

Glenwood Refinement Plan Update Project

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Riverfront cities around the world have traditionally turned their backs to the natural assets meandering through their midst, utilizing riverfront property as a hub for transportation or heavy industry. However, in recent decades, new patterns of development have emerged that embrace the ecological features of such communities. As such, once neglected, underdeveloped, and heavily industrialized riverfronts have been transformed into vibrant neighborhoods with a mix of residences, businesses, and open space that attempt to balance both a community's economic and environmental interests.

The Glenwood area of Springfield, a tear-drop of land encompassing approximately one square mile abutted by Interstate 5 (I-5) on the west and south and the Willamette River on the north and east, is ripe for redevelopment and reconnection to the river. Settled as a farming community in the 1800s and constrained in its development by recurrent flooding until the middle of the 20th century when dams were constructed upriver, Glenwood has always been viewed as a unique district nestled between Eugene and Springfield. In fact, when the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan, the region's overarching planning policy document, was adopted in 1982, the question of which jurisdiction should ultimately provide urban services to Glenwood arose. Once it had been determined that Glenwood would fall under Eugene jurisdiction, planning for Glenwood began in earnest in 1985 when Eugene and Lane County engaged residents and property owners in a five-year process to develop a refinement plan for the area.

While a community-driven effort to transfer jurisdictional responsibility to Springfield was approved in 1998, the Glenwood Refinement Plan was left largely unchanged. Development in much of Glenwood is thus still guided by the policies of a Glenwood Refinement Plan developed over twenty years ago when it seemed appropriate to zone the area predominantly for industrial use with a residential core and commercial strip development, a land use pattern that undervalues contemporary opportunities for planning and development. Some areas of Glenwood continue to be appropriate for the type of industrial development that is attracted to the two rail lines bisecting Glenwood and I-5 access. However, other sections of Glenwood are well positioned to attract the type of mixed-use employment, commercial, and residential development that could create a thriving riverfront district. The unique amenities provided by the Willamette River as it flows through Glenwood are unsurpassed in the state. In addition, Franklin Boulevard, running east-west through the northern edge of Glenwood, serves as a major thoroughfare connecting Springfield and Eugene and sets the stage for Glenwood as a gateway to both cities. The recent addition of the region's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line, the EmX, along Franklin Boulevard, enhances the possibilities for transit-oriented development. Glenwood's proximity to the University of Oregon also positions it well for successful, mixed-use residential and commercial development along the Franklin and McVay corridors.

However, existing conditions and outdated development and annexation policies outlined in the GRP constrain the likelihood that the area will develop in a way that is consistent with a more modern vision for the area held by both the community and its elected officials. In 2004, the City Council proposed and citizens voted affirmatively to form an urban renewal district to fund catalytic infrastructure and development projects in Glenwood. City Council also approved the Glenwood Riverfront Plan in 2005, the result of five years of an extensive community planning process for 48 acres in the northeast corner of Glenwood near the Springfield bridges. While the Riverfront Plan showcases the type of forward-thinking planning concepts envisioned for all of Glenwood, it represents only one segment of Glenwood.

In fact, a market study conducted by the Leland Group in 2007 indicated that existing development patterns, combined with a lack of a coordinated development plan for all of Glenwood, would thwart the implementation of the proposed mixed-use plan in the Riverfront Plan.

The City has taken crucial steps to begin to address these constraints: the Franklin Boulevard Study and the Glenwood Refinement Plan Update Project. The transportation study, which was initiated in July 2007, culminated in Spring 2008 with Council approval of a multi-way boulevard concept, a design that could support the type of high-density, mixed-use development envisioned in the Glenwood Riverfront Plan. Also, in July 2007, staff presented Council with five planning options for Glenwood, ranging from maintaining the status quo to a comprehensive refinement plan update process. Council elected to pursue the complete update of the Glenwood Refinement Plan, recognizing that it would be a significant undertaking, but was necessary to enable the implementation of a modern vision for Glenwood. In February 2008, Council directed staff to make the Glenwood Refinement Plan update a priority work item.

The Glenwood Refinement Plan Update project will result in the adoption of planning documents that will provide property owners, developers, and residents greater certainty regarding the desired form and character of future development. In addition, such documents will provide direction to public agencies for the provision of public facilities and services and will guide the City in evaluating annexation and development proposals. As such, the City will be better able to attract and facilitate the development of harmonious land uses supported by a community vision.

PLANNING PROCESS

To best manage the complexity of updating the Glenwood Refinement Plan (GRP) and to address development pressure along the Franklin Boulevard and McVay Highway riverfront corridors, the City Council directed staff to undertake this project in three phases. Together, these phases will comprise a comprehensive planning process that will include visioning, feasibility analysis, physical planning, and design.

In the first phase, City staff and other public agencies will establish a keen understanding of existing conditions and policies governing land use, transportation, housing, economic development, public facilities, and natural and historic resources in Glenwood. During the first phase, City staff will also work with the community to establish a vision that will lay out what Glenwood should look like physically, socially, and environmentally in twenty years. The remainder of the first phase will be dedicated to developing policies and implementation actions to ensure future land uses, infrastructure, and other features to support such land uses will achieve the vision along the Franklin and McVay riverfront corridors. This phase will also include producing development and design standards specifically crafted to ensure development along those corridors occurs in line with the established vision. Phases Two and Three will follow the adoption of planning documents associated with Phase One and will focus on the Glenwood Boulevard Corridor and Glenwood Core, respectively.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

In October 2008, the Springfield Planning Commission approved a Citizen Involvement Plan for this project. The goal of the citizen involvement plan is to establish and maintain a transparent planning process by promoting dialogue and building relationships with the community – individuals, interest groups, corporations, and government agencies – from the beginning of the project. The citizen involvement plan also strives to create opportunities for the community to provide meaningful input by

identifying the desired character for each of Glenwood’s plan districts and assisting in the development of strategies to support that vision for the future.

Several citizen involvement strategies will be used to engage the public in the Glenwood planning process, including a project website, survey, and a series of public workshops and meetings. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been selected to provide a regular sounding board for staff regarding more technical aspects of the project and to ensure interagency and interdepartmental coordination.

Perhaps one of the most important citizen involvement forums will be the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC provides an opportunity for citizens to routinely communicate with the project team, providing input, feedback, and guidance to staff and elected officials throughout the duration of the project. In November 2008 and January 2009, 20 individuals with a diverse mix of perspectives and backgrounds were appointed to serve on the CAC for this project, and they include:

Glenwood Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zack S. Pardo • James Peterson • Steven Ramseur • Kara Smith
Glenwood Business Owners/Property Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Randall Hledik • John Oldham • Stephen Roth
Glenwood Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivia Reynoso • Eric Howard • Bill Woods
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracy Rogan • Christine Kehoe
Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian McBeth • Daniel Hill
Realtors / Lenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laurie Adams • Ken Schmidt
Designers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roxi Thoren • Erik Bishoff
Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Seider
Affordable Housing Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susan Ban

The CAC will start meeting on a regular basis in March 2009, and the proposed CAC meeting topics will be as follows:

Kickoff

The first CAC meeting will focus on orienting the committee to the project and other planning actions around Glenwood, explaining the role of the committee, outlining CAC member expectations, and discussing project goals and the visioning process. Members will be asked to reach consensus around a meeting schedule, committee processes, and election of co-chairs.

Tour of Glenwood

To give all participants a better on-the-ground understanding of the entire project area, staff will organize a tour of Glenwood. The tour will include a brief history of the area, visits to key sites that illustrate the character of the sub-areas, physical connections and disconnections, the limited connections to the riverfront, highlight changes occurring in area, and point out potential redevelopment locations. The tour presents an opportunity for CAC members to interact informally with each other and familiarize themselves with the different areas of Glenwood.

Visioning

The CAC will dedicate at least two meetings to the visioning process. At the initial meeting, the CAC will be led through a series of facilitated visioning exercises. The CAC will also be asked to weigh in on the content and outreach methods employed for a visioning survey and public visioning workshop. A second meeting will help to refine the vision, taking into consideration the practicality and feasibility of the ideas generated to date from a physical, financial, and political perspective, as well as the ideas generated by the greater community.

Future Land Uses, Infrastructure, and Other Policies & Implementation Actions

Using the vision established by the community, staff will develop policies and implementation actions regarding future land uses, housing and economic development, transportation and other public facilities and services, natural and historic resources, and urban transition to meet the vision. Over the course of several meetings, CAC members will be presented with an overview of particular topics, will be asked to review and discuss preliminary results from analyses, and reach consensus on draft or final recommendations.

Plan Documents

Once the draft plan documents are drafted, the CAC will be asked to review the documents for final input and recommendations to the Planning Commission.