

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When was the current Comprehensive Plan adopted?

A: The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted on January 27, 2014. As noted in its preface, "The plan update is the first major revision to the Forest Grove Comprehensive Plan since the mid-1980s. Much has changed since that time. Forest Grove has become much more integrated with the Portland region. Our economy has diversified and new neighborhoods providing housing for workers in Hillsboro and western Washington County have been built. This change brings both opportunities and challenges. It is these opportunities and challenges that the plan addresses."

Q: Can we change what was adopted in the Comprehensive Plan?

A: Comprehensive plans are living documents and can be changed; however, this project is focused on implementation of adopted Comprehensive Plan policies which requires amending the Development Code.

Q: Why is there a need to amend the Development Code?

A: The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document – it lays out the overall goals for how the city should grow and develop. The Development Code provides the specifics: how wide streets should be, how many residential units are permitted on a property, how close buildings may be to a property line, etc. Those are the kinds of details this project will address.

Q: What is the difference between the Comprehensive Plan and zoning?

A: The Comprehensive Plan is a policy document – it lays out the overall goals for how the city should grow and develop. The Comprehensive Plan does not apply directly to development applications; those are reviewed according to the criteria contained within the Development Code. Communities are separated into areas with different land uses, also called zones. Zoning laws help promote orderly, cost-effective community growth. All lands with the city have been zoned on the basis of Comprehensive Plan policies, existing uses and desired patterns of future development.

Q: What are the objectives of this project?

A: Project objectives include the following:

- Creation of a mixed-use zone and design standards for three areas with the goal of encouraging the placement of complementary land uses to promote more complete neighborhoods. The mixed use zone may contain specific standards for any or all three areas. These areas are located at the southeast corner of Sunset Drive and Highway 47 (a.k.a. the Davidson site); the northwest corner of Thatcher Road and David Hill Road (a.k.a. the David Hill site); and at the Thatcher Road and Gales Creek Road intersection.
- Expanding the Town Center boundary from Cedar Street to Elm Street.
- Evaluating whether the three existing Town Center zones should be consolidated.

- Increasing the target and maximum residential densities in the Town Center.
- Developing a list of project amenities and enhancements that would be required for builders to receive density bonuses above the target density.
- Recommendations for regulatory strategies to promote the development of more residential and commercial/residential buildings on the south side of Pacific Avenue on either side of Highway 47, and along existing retail strips.

Q: What flexibility is there for the zoning amendments to implement the Comprehensive Plan action?

A: The very purpose of this project is to examine multiple approaches to implementing the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. For example, while three mixed use areas have been identified, they do not necessarily have to be regulated the same way – each could have unique land uses and design characteristics.

Q: Why is this project focused on just the study areas shown on Figure 1 and will there be any impact on other parts the city?

A: As noted above, the City recently completed a major update to the Comprehensive Plan. During the course of that update, it was noted that the planning for certain areas needed further refinement. The mixed use areas are proposed for complementary land uses to promote more complete neighborhoods. The Town Center has been expanded to encourage more downtown-style development along the Pacific / 19th corridor to Elm Street. Higher residential density has been suggested in the Town Center and along the Pacific and 19th transit corridor. Because the project is focused on the Town Center, mixed use areas, commercial corridor and the Pacific Avenue / Highway 47 intersection, there should not be any significant impact on other parts of the city.

Q: What types of changes could result from this project?

A: The Development Code could be amended to allow higher residential densities in the Town Center, establish a new list of uses permitted in the three mixed use areas (which may be unique to each area), create new design standards for the Town Center and mixed use areas, and create a list of design amenities and enhancements that could be employed to allow even greater densities. Examples of possible design amenities could include such features as pedestrian plazas, awnings over the public sidewalk, private courtyards, and use of high quality building materials such as brick.

Q: What is the project schedule and what are the opportunities for public participation?

A: It is anticipated that the project will be completed by November 30, 2015. The project consists of six tasks:

Task 1: Project Kick-Off. This task has been completed.

Task 2: Evaluation of Existing Regulations and High-Density Residential Development. This task has been completed.

Task 3: Public Outreach. Several community and stakeholder meetings are proposed -

- *Community Meeting #1* will present the goals of the project; demonstrate how high density residential and mixed use development can be compatible with liability and a small town setting; and solicit feedback on the most appropriate type of high-density residential development, desire project enhancement and amenities required for residential density bonuses, and other project goals. **This meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, March 12th from 4 pm to 8 pm. It will be held in the Community Auditorium at 1915 Main Street. All are invited.**
- *A stakeholders meeting* will discuss the mixed use zone for the Gales Creek Road / Thatcher Road area. The purpose of the meeting will be to present a possible vision for the area, explain the project goals, and solicit feedback from area property owners and neighbors. Invitees will include area property owners and neighbors. This meeting has not yet been scheduled.

Task 4: Regulatory Strategies to Promote Mixed-Use Development. The consultant and City staff will confer so that the consultant gains a better understanding of why mixed use development has not occurred in the areas where it is already permitted.

Task 5: Code Drafting.

- City staff and the consultant will convene a *stakeholder work session* to gather input from stakeholders on possible development code and zoning map amendments.
- City staff shall convene a Planning Commission work session to gather input from the commission on possible development code and zoning map amendments.
- *Community Meeting #2* will present possible development code and zoning map amendments to the public at large.

Task 6: Final Code Draft and Adoption.

- *A Planning Commission public hearing* will be scheduled to receive public testimony and make a recommendation to the City Council.
- *A City Council public hearing* will be scheduled to receive public testimony and adopt the code and map amendments.

Q: How is this project being funded?

A: The project is partially funded by a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. The TGM grant is financed, in part, by federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21), City of Forest Grove, and State of Oregon funds.

Q: Who's working on this project and who should I contact if I have questions?

A: City staff working on this project include:

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