



MEMORANDUM

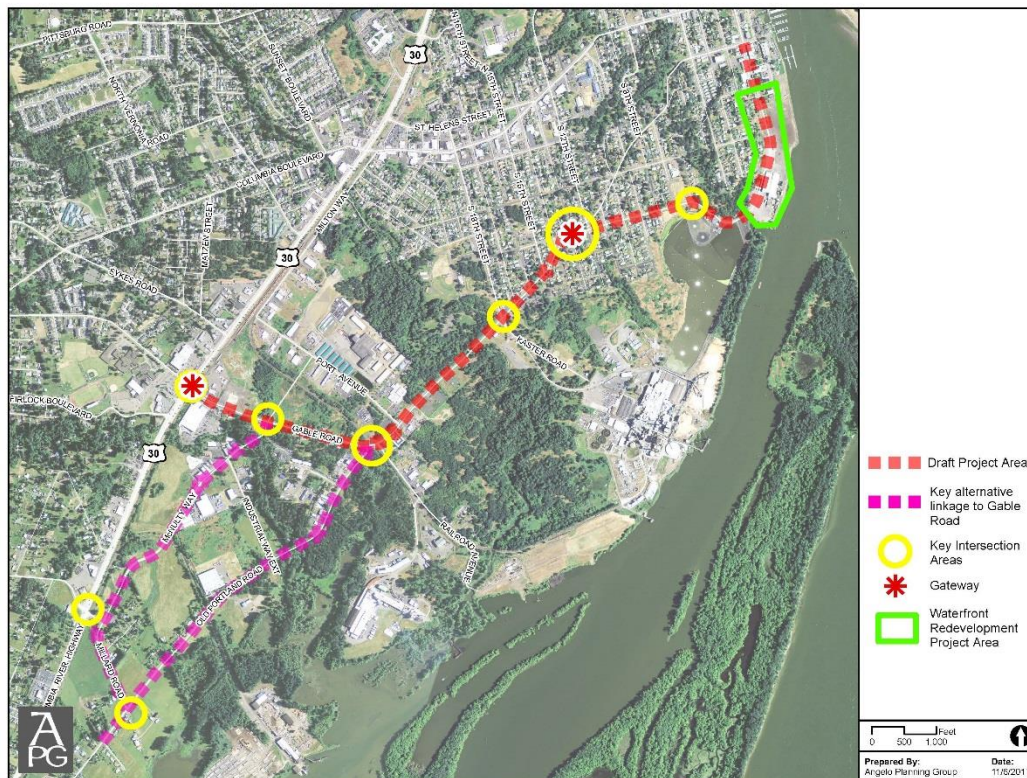
Technical Memorandum #1
City of St. Helens Riverfront Connector Plan

DATE February 6, 2018
TO Project Management Team
FROM Matt Hastie and Kyra Haggart, Angelo Planning Group
CC

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this background document report is to provide an overview of the policies, standards, and practices related to corridor planning as they apply to the study area, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Study Area



The documents that were reviewed for policies, standards, and practices related to access management, highway design, signals, crosswalks, street lighting, and landscaping include the following documents, as identified in Task 2.3. Policies, standards, and practices applicable to the study area and related topics were not necessarily found in every document.

- Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 734 Division 51 – Access Management Rule
- 2006 Oregon Transportation Plan
- 1999 Oregon Highway Plan and amendments
- 2016 Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- 2012 Highway Design Manual and amendments
- 2016 ODOT Traffic Manual
- Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 734 Division 20 – Traffic Control
- 2011 St. Helens Transportation System Plan (TSP)
- 2016 St. Helens Waterfront Framework Plan
- 2017 St. Helens Branding & Wayfinding Master Plan
- 2017 St. Helens Urban Renewal Plan & Urban Renewal Report
- 2005 St. Helens Strategic Plan
- 2007 Economic Development Plan
- 1997 A Vision for the St. Helens in the Year 2020
- St. Helens Municipal Code Chapter 17.32 Zones and Uses

Corridor planning elements listed below, as identified in Task 2.3, have been expanded to include planning elements identified in Task 7.2 (Draft Implementing Policies and Ordinances). These elements will potentially be the subject of plan and code amendments needed for implementation of the corridor plan. Elements outside public right-of-way may be addressed only nominally and insofar as they interact with elements in the right-of-way.

Streetscape and street design elements (inside right-of-way):

- Access management (driveways and curbcuts)
- Highway design
- Signals
- Crosswalk enhancements (paving, pavement markings, signs, advance stop bars, lighting)
- Street lighting (pole design, banner hangers, flower baskets)
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections between commercial, public, and residential uses
- Streetscape
- Lane widths
- Mid-block curb extensions (wider sidewalks, potential pedestrian crossings)
- Curb extensions (designs, dimensions, uses of additional space, landscaping)
- Sidewalk paving (materials and patterns)
- Street trees (locations, grates or pavers, species)

- Setbacks
- Parking and parking lot landscaping and design
- On-site stormwater management that can include green streets strategies

Site design and building design/orientation (outside right-of-way):

- Building street interface and presence, including orientation, windows, awnings and overhangs
- Architectural design
- Building height and massing
- Gateway treatments
- Direction signs & wayfinding
- Public art locations
- Street furniture (locations, benches, trash cans, and style)
- Walls and fences
- Special opportunity areas that can include small plazas
- Mixed use development

The corridor planning study area includes the following corridor segments:

- **South 1st Street Segment.** South 1st Street is located within the City's Riverfront District. It will continue to provide multi-modal access to local businesses within the Riverfront District, and will serve as a primary route within the redeveloped Riverfront District area. The portion that is within the redeveloped waterfront site will be a walkable street that supports the redevelopment of a vibrant waterfront district and provides access to the area from surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Plymouth Street, northern Old Portland Road, and Gable Road Segments.** These roads will provide multi-modal connections to the waterfront redevelopment site, the surrounding Riverfront District, and adjacent neighborhoods. Street designs will incorporate opportunities for landscaping, wayfinding signage, and gateway features that direct people to the Riverfront District.
- **McNulty Way and southern Old Portland Road Segments.** These roads will provide an alternative route to the area from US 30. Proposed street and intersection designs for these segments will focus on key intersection improvements, wayfinding signage, and multi-modal connectivity, and support the access needs of adjacent land uses.

This report begins with background in the general planning context provided by State documents and local documents. Then the report moves into more specific corridor planning elements, organized by those inside the right-of-way (Streetscape and Street Design) and those outside the right-of-way (Site Design and Building Design/Orientation).

PLANNING BACKGROUND

Statewide Planning Context

The following statewide planning documents impact the St. Helens Riverfront Connector corridor planning process.

Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 734 Division 51 – Access Management Rule

Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 734-051 defines the State’s role in managing access to highway facilities in order to maintain functional use and safety and to preserve public investment. The rule includes spacing standards for varying types of State roadways and criteria for granting right of access and approach locations onto State highway facilities.

Amendments to OAR 734-051 were adopted in early 2012 based on passage of Senate Bill 1024 and Senate Bill 264 in the 2010 and 2011 Oregon Legislature respectively. The amendments were intended to allow more consideration for economic development when developing and implementing access management rules and involved changes to how ODOT deals with approach road spacing, highway improvement requirements with development, and traffic impact analyses requirements for approach road permits.

Senate Bill 408, which passed in the 2013 legislative session and became effective January 1, 2014, addressed three priorities: existing approaches (private driveways) without ODOT’s written permission; access management in highway facility plans; and access management in highway project delivery. The legislation provides new requirements for access management in the development of highway facility plans such as interchange area management plans and corridor plans, and requires collaboration with local governments in determining the location of local roads that intersection highways in the planning area. The legislation also directs ODOT to develop an access management strategy¹ for each highway modernization or improvement project. ODOT must develop key principles for each facility plan, which will be used to evaluate how abutting properties may retain or obtain access to the State highway during and after plan implementation. In developing the key principles, the department must also develop a methodology to weigh the benefits of a highway improvement to public safety and mobility against the locally adopted Transportation System Plan (TSP) and land uses permitted in the local comprehensive plan, as well as the economic development objectives of affected real property owners who require access to the State highway. If a facility plan identifies the need to modify, relocate or close existing private approaches, the plan must include key principles for managing access to the State highway and a timeline for plan implementation. Each facility plan also must document that there was

¹ The 2011 City of St. Helens Transportation System Plan Update defined an access management plan for City streets and US 30 through the community. The preparation of the current Riverfront Connector Plan will address access management and comply with OAR 734-051 and the TSP-defined access management strategy.

collaborative discussion and agreement between the department and the affected cities and counties regarding the location of County roads and City streets that intersect a State highway within the study area. Senate Bill 408 resulted in the adoption of two permanent rules by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC): 734-051-1065 Restriction of Turning Movements for Existing Approaches, and 734-051-3015 Presumption of Written Permission for an Existing Private Connection. Additionally, fifteen (15) existing permanent rules were amended, and five previously adopted temporary rules were repealed.

OAR 734-051-4020 (Standards and Criteria for Approval of Private Approaches)

Revised spacing standards were established in 2012 for new or modified approaches to statewide highways.² The amendments allow access management plans to establish spacing standards that may take precedence over the highway/approach spacing standards in the rule.³

Improvements that are proposed in corridor plans will need to meet these standards or move “in the direction of the access management spacing standards” by means of an access management strategy, plan, or mitigation proposal.⁴

Any recommended changes to existing access points or new access points from US 30 will need to meet or move in the direction of compliance with spacing standards in OAR 734-051. To be consistent with the direction provided in Senate Bill 408 and the resulting adopted and amended permanent rules, the development and evaluation of alternatives to address identified transportation system deficiencies should acknowledge the impacts and benefits to the local economy, as measured by adopted local land use designations (allowed uses) and economic development objectives and, to the extent known, the economic development objectives of property owners. While these standards are important in maintaining the integrity of state facilities like US 30, they will have a relatively minor impact on the Riverfront Connector Plan, given that the study area only interfaces with US 30 at two intersections.

Oregon Transportation Plan (Updated 2006)

The Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) is a comprehensive plan that addresses the future transportation needs of the State of Oregon through the year 2030. The primary function of the OTP is to establish goals, policies, strategies, and initiatives that are translated into a series of modal plans, such as the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) and the Oregon Bike and Pedestrian Plan (OBPP). The OTP emphasizes:

- Maintaining and maximizing the assets in place;

² Tables 3 through 6 in OAR 734-051

³ Pursuant to OAR 734-051-4020(8)(b)(C), spacing standards in AMPs may take precedence only over spacing standards in Tables 3-5 of OAR 734-051.

⁴ OAR 734-051-1070(2), (3), and (4)

- Optimizing the performance of the existing system through technology;
- Integrating transportation, land use, economic development, and the environment;
- Integrating the transportation system across jurisdictions, ownerships, and modes;
- Creating sustainable funding; and
- Investing in strategic capacity enhancements.

The 2011 City of St. Helens Transportation System Plan Update identified future transportation needs within the study corridors. The current Riverfront Connector Plan will address deficiencies along key intersections in the project area through detailed streetscape recommendations, intersection improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian enhancements and is expected to be adopted as an addendum to the 2011 TSP. The planning process will be mindful of OTP planning principles.

Oregon Highway Plan

The Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) is a modal plan of the OTP that guides ODOT's Highway Division in planning, operations, and financing. Policies in the OHP emphasize the efficient management of the highway system to increase safety and to better utilize roadway capacity as well as establishing partnerships with other agencies and local governments. These policies also link land use and transportation, set standards for highway performance and access management, and emphasize the relationship between State highways and local road, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, rail, and air systems. The following policies, in particular, are relevant to the plan. Although the project study area does not include any state highways, it does include two intersections with state highway US 30 at Gable Road.

Goal 1: System Definition

POLICY 1A: STATE HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The OHP classifies the state highway system into four levels of importance: Interstate, Statewide, Regional, and District. ODOT uses this classification system to guide management and investment decisions regarding State highway facilities. The system guides the development of facility plans as well as ODOT's review of local plan and zoning amendments, highway project selection, design and development, and facility management decisions including road approach permits.

US 30 is classified as a Statewide Highway in the State classification system, is part of the National Highway System (NHS), and is a State Freight Route. According to the OHP, Statewide Highways typically provide inter-urban and inter-regional mobility and provide connections to larger urban areas, ports, and major recreation areas that are not directly served by Interstate Highways. A secondary function is to provide connections for intra-urban and intra-regional trips. The management objective for Statewide Highways is to provide safe and efficient, high-speed, continuous-flow operation. In constrained and urban areas, interruptions to flow should be minimal.

POLICY 1B: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Policy 1B applies to all State highways. It is designed to clarify how ODOT will work with local governments and others to link land use and transportation in transportation plans, facility and corridor plans, plan amendments, access permitting and project development. Policy 1B recognizes that State highways serve as the main streets of many communities—as US 30 does in St. Helens—and strives to maintain a balance between serving local communities (accessibility) and the through traveler (mobility). This policy recognizes the role of both the state and local governments related to the State highway system and calls for a coordinated approach to land use and transportation planning.

POLICY 1F: HIGHWAY MOBILITY STANDARDS ACCESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy 1F sets mobility standards for ensuring a reliable and acceptable level of mobility on the State highway system. The standards are used to assess system needs as part of long range, comprehensive planning, and transportation planning projects during development review, and to demonstrate compliance with the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR).

Significant amendments to Policy 1F were adopted at the end of 2011. The recent revisions were made to address concerns that State transportation policy and requirements have led to unintended consequences and inhibited economic development. Policy 1F now provides a clearer policy framework for considering measures other than volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratios for evaluating mobility performance. Also as part of these amendments, v/c ratios established in Policy 1F were changed from being standards to “targets.” These targets are to be used to determine significant effect pursuant to TPR Section -0060. The targets that apply to US 30 reflect its classification as a Statewide Highway and a designated freight route.

POLICY 1G: MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS

This policy requires maintaining performance and improving safety on the highway system by improving efficiency and management on the existing roadway network before adding capacity. The State’s highest priority is to preserve the functionality of the existing highway system. Tools that could be employed to improve the function of the existing roadway include access management, transportation demand management, traffic operations modifications, and changes to local land use designations or development regulations.

After existing system preservation, the second priority is to make minor improvements to existing highway facilities, such as adding traffic signals, or making improvements to the local street network to minimize local trips on the State facility. The third priority is to make major roadway improvements which could include adding lanes or reconfiguring intersections. These policies will help guide future improvements to intersections with US 30 and Gable and Millard Roads.

Goal 2: System Management

POLICY 2A: PARTNERSHIPS

This policy recognizes the importance of establishing cooperative partnerships between ODOT, state and federal agencies, regional governments, cities, counties, tribal governments, and the private sector in ensuring efficient and effective use of limited resources to develop, operate, and maintain the highway and road system. The project study area does not include any state highways; however, it does include two intersections with US 30. This policy is designed to support planning and development of both highway and local road projects that enhance the seamless qualities of a transportation system which balances state, regional, and local needs.

POLICY 2B: OFF-SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

This policy recognizes that the State may provide financial assistance to local jurisdictions to make improvements to local transportation systems if the improvements would provide a cost-effective means of improving the operations of the State highway system.

POLICY 2D: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to ensure that citizens, businesses, regional and local governments, state agencies, and tribal governments have opportunities to have input into decisions regarding proposed policies, plans, programs, and improvement projects that affect the state highway system.

POLICY 2F: TRAFFIC SAFETY

This policy emphasizes the State's efforts to improve safety of all users of the highway system. Action 2F.3 identifies potential solutions to traffic safety problems, including managing access to highways.

Goal 3: Access Management

POLICY 3A: CLASSIFICATION AND SPACING STANDARDS

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to manage the location, spacing, and type of road intersections on State highways to ensure the safe and efficient operation of State highways consistent with the classification of the highways.

Action 3A.2 calls for spacing standards to be established for State highways based on highway classification, type of area, and posted speed. Tables in OHP Appendix C present access spacing standards which consider urban and rural highway classification, traffic volumes, speed, safety, and operational needs. The access management spacing standards established in the OHP are implemented by access management rules in OAR 734, Division 51, addressed previously in this report.

Goal 4: Travel Alternatives

POLICY 4B: ALTERNATIVE PASSENGER MODES

This policy encourages the development of alternative passenger services and systems as part of broader corridor strategies and promotes the development of alternative passenger transportation services located off the highway system to help preserve the performance and function of the State highway system. Note: No rail passenger or air passenger service is provided within the study area. Public transit service is provided by Columbia County Rider.

The Riverfront Connector Plan is being developed in coordination with ODOT so that projects, policies, and regulations will comply with or move in the direction of meeting the standards and targets related to safety, access, and mobility that are established in the OHP.

Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (Updated 2016)

The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (OBPP) is intended to support decision-making for walking and biking investments, and provide strategies and programs that can help develop an interconnected, robust, efficient, and safe state transportation system. The plan was adopted in 1995 and reaffirmed as an element of the OTP in 2006. In 2011, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guide was adopted as the second section of the OBPP. In 2016, the policy section of the document was updated and adopted as a modal plan of the OTP.

The 2016 OBPP guides the state through efforts such as prioritizing projects, developing design guidance, collecting important data and other activities that support walking and biking in Oregon. ODOT has also identified a number of action items from the recently-adopted 2016 Plan that can be implemented within the next five years, which can be found in the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Work Program. The Plan includes a vision statement; background information such as statewide statistics and trends for walking and biking, and relevant state and federal laws; goals, policies, and strategies proposed by ODOT to improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation; funding and investment considerations, including historic spending, funding opportunities, and funding scenarios; and opportunities, challenges, and next steps for implementation.

Highway Design Manual (2012)

The Highway Design Manual (HDM) establishes ODOT standards and procedures for the location and design of new construction, major reconstruction, and resurfacing/restoration/rehabilitation projects. The manual is used for all projects that are located on State highways. Design standards for State highways depend on the highway's functional classification and the project type.

Section 13.5 of the Highway Design Manual includes standards for pedestrian crossings for urban State highways such as US 30. It indicates that crossing improvements should be no closer than 300 feet from the nearest signalized crosswalk. Crossing locations must take into account property access and circulation, along with a variety of other issues, such as land use, transit stops, signal spacing, access management, and others. Additional information related to the design of pedestrian crossings along State highways is also provided in Chapter 13. Any recommendations in the

Riverfront Connector Plan that result in proposed changes to the intersections of Gable or Millard Roads with State highway US 30 will be consistent with the applicable HDM standards.

ODOT Traffic Manual (2016)

The Traffic Manual summarizes ODOT traffic engineering policies and practices and provides guidance for traffic operations, maintenance and project delivery. The manual also clarifies roles and responsibilities, as well as provides information that may be required when considering traffic control changes. The manual underwent an update in 2016, including updates to Chapters 1, 2, 5, and 6. Section 6.1 of the Traffic Manual provides an overview of access management, including the policies and guidelines presented in Chapter 734, Division 51 of the Oregon Administrative Rules, and the process for obtaining a grant of access along State highways. Section 6.6 provides information related to crosswalks along State highways such as US 30, including the criteria for establishing a marked crosswalk at unsignalized intersections, crosswalk approval, crosswalks at signalized intersections, crosswalk safety, and crossing strategies. Any recommendations in the Riverfront Connector Plan that result in proposed changes to the intersections of Gable or Millard Roads with State highway US 30 will be consistent with the applicable HDM standards.

Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 734 Division 20 – Traffic Control

OAR 734-020 defines the State's role in managing traffic control along State highways in order to maintain functional use and safety and to preserve public investment. The rule establishes speed limits, speed zones, variable speed zones, high occupancy vehicles lanes, bicycle lanes, along with several other forms of traffic control including traffic signals.

Local Planning Context

The St. Helens Riverfront Connector project builds on the guiding principles for waterfront development that were developed through the City's Waterfront Redevelopment Project and adopted in the Waterfront Framework Plan in 2016. The Riverfront Connector Plan will complete the City's business loop planning concept included in the US 30 & Columbia Boulevard/St. Helens Street Corridor Master Plan (adopted in 2015) and in the City's 2011 TSP. The Plan has its roots in the following planning efforts:

St. Helens Transportation System Plan (2011)

The 2011 Transportation System Plan (TSP) update identified future transportation needs within the study area for this project, with guidance from State transportation planning policies and regulations. The Riverfront Connector Plan is expected to refine TSP recommendations regarding streetscape design and develop a detailed vision for the corridors. Traffic analyses conducted for the TSP also will be updated based on changes in projected or planned developments since that time as part of the traffic analysis conducted for this effort.

St. Helens Waterfront Framework Plan (2016)

The Waterfront Framework Plan is an action-oriented plan intended to guide implementation of the waterfront's redevelopment. The Framework Plan develops a future vision for the waterfront, and plans for new public amenities as well as employment opportunities. The Plan is based on three core principles: public access, natural and cultural heritage, and sustainable economic development. The City has acquired over 230 acres of waterfront property, including an approximate 25-acre brownfield property that is the former location of a plywood veneer plant and is immediately adjacent to the City's historic downtown (Riverfront District). The Riverfront Connector Plan study area includes a segment of South 1st Street that runs through the former veneer plan property. The Riverfront Connector Plan will use the proposed cross-section design for that street as a starting point for streetscape design recommendations and will ensure that recommendations in the Riverfront Connector Plan are consistent with the Waterfront Framework Plan.

St. Helens Branding & Wayfinding Master Plan (2017)

The City's Branding & Wayfinding Master Plan provides a strategy for the City to implement a citywide wayfinding system, including guidance on sign placement and route prioritization, as well as preferred design for wayfinding signs. The goals of the Plan are to connect residents and visitors to city services and destinations such as the Riverfront District, to support and enhance tourism, and to encourage travel off US 30 and into St. Helens. The Branding & Wayfinding Master Plan draws on a recommendation from the Waterfront Framework Plan that suggests a wayfinding plan is needed to help people find the City's downtown and Riverfront District from US 30. The Riverfront Connector Plan should review proposed sign placement from the Branding & Wayfinding Master Plan that falls within the project study area and should include recommendations for the location and general content of proposed new wayfinding signs within the study area.

St. Helens Urban Renewal Plan & Urban Renewal Report (2017)

The Urban Renewal Plan sets the parameters for investments in the City's waterfront, commercial business district, centrally-located brownfield sites, and surrounding industrial properties. The adoption of the Plan created an Urban Renewal Area (URA) intended to capture revenues from growth to reinvest in projects that will achieve the public vision for the area. The accompanying Urban Renewal Report is intended to provide context and supplemental information to support the Urban Renewal Plan, including information about the funding plan and existing conditions of the URA. The primary purposes of the Plan are to cure blight within the URA, assist with implementation of previous planning efforts such as the US 30 & Columbia Boulevard/St. Helens Street Corridor Master Plan and the Waterfront Framework Plan, and improve specific areas of the City that are poorly developed or vacant. A large portion of the Riverfront Connector Plan study area is located within the URA boundary. In addition, the Urban Renewal Plan includes several specific recommendations for corridors in the Riverfront Connector Plan. The Riverfront Connector Plan will build on and be consistent with the URA Plan and Report.

St. Helens Strategic Plan (2005)

The St. Helens Strategic Plan is intended to guide the Council and its staff in a number of strategic projects. The Plan also established a Mission Statement for the City. Recommendations in the Plan were reflected in City budgets and City staff work programs through the year 2007, and the Strategic Focus Areas from the Plan are represented as Council goals in the City's annual budget to this day. Strategic Focus Area #9 – Business Development is particularly relevant to the Riverfront Connector Plan. The desired outcome of this focus area states:

“The City’s Old Town and Waterfront become an exciting, dynamic, and successful cultural, government, recreational, and business district; the highway strip is attractive and functional; and the Mid-Town area is a vibrant area of many uses.”

Suggested measures to achieve this desired outcome include river-oriented tourism and recreational uses, and a master planned waterfront area. Proposed streetscape designs and improvements in the Riverfront Connector Plan also will support these objectives.

St. Helens Economic Development Plan (2007)

The Economic Development Plan came about through the development and implementation of the St. Helens Comprehensive Plan and the St. Helens Strategic Plan. Two of Strategic Focus Areas from Strategic Plan lay the groundwork for the Economic Development Plan: Strategic Focus Area #4 – Economic Development, and Strategic Focus Area #9 – Business Development. The Economic Development Plan identifies the Old Towne district (now called the Riverfront District) as one of the City's greatest assets and identifies key recommendations and principles to guide future planning efforts in the District. These recommendations will guide recommendations to be developed in the Riverfront Connector Plan.

A Vision for St. Helens in the Year 2020 (1997)

The Vision for St. Helens in the Year 2020 includes several statements that relate to the Riverfront Connector Plan study area, including:

“A Historic Waterfront Redevelopment Plan has united both public and private resources of the community to create a new focus and center for the entire St. Helens area. The Old Town area has been revitalized with historic building restorations and construction of new buildings in a manner consistent with the area’s historic character.

[...]

People are guided to both the Old Town and Uptown areas by gateway parks, created on Highway 30 and the Columbia River, as well as tree-lined boulevards and other urban design amenities.

[...]

Emphasis is given throughout the community to pedestrian and bicycle connections to keep the scale of development small and residences in close proximity to work, school, and play. Views of the river, mountains, and other vistas seen from public property are protected.”

The Riverfront Connector Plan will support these elements of the Vision.

St. Helens Municipal Code Chapter 17.32 Zones and Uses

Many of the standards outlined in this report depend on zoning designations. Regulations for zoning districts are established in Chapter 17.32 of the St. Helens Municipal Code (SHMC). Zoning in the study area generally consists of the following districts:

- **South 1st Street Corridor Segment:** Riverfront District (RD)
- **Plymouth Street, Old Portland Road, and Gable Road Segments:** Public Lands (PL), Heavy Industrial (HI), Light Industrial (LI), Apartment Residential (AR), General Residential (R5), General Commercial (GC), and Mixed Use (MU)
- **McNulty Way and southern Old Portland Road Segments:** Heavy Industrial (HI) and Light Industrial (LI)

These requirements will be evaluated as part of the Riverfront Connector Plan process and amendments to the Development Code may be recommended to implement the Plan. Additional information on this topic is found in Technical Memorandum #4.