identified on the accompanying map?**

<i>1, do not support at all</i>	<i>2, do not support</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, support somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly support</i>
6.0%	6.0%	9.5%	36.9%	41.7%

#### **4. Do you agree with the Bridge Vista Area designation? Please respond by answering the specific questions below.**

Is the description of this zone accurate?

YES: 83.8%	NO: 16.2%
------------	-----------

Are the boundaries where they should be?

YES: 83.3%	NO: 16.7%
------------	-----------

If not, where should they be?

- The eastern border should be 6th Street.



What types of features would you like to see in this zone?

- Maintain working riverfront in this area; water-related uses
- Increased parking; improved traffic pattern and pedestrian access
- Historical interpretive signs, benches, viewpoints

**5. Do you agree with the Urban Core Area designation? Please respond by answering the specific questions below.**

Is the description of this zone accurate?

YES: 88.3%	NO: 11.7%
------------	-----------

Are the boundaries where they should be?

YES: 86.8%	NO: 13.2%
------------	-----------

If not, where should they be?

- Eastern boundary – 14<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- Western boundary – 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Street

What types of features would you like to see in this zone?

- Park/picnic area
- Commercial activities
- More urban feel – curbs, lighting, streetscape improvements

**6. Do you agree with the Civic Greenway Area designation? Please respond by answering the specific questions below.**

Is the description of this zone accurate?

YES: 85.7%	NO: 14.3%
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Are the boundaries where they should be?

YES: 79.7%	NO: 20.3%
------------	-----------

If not, where should they be?

- Western border at 14<sup>th</sup> Street
- Eastern border at Safeway/32<sup>nd</sup>
- From 17<sup>th</sup> to Pier 39

What types of features would you like to see in this zone?

- Green areas, parks, beaches, amphitheater, recreational opportunities

**7. Do you agree with the Neighborhood Greenway Area designation? Please respond by answering the specific questions below.**

Is the description of this zone accurate?

YES: 88.2%	NO: 11.8%
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Are the boundaries where they should be?

YES: 84.9%	NO: 15.1%
------------	-----------

If not, where should they be?

- Western border should be east of Pier 39
- Western border should be just east of Mill Pond

What types of features would you like to see in this zone?

- All residential

- Natural area
- Rehabilitate “stinky beach”
- Continued Riverwalk

**8. How are you most likely to learn about or participate in this process (please check all that apply)?**

51	Attend an open public meeting
57	View a community display at a local gathering place
28	Complete a survey via the City’s web site
56	Complete a written survey
66	Read about the project in the newspaper
39	Hear about the project on the radio
30	See a meeting flyer posted in a local business or civic building

Other:

- Direct mail
- Friends/co-workers
- Monthly newsletter/tabloid

**ABOUT YOU**

**How many years have you lived in Astoria?**

23	Less than 5 yrs
17	6-10 yrs
9	11-15 yrs
3	16-20 yrs
25	More than 20 yrs
5	Non-resident/visitor

# Astoria RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN

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## Land Use Survey – Summary of Results

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This document summarizes the results of a land use survey distributed with a map of proposed land use improvements by the City of Astoria as part of a process to develop a vision for its riverfront. This is the second in a series of three sets of maps and associated graphics designed to help illustrate the Astoria Riverfront Vision that will help guide the design of future public and private improvements. The map divides the riverfront into four areas based on the existing character of the riverfront and comments received through the planning process. The areas will act as core elements for the Astoria Riverfront Vision and are:

- Bridge Vista Area
- Urban Core Area
- Civic Greenway Area
- Neighborhood Greenway Area

The following is a summary of the survey results sorted by the four areas. A more detailed summary follows.

### Bridge Vista Area

A majority of survey respondents agree with the land use concept for the Bridge Vista Area. Respondents also agree with expanding the design overlay for the historic district, supporting water-dependent uses and strengthening connections to adjacent neighborhoods. A summary of written comments regarding proposed land use improvements in this area includes:

- Keep C2 zoning if alternative zoning lessens restrictions on development
- Keep building heights down and encourage historic architecture; encourage rehabilitation of run-down structures
- Expand/create more moorage space
- Redefine “working waterfront” to reflect current reality
- Do not support new development, especially development north of the railroad tracks and over the water; do not want condominiums or hotels
- Extend the Riverwalk over the water in public rights-of-way
- Protect riverfront habitat and preserve views
- City should Buy riverfront land to preserve open space
- Safety concerns along River Trail
- Disappointed with public involvement process
- Include the Port of Astoria in planning
- Do not create more murals

### Urban Core Area

Survey respondents are divided in their support for the land use concept for Urban Core Area. A majority of survey respondents agree with requiring new construction and redevelopment to respect local character and encouraging intimate open spaces and gathering places within new developments. A majority of respondents support establishing viewpoints along the river and extending the River Trail. A lesser majority agrees with encouraging mix of uses that compliment downtown development. A summary of written comments regarding proposed land use improvements in this area includes:

- Keep building heights low to protect views of the river; enforce existing codes
- Keep historic character of the riverfront
- No new development, especially condos and development on submerged lands
- Increase public access over the water through pedestrian walkways and docks
- Connect downtown to the river
- Preserve open space rather than promote development
- If the City does add development along the riverfront, it should be in this area
- Parking district concept is poorly defined
- Trade building height for building mass

### Civic Greenway Area

A majority of survey respondents agree with the overall land use concept for the Civic Greenway Area. A majority also agrees with developing open areas that provide broad views of the river and enhancing connections to the greenway from adjacent neighborhoods. A lesser majority agrees with locating new a new residential and mixed-use neighborhood east of Mill Pond. A summary of written comments regarding proposed land use improvements in this area includes:

- Commercial use should be compatible with residential areas; do not compete with downtown
- Keep bright lighting to a minimum
- Do not allow condominiums or development like Mill Pond
- Preserve views of the river and open spaces by accepting new development in this area
- Expand moorage access
- Do not allow overwater development
- Enhance greenspace along the river's edge; create areas for recreational use
- Encourage development south of the River Trail
- Good residential concept
- Clean up existing area

### Neighborhood Greenway Area

A majority of survey respondents support the land use concept for the Neighborhood Greenway Area. An overwhelming majority also supports protecting the visual and natural character of the area and maintaining open views of the river. There is much less support for minimizing the impact of pedestrians on neighborhood residents. A summary of written comments regarding proposed land use improvements in this area includes:

- Create a waterfront trust
- Increase public access to the water for boats and canoes/kayaks
- This area is a model for residential development while protecting visual and natural character
- Do not allow development north of the railroad tracks
- Pedestrians are good
- Improve existing buildings and public properties
- Use native plantings

Other Comments

- Explore creating a bypass for Highway 30
- Plan for rising sea levels
- Increase moorage space
- Protect public access to the river; do not build more condominiums
- Excellent process
- Where will funding for these improvements come from?
- New development should require a public vote

1. Do you agree with the overall land use concept for the Bridge Vista Area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
9.7%	9.7%	6.5%	25.8%	48.4%

1.a. Do you agree with expanding the design overlay for the historic district in this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
9.1%	3.0%	15.2%	27.3%	45.5%

1.b. Do you agree with supporting water-dependent and other uses in this area that are consistent with Astoria's "working riverfront?"

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
9.1%	3.0%	9.1%	9.1%	69.7%

1.c. Do you agree with strengthening connections to adjacent neighborhoods in this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
3.0%	0.0%	15.2%	18.2%	63.6%

1.d. Do you have any other comments regarding proposed land uses in the Bridge Vista Area?"

- Bond and Marine Drive junction needs more landscaping. Keep building heights down. Seawall.
- Zoning C2 in East area should remain.
- Expand or create more moorage space to the east of the west moorage basin. As the city grows more people mean more boats.
- Other than the "end of breakwater" location, I can see no other area where there is protection from structures north of the riverwalk, in sub-aquatic areas. In its utilization of the term "working waterfront," Astoria needs to revise the term "working." Its past mention and its past use have no relevance now.
- Why does the city continue to support a condo development right in the middle of this area? This is contrary to all the positive plans and the overall land use concept for the Bridge Vista area. As with other areas, keep new development south of the riverwalk. That could mean extending a boardwalk outward of buildings. Provide frequent, wide river corridors where possible.
- Limit over water construction, in fact all construction river side of the walkway to river dependant business.

- No proposal I can see to use existing piles from previous docks or use of this area. Which here or other areas could support a large public view dock and park- river aquarium memorial for the U.S.S. Astoria or what have you! Public access for citizens and visitors.
- No development on river side of trolley tracks.
- Height restrictions maintained. Intertidal/aquatic zones identified and when publicly owned, maintain restricted use. Mitigate for all construction that compromises salmon passage.
- Keep buildings low to preserve view shed. Keep architecture historic.
- No more hotels please.
- If we are able to sustain the visible character of a "working waterfront" in this area, it will do much to protect us from the appearance of an inauthentic gentrifications
- Everything you call out looks very appealing; however I do not know the differences between C-2 and "other" commercial zones, so I'm unable to comment on that proposed feature.
- I'm glad to see looking into the Alderbrook area. I hope it works with access from the trestles to shore.
- The city should buy all riverfront land and preserve as open space, picnic space for the public. Once land is built on it is lost forever for public use.
- Don't loose the small town charm with box condos.
- Heading west on riverfront trail, once you come to the bridge between Holiday Inn Xpress and NW Natural, the on and off of the bridge is slightly tricky and hazardous for bikers.
- What does #1a mean? What does #1d mean?
- I have some safety concerns with the riverwalk going through the industrial spaces Also I think there should be height and width limits with view corridors here as well.
- Need to see a zoning overlay for this area -- I'm skeptical of changing tourist zoning until I see how it fits in with adjacent zoning; this area should be overlaid on Port/Uniontown transportation plan, which has a much better map.
- I was very disappointed with this plan. In my opinion it proposes nothing grand, nothing innovative or exciting, and does little to nothing to restore the rivers edge in an environmentally or visually sensitive manner. The plan doesn't restore or protect the waterfront, it develops it. This is not a wise approach. Cities throughout the U.S which were built along water features have largely went the opposite direction. Buildings along the water have been removed and public areas developed in their place. The City of Portland's waterfront park is perhaps the best and closest example. Your plans seem to have this backwards. The plan shows a heavy pro-development influence. Open areas are built upon rather than removing structures from the water's edge. I think you need to start over. What kind of design and planning expertise has been utilized in the creation of this plan? I think you may need to bring in folks with waterfront planning and development expertise. You also seem to need help with public involvement. You don't compile comments that you receive and explain how they were responded to. Comments that I have made before seem largely to have been ignored, and I wonder if the comments of others have been taken seriously. If you ask for input you need to explain how you used the input you were given. You use the term "working waterfront" but you seem to exclude the logical location for such activities... the Port Properties. The Port of Astoria needs to be involved in the planning process and The Port Properties must be included in this plan. Vast over-water zoning areas still are shown on the maps. It's as if you expect that someday buildings will once again cover the entire shoreline of the Columbia River as they did in the 1920's. This is preposterous. The State and Federal governments would never allow this, and their views trump any thoughts that the City may have on this topic. Remove these

zones from your map once and for all. There seems to be an emphasis on encouraging commercial development in areas that are currently not developed instead of encouraging the rehabilitation of existing run-down structures near the river. I would create a zone that encompasses all existing commercial buildings in this district and call it something like "historic commercial restoration zone". Leave all existing open spaces on the river side of the riverwalk undeveloped and zone them as "conservation" or "public spaces". Explain the types of recreational uses that might be developed in these "public conservation zones." The term "public waterfront vision" seems more aligned with the best long-term interests of the City of Astoria, its citizens, and its long-term economic viability. You use the terms "Other Commercial and Tourist Commercial" on your map, but don't define them. It seems that there is a desire to make development easier and less restrictive in this zone. If so, I don't see why this is desired. One would think that greater restrictions would have been proposed not less. These are areas that are near to the river and development in these areas would not be desirable at least according to any contemporary river-front vision that I am familiar with. Is zoning in areas shown as light beige unchanged? If so what is it now? New development should be encouraged in these areas, not undeveloped or over-water areas. Restorations should be done in a manner that reflects the historic nature of the area. You should make it clear in the plan that you intend to restrict re-development in over-water areas so that eventually no over-water buildings exist in the City. Encourage existing over-water building owners to relocate to on-land sites by providing tax incentives and perhaps offer to trade for on-land building sites that have been acquired for this purpose (city shop, Lum's, Roller skating rink, etc.)

- I'd be wary of creating an abundance of murals that ostensibly depict historic conditions - overall effect is trash art.

2. Do you agree with the overall land use concept for the Urban Core Area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
25.0%	18.8%	0.0%	25.0%	31.3%

2.a. Do you agree with encouraging a mix of residential, commercial and water-dependent uses in this area that compliment downtown development?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
24.2%	3.0%	0.0%	33.3%	39.4%

2.b. Do you agree with requiring new construction and rehabilitated buildings in this area to respect local character?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
12.1%	0.0%	3.0%	15.2%	69.7%

2.c. Do you agree with encouraging intimate open spaces and gathering places within new developments?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
12.1%	0.0%	9.1%	24.2%	54.5%

2.d. Which concept(s) in the Urban Core New Development and Public Access to the River concepts do you support the most?

<i>Status quo</i>	<i>Access through middle of site</i>	<i>Viewpoints</i>	<i>River trail extension</i>
9.5%	16.7%	33.3%	40.5%

2.e. Do you have any other comments regarding proposed land uses in the Urban Core Area?"

- The highest density of housing in Astoria is over the "Urban Core." Developing the water front here has the greatest potential to revive river views for the most of people, so low height requirements are critical.
- Must keep flavor and history in front of all development for Astoria
- Access to the water is fine - but what about access on the water? Build canoe/kayak access points on these pedestrian walkways, and places where boats can tie up.
- Too dense not enough open and view space too high.
- The "hatched zones" seems to be an admission that we have no control over the waterfront - and that one way or another - something is going there. These things will subtract from socializing the downtown, not add to it. Survey the comings and goings of the Columbia House to see how many people utilize the downtown in their everyday lives.
- Connecting the river with downtown is important to commerce, tourism, and local use. More commercial and residential development south of the riverwalk and more open access to walking along the river should be a priority. I think it is critical that the river trail does not become a tunnel with a passage to the river every so often. Being able to walk along the river with a more panorama view is what should be preserved.
- I support enforcement of the existing height restrictions.
- It appears the planning is to accommodate large high rise development - access to riverfront from town is not planned - river front will be for large development - intimate open spaces seem envisioned so more room for development - why not large size character dock for tourists and residents of city with proper access?
- All of these plans serve developers and not the public. Who will live/work in these new buildings? Our core infrastructure needs improvement, not new buildings at this site. Greed is not good.
- Keep buildings low to preserve view shed from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. As much access to river as possible. Walking wall.
- No building should be between me and the river without some complete river access.
- If Astoria does add condos or other intense residential development, it should be here where the additional population will support commercial shops, restaurants, etc.
- The urban core parking district needs clarification, please. Does the word "district" here imply there will be a tax created to fund this parking facility? Will developers then be relieved from the requirement that they provide adequate parking to serve the purposes of their developments? Leaving that bill for everyone else to pay instead? Or will developers be "taxed" to build, maintain, and operate this central parking facility? Will the central facility lead to greater traffic congestion than it was intended to avoid? This idea has promise, but we need details and clarification to evaluate it. Regarding public access options for the urban core - option 4 is far and away the best. Option 3 is an acceptable choice. Option 2 is perhaps acceptable if the development is strictly for the public (e.g. retail stores, not residential). Option 1 stinks.
- Keep buildings to current height codes - limit number of expensive condos so waterfront is enjoyed by all rather than owned by a wealthy few.
- Instead of building all these condos why not fix up all the downtown buildings "Flavel" Force him to sell or fix up and rent out. You need to force your efforts on promoting the downtown and town in general towards tourism.



- Your questions are very misleading. All you want to do is build as many condos as you can "affordable living" is what you are calling it. You bend for local people with deep pockets.
- People come to see the "small town" and history not to look at all the condos that would be on the water. Seaside is a fine example of box ugly.
- Breakup the condos, have local business on a ground level for those to shop and a wrap around to complete the view, everyone wins.
- No new development. Any new construction replacing existing buildings should not be larger than the building being replaced. No building over submerged land.
- I think that for each foot of width that is granted for a view corridor a proportionate foot should be granted on the height. I think this would give a balance to developers and the public view for corridors. You wouldn't end up with monster buildings on the water but you also wouldn't end up with long 1 or 2 story spaces either. If they are single level or 2 level then they should allow for a diversion off the riverwalk that provides public access to the north side of the building. This will give the riverwalk more texture. I think that as much as possible should be done to enable developers to put high density residential in the urban core. The more we can get residents from needing and using cars the more vibrant and successful our downtown will be.
- Height limits, no condos over the water to block views.
- Need to see zoning map. There should be no residential zoning in water. There should be an industrial zone here to fit with previous uses and existing buildings. There should be a strict limitation on height in water. I don't understand the parking district idea.
- The comments I made for the Bridge Vista area also apply to the Urban Core area. There is no need to build structures over the water. There are many existing buildings in the downtown area that should be rebuilt to accommodate new uses. None of the concepts you show for Urban Core Development are acceptable. No development should be permitted over the water especially on the river side of the existing river-walk.
- It is disgusting that "sweeping views of the river" (even the absurdly reductionist "managed views through building corridors") have been eliminated from being the central theme of Astoria riverfront visioning! The "ASTORIA RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN IDEAS OCTOBER 2008" Urban Core plan makes no distinction between shorelands under private ownership, and the submerged or submergible lands that in the Urban Core universally belong to the people of Oregon, to be held in trust for the enjoyment of the general public. The plan nonsensically acts as if shoreland owners have a claim on submerged public lands superior to those of the general public; the urban core waterfront plan is more an over-water condo plan than a "Riverfront Vision." "Allow for a mix of commercial, residential, and water-dependent uses that support but don't compete with the downtown core" appears to be a condo-developer/restaurateur driven elimination of the existing requirement of ground floor river-oriented commercial 2.540.10(b).

3. Do you agree with the overall land use concept for the Civic Greenway Area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
14.7%	8.8%	2.9%	29.4%	44.1%

3.a. Do you agree with developing open areas that provide broad views of the river in this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
12.1%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	69.7%

3.b. Do you agree with locating a new residential and mixed use neighborhood east of Mill Pond?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
25.8%	16.1%	9.7%	25.8%	22.6%

3.c. Do you agree with enhancing connections to the greenway from neighborhoods adjacent to this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
12.5%	0.0%	15.6%	21.9%	50.0%

3.d. Do you have any other comments regarding proposed land uses in the Civic Greenway Area?"

- Commercial use needs to be compatible with residential area and keep the bright lighting to a minimum and shaded.
- Must keep the river in view - no condo block out - residential and tourist access use for all to enjoy.
- Expand moorage road or boat access at the east mooring basin on cities side of the causeway. Small boat/historical craft moorage at East end of Maritime Museum.
- If all the line work - with or without hatchwork - could be removed from the water, I could better understand what the immediate decisions should be regarding the shoreline line. What does all the demarcation in Alderbrook Bay mean?
- Yes! Residential south of the riverwalk and enhanced river edge greenspace. The museum, mill pond, Safeway and the eco based already "invite" people to enjoy the river views.
- Doesn't seem to envision anything of extraordinary support of Astoria character and needs!
- Use care with density and require sufficient parking and design review. Look closely at transfer patterns. Don't overwhelm those narrow streets that parallel Leif Erikson Way. Require distance width of a street plus sidewalk from railroad tracks to buildings - don't wall-in their walk.
- I think the Mill Pond is a great example of what NOT to repeat: cheap, junk houses stuffed cheek-to-jowl on a floodplain. Ugly and stupid. And who lives there? No one I know. Retain all that land for parks, trees, and children.
- This area has the best residential concept. These concepts should be incorporated in the other areas.
- Lots of green.
- Intentionally creating a second "hub" in a small community may be tricky if you are also trying to reinforce the downtown.
- All else being equal (though it never is) development south of the river trail is preferred over north of the trail. Therefore, if we can keep the river itself free of new development in this area, accepting new development as shown in your map would seem to be a reasonable trade.
- 3b – only if adequate parking, standard with streets and traffic light access to Hwy 30 provided. 3c – access by vehicle should be limited to neutral entrance, i.e. via Hwy 30 so neighborhoods are not inundated with parking and traffic from outside.
- Clean up what's there.
- Having a "condo builder on this committee is not a good idea or a fair one.

- The river is for the people, not for the few. To have a place in this area to play with their child/friend/dog is an experience anyone should be entitled to have rather than the wealthy only to enjoy the potential land use.
- NO RESIDENTIAL. Mill Pond is too dense! Building on pilings over the pond is ugly & dense. Stop future development on pile fields.
- I think this area needs one big grassy area for outdoor concerts/festivals or events so that instead of having things like the concert for big red at the fairgrounds we can host events downtown where people can walk to it and the downtown can benefit from it.
- Too many residences crowded together.
- No car access from neighborhoods, only pedestrian access. Car access should be from Highway 30. I'm violently opposed to residential zones as suggested. This should be a commercial, industrial and natural area zone. In general, this should be similar to Alderbrook zone to the east -- natural as possible, with unrestricted views of river.
- Your plans for the civic greenway area in general are much improved from than those of the previous two areas. However, you still show over-water zoning that to me causes the goals and objectives of this area to become questionable. Over-water land use zones need to be removed from the plan and city planning and zoning in these areas should be discontinued. You also don't really look at potential for redeveloping lands south of Hwy. 30 to reduce development pressures on river-front lands. I suggest that you establish a long-term goal of acquiring land for public use between U.S. Hwy. 30 and the river from Safeway to the Maritime Museum. I suggest that such activities as the football field, soccer fields, baseball fields and open parklands be created in this area. These would provide broad views of the river, yet provide for needed city functions. Lands now occupied by the football field, the school bus parking area and the run down building adjacent to it could be purchased and exchanged for lands in this zone. The baseball field and tennis courts could also be relocated to this area and more intensive development could occur in south of Hwy. 30 sites.

4. Do you agree with the overall land use concept for the Neighborhood Greenway Area?

<i>1, do not support at all</i>	<i>2, do not support</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, support somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly support</i>
12.1%	3.0%	3.0%	27.3%	54.5%

4.a. Do you agree with protecting the visual and natural character of this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	81.3%

4.b. Do you agree with minimizing the impact of pedestrians on neighborhood residents?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
9.4%	15.6%	21.9%	15.6%	37.5%

4.c. Do you agree with maintaining open views of the river in this area?

<i>1, do not agree at all</i>	<i>2, do not agree</i>	<i>3, no opinion</i>	<i>4, agree somewhat</i>	<i>5, strongly agree</i>
6.1%	0.0%	6.1%	9.1%	78.8%

4.d. Do you have any other comments regarding proposed land uses in the Neighborhood Greenway Area?"

- We need to create a waterfront Trust that can research waterfront leases and can try to purchase leases for preservation of undeveloped (except as park land) waterfront.
- Again more boat moorage - the area just east of pier 39 would be good for small boats (it is seasonably sheltered) if a lot of the old pilings are removed and docks added.
- Need public access to water and canoe/kayak launch.
- 4 and 4B the visual and natural character of this area can be protected without having to minimize population growth as long as visual access to the bay is part of building design.
- If Alderbrook Lagoon "park" is to be developed as the open public space on the waterfront, how could impact be minimized in the neighborhood?
- The mill pond village seems an obstruction to the line of development of the waterfront...impact of pedestrians should have been thought of when it was implemented, planned, and developed...Mill Pond Village, the misuse of the old fairgrounds...the tearing down and misuse of the old Safeway store does demonstrate the need of some real planning ... long range planning! I think the first thing planners for the waterfront should do is look at these mistakes and go from there. We need some development for the cities citizens not just for developers!
- No development on river side of trolley track!
- Notice how this historic neighborhood has houses with yards, space, and civic ownership. In contrast to the horrible condo-congestion of Mill Pond. Retain and enhance this area - it should be the model for future developments.
- Impact of pedestrians? We love walking people!
- I'd like to see more of what can be done with the existing "public" properties.
- Very good plans for this area.
- I hope this goes through, beautiful even. I grew up in this area. Everyone should enjoy.
- Building between Marine Drive and the river is a mistake that squanders Astoria's precious ambiance, we are a river city - why allow it to be blocked by even the most "friendly" building?
- Clean up what's there already.
- Look at the condos on 39th, not even full and building more. Shame on them GREED.
- Go indigenous not decorative flora. Show visitor what grows here and remove what doesn't. Being so far from a road on the lagoon should some emergency mechanism be considered?
- Does the fact that Paul Benoit lives in the Neighborhood Greenway area have anything to do with the "less development is better" and open view concepts?

5. Are there any other comments you would like to make?

- By pass (of Hwy 30 to 101) should be supported. Planning for rising sea levels is critical to be included on all planning and building requirements. Tsunami response plan needs to be in place before more building is permitted in Astoria.
- Do not loose the city to condoization.
- Pardon my scrawl - it is hard to write with these pens provided in the library! But this town likes to brag about its maritime history. In light of this, I think any waterfront vision plan is incomplete without consideration and plan for implementation of more moorage and boat space.

- Looking at "minimizing impacts of pedestrians" brings up a major concern for new development "on" or "in" the river in the urban core. I am concerned that planned boardwalks and extensions will be cut off to the public by residents. Can we ensure public access? New development already advertises private piers and private river access.
- Re above question, will the area west of the port and boat dry dock area be available for a public park? That would be preferable to the Alderbrook area.
- Excellent process.
- You have identified a slew of very attractive new features in these four areas that, taken together, go a long way to ameliorating the inevitable "condo-ization" of the river. But where will funding for these improvements come from? If they are only dreams with little chance of coming to fruition, then we are agreeing to something distasteful based on false promises of palliative measures.
- So appreciate your doing this process - well thought out :)
- I'm glad to see Astoria moving forward.
- Condo's take away what you need to save the history of the town. Also lodging is collecting a room tax, which a percent should be used exclusively for promoting tourism in this town. Save what's here DON'T BUILD MORE!
- Why waste everybody's time and money when in the end you will build what you want and where you want it and nobody can stop it.
- Any project that comes up that will change the landscape of any area. It should come up to a "public vote" because we can't trust our elected officials, they don't have the "public welfare" in mind. Just how much money will make on the venture.



## Development Code summaries

# Summary of Astoria Waterfront Zones and Regulations

The following is an overview of regulations related to riverfront development. A general description of each zone is provided along with common and specific development standards when applicable. A summary table highlights specific regulations, such as building height, lot size, landscaping, lot coverage and parking.

## **AQUATIC ZONES**

### ***Aquatic One Development Zone (A-1)***

Provide for the maintenance, enhancement and expansion of areas, activities and structures needed for navigation and for water-dependent industrial, commercial and recreational uses. Water-related industrial, commercial and recreational uses are also provided for where such uses are consistent with the purpose of this Zone.

### ***Aquatic Two Development Zone (A-2)***

Enhance the unique character of the Downtown Waterfront and Maritime Museum subareas by providing for their redevelopment as mixed-use areas; the redevelopment to occur in a manner that is compatible with the retention and expansion of existing water-dependent uses. The mix of water-dependent and non-water-dependent uses shall provide for public access where feasible.

#### **Specific Development Standards:**

- Special siting standards:
  - 25 foot set back from a line extending from a point of intersection of a City right-of-way and the shoreline of the Columbia River Estuary, to the pierhead line.
  - Buildings shall be located as close to the bankline as practical, except where necessary to provide loading and unloading, or parking or to provide an aesthetic feature such as an open water area adjacent to the shore. Not applicable to deep water, water-dependent uses.
  - Buildings should minimize the impact of views on surrounding or adjacent properties through orientation or location on the site.
  - Water-oriented uses that provide public leisure and recreation opportunities shall occupy at least 75% of the ground level building facade facing the waterfront.
- Certain office and service uses are permitted where they are part of a mixed-use development that also includes some of the tourist-oriented uses, under the following conditions:
  - Single-Story Structure: The uses shall constitute no more than 25% of the total project's gross floor area
  - Multi-Story Structure:
    - 1) The uses shall constitute no more than 50% of the total project's gross floor area; or
    - 2) A multi-story structure which maintains at least 75% of the ground floor or street level space for tourist-oriented uses as listed above, may devote 100% of the upper floors to non-tourist oriented uses.

### ***Aquatic Two-A Development Zone (A-2A)***

Provide for its redevelopment as a mixed-use area while permitting exclusive office use on piling supported structures. The mix of uses shall provide for public access where feasible.

#### **Specific Development Standards:**

Residences are permitted when part of a mixed-use development that also includes tourist-oriented uses under the following conditions:

- Single-story residences shall constitute no more than 25% of the total project's gross floor area.
- Multi-story structures shall conform to one of the following options:

- Constitute no more than 50% of the total project's gross floor area; or
- A multi-story structure which maintains at least 75% of the ground floor or street level space for tourist-oriented uses as listed above, may devote 100% of the upper floors to residences

## **COMMERCIAL ZONES**

### ***Tourist Commercial Zone (C-2)***

Provide suitable locations for tourist commercial facilities and certain tourist related establishments; preferably in close proximity to an arterial street or highway. Enhance the attractiveness and convenience of the facilities for tourist use and achieve compatibility with adjacent residential areas and overall community design objectives.

#### **Design Review Standards:**

- Take maximum advantage of river views.
- Height, mass, and scale shall be compatible with the site and adjoining buildings. Use of materials should promote harmony with surrounding structures and the character of the waterfront.
- Stylistic features characteristic of the historic Astoria area and the Pacific Northwest are preferred.
- Design in gateway structures will acknowledge potential impacts on the entire community
- Variety of detail, form and siting should be used to provide visual interest. Large expanses of blank walls shall only be located in areas which are not visible to the public.
- Buildings should minimize the impact on views and vistas from surrounding or adjacent properties through orientation or location on the site.

### ***General Commercial Zone (C-3)***

Provide for a wide range of commercial businesses, including most of those allowed in other commercial zones. Appropriate for uses requiring a high degree of accessibility to vehicular traffic, low intensity uses on large tracts of land, most repair services, and small warehousing and wholesaling operations.

### ***Central Commercial Zone (C-4)***

The commercial center of the Astoria urban area and focal point for retail trade, services, professional, financial, and governmental activities. The uses permitted are intended to be compatible with the locale's pedestrian orientation, so off-street parking is not required.

## **INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL ZONES**

### ***General Industrial Zone (GI)***

Provide appropriate areas suitable for such uses as warehousing, processing, packaging and fabricating of finished goods and equipment with related outdoor storage and incidental sales. secondary purpose is to provide areas for other moderate-intensity, complementary and supporting land uses that serve the area and contribute to a mixed-use environment. Buildings, streets, bike and walking paths, and open space will be configured to create a convenient and aesthetically pleasing environment.

### ***Institutional Zone (IN)***

This zone is intended to facilitate uses such as parks, public works, schools, museums, open space, and similar activities on property which is presently committed to such uses.



## **RESIDENTIAL ZONES**

### ***Medium Density Residential (R-2)***

Provide an area for medium density residential development, at a maximum density of 16 units per net acre including single-family dwellings and duplexes as outright uses and multi-family dwellings as a conditional use.

### ***High Density Residential (R-3)***

Provide an area for high density residential development not exceeding an average density of 26 units per net acre, accessory uses, and certain public uses.

## **SHORELANDS ZONES**

### **Common Development Standards**

- Accessory structures in the Marine Industrial Shorelands Zone are limited in size to a maximum of 10% percent of the lot or parcel size.

### ***Marine Industrial Shorelands (S-1)***

Manage shorelands in urban and urbanizable areas especially suited for water-dependent uses and to protect these shorelands for water-dependent industrial, commercial and recreational use. Includes areas with special suitability for water-dependent development, such as access to well scoured deep water and maintained navigation channels, existing developed land uses, potential for aquaculture, feasibility for marina development, and potential for recreational utilization.

### ***General Development Shorelands Zone (S-2)***

Provide an area where a mixture of industrial, commercial, residential, public and recreational uses can locate. Uses which are water-dependent or water-related and other uses which would benefit from a water-front location are preferred.

### ***Tourist-Oriented Shorelands Zone (S-2A)***

Provide for mixed-use tourist oriented development that retains and takes advantage of the working waterfront character of the area. Uses permitted are intended to be compatible with pedestrian orientation. The emphasis is on the rehabilitation and reuse of existing structures.

### **Specific Development Standards:**

- New or renovated storefronts will be designed to relate to existing adjacent businesses in terms of scale, color and use of materials.
- Where appropriate, store front windows along north-south streets will be restored to "display window" condition.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS					
<u>ZONE</u>	<u>HEIGHT LIMIT</u> (above grade)	<u>LOT SIZE</u>	<u>LANDSCAPING/YARDS (Article 3)</u>	<u>LOT COVERAGE</u>	<u>PARKING (Article 7)</u>
A-1	None	NA	NA	NA	
A-2	45 feet*	NA	NA	NA	Off-street parking not required between 8th and 14th streets.
A-2A	28 feet	NA	NA	NA	
A-3	20 feet	NA	NA	NA	
AH-MP	35 feet**	NA	NA	NA	
C-2	45 feet	NA	10% minimum landscaped open area.	90% maximum	Provide joint access and parking for more than one use where feasible.
C-3	45 feet	NA	10% minimum landscaped open area.	90% maximum	Provide joint access and parking for more than one use where feasible.
C-4	45 feet	NA	NA	NA	
GI	45 feet	NA	10% minimum landscaped open area.	90% maximum	Provide joint access and parking for more than one use where feasible. On-street parking may be applied toward minimum parking requirements.
IN	45 feet	NA	20 foot front yard min. 5 foot side yard min.; 15 ft. side yard for corner lots. 20 ft. side yard min.; 5 ft. for corner lots.	NA	Provide joint access points and parking facilities for more than one use where feasible.
HR	45 feet***	NA	10% minimum landscaped open area.	NA	
LS	35 feet	NA	NA	NA	
MH	45 feet	NA	NA	NA	
R-2	28 feet	Min. lot size - 5,000 sf • Two-family dwelling - 7,500 sf • Multi-family - 5,000 sf + 2,500 sf/unit Min. lot width – 45 feet Min. lot depth – 90 feet	20 ft. min. front yard. 5 ft. side yard min.; 15 ft. side yard for corner lots. 20 ft. side yard min.; 5 ft. for corner lots.	40% maximum	
R-3	35 feet	Min. lot size - 5,000 sf • Two-family dwelling - 6,500 sf • Multi-family - 5,000 sf + 1,500 sf/unit Min. lot width – 45 feet Min. lot depth – 90 feet	20 ft. front yard min. 5 ft. side yard min.; 15 ft. side yard for corner lots. 20 ft. side yard min.; 5 ft. for corner lots.	50% maximum	
S-1	None	NA	NA	NA	Uses located between 8th and 14th Street are not required to provide off-street parking or loading.
S-2	28 feet*	NA	NA	NA	
S-2A	28 feet*	NA	NA	NA	Off-street parking not required between 8th and 14th streets.

\*45 feet for areas between the extended 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> St. r-o-w & between the extended 6<sup>th</sup> St. r-o-w and the Astoria-Megler Bridge.

\*\*45 feet for structures on lots with frontage on Marine Dr & Lot 47 & in Mill Pond Village having frontage of 29<sup>th</sup> & Waterfront St.

\*\*\*Hotel will not exceed 60'