

# Community Culture Action Area Topics

- Education
- Arts
- Recreation
- Library Services
- Historic Preservation
- Civic Engagement



## **Community Culture Action Area Education**

### **Notes:**

The Education topic of Community Culture addresses the Lake Oswego School District, Marylhurst University, private primary and secondary schools, and learning opportunities through the City Parks and Recreation Department. Schools are currently addressed in Goal 11, Section 5 of the Comprehensive Plan: Administrative and Government Services, Energy, Communications, and Schools. The existing goal and two policies call for safe transportation routes to schools and for the City to review residential development proposals for potential impacts on the school system.

### **Background:**

- Lake Oswegans have access to a variety of high quality educational opportunities that provide for lifelong learning, including: the Lake Oswego School District (LOSD), private primary and secondary schools, Marylhurst University, and close proximity to Lewis and Clark College and Portland Community College Sylvania campus.
- The Lake Oswego School District currently consists of 8 elementary schools, two junior highs, and 2 high schools. Total district enrollment in 2011 is approximately 6,750. Enrollment at the City's last Periodic Review was approximately 6,900, and reached its peak at 7,250 in 1996 before beginning a general decline.
  - The Lake Oswego School District is known for its educational excellence. For the fourth consecutive year, all 13 Lake Oswego schools have received the highest rating on Oregon state report cards. In 2010, over 90% of high school graduates went on to college.
  - There are some properties within the Lake Oswego Urban Services boundary – in the northern part of Mountain Park and Birdshill – that do not fall within the Lake Oswego School District boundaries. Those students can attend LOSD on a tuition basis for \$3,250/year. Students who live outside the Lake Oswego School District and the City of Lake Oswego can enroll as tuition students with an annual tuition of \$6,500 for the 2011-12 school year.
  - There are also areas outside Lake Oswego's city limits and outside Lake Oswego's Urban Services Boundary that are within the LOSD boundaries.
  - In 1990, soon after the last Comprehensive Plan update, Ballot Measure 5 was passed which transferred the responsibility for school funding from local government to the state on a per pupil funding basis, to equalize funding between districts. Since then, LOSD has never received sufficient state revenue to support its programs.
  - A budget shortfall of \$5-8 M for the 2011-12 school year prompted the school district, community and City to explore ways to bridge the gap.
    - The district closed Palisades Elementary School for the 2011-12 school year, and plans to close Bryant Elementary School and Uplands Elementary School the following year. Remaining elementary schools will be reconfigured to

grades K-5, and Waluga Jr. High and LOJHS reconfigured to grades 6-8 middle schools.

- In Spring 2010, the City Council approved a one-time financial contribution of \$2 million to assist the district with its 2011-12 budget shortfall.
- In 2002, the City adopted a zone change ordinance that brought all public facilities, including LOSD schools, into a new Public Functions (PF) zone. Prior to that zone change, public school properties were zoned residential and were subject to residential zoning regulations. All schools are still subject to a conditional use review process.
- Lake Oswego is also home to several private schools offering education from pre-kindergarten through high school:
  - Westside Christian High School
  - Our Lady of the Lake Church and School
  - Touchstone School
  - Christie School
  - Children’s Hour Academy
  - Park Academy
  - West Lake Montessori School
  - Northwest Montessori School
  - Lake Oswego Montessori School
- Marylhurst University, Oregon's oldest Catholic university, has been located at the southeast end of Lake Oswego since 1930. The university provides daytime, evening, weekend and online classes to 932 undergraduate students and 985 graduate students (2010-11). It is a national leader in adult-focused higher education.

**Policy Questions:**

- Staff is waiting for feedback from the school district and Marylhurst University.

## **Community Culture Action Area Arts**

### **Notes:**

The Arts component of Community Culture includes visual and performing arts. The Lake Oswego Community Vision for 2035 states that “public art and historic resources enrich our cultural identity.” Arts are not included in the existing Comprehensive Plan, and goals and policies will be added to support the vision.

### **Background:**

- The downtown Gallery Without Walls, Lake Oswego’s signature public art program, began in 2002 and today includes 30 rotating sculptures and 30 sculptures in the permanent collection.
- The City has a 1.5 Percent for Art Program that is funded through capital projects exceeding \$25,000 paid for wholly or in part by the City of Lake Oswego to purchase, construct, rehabilitate or remodel any building, decorative or commemorative structure, park, parking facility or any portion thereof within the limits of Lake Oswego.
- The City has over 200 pieces of public in its permanent collection.
- The Arts Council is currently developing a Neighborhood Public Art Program, and partnerships are being formed to develop gateways in different parts of the community.
- The Lakewood Theater Company began in 1952 and now produces over 10 shows per year with an annual audience of over 40,000.
- The Lakewood Center for the Arts also houses a children’s theater, arts pre-school, dance studios and more.
- The Lakewood Center also produces the annual Lake Oswego Festival of the Arts each June, which showcases visual arts, a juried exhibit, and performance stage.
- Lake Oswego’s Parks and Recreation Department produces concerts in the parks throughout the summer that draw thousands of community members.

### **Policy Questions:**

- Staff is waiting for feedback from the Arts Council Board following their September 22 meeting.

## **Community Culture Action Area Recreation**

### **Notes:**

The Recreation component of Community Culture focuses on City park facilities and programs (Goal 8 of existing plan). Also addressed specifically in the current Comprehensive Plan are the Willamette River Greenway (Goal 15), and Oswego Lake (Goal 5, Section 7).

### **Background:**

- The City owns over 600 acres of land that is included in the park system. Close to 300 acres of park land have been added since 1993 when the Comprehensive Plan was last updated.
- Parks and Recreation Department Program areas include: The Adult Community Center (ACC), Indoor Tennis Center, Municipal Golf Course, sports and fitness, cultural and specialized activities, and special events.
- Several park facilities have been developed since the last Comprehensive Plan update, including Foothills Park, Hazelia Field, the Stafford Basin Trail, Tryon Cove and Millennium and Sundeleaf plazas.
- Goal 15 of the Oregon Statewide Planning Goals and the Lake Oswego Comprehensive Plan address the Willamette River Greenway. The Willamette River Greenway was originally established by the 1967 Oregon Legislature as a grant program for land acquisition to State Parks along the Willamette River from Eugene through Portland. Over the last fifteen years, there has been growing interest around the nation in connecting communities to their riverfronts.
- The Greenway Trail along the Willamette River has been extended during this time period, however a pathway gap remains across four properties to provide a future connection between George Rogers Park & River Road to the south, and Rohr and Foothills parks to the north.
- The City is currently developing the Parks Plan 2025, which will plan for the full range of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services. This planning effort has made several key findings:
  - The three essential services provided by parks are: Exercise and Sports, Play for Children, and Experience Nature. There are portions of the community that do not have access to all three services within a 1/2 mile reach.
  - Lake Oswego residents desire public access to essential services within walking or biking distance of their homes. Access to nature experiences is well-supported across the City based on the distribution of existing parks. Formal places for children to play are poorly distributed across the City and leave many areas of the City unserved.
  - Many of the missing needs can be met by adding facilities/opportunities to existing park facilities.
  - According to the Parks Plan 2025 public involvement findings, the greatest needs in Lake Oswego are for innovative, state-of-the-art recreation facilities, such a multi-

- purpose, multi-generational community and recreation center, an aquatic center, and an improved facility for senior and older adults.
- Six of the 12 activities with the highest participation levels could be supported by trails: walking for exercise, walking for pleasure, dog-walking, jogging/running, nature walks and bicycling.
  - The community's inventory of recreation facilities also includes school facilities including sports fields, playgrounds, gymnasiums, the only public indoor swimming pool, as well as the Lake Grove Swim Park, an outdoor swimming facility on Lake Oswego.
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**Policy Questions:**

- Staff is waiting for feedback from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board from their September 21 meeting discussion.

## **Community Culture Action Area Library Services**

### **Notes:**

The Lake Oswego Public Library offers informational, cultural and recreational opportunities for the community. The Lake Oswego Community Vision for 2035 calls out “our outstanding library” as part of Lake Oswego’s community culture. The library is not currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, but will be added as one of the important City services and contributor to education, literary arts, history and community events.

### **Background:**

- The Lake Oswego Public Library is proud to have the highest annual per capita use in the state with over 1,000 visitors daily, and circulation of over 1.4 million items per year in 2010.
- The Library maintains and builds upon a local history collection of maps, oral histories, newspaper stories, historic photographs, and some physical items representing the history of the city and its surrounding community.
- The Lake Oswego Public Library was established in 1930 and was located in City Hall. In May, 1962 a new, 7000 square foot Library was dedicated at Fourth and D. After a period of rapid growth, a new Library was constructed on the same site, and in 1983 a library of 27,100 feet was opened. In 1988 a citizens task force on library growth found that “the present library facility...has essentially reached its designed capacity. It will be inadequate for the population in a few years...”
- In 2010 the Lake Oswego Redevelopment Agency began to consider plans for a 60,000 square foot Library facility at 1st and B, now known as the North Anchor project.
- One of the long-noted major deficiencies of the current site is that of a community space; i.e. an auditorium or large meeting room. Other significant additions to a new facility would include a dedicated teen room space, a local history room (which addresses part of our Library mission to archive and provide access to materials relating to local history) and study/small meeting rooms.
- Research findings indicate that library users combine library visits with shopping. Library visitors would have convenient access to downtown shopping and dining from the First and B North Anchor location.
- The North Anchor project requires site acquisition and assembly, but would not require extraordinary traffic or utility improvements. Based on analysis of new use requirements and downtown parking supply and demand, the project provides adequate shared parking. A comprehensive downtown parking study will be presented to the Council later this fall.

### **Policy Questions:**

- Staff is waiting for feedback from the Library Advisory Board from their September 14 meeting discussion.

## **Community Culture Action Area Historic Resources**

### **Notes:**

The Historic Resources component of Community Culture calls for the preservation of the historical, archaeological and cultural resources of the community. There is currently one goal and five policies related to the topic. The Historic Resources Advisory Board which supports the city's historic preservation program in conjunction with staff is very active.

### **Background:**

- The City participates in a preservation partnership with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service as a “certified local government,” (CLG) which requires the City to maintain certain qualifications such as;
  - maintaining a preservation commission
  - administering the preservation code
  - updating and expanding the state's historic building inventory
  - review of demolition permits
  - reviewing the National Register of Historic Places nominations
- The City has used matching CLG grants from the state for a number of preservation projects including documenting the city's iron industry history, documenting the city's mid-century architecture, and updating and expanding the city's inventory of historic buildings.
- In 1989 the City completed and adopted a citywide inventory of more than 160 properties (40 more were inventoried in 2008) that were determined to have potential historical and architectural significance although not all of those structures are included on the City's Landmark Designation List which includes 73 properties. Some have been altered significantly and are no longer significant and other owners do not want to be listed as a Landmark.
- There are 13 historic properties within the City on the National Historic Register
- Since 1996 24 historic resources have been removed from the City's Landmark Designation List, seven of which have been demolished.
- In 2011 the City initiated a Preservation Grant Program which allocates \$5,000 to rehabilitate, restore or repair homes listed on the City's Landmark Designation List.
- The City owns two historic resources: the Iron Furnace and the Iron Workers' Cottage.

### **Policy Questions:**

Staff is currently working with HRAB on suggested revisions to the goal and policies that are not substantive. There may be one or more new policies suggestions including one that addresses reusing existing buildings (adaptive reuse), retrofitting existing building stock, and deconstructing historic buildings.

## **Community Culture Action Area Civic Engagement**

### **Notes:**

The current chapter under Goal 1, Citizen Involvement is specifically geared towards public involvement in the land use process. Within the context of this update, Citizen Involvement is intended to be replaced with Civic Engagement and not only include involvement in land use processes, but also community participation and volunteerism.

### **Background:**

- Program guidelines for citizen involvement have existed since 1975, with the intent of having a better informed citizenry and to provide a framework for government and citizen involvement.
- Since 1978, when the First Comprehensive Plan was adopted, subsequent updates in 1994 identified “rearranging the Plan so that it is easier to use” as a major issue to address.
- In 2011, there are 22 recognized neighborhood associations and 12 City Boards and Commissions.
- Since the late 90’s the Planning Commission has served as the Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI). Its purpose is to assist in the development, implementation and evaluation of citizen involvement programs.
- The first Citizen Involvement Guidelines (CIG) was adopted by the City Council in August 1991. It was last updated in April 2009. The CIG outlines:
  - Goals & Objectives;
  - Roles of Participants (City Council, City Commission, Staff and Neighborhood Associations, Advisory Committees and the General Public); and
  - Procedures & Methods to achieve the goals and objectives.
- Methods currently used to solicit information:
  - Public advertised meetings, statistically valid surveys, public comment periods at meetings, pre-application conferences, neighborhood meetings, focus groups, ad-hoc citizen advisory committee, city web based “Open City Hall”, and citizen information center.
- Methods currently used to provide information:
  - Posting notices in public places and newspapers, producing summaries of long complex documents, flyers, brochures, making city documents readily available, neighborhood newsletters, informational meetings, speak series, using existing communication vehicles (water bills, etc), citizen information center, City Council digest and dispatch, Facebook, Twitter, RSS, Code Red Emergency Notification, HelloLO, LO-Down newsletter, and listservs.
- Community Involvement based on Quality of Life Indicators (quantitative measurements of the elements of the community’s quality of life:
  - 2009 – 62% registered voters

- 2008 -89% of registered voters participated in general elections
- 2003 & 2005 – 59% and 56% of residents volunteered
- Emerging trends and issues:
  - Technology and social media;
  - Balancing and weighing in-person v. email comments at public meetings;
  - Utilizing different media (visual, computer generated, etc) to describe complex ideas;
  - Tracking public involvement efforts and results to determine what works; and
  - Ensuring citizens feel that that they are heard.

**Policy Question(s):**

- In the next 20 years, what new policies should there be to guide the civic engagement considering new technologies and social media to ensure that two-way communication exists?
- Need suggestions for a volunteer policy question?