

**North Bethany Concept Plan**  
DRAFT Open house #1 report  
1/24/07

## Introduction

Washington County hosted the first North Bethany Concept Plan open house on January 9, 2007. More than 250 people attended the open house held at Portland Community College Rock Creek. The open house materials and an online comment form were also available on the project web site from January 9 through January 19, 2007. In total, 122 people completed the comment form either on paper or online.

The meeting was publicized through a postcard mailing to 1,400 addresses, and an email to 150 addresses. A meeting notice was also included in CPO and other community group newsletters. Finally, the Oregonian published a story about the open house on January 8, 2007 and included the open house on its Washington County meeting calendar for the three weeks preceding the open house.

This report will provide a summary of the input gathered through the comment form. A complete list of responses to comment form questions is attached. Please note that the comment form was voluntary and not all attendees completed it; information from the comment form provides only an indication of community concerns and preferences.

## Key messages

Some key messages from the open house included:

- An interest in building schools and improving the transportation system before development begins.
- A desire to improve the transportation system (especially roads) outside of North Bethany to reduce impacts on existing residents.
- Concerns about widening existing roadways like Bethany Boulevard.
- An interest in developing a multimodal transportation system with bike paths, sidewalks and good access to transit.

## Open house format and purpose

The meeting was designed as an open house where participants could review displays and talk with staff. A comment form was the primary method of providing input although some participants recorded comments on post-it notes and left them on relevant displays.

The open house was designed to:

- Share and ground truth working assumptions (existing environmental conditions, community features and transportation assumptions).
- Gather input on project goals and objectives and evaluation framework.
- Share information about the project, how it will be completed and how community members can be involved.

## Participant profile

Of those participants who completed the comment form, almost 30 percent lived or owned property in the North Bethany study area. Of the participants who did not live or own property in the study area:

- 60 percent live in the existing Bethany community.
- 12 percent live in rural Multnomah County north or east of the study area.
- Less than 6 percent live in each of the following areas: rural Washington County, Hillsboro, Beaverton, Cedar Mill, Oak Hills, Scappoose, Sherwood, Aloha Portland or Rock Creek.

More than 40 percent of participants were longtime residents who reported living in their current homes for ten or more years. Less than 10 percent reported living in their current homes for less than a year, 29 percent reported five to nine years and 21 percent reported one to four years. Participants heard about the open house through neighborhood or CPO newsletters (44%), Washington County postcard or email (46%), a newspaper article (20%) or an email from a group or individual (30%).

## Planning principles and goals

Of the 56 people who responded to the question “do you have any comments on the vision, planning principles or goals,” many said that the evaluation framework was acceptable. Of those who suggested changes, the greatest number suggested that traffic and transportation issues should be a greater focus; many of these people suggested adding a goal or principle that focuses on traffic impacts outside of the North Bethany study area. There was also a suggestion to add a goal or principle focused on schools and one focused on the timing infrastructure improvements before construction begins.

Most participants said that all of the goals were “very important.” More than 80 percent of respondents said that the following goals were somewhat or very important:

- Integration with Greater Bethany
- Transportation Choices
- Integration of Urban and Natural Areas
- Equitable and Feasible Infrastructure Financing
- A Livable Long Term Future
- Consensus, Involvement and Partnerships

Fewer respondents said that the goal to create a community of distinction was somewhat or very important. Almost one-quarter responded neutral/don’t know to this goal suggesting that “community of distinction” should be better defined.

Specific suggestions included more focus on the following:

- environmental protection
- traffic impacts outside the study area (arterials and U.S. 26)
- bike and pedestrian routes
- transit
- schools
- neighborhood commercial development
- senior housing

- parks
- affordable housing

## Working assumptions

### *Parks*

Almost 70 percent of respondents said that the preliminary estimates of parkland seemed about right. A few people responded that the preliminary estimate was not enough. People suggested that parks plans include:

- community gardens
- play areas
- trails
- dog parks
- community gathering spaces
- a swim/recreational center
- parks that are not under power lines
- green spaces that are inaccessible and buffer natural areas.

### *Transportation*

When asked what strategies should be explored to improve the transportation system, it was apparent that respondents would like to see all aspects of the transportation system improved from road widening to transit to bike and pedestrian improvements. Responses included:

- Increased transit service (53%)
- Compact development to support walking and biking (46%)
- Enhanced network of bike and pedestrian paths (68%)
- Widening of east-west arterials (56%)
- Widening of north-south arterials (65%)

Some people expressed concern about widening existing roads like Kaiser Road and Bethany Boulevard; other people suggested that widening existing roads was important. Respondents also suggested new roads and more connections to reduce the impacts on any one existing roadway.

When asked about intersections or roadways that needed improvement, the following were mentioned many times:

- Springville Road
- 185<sup>th</sup> Street
- Bethany Boulevard
- Kaiser Road
- Germantown Road
- Entrances and exits to US 26
- West Union

### *Commercial scenarios*

When asked if the commercial and mixed-use development scenarios deserved further consideration, more respondents said that all scenarios (neighborhood centers, village centers and a combination of centers) deserved further consideration. Some respondents

expressed concern about competition with the existing Bethany center or creating centers that are too small to be viable. Several people noted that employment land should be located in or near North Bethany.

#### *Residential scenarios*

Forty-four percent of respondents said that the range of housing densities presented was appropriate for study purposes. Thirty-seven percent said that the range shows densities that are too great. Five percent said that densities were not great enough.

#### *Natural resource protection*

When asked how natural systems could be integrated with development, responses included

- co-locating storm water facilities with natural drainage corridors (55%)
- integrating natural areas into community design (74%)
- creating trails and corridors along existing stream corridors (80%)
- connecting natural areas to parks (71%)

#### *Other comments*

Other comments included a range of issues. Some themes not mentioned elsewhere included:

- consider locating a library, cultural center or other gathering place in North Bethany
- focus on connecting new and existing areas
- create a range of housing types for different life stages
- continue to involve community members in plan development