

**CITY OF ALBANY
NORTH ALBANY REFINEMENT PLAN
TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #5**

WORKSHOP #4 SUMMARY

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Technical Memorandum #5 – Workshop #4 Summary
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1. WORKSHOP #3 OBJECTIVE

To assist in the development of the North Albany Refinement Plan, a series of four (4) community workshops have been planned. The overall objective of the workshop series is to develop a preferred land use plan for North Albany, including assessment of the potential to design the Hickory Street area as a walkable neighborhood-scale commercial center, creating a gateway to North Albany, and strengthening the link to downtown. The objective for Workshop #4 was to present the draft North Albany Refinement Plan, including the draft Hickory Street Plan, to the public. The contractor was to review the findings to date, facilitate a public comment session and summarize community input obtained. This memorandum summarizes Workshop #4.

2. WORKSHOP PROCESS

Workshop #4 was held at Albany City Hall, 333 Broadalbin Street, on Tuesday evening, April 15, 2003, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The room was set up theater style with seats facing the front of the room. Three easels were set up – two displaying draft Plan diagrams and the third holding a flip chart to record public comments.

The Workshop began with city staff presenting the status of the project and what has transpired since last year's Workshop #3, including the additional traffic impact analysis and City Council adoption of a new Mixed-Use Commercial Zoning Ordinance, applied in the Hickory Street area. Following the staff presentation, the consultant team presented the highlights of the draft North Albany Refinement Plan. Large color graphics of a draft refinement plan diagram and draft Hickory Street zoning diagram were reviewed. In addition, large presentation-size character sketches of cluster residential neighborhoods, commercial streetscapes and rural and suburban arterial streetscapes were presented. The workshop concluded with a general question and comment period and a summarization by the consultant of themes heard in the evening's comments.

As an additional public comment vehicle, a comment card was made available to Workshop attendees to provide comments on the draft Plan not otherwise verbalized in the public comment session. Comment cards and flip chart comments were collected. The results of the public comment are presented below.

3. INFORMATION SHARED

7:00 p.m. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Workshop was convened by Rich Catlin, city staff and North Albany Refinement Plan project manager. Rich reviewed the agenda (Attachment A),

introduced staff, local elected and appointed officials, and State of Oregon representatives.

7:05 p.m. PROJECT PROCESS

Rich Catlin review project-related activities with Workshop attendees, summarizing project progress occurring since Workshop #3. Following Workshop #3, two items emerged needing attention that were not on the original project's list of activities. The first was the issue of short-term traffic impacts. It was determined that additional traffic analysis, focusing on the year 2020 level of projected residential and commercial development, would be of benefit in developing the North Albany and Hickory Street Plans. This additional analysis was conducted this past fall and winter. The second issue was that commercial developer interest emerged regarding the Hickory Street neighborhood. In that regard, city staff developed, and City Council adopted, a new mixed-use commercial zoning ordinance and applied it select area in the Hickory Street neighborhood. With the additional traffic analysis providing confidence in emerging draft plan recommendations, and the new mixed-use zone providing marketplace flexibility for commercial developers, the project was ready to move forward.

7:10 p.m. WORKSHOP #4 AGENDA

Rick Satre, consultant team project manager, provided an overview of the Workshop agenda.

Plan Status

- The draft North Albany Refinement Plan is a work in progress.
- This draft is available for public review.
- Full text is on the City's project website.
- Presented at the Workshop are some of the Plan's diagrams and illustrations.
- The Plan will eventually go before the City Council and public hearings will be held to provide additional venues for public review and comment.
- But first, an opportunity to review the draft plan at this evening's Workshop.
- A brief presentation, with maximum time allotted for questions and comments.

7:15 p.m. REVIEW OF DRAFT PLAN

Rick Satre presented a brief review of initial Project Objectives (Attachment B) and previous Public Comment (Attachment C).

Project Objectives

1. Highway Capacity.
 - Preserve and enhance the "through movement" of Highway 20 in North Albany.
 - Consider alternatives that may delay the need for Highway 20 capacity improvements.
2. Transportation.

- Establish a land use pattern that reduces reliance on the automobile.
 - That reduces overall household trip generation and trip length.
 - That provides maximum opportunity for the use of bicycles, walking and transit.
3. Rural Atmosphere and Aesthetics.
 - Designate land uses and apply land use patterns for livable neighborhoods.
 - Include mixed-use and village and neighborhood centers.
 - Apply use of “rural cluster” housing and land development techniques.
 - Preserve scenic vistas and open space.
 - Increase efficiency in the use of land.
 4. UGB and Annexation.
 - Delay the need for expansion of the UGB through the creative application of higher-density land use patterns. Do so while maintaining the livability of the area.
 5. Housing Needs.
 - Ensure that development occurs at the densities and mix needed to meet the City’s housing requirements. Do so while limiting impacts on transportation, other systems.
 6. Utilities and Infrastructure.
 - Identify land use patterns that economize the extension of utilities (water, sewer).
 7. Natural Resources.
 - Identify land use and development guidelines that respect the significant environmental constraints posed by the floodplain, steep hillsides, and wetlands.
 8. Employment Opportunities and Access to Goods and Services.
 - Provide commercial retail and services land uses to meet daily needs of North Albany Residents.
 - Provide close to home employment opportunities.

Previous Public Comment

North Albany

1. Keep rural atmosphere.
2. Buffer wetlands from residential development.
3. Make sure wetlands stay within development, not mitigated elsewhere.
4. Provide walkways and bikeways in addition to street system.
5. Emphasize local streets and connectivity, minimize new arterials.
6. Preserve tree canopy.
7. Keep scenic views.
8. Keep development out of Crocker Creek.
9. Cluster housing is a nice concept.
10. Don’t forget about parks.
11. Plan for street improvements and emergency services as population grows.
12. Balance traffic congestion with land uses. Coordinate development with utility extension.

Hickory Street

1. Allow for flexibility and opportunities to respond to market demand.
2. Provide opportunities to live in the village center. Provide a variety of housing types.
3. Provide a range of services – accommodate daily commercial needs – especially a grocery store.
4. Mix land uses.
5. Provide a park and ride lot.
6. Provide a centrally located neighborhood park. Around the pond is a good idea.
7. Give commercial development frontage on North Albany Road.
8. Provide visibility from Highway 20 and North Albany Road.
9. Provide sufficient vehicle access and parking.
10. Don't change zoning or add new streets between Hickory Street and Hwy 20.
11. Retain flood storage capacity, flood drainage channels.
12. Include bike and pedestrian facilities and connections to overall North Albany area.

Rick presented the draft North Albany Refinement Plan Diagram (Attachment D) and the draft Hickory Street Zoning Diagram (Attachment E). He reviewed the significant attributes of each of the two plans.

North Albany Attributes

- Preservation of rural character (through application of cluster residential development, flexible street profiles, and alternative stormwater drainage measures).
- Preservation of significant natural features and open spaces (through application of same above attributes, plus identification of an open space overlay designation).
- Minimizing vehicle trips and length of trips (through application of small neighborhood commercial nodes geographically disbursed to key intersections in the study area).
- Preservation of Highway 20 and key arterial and intersection vehicle capacity.
- Efficient use of public resources through efficient extension of roadways and public utilities.
- Identification of network of future neighborhood parks and off-street multi-use pathway system.

Hickory Street Attributes

- Preservation of existing community commercial zone.
- Application of new Mixed-Use Commercial zone.
- Application of medium-density residential zone adjacent to community and mixed-use commercial areas.
- Pedestrian linkages through Hickory Street Village Center and linkages from Hickory Street to the greater North Albany area.
- Recommendation for new bike/ped bridge across Willamette River.

- Walkable local street and pedestrian friendly streetscape site development standards.
- Recommendation for neighborhood open space.
- Open space overlay designation or use of conservation easement concept to preserve storm drainage and flood storage swales.

City of Albany staff provided three additional handouts, which Rick utilized to help illustrate some of the above key plan attributes. Rick reviewed the previously presented Green Infrastructure Concept (Attachment F). Developed by the University of Oregon neighborhoodsLAB, Green Infrastructure involves a multi-pronged approach to minimizing the conventional piped public storm drainage system through the use of bio-swales, rain planters, wet ponds, and drainage corridors. Public investment is economized, storm water is filtered through natural processes, and ground water is re-charged.

Rick also reviewed the previously discussed concepts of cluster residential development and small lot, high quality residential development that could occur in both low density and medium-density residential areas (Attachments G and I).

Rick summarized the additional traffic impact analysis conducted since Workshop #3. This further analysis documented that Highway 20, Willamette River Bridge and key roadway and intersection capacity, including projected residential and commercial development and population changes, through the year 2020 remained at acceptable levels. Both short term and long term traffic mitigation measures have been identified.

Short Term Traffic Mitigation Measures (through 2020)

- Key arterial and collector street extensions.
- Disbursed minor neighborhood commercial nodes.
- Park & Ride facility in Hickory Street area.
- Extended public transit along key routes in North Albany.
- On- and off-street bike and pedestrian circulation system.
- Bike and pedestrian bridge across Willamette River, linking North Albany with downtown.
- Efficient use of land through the application of the Village Center designation in Hickory Street and introduction of the cluster residential concept.

Long Term Traffic Mitigation Measures (for consideration beyond 2020)

- Long term planning for possible future high school in North Albany.
- Long term planning for possible employment centers along key highway or arterials in North Albany.
- Exploring concept of a light rail transit system utilizing existing railroad line connecting downtown Albany with Downtown Corvallis.

7:35 p.m. PUBLIC COMMENT & QUESTIONS

Rick polled the audience and solicited comment on key plan attributes, including:

1. Residential Land Use.
 - Low-density residential, rural character and cluster development.
2. Commercial Land Use.
 - Hickory Street Commercial Mixed-Use and Community Commercial.
 - Small neighborhood commercial nodes.
3. Natural Resource Preservation.
 - Cluster residential development to help preserve steep slopes, existing woodlands, wetlands, creeks and drainages and open spaces.
 - Open space overlay to help protect wetlands and drainages.
4. Transportation.
 - Key roadway extensions.
 - Mitigation measures.

Ensuing public comment was generally supportive of the draft North Albany and Hickory Street plans and their key attributes and concepts. Primary questions were posed regarding implementation details in terms of concept definitions and examples and implementation timelines. Public comments were recorded on the flip chart and by way of comment cards (Attachment I).

8:45 p.m.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Rick asked the workshop audience for general concurrence of several plan attributes. These included:

1. There is general interest in the cluster residential concept. Spell it out clearly in the final document.
2. There is interest in the street design options. Like the flexibility and opportunity to preserve some rural atmosphere.
3. There is interest in the alternative stormwater management concepts.
4. Preserve the rural atmosphere.
5. Spell out clearly in the Plan that higher density does not preclude open space and rural atmosphere.
6. Let the marketplace work.
7. Agree that if a larger grocery store/commercial development goes in Hickory Street area, that other small commercial development is not needed in the short term, but is a good idea for long term planning.
8. Long-term ideas include improved railroad crossings for emergency and connectivity needs and commuter train between Corvallis and Albany.

9:00 p.m.

ADJOURN AND THANKS

Rich Catlin thanked attendees for their participation and encouraged everyone to remain involved.

4. PROJECT PROGRESS SUMMARY

Following Workshop #4, the consultant team and city project manager met briefly to summarize Workshop #4 results and note next steps in the process. It was the general consensus that the plan is heading in the right direction and has general support from the public. Items of note included:

1. Clarify some of the concepts and recommendations in the final draft plan.
 - Cluster residential.
 - Open space overlay.
 - Alternative storm drainage management and bio-swales.
 - Conservation easements.
2. This clarification could include:
 - Adding a ‘problem statement’.
 - Adding an expanded definition.
 - Citing examples.
 - Including additional graphics or photos.
 - What it is; what it does.
 - Frame concept as an opportunity.
 - I.e., not creating open space, but protecting it, avoiding, minimizing or mitigating impacts.
 - Identify a ‘sliding scale’ of mitigation actions.
3. In the implementation chapter (and implementation task), address:
 - Standards.
 - Processes.
 - Predictability in interpretation and application of standards and processes.
4. Next tasks:
 - Rick – type and distribute tonight’s comments.
 - Rich – provide additional feedback from tonight’s public comment (if any), review comments from latest draft plan, and direction on changes to incorporate in the final draft plan.
 - Team – Steve, Thomas, Ron – be prepared to assist Rick and Terri regarding any of the above clarification ideas.

In summary, tonight’s draft plan is closing in on a final draft document. The final draft plan will be delivered to Albany and TGM representatives by the end of April. May will be a key month as Comprehensive Plan, Development Code and Transportation System Plan amendments are generated.

~~~ End of Memorandum ~~~