

CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL AMENITIES

GOAL 8: RECREATIONAL NEEDS

PARKS AND RECREATION BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Albany, like many cities in Oregon, has been challenged to meet increased community demand for parks and recreation facilities and services with static or shrinking resources. There is a high level of demand in Albany for parks and recreation services. This demand level is partially the result of Albany's role as a regional center. Available data does not accurately reflect actual population service levels, but it is estimated that the Albany Parks and Recreation Department may serve almost double the city's current population. This is evidenced in the high participation and attendance rates in Senior Center programs. Also, Albany's relatively large number of active, young residents contribute to high participation rates. About sixty percent of the city's population is younger than 34 years.

Other reasons for increased demand include factors which have influenced recreation activity throughout the United States. These factors include increasing per capita amounts of leisure time, growing participation in recreation activities, greater usage of close-to-home recreation facilities, etc.

Since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1980 and through innovation and resourcefulness, Albany has made additional progress in providing for the recreation and leisure needs of its citizens. Park lands have been acquired through donation, purchase, and the subdivider's reserve fund as provided for by the Albany Subdivision Ordinance. Within recent years, several parks have been developed using a variety of state and federal grants in combination with local funds. Parks Department operations are supported through a 2 mill continuing tax levy.

As of 1986, Albany has a total of 410 acres of public park land and open space, of which 262.64 acres are developed. This is an increase of 140 acres from the 1980 total of 270 acres. There have been several significant park development projects since adoption of the 1980 Comprehensive Plan which have improved the extent and quality of park lands in Albany. These are:

Monteith Riverpark: Monteith Riverpark is a "dream come true" for Albany. This park was completed in 1983. It spans twelve blocks along Albany's Willamette River waterfront. Monteith Riverpark won the Oregon Parks Design Award by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Society. The park features picnicking, boat moorage, a shelter pavilion, bicycling and pedestrian paths, river viewpoints, and a concert stage. The Monteith Riverpark summer concerts have become one of the region's favorite summer activities. The concerts draw thousands of enthusiastic spectators every year.

Neighborhood Park Development: To meet the need for close-to-home recreation opportunities, Albany has developed three new neighborhood parks: Teloh-Calapooia in South Albany (11 acres completed in 1985), Pineway in the Oak neighborhood (.87 acres completed in 1983), and Deerfield in the Periwinkle neighborhood (6.6 acres completed in 1984).

Takeena Landing Acquisition & Development: The City of Albany acquired approximately 70 acres of land bordering the Willamette River from the Oregon State Highway Division in 1983. Adjacent to this property, the City also has a lease agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation for use of an additional 30 acres. The Takeena Landing property runs for approximately one and one-half miles along the river directly across from downtown Albany. The property was developed in 1988. An access road, parking lot, boat ramp, and day use areas were constructed. Also, a hiking/nature trail was developed along the length of the property.

Other Projects: The Albany Parks and Recreation Department has continued to enhance the range of park facilities offered to Albany residents. Since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, improvement projects have been ongoing in all existing parks. These projects have included new restrooms, playgrounds, hard court areas,

picnicking areas, shelters, trails and bikeways, irrigation and lighting systems, improvements to the community swimming pool, and extensive landscaping and tree planting. The Parks Department has completed development plans for most of the existing park lands, including Timber Linn Park, Albany's largest facility. The Parks Department also maintains a structured Parks Capital Improvement Program.

In 1985, the National Recreation and Park Association conducted a nationwide survey of the types and quantities of park and recreation facilities possessed by municipal and county park and recreation agencies. From this information, nationwide facilities data was acquired for cities between 25,000-50,000 in population. Albany compares favorably with other cities in this population range in most facilities categories except total acres of community park land and in the area of community recreation centers. The average number of park acres for the 142 cities surveyed was 968.45, compared to 410 acres for Albany. The surveyed cities also had an average of 1.67 community recreation centers compared to none for Albany. However, the Albany area compared favorably in the total number of park sites, 23 compared to the national average of 22.5.

Albany has close to the amount of park land recommended for neighborhood and community parks, 410 existing acres compared to a recommended acreage of 490 when national per capita acreage standards are applied to Albany's current population of 27,911. By the year 2005, these standards call for 688.42 acres of neighborhood and community parks to meet the needs of the City's projected population. However, the above does not include the need for regional or natural parks. National standards call for an additional 15 acres of regional park land per 1,000 persons. To meet the standards for regional or natural parks, an additional 493 acres is required for 1986 and 688 acres for the year 2005. Currently, Albany residents do not have easy access to large regional park lands. Citizens must travel considerable distances to the larger county, state, or federal parks.

Currently, Albany is in good standing in relationship to basic park facilities except tennis courts. National standards call for 10 public courts to be available in a city of Albany's size. Albany has four. In addition, Albany appears to be short in relationship to the recommended miles of walking and bicycle trails.

In areas where parks are located adjacent to schools, the City relies upon the school/park concept to provide recreation opportunities. The Department has year-round use of the schools within the city limits when they are not needed for school uses. The school/park program provides for year-round education and activity centers, eliminates duplication of facilities, and provides larger and more attractive school and park sites.

There are several other organizations which help meet Albany's recreational needs. These include the Albany Boys and Girls Club, Albany Tennis Club, Mid-Willamette Valley YMCA, Albany Athletic Club, the Golf Club of Oregon, and Spring Hill Golf Club. Both golf courses are just outside the city limits in the North Albany area.

The Albany Parks and Recreation Department operates a year-round recreation program. The program offers a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation activities for all age groups. During the last five years, recreation programs have shown a continued increase in attendance. Program fees and charges partially pay for operational costs. Citizens outside the city limits pay a slightly higher fee than Albany residents. In 1986, Albany voters approved an \$800,000 bond to remodel and substantially expand the Albany Senior Center. Recreation, information and referral programs, nutrition, and health clinics are offered at this facility. Attendance rates indicate that a large percentage of Albany's seniors use the Senior Center, as do a significant number of seniors from the adjacent Linn and Benton County areas.

The Albany Parks and Recreation system has become a more important part of the community's positive self-image during the past few years. Albany's park system plays a positive economic and promotional role for the city and attracts and provides recreation facilities for many visitors to Albany. Several annual community and regional programs and events rely on Albany's parks, including the annual Timber Carnival, Monteith Riverpark Summer Concert Series, Summer Fling Jazz Festival, Spring Arts Festival, and several softball tournaments.

GOAL 8: RECREATIONAL NEEDS

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

GOAL

Provide a high quality and diversified system of safe and attractive parks, open space, recreation programs, and facilities to:

1. Facilitate community access to leisure, recreation, open space, and cultural opportunities.
2. Meet the varied recreation and leisure needs of Albany's citizens for self-expression, creativity, achievement, imagination, relaxation, and enjoyment.
3. Enhance the beauty, livability, and positive image of Albany.

POLICIES

1. Continue to provide and develop a system of multi-purpose parks and facilities that consider:
 - a. Opportunities for both passive and active recreation.
 - b. Recreation and leisure needs of Albany's special populations (i.e. the handicapped, elderly, low-income, and others whose activity capabilities or geographic mobility are limited).
 - c. Protection and enhancement of natural environmental qualities and values.
 - d. Albany's existing natural resources such as drainageways, rivers, woodland areas, and other scenic and open space features.
2. Where possible, locate schools and parks on the same or adjacent sites and encourage the maximum use of public school facilities for community recreation and other purposes.
3. Promote a variety of public and private recreation and leisure opportunities for Albany's citizens including:
 - a. The use of park and recreation facilities by community service organizations to provide special human services such as health maintenance and information programs, nutrition and meal services, outreach and transportation programs, etc.
 - b. The transfer of lands to the City of Albany that are desirable for park and open space uses that are owned by individuals, corporations, or other agencies.
 - c. Public recreation on lands and facilities committed to private and public purposes including federal properties, utility easements, and corporate and institutional properties.
 - d. The development of private facilities and programs (such as golf courses and racquetball, health, and sports clubs).
 - e. Where feasible and appropriate, the lease of public lands to private recreation providers for recreation services that serve the public interest.
4. Promote the development of linear parks that incorporate hiking, jogging, and bicycle trails and/or provide buffers between incompatible uses.
5. Develop Albany's Willamette River parklands and encourage development of those parklands within proximity to the Albany area as a major recreational focus. In particular, promote the following:
 - a. Continued use of Monteith Riverpark for a variety of cultural and social events.
 - b. The development of Tadena Landing Park as a "river-user" resource by developing boat launching, nature trails, and camping opportunities.

- c. The development of pedestrian and bicycle paths along the Willamette River linking major recreation facilities and nearby communities.
- 6. Maintain and enhance the role of the cultural arts for all ages in Albany’s recreation programs.
- 7. Provide an appropriate level of neighborhood park and recreation facilities to both developed and developing neighborhoods which lack readily accessible neighborhood recreation facilities.
- 8. Use the following minimum standards as guidelines to public policy and action in facilitating communitywide provision of parks and open space:

Neighborhood parks, school parks, playfields	= 5 acres/1,000 population
Community parks	= 10 acres/1,000 population
Regional parks	= 15 acres/1,000 population

AREA FOR SERVICE

<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>1,000 POP.</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>USUAL FACILITIES & REMARKS</u>
Neighborhood Park	Up to 5 acres	1.0 acre	Up to 1/2 mi. radius	Softball & other games, equipment, multiple use areas, turf, and planted area connect with open space links as desirable.
School Park	10 acres	1.5 acres	1/2 mi. radius	Adjoining the elementary school near the center of neighborhood.
Playfield	10-15 acres	2.5 acres	1 mi. radius	Baseball, softball, tennis, football, & other activities; athletic areas connected with open space links as desirable; community center & swimming pool. Lighting for night off-street parking is required.
Total Neighborhood Parks		5.0 acres		
Community Parks	20 acres min. others as apply	10 acres	2 mi. radius	Active areas similar to playfield, but should provide picnicking, hiking, archery, shelters, swimming pool, space links, & conservation.
Regional Parks	100-300 acres min.	15 acres	25 mi.	Nature study, open space links, conservation areas, golf course, hiking trails, fishing & boating, play areas, active athletic area.

Based on the above general formula, except where superseded by special circumstances, the provision of park lands shall be provided as follows:

- a. Through development regulations which provide for dedication of park lands or fees in lieu thereof and which ensure provision of neighborhood parks, school parks, and play fields commensurate with the needs of new growth.
- b. Allocation of fees paid in lieu of park land dedication shall go toward park land acquisition or improvements in the same neighborhood area as the development.

- c. All other public recreation facilities intended to meet the communitywide needs of Albany, including the development of community and regional parks, shall be the responsibility of the community-at-large.
9. Promote major recreation and cultural activities (such as the Monteith Riverpark concert series, summer softball program, historic tours, etc.) as tourist attractions and coordinate these activities with the Albany Convention and Visitors Commission when possible.
 10. Maintain an active park and recreation planning effort to:
 - a. Identify existing and future recreation needs of Albany’s citizens.
 - b. Acquire program funds and other resources to meet identified needs.
 - c. Promote citizen involvement in the planning for and delivery of public recreation services.
 - d. Coordinate the development, promotion, and provision of recreation services, facilities, and programs with the efforts of other public, quasi-public, and private interests.
 - e. When possible, identify and acquire park sites in advance of urban development to avoid future acquisition costs.
 11. Promote the park system as a cornerstone of Albany’s attractiveness as a place to visit, live, and conduct business and thereby provide the budget to ensure a high level of park maintenance, landscape enhancement activities, and ongoing capital improvements.

IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

1. Ensure that energy considerations are addressed when planning for and providing recreation facilities by:
 - a. Providing for maximum pedestrian and bicycle access to recreation activities, parks, and other open space areas.
 - b. Developing “close-to-home” recreation facilities.
 - c. Coordinating park and transportation planning to ensure parks and other recreational facilities are accessible by a variety of transportation modes including public transit.
2. Encourage the development of neighborhood park facilities on undeveloped or under-utilized school sites.
3. Provide for a system of fees and charges to support recreation services which includes:
 - a. Reduced fees and charges based on the ability to pay for senior adults, disabled, and low-income persons.
 - b. A schedule of higher fees for out-of-city residents to pay the actual costs of recreation activities and programs in which they participate in lieu of taxes which city residents are required to pay. Fee payments for out-of-city residents shall be limited to no greater than twice that which city residents pay.
4. Maximize user-hour benefits, relative to each activity and participant, for each public dollar expended for the provision of recreation service opportunities.
5. Identify and pursue various means of funding special recreation programs for disabled persons.
6. Provide an appropriate level of cost subsidization to the following recreation and leisure categories:
 - a. Services and activities not furnished by the private sector and used by a significant segment of the community including citywide competitive sports activities, senior adult programs, community cultural and performing arts programs and events, municipal pool program, non-profit youth organizations.
 - b. Recreation and leisure services used by special groups (i.e. the disabled, senior adult, and low-income

persons) that provide a direct social benefit to the community and which cannot be self-supporting through user fees.

7. When possible, negotiate with the private sector to encourage the granting of public easements and donations or bargain sales of land desirable for parks and open space.
8. Maintain a commitment to stable funding sources for the Albany Parks and Recreation Department such as the 2 mill levy and user fee charges.
9. Continue to utilize state and federal grant programs to help support park development and recreation programs.
10. Augment recreation staff capabilities by:
 - a. Utilizing student internship programs.
 - b. Utilizing community service workers when possible.
 - c. Utilizing federal and state employee programs when feasible.
 - d. Encouraging and utilizing voluntary labor when possible to assist in promoting and providing park and recreation services. Volunteer organizations may include neighborhood, senior citizen and youth groups, garden clubs, National Guard, and other service organizations.
11. Maintain, regularly update, and post regulations governing park use to increase the use and enjoyment of city parks.
12. Coordinate with private, quasi-public, and other public agencies to provide balanced, cost efficient, citywide recreation programs and services.
13. In cooperation with quasi-public, private, and other public interests, concentrate on meeting the following current unmet recreation needs:
 - a. Social and special events for teenagers.
 - b. Cultural enrichment programs/events for children.
 - c. Activities and organized events that focus on involving the senior population in community life.
 - d. Nature related activities for all ages.
 - e. Self-supporting, after-school programs for children of working parents.
14. Coordinate with the following agencies and jurisdictions to acquire future park sites within the Albany Urban Growth Boundary:
 - a. Linn and Benton Counties.
 - b. Greater Albany Public Schools.
 - c. Parks Division of the Oregon Department of Transportation and other state and federal agencies.
15. Utilize a variety of methods to determine community needs and preferences for recreation facilities and programs including:
 - a. Needs assessments and other statistically valid surveys.
 - b. Neighborhood meetings.
 - c. Goal setting workshops.
16. Develop and periodically update a comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan to provide long-term direction for provision of park and recreation services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage Benton County to acquire park lands in North Albany through gifts, donations, or establishment of a special purpose subdividers' park fund to generate funds for park land acquisition and development within the North Albany Urban Growth Boundary.
2. Encourage the development of a regional park in close proximity to the Albany urban area.
3. Encourage the private sector to provide recreation services where there exists a sufficient market to provide a profit while keeping user costs affordable to the population as a whole.

GOAL 5: OPEN SPACES, SCENIC & HISTORIC AREAS, & NATURAL RESOURCES

AESTHETICS AND URBAN DESIGN BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Community aesthetics and appearance are important elements of a community's well-being. This is apparent in many ways. In residential areas, neighborhood appearance directly affects property values. Appearance and aesthetic quality also reflect community pride and may further affect neighborhood stability and environmental health. Commercial areas have a vital stake in their own aesthetic quality. Not only can a pleasant shopping area attract customers, but good aesthetics also attract them to stay. An attractive community also aids industrial development. A positive image can help in the recruitment effort since a growing number of firms perceive quality of life as a major benefit. Also, with good design, the overall business climate may be enhanced by reducing residential and industrial conflicts.

The most important areas in which to emphasize good aesthetics are those which are seen the most. Such areas include commercial strips along major arterials (i.e. Pacific and Santiam Highways) and other commercial districts (i.e. the Central Business District). Because of minimal landscaping, congestion, and competing signage; the Pacific Boulevard-Santiam commercial strips present an image of Albany which does not reflect the community's true character. This is also true of the image many people have of Albany when traveling Interstate-5. That part of the community viewed from the freeway is almost entirely dominated by heavy industry.

Albany has significant visual and aesthetic resources. The most important are those of the Willamette River Greenway and the community's unique historic architecture. It is important to protect and enhance these resources. An important part of urban design is the type and location of vegetation. The need for vegetation in the urban environment and related policies are discussed in Chapter I of the Comprehensive Plan.

Albany's older neighborhoods contain a large number of mature trees and shrubs which provide shade and lend substantial beauty and charm to the older portions of Albany. Street trees are required in new developments, but there is a lack of vegetation in many of Albany's newer neighborhoods. Vegetation is also scarce along the Santiam Highway and the southern strip of Pacific Boulevard. These highway commercial strips represent Albany's highest visibility areas. Some visual improvement was made at the north Pacific Boulevard/I-5 interchange with the completion of Waverly Park and the highway couplet. A street tree planting program has improved several areas downtown. The City's urban forestry program includes a free street tree planting program and recommendations for street trees, planting and maintenance. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]

The planning approval process is also an important part of providing for urban landscape and vegetation. The use of vegetation for aesthetic purposes, such as the creation of buffer zones between incompatible development or street tree planting, can help improve the livability of the Albany area. . [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]

Since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, there have been several projects and programs that have enhanced Albany's aesthetic image. One of the most recent positive occurrences is the growing public awareness that appearance and aesthetic quality is important to community image. The following are the most significant accomplishments during the last twenty-five years.

PARK DEVELOPMENT

Albany has pursued an aggressive park development program. Monteith Riverpark along the Central Business District waterfront and Waverly Park along the Pacific Boulevard entrance to the city each received the Oregon Park and Recreation Association Design Award in 1984 and 1985 respectively. Albany has also developed and improved several neighborhood parks during this period. These improvements have contributed significantly to the quality and aesthetic character of Albany's neighborhoods.

SIGN CODE ADOPTION

Albany adopted its first comprehensive Sign Code in October 1984. The Sign Code provides equitable methods of accomplishing business identification, reduction of signage conflicts, increased traffic and pedestrian safety, and enhancement of the aesthetic value and economic viability of the community.

The Sign Code also has a “take down” provision that takes effect within seven years of its adoption for those existing, non-conforming signs which are not in conformance with its provisions.

HISTORIC ALTERATION AND DEMOLITION ORDINANCE

In 1985, the City adopted an Historic Alteration and Demolition Ordinance that provides for review of exterior alterations to historic structures within the historic districts. This ordinance provides for maintenance of the historic districts’ architectural and aesthetic integrity.

ALBANY DEVELOPMENT CODE

The Development Code provides for appropriate landscaping and/or screening and buffering for all new commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments. These provisions have resulted in substantial aesthetic improvements in Albany’s commercial and industrial districts. Many developers realize the importance of good aesthetics to overall project character and have provided for site design features and landscaping in excess of the City’s requirements. The Albany Development Code also provides for underground utilities in all new residential subdivisions.

MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS

There have been several programs and projects in addition to the above that have resulted in a marked difference in Albany’s appearance. The most significant of these are:

- 1. City of Albany Downtown Street Tree Planting:** In 1983, Albany received a federal grant to plant 150 street trees in the Central Business District.
- 2. 8th Avenue Historic Information Gazebo and Victorian Garden:** Through cooperation between the Albany Historic Tours Committee, adjacent businesses and residents, St. Mary’s Catholic Church, and the City of Albany; a two-block section of unpaved city street was developed into an attractive parking lot and Historic Information Center. Volunteers developed and maintain a Victorian Theme Garden on this site that has drawn attention from throughout the region. This project has additional significance because of its location at the Highway 20 entrance into downtown Albany.
- 3. Albany/Millersburg I-5 Enhancement Project:** This project, developed through the Albany/Millersburg Chamber of Commerce, proposes to create an attractive landscape along the Interstate 5 interface of Albany and Millersburg. The purpose of the concept is to mitigate the negative views presented to passing motorists by the two cities’ industrial districts and to minimize the negative environmental impacts the freeway has on adjacent land uses. Implementation of the program has begun. In 1986, 300 trees were planted on the site of Willamette Industries’ paper mill.
- 4. Other Projects:** Several other projects and programs have been undertaken that have had substantial impact. The Albany Downtown Association Streetscape Committee regularly meets to investigate ways to improve the appearance of the Downtown District. Results of their efforts have included building facade improvements, street furniture placement, and attractive new signage. The City of Albany has developed a planning document entitled, City of Albany Beautification Opportunities. It is an analysis of beautification opportunities and constraints within each of Albany’s separate neighborhood districts. During the last five years, the City has also funded several landscape/beautification projects intended to improve the appearance

of public property. General city appearance has also been improved through utilizing community service workers for litter cleanup, landscape maintenance, and other tasks.

Much has been done to improve Albany's aesthetic quality and image. However, enhancement of community image is an ongoing process that needs the daily attention of Albany's residents and leaders. A positive image and a high quality of life are some of the major benefits a community can offer its citizens.

GOAL 5: OPEN SPACES, SCENIC AND HISTORIC AREAS, & NATURAL RESOURCES

AESTHETICS AND URBAN DESIGN GOAL, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

GOAL

Improve Albany's image, livability, appearance, and design quality through aesthetic enhancement.

POLICIES

1. Expansion and new development projects shall be designed and landscaped to complement and enhance the appearance of the development site and surrounding area.
2. Develop and maintain a sign code to:
 - a. Provide equitable and economic methods of business identification.
 - b. Reduce signage conflicts.
 - c. Promote traffic and pedestrian safety.
 - d. Increase the aesthetic appearance of the city.
3. Develop enforcement procedures to abate dangerous and nuisance-creating situations to promote compatibility and reduce conflict within neighborhoods and between different land uses.
4. Continue to develop and implement aesthetic enhancement programs that will improve Albany's image.
5. Recognize and protect the unique aesthetic contribution that the Willamette and Calapooia Rivers lend to the Albany area.
6. Preserve and enhance desirable and distinctive neighborhood features which satisfy the following criteria:
 - a. Are commonly recognized features by neighborhood residents as desirable and distinctive?
 - b. Are features which can be preserved and enhanced without significantly impairing development or redevelopment opportunities in conformance with other Comprehensive Plan and Development Code provisions?
 - c. Are features which can be preserved and enhanced through consideration of design alternatives in development and redevelopment projects?
7. Develop and implement a landscape enhancement program for Albany that:
 - a. Enhances Albany's appearance and image.
 - b. Creates an attractive and comfortable environment for Albany's residents and visitors.
 - c. Maintains and manages existing vegetation resources.

. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]
8. Utilize landscaping around public buildings and spaces, including parking lots to improve Albany's appearance and image.

. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]
9. Encourage the upgrading of existing developments to meet current Development Code landscape requirements. Emphasis shall be placed on landscaping.

. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]

IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

1. Provide site design review assistance for new developments (industrial, commercial, multi-family, and planned residential developments) and those that constitute a major change or expansion of use in order to:
 - a. Ensure compliance with the Albany Development Code.
 - b. Determine the most efficient means to provide public facilities and services.
 - c. Suggest methods to enhance the project's aesthetic quality, protect and enhance on-site natural features, and to mitigate adverse impacts on adjacent or surrounding property.
2. Periodically review past development proposals that required planning approval to determine compliance with development conditions and the standards of the Albany Development Code.
3. Maintain development standards that assure compatibility of commercial and industrial areas with surrounding land uses, including residential neighborhoods. Pay particular attention to areas adjacent to residential streets, Pacific Boulevard, Santiam Highway, and those adjacent to or visible from Interstate 5. These standards may include:
 - a. Setback, buffering and landscape provisions, and other site amenities including screened refuse disposal.
 - b. Traffic safety considerations including provisions for safe pedestrian movement.
4. Periodically review and, if necessary, update Development Code requirements and other policies and ordinances that address issues of public nuisance and community appearance.
5. Develop programs and regulations which will result in the underground placement of existing overhead utilities.
6. Continue to develop area improvement plans which show what aesthetic improvements could be made and at what cost. Existing strip commercial areas should be considered a priority.
7. Increase the aesthetic and design quality of the downtown commercial core through:
 - a. The use of vegetation and maintenance of the existing street trees.
 - b. Regulation of signs and other forms of on-street advertising.
 - c. Increased design orientation towards the Willamette River.
 - d. Alleyway improvements.
 - e. Encouraging the use of well-designed and functional streetscape improvements such as street furniture (drinking fountains, benches, trash containers, bicycle racks, information centers, etc.), decorative pedestrian scale street lights, planting and maintenance of street trees and other forms of landscaping, sidewalk improvements, bus shelters.
 - f. Utilization of the Historic Alteration and Demolition Ordinance to promote design consistency within the Downtown Historic District.
 - g. Improvements of Parking Assessment District properties, particularly those parking lots adjacent to the waterfront.

[The following implementation methods were relocated from Chapter 1, per Ordinance 5764, effective December 1, 2011.]

8. Encourage and, when appropriate, offer assistance to utility companies to improve line clearing practices to avoid public safety hazards associated with improper pruning and improve the health and aesthetic contribution of Albany's street trees.

9. Undertake the following as part of the City of Albany's aesthetic and landscape enhancement programs:
 - a. Develop and implement comprehensive street tree programs that includes planning for, planting, and maintenance of trees in all areas of the community including all street rights of ways, public open space areas, and on the grounds of all institutions.
 - b. Encourage neighborhood organizations, schools, and service clubs to participate in tree planting programs and other landscape enhancement efforts.
 - c. Adopt city street tree regulations and standards.
 - d. Implement an ongoing and professional maintenance program for Albany's street trees and other vegetation within public rights of way and on other public properties.
 - e. Ensure that trees are part of the landscape design for all developments except where they are determined to be inappropriate or present hazards.
 - f. Encourage local industry to use appropriate vegetation to visually enhance development sites and provide buffering from incompatible uses.
 - g. Develop landscapes around public buildings and spaces, including parking lots to improve community appearance and image.
 - h. Encourage property owners to improve and maintain their landscapes, including provision of replacement vegetation when older, deteriorated vegetation is removed.
 - i. When necessary, provide an appropriate level of site design and landscape planning assistance.
 - j. Develop, maintain, and distribute public information pertaining to site planning, landscape design, appropriate use of plant materials, and other technical information.
 - k. Improve Albany's appearance along Interstate 5.
 - l. Where possible, promote the energy saving benefits of appropriately planted vegetation.
10. Utilize the report "City of Albany Beautification Opportunities - Phase I" as a guide to implement specific landscape development and community beautification programs for:
 - a. Albany's residential neighborhoods.
 - b. Major city entryways.
 - c. The downtown commercial core.
 - d. The Willamette River waterfront.
 - e. The Pacific Boulevard and Santiam commercial strips.
 - f. Industrial areas.
11. Except for single family and two family residential development, require developers to utilize the skills of landscape architects, landscape designers, or otherwise receive City approval of landscape designs, and guarantee the completion of landscape requirements (i.e. through performance bonding or by setting aside funds for landscaping).
12. Require the continued maintenance of landscaped areas in accordance with Development Code requirements and conditions of planning approval.
13. Require the establishment and maintenance of landscaped areas in all parking lots to provide shade and visual amenities, except where site conditions are inappropriate or where hazards would result. Landscape development in parking lots should emphasize the following:
 - a. The planting of broad spreading trees to provide shade and mitigate the negative visual and environmental impacts of parking lots.
 - b. Installation of other plant materials in a manner to provide effective screens between parking lots and adjacent uses.
14. Develop specific urban design and beautification measures for the Pacific Boulevard and Santiam commercial strips whereby:

- a. Specific site design, landscape, and street tree design improvements are developed for each establishment.
 - b. Funding alternatives are developed that utilize a combination of private, city, state, or federal funds.
 - c. For projects which funding sources become available, completion shall be accomplished within five years of the acquisition of funds.
15. Where appropriate, street design and construction standards shall provide for a planter area between the curb and sidewalk in all areas used by pedestrians, including residential and commercial areas and areas in close proximity to schools to provide:
- a. Pedestrian safety by separating the sidewalk from the street.
 - b. Beautification and visual amenity.
 - c. Shade and buffering from streets.
16. Pursue redesignation for Albany as a “Tree City USA” sponsored by the National Arbor Day Association. Designation requires the following:
- a. Expenditure of at least one dollar per capita for maintenance, preservation, and planting of street and other publicly-owned trees.
 - b. Adoption of an ordinance providing for the protection and planting of street trees and other trees on public properties.
 - c. Formation of a Shade Tree Advisory Committee to guide the City’s tree program and to formulate policy.
 - d. Holding an annual Arbor Day celebration and tree planting event.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage Pacific Power and Light Company to develop a long-range plan to reduce visual clutter within the Albany downtown and elsewhere through relocation and undergrounding of utilities.
2. Encourage the Albany Downtown Association to provide building and facade design assistance to downtown merchants and property owners.
3. Encourage the Albany/Millersburg Chamber of Commerce to provide leadership and coordination to implement the “Albany/Millersburg Interstate 5 Enhancement Project.”
4. Encourage the Historic Tours Committee and other organized historic groups to maintain the historic information center as an entry focal point to the downtown.
5. Encourage Albany/Millersburg industries to develop buffering and landscaping programs to enhance the appearance of their sites.
6. Encourage Albany area schools to make an ongoing commitment involving students and school district resources to plant and maintain shade trees on school grounds and other public places. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]
7. Encourage the Oregon Department of Transportation to improve and maintain the Interstate 5 landscaping along Albany’s interface with the freeway. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]
8. When private property is unavailable, encourage the Oregon Department of Transportation to allow Albany businesses to utilize the undeveloped portion of right-of-way along Pacific Boulevard and Santiam Highway to meet landscape requirements. [Ord. 5764, 12/01/11]